



Annual Report 2009

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Canberra's leading non-profit community dance company



Our Mission

- ◆ To be a vibrant, diverse and sustainable part of dance culture in the ACT and region;
- ◆ To promote dance and CDT through the delivery of high quality classes, performances, workshops, and professional development opportunities for professional and recreational dancers and associated artists;
- ◆ To provide opportunities for, and work in partnership with, local dance and/or associated artists and community members; and
- ◆ To foster an environment where members can discover, explore, learn, experiment and share a variety of dance styles and techniques.

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Office bearers 2009



Position	Office Bearer	Elected
Chairperson	Brooke Thomas	elected 23 August 2009, resigned 13 December 2009
Company Manager	Philip Piggin	elected 23 August 2009, resigned from position as Company Manager 28 February 2010; remained as Board member
Artistic Director	Liz Lea	Appointed 5 December 2009
Treasurer	Thor Diesendorf	elected 23 August 2009
Members' Services Manager	Elanor Matton-Johnson	elected 23 August 2009
Studio and Resources Manager	Jane Ingall	elected 23 August 2009
Marketing Manager	Hannah Ley	elected 23 August 2009
Studio Bookings Manager	Rachael Hilton	elected 23 August 2009
Secretary and Public Officer	Susan Cochrane	elected 23 August 2009

Chairperson



It was my pleasure to serve as CDT's Chairperson up to Christmas 2009. My resignation comes after several years on the Board and a very hectic, challenging, but rewarding term as Chair. Despite shifting the focus of my volunteering to other areas of community work, it is hard to step away from such a dynamic, exciting and just plain fun organisation and I have, and intend to stay, very much involved as a member and as a performer with CDT's Quake bellydance troupe.

During my time on the Board, CDT physically shifted from the old, drafty wooden hall which was where the new ANU Uni Lodge now stands, into our new "long term temporary" premises which it is itself a stepping stone to even greater things. In the old hall, the kitchen doubled as the ladies' change room and to get to the toilet, one had to brave the cold and dark outdoors, spiders, and a huge vicious possum that lurked in the undergrowth. You can see why the new purpose-built demountable studio has been such a wonderful improvement.

And in so many other ways, CDT has positively grown and changed, attracting high numbers of enthusiastic students, highly qualified teachers, and a dedicated team of staff and volunteers. CDT would not exist without this last group - the volunteers who serve on the board, organise events, maintain the building, and keep CDT connected to other community arts groups and agencies.

I strongly commend the experience of volunteering at CDT to you. It's a great way to contribute to the arts and the community, to meet and spend time with creative, diverse but like-minded people, and a wonderful personal development opportunity.

I would also like to thank everyone on the CDT board for their wonderfully hard work alongside me for the past several years, for your commitment, drive and innovation which has seen CDT go from strength to strength as a leading community dance organisation in the ACT.

Brooke Thomas

Chairperson (until 13 December 2009)

Company Manager's report

2009 marked 31 years of operation for Canberra Dance Theatre in the ACT region. After the demands of the preceding year of 30th birthday celebrations, 2009 was a time for consolidation and refinement of our organisation.



1. ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Attempts to source a new AD for the year were unsuccessful, despite long and detailed discussions within and without CDT and some initial meetings with a headhunted candidate. Consequently, it was decided we would pursue a quieter year performance-wise. So, with significant Board support, I undertook to manage both the artistic and business management of CDT for 2009. The year then concluded with CDT negotiating successfully with Liz Lea to be our new AD for 2010. Liz comes with a very diverse and extensive international dance career, and had undertaken various teaching and choreographic work for us throughout the year.

2. PERFORMANCES

Whilst supposedly a quieter year, CDT was again around Canberra and the region, presenting a number of performances which included:

a. **Contact Day**, successfully delivered in early February, with colourful, energetic performances from the Belly dancers and the Gypsy dancers.

b. *Quake* (the belly dance performance group), World Fusion and Gypsy classes performed at the **Multicultural Festival**. Thanks to these groups for their constant and generous support throughout 2008.

c. Term 1 performance evening

d. For **Dance Week** we delivered two very packed performance events on Saturday May 9:

– **TAKING SHAPE – A DANCE SCULPTURE**, based on the flash mob concept, which occurred twice in the city during the day. Concept and direction by Jane Ingall.

- **STUDIO ON SATURDAY – AN EVENING PERFORMANCE**. Performers included SCHWAA, the Performance Class in SALT, choreographed by Hayley Schmidt, Terpsichore's Aunts in **READING THE THREADS**, and QL2 Youth Dance Ensemble, presenting **25 THINGS**, choreographed by their AD Ruth Osborne, with the dancers.

e. CDTeens at the **ACT Downs Syndrome Association Ball** – choreographed by Bec Olson and Mica Cochrane

f. Term 3 performance evening

g. **Floriade Performance** – **WITHIN** was choreographed by Lailah Masiga with the Performance Class dancers, co-ordinated by me. Again, our fabulous *Quake* and the Gypsy class also contributed their usual riot of colour, energy and movement.

h. **Xmas Gig**, with Santa, and performers from 1 to 71!!

3. COMMUNITY CLASSES

a. PROGRAM

The year commenced with CDT running a total of 18 dance classes/week, at various levels, with

several new classes added to the program (*). Throughout the year, we also held a number of Sunday workshops, with a variety of tutors in a variety of dance genres including African Dance, Contemporary South Asian Dance, Contact Improvisation, and World Fusion. Our regular class program included:



Monday	*Funk Hip Hop (Advanced), E Young-Wright Ballet (Intermediate), H Schmidt Performance Class, various teachers
Tuesday	Parents, Tinies and Toddlers, J Ingall Middle Eastern Belly Dance (Basics), L Smales *Hilal (Basics), D Cook
Wednesday	Funk/Hip Hop (Basics), S Winsor Pilates, F Dumbrell Contemporary (Intermediate), H Schmidt
Thursday	Women's Creative Dance, J Ingall Contemporary (Basics), P Piggin Ballet (Basics), R Olsen
Friday	Modern Gypsy (Basics), R Markwell *Modern Gypsy (Intermediate), R Markwell
Saturday	CDTeens, G Burgess & A Larsson Jumping Juniors, J Ingall *Ballet (Advanced), H Schmidt
Sunday	*Contemporary Advanced – various teachers Sunday Workshops – various teachers

A group of keen Contact Improvisation students requested the studio for a regular “Jam” on Saturday afternoons, and this received Board approval, with Thor Diesendorf as the group co-ordinator and spokesperson. This was perceived to be an excellent alternative to the regular CI classes we were unable to provide this year.

For Dance Week, CDT again offered a “bring a friend for free” class deal for CDT, Ausdance and QL2 members, and half price dance classes to the general public, in order to promote the industry and our profile.

b. CLASSES FOR VARIOUSLY ABLED DANCERS - CDTeens

Enormous thanks to Jane Ingall for putting together a successful funding application to the ACT Government Health Promotions Grant Program. This enabled us to establish a class for teenagers with Special Needs during the year. With this funding, we were able to provide the class at a reduced rate of \$10 for 3 terms, ensuring price was no barrier to participation. The classes were taught initially by Gretel Burgess and Adelina Larsson, and subsequently by Mica Cochrane and Bec Olson. They were promoted, managed and evaluated by Jane Ingall. This was a fabulous first for us and the ACT, and a very exciting development of the wonderful work we have established with the Jumping Juniors class. One of the highlights for the class was the performance at the ACT Down Syndrome Association Ball – choreographed by Bec Olson and Mica Cochrane with the students.

c. CLASS ATTENDANCES

In a total of 18 classes per week, CDT had **5372 attendances** over the year, another increase on the previous year. Class attendances achieved a maximum during each of Term 1 and 2, of over 1300 attendances per term, and then stayed at over 1000 for the remainder of the year. There was a slightly lower annual average of 7.68 people/class, perhaps due to the larger number of classes held, and the fact we may have been over optimistic in establishing some new ones.

Class numbers in previous years totaled 5264 (2008), 3727 (2007), 3231 (2006), 1790 (2005),

1805 (2004), 1687 (2003), 1024 (2002), and 734 (2001). The 2009 figures indicate a very healthy percentage increase of over 70% in our class enrollments from 2001.



The variety of classes and levels we have programmed, the calibre, reputation and dedication of our teaching staff, and the work of the Board who fully supported the programs' development and patronage, all helped to ensure another very successful program of community dance classes. With a continued and well-planned marketing strategy in 2010, class numbers should hopefully continue to grow, despite the economic recession.

d. CLASS FEES

Class fees remained at the 2007 level, at \$20/\$16 (concession) per class, or a term rate of \$160 (full), or \$140 (concession). Membership rate was reduced to \$5.

e. CLASS ADMINISTRATION

Many thanks must go to all Board Members who have so kindly and generously donated time to complete class administration duties in the evenings. A new Dance Card concept was suggested by Robin Jean, and then designed and printed for the new year. It was kept by the clients, and marked for each attendance. This was a very time efficient way of improving our Dance Card system. Many thanks, Robin.

4. CDT TEACHERS

A very enthusiastic, skilled and diverse team of teachers worked with CDT throughout the year. We were able to offer a number of local and visiting teachers employment opportunities, top rate payment and conditions, and four Term Newsletters.

Our regular teaching staff comprised Gretel Burgess, Mica Cochrane, Danielle Cook, Fran Dumbrell, Jane Ingall, Adelina Larsson, Rita Markwell, Rebecca Olson, Philip Piggin, Franco Rojas, Hayley Schmidt, Lani Smales, Shannon Winsor and Emma Young-Wright.

Throughout the year, we had a number of guest teachers who included Gretel Burgess, Elizabeth Cameron Dalman, David Corbet, Liz Lea, Lailah Masiga, Alison McLean, Padma Menon and Kylie Murray.

5. FINANCES

At the beginning of 2009, our Treasurer, Lis van Papenrecht, resigned for family reasons, and Danielle Chesher offered to take on the responsibility. There had accumulated a significant backlog of data to process, because we had just been through our busiest ever year with unparalleled growth. Income exceeded \$111,000. This reflected an increase of over 100% from the previous year's income, additional to the grant monies received for our 30th birthday performance. Unfortunately, Danielle was also unable to continue in this role, and we approached Korina Choundary to take on the position of Book Keeper for a regular monthly fee. We were then most fortunate to secure Thor Diesendorf as CDT Treasurer, and he has implemented a variety of business practices which have significantly improved the financial records and operational procedures of the organisation. We now have a very clear and detailed indication of how we are performing financially, and this will continue to ensure the security of the organisation, and the implementation of effective and appropriate management practices and policies. Many thanks to Thor for his clear thinking and generous and significant contribution.

6. MARKETING

Sincere thanks must go to Hannah Ley who has worked so enthusiastically and thoroughly throughout the year promoting our many and various events, enabling CDT to continue increasing

its profile throughout the many ACT media formats. Thank you, Hannah.

7. WEBSITE/DESIGN

Paula Nesci has taken on the job of maintaining the CDT website in 2009. She has contributed numerous hours to the task, with incredible attention to detail and quality. This facility is a major component of our communications and advertising strategies, and is an essential part of our increasingly successful and quality business practice. Statistics for the CDT website show a staggering increase in usage from 2008 to 2009 of over 500%. This has come about through ensuring the website was always kept accurate, up-to-date and current, and also the effort in communicating to members through email and Facebook. Thank you, Paula – your work has been much appreciated.



8. MEMBERS

We were pleased to report an increase in CDT Memberships to almost 500, with the development of accompanying privileges. These included access to CDT classes; discounts to our special classes, workshops, performances and events; voting rights at our AGM; a newsletter each term; and discounted tickets to various performances at Canberra Theatre Centre and QL2 Centre for Youth Dance.

Many thanks to Elanor Matton-Johnson and Tammy Rosenberg for contributing tirelessly to our Members, up-dating the Members' data-base, providing Members' Newsletters each term, and facilitating a series of very successful Members' Social/Performance Evenings, with plenty of good refreshments.

9. CDT MANUAL AND ARCHIVES

The CDT archives continue to be developed, and copies of all our important documents, posters and programs have been delivered to update our collection at the ACT Heritage Library at Woden, and the Ausdance National Resources in Braddon. We are in dialogue with Diana Sandeman about her taking on this responsibility next year as our volunteer Archive Manager.

10. CDT RESOURCES

Thanks to Jane Ingall who has continued to spend time researching, purchasing and cataloguing additional resources and costumes from our CDTeens Grant, and carrying out cleaning and repairs as required. We now possess a very extensive and quality range of dance resources.

11. STUDIO

The studio continues to be busy, as the high quality nature and reasonable cost of our purpose-built environment is increasingly recognised. Particular thanks must go to:

- a. Rachael Hilton, our highly efficient and organised Studio Bookings Manager
- b. Jane Ingall (Studio and Resources Manager) who has managed the constant on-going challenges and complexities of our space
- c. David Keaney (our fabulous Maintenance Man) who has worked tirelessly to maintain and improve our new space, attach speakers to walls, and build new ballet barres.

12. LIFE MEMBERSHIP

We developed a set of criteria by which to allocate further Life Memberships. These were:

- * Contributions of an exemplary nature
- * Contributions of an extensive nature
- * Contributions of a generous nature
- * Contributions of a lengthy nature

* Contributions of a unique nature

Present Life Members are:

STEPHANIE BURRIDGE (2003), CDT AD from 1978 – 2000

RUSSELL CUNNINGHAM (2003), Exemplary and long serving Board Member and Performer

KAY JOHNSTON (2003), Exemplary and long serving Board Member, and Costume Designer and Maker

BREN WEATHERSTONE (2004), Exemplary and long serving Board Member and Costume/Props Designer/Maker

PRISCILLA RUFFELL (2005), Exemplary donations of dance resources

On this basis, it was agreed that Life Memberships would be awarded to **MEG MILLBAND**, for her exemplary contribution to CDT for the term of her Artistic Directorship, and to **DAVID KEANEY**, for his exemplary contribution as CDT handyman par excellence.

13. COMPANY ADMINISTRATION

Several new policies and procedures were clarified for a number of aspects of our business, including:

- a. Child Protection Policy
- b. Life Membership Policy
- c. Emergency Evacuation Plan and Policy
- d. Yearly Calendar of activities and deadline dates

Thanks to all the Board members for their various contributions to the development and refining of these important documents.

14. VOLUNTEERS

Throughout the year, CDT was most fortunate to have support and assistance from a number of volunteers in a many areas of the company's work. Our sincere thanks go to all those – particularly the CDT Board - who have volunteered their time so generously and enthusiastically. Particular thanks must be given to David Keaney for his generosity and expertise in studio fittings, maintenance and repairs. Additional voluntary work was offered by Tammy Rosenberg, who contributed to the updating and maintenance of the members data base and communications.

15. BOARD

During 2009, some nine Board Meetings were held and, during this time, some changes occurred in Board Membership. During the year we bade farewell to Danielle Chesher (Treasurer/Business Manager), Robin Jean (Secretary), Merle Ketley (Web/Design Manager) and Julie Rickwood (Members Manager). All Board members brought a wealth and diversity of skills and knowledge to the organisation during the time of their Board Membership, and CDT is much the better for this. We thank you most sincerely.

New board members for 2009 were Susan Cochrane (Secretary) and Thor Diesendorf (Treasurer).





IN CONCLUSION

CDT has again been well-supported with a diverse performance program and our year long program of quality classes that continued to grow in number and attendance. Significantly, this class program provides our major revenue source, a means of providing quality art programs to the region, and importantly the opportunity to pay a small but regular wage to the teachers and staff. As the longest serving dance organisation in the ACT, it is paramount that we are able to uphold the best of work-place practices within our often resource challenged world.

Given the enormous amount of volunteer time put into the running of the organisation, especially with the limited time and resources we have, CDT has continued to operate at an amazing level of activity. My sincere thanks to the Board of 2009, who have contributed tirelessly to the running and ongoing development of CDT in another hectic year. To Brooke Thomas, our departing Chair, we wish you well in your new endeavours, and thank you most sincerely for your incredible commitment and contribution to the organisation, and your generous support at all times.

With another dedicated, energetic, supportive and skilled Board and staff, I remain most confident that our future will continue growing, strongly and assuredly, despite the economic challenges of the time. In 2010, CDT takes a new journey as I move onto a full-time position at Belconnen Arts Centre. My warmest congratulations to Liz Lea, the new AD, and to Melinda Spink, the new Company Manager, who will be driving CDT into its next exciting chapter. I know the company is in very good hands.

I am delighted to be able to stay on the CDT Board, and so continue to support and contribute to this organisation that continues to play a very significant role in the ACT cultural landscape. My deepest thanks to all that have supported, helped and educated me in the running of this very special organisation.

Philip Pigg

Company Manager

Treasurer's report



I took on the position of Treasurer with CDT in August 2009. In the last few months of the year, with a great deal of assistance from the Chairperson, the Board and the Company Manager, we managed to make a number of significant improvements to our financial systems:

- we closed our two bank accounts and opened a new single account with Bendigo Bank Community Sector Banking. This account has reduced fees compared to our previous accounts, and has been set up with dual authorisation required for all disbursements including internet banking
- all payment invoices are now authorised by two Board members, as recommended by our auditor, Colin Doery
- we formalised our reimbursement system for expenses – another recommendation from Colin
- a single float and reconciliation system has been set up for class payments, as recommended by Colin
- KTL Solutions was started as bookkeeper, and all our financial information for 2009 was entered into a new single system using MYOB. Previously, our financial records were held in various Excel spreadsheets.

Unfortunately, over 2009, CDT made a substantial loss, as detailed in our audited financial reports. The Board has spent some time examining the causes for this loss. CDT income tends to drop off suddenly from August to December, which means that any losses do not become evident until late in the year. However, we believe that a decision in 2008 to decrease membership costs to a nominal amount and at the same time increase teacher's pay by 10% was a substantial cause of the loss. This loss was effectively exacerbated by our increase in turnover, as the wages bill grew with the increase in the number of classes CDT was running.

The increase in turnover has also meant that some of the tasks required to operate CDT have grown beyond the time available to volunteer board members. This has also increased costs as paid staff are required to take on more of the duties.

In the light of the loss, a decision was made by the Board to increase membership costs and some of the class fees starting in January 2010. CDT still has substantial cash reserves, and we will be monitoring the financial system closely in future months. We are confident that the financial situation will improve in 2010.

Thor Diesendorf

Treasurer

Members' Services Manager's report

In 2009, Canberra Dance Theatre had 284 paid members. Four members' newsletters were produced and sent out by email, and three Members Performance Evenings occurred. The offering of group bookings at discounted rates was trialled, but unfortunately was not taken up in the numbers for which we hoped. Halfway through the year, the role of Members Manager was transferred from Julie Rickwood to Elanor Matton-Johnson.



Elanor Matton-Johnson

Members' Services Manager



Studio and Resources Manager's report



In 2009, significant improvements were made in the Studio as a performance space:

- The four air conditioners and two windows on the wall behind the dancers during performance (Barry Drive side) are now able to be obscured with fabric drapes during performance events, thus greatly enhancing the 'set' and the atmosphere in the Studio. I have created four cream bemsilk, ceiling to floor fabric drops and a sewn pocket has been made in the four existing coloured bemsilk lengths for ease of use.
- David Keaney has added removable 'mini curtain rods' for each fabric length so they can be hung and removed easily after events. He has mounted sound speakers and created stands for stage lights and continues to develop these for CDT.
- This new lighting and the fabrics created a splendid atmosphere for the performance "Studio on Saturday" during Dance Week.

Our previous CDT cleaner left the position at the end of 2008 and a new cleaner was engaged. Melissa Lawler started at the beginning of 2009 and her weekly work has continued to meet CDT's needs over 2009.

Liaison has been established with the new Food Co-op Co-ordinator for provision of cleaning and bathroom supplies.

CDT Maintenance Worker David Keaney has continued to provide great assistance with the ongoing repair of aspects of the "temporary" structure, as well as adding to the use of the facilities in various ways with numerous small projects.

CDT Dance Resource Library

The CDT Dance Resource Library has been considerably added to over 2009 and used by several teachers and some members. I have been able to purchase nearly \$1000 of new dance resources for the Dance Resource Library using the ACT Government Health Promotion Grant received by CDT for the class for students with special needs. These items have been catalogued and are available for loan by CDT members and teachers.

Costume and Props Collection

A costume set from the collection was used by the CDT Performance Class at the "Studio on Saturday" Dance Week event at CDT. Other costumes have been used for displays at community events. The collection list has been updated as new items are added.

Jane Ingall

Studio and Resources Manager

Marketing Manager's report

Marketing activity in 2009 was busy and varied, exploiting both traditional avenues for publicity, and increasingly embracing low cost opportunities offered by emerging technologies.



CDT provided a constant flow of information to the *Ausdance Newsletter*, *Dance Informa*, *Dance Life*, *Canberra Times' Fridge Door & Events*, the Arts Editor of the *City News* and *Daily Capital*. In addition, CDT had a presence at key local events such as the National Multicultural Festival Contact Day, constantly updated local arts and cultural websites, and placed free advertisements in publications such as the *Canberra Times Fridge Door*.

By these means, CDT maintained a constant presence in the dance, arts and culture network within the ACT, despite engaging in no major marketing projects during the reporting period.

E-cards to publicise struggling classes and workshops or any special offers to CDT members did not continue in 2009.

Facebook Events were more usually relied upon, with the addition of signage around the studio. With the support of Paula Nesci, the CDT website contained far better, more frequently updated content, ensuring that it became the central point for information that it should be.

Moving forward

Key upcoming challenges include:

- sourcing a new Marketing Manager with greater ability to devote time to CDT Marketing activities
- continuing to update and source new and free sites on which to advertise
- increase the use of websites to enhance CDT's likelihood of being included in search engine results
- increase membership of the Facebook site to communicate news about offers and events

Hannah Ley

Marketing Manager

Studio Bookings Manager's report



2009 saw an increase in studio hire in both the casual and permanent hire categories and brought in an estimated total of \$8,469.75 in income (see Treasurer's report for final figures).

A number of hire payments remain outstanding and continue to be followed up in early 2010.

The centralisation of hire payments resulted in a change to the invoice, requesting payment by cheque posted to the CDT PO Box attention to the Treasurer, or by direct deposit into the CDT bank account. Some hire payments were made by cheque during office hours to the class administrator.

The issuing of studio keys to private hirers, CDT Board members and teachers was also centralised. The keys are now available through the class administrator during class times. The bookings manager holds the master studio key and continues to monitor the number of keys available, ensuring additional keys are cut and are available as required. The bookings manager is also responsible for following up on key returns by teachers or Board members who are no longer affiliated with CDT.

The *duties and process and procedures document* for the studio bookings manager were updated to reflect the changes.

The invoice and hire agreement were combined into a single document to ensure consistency between documents and cut down on administration time.

The studio bookings manager assisted with rostering cleaning times and studio maintenance when necessary throughout the year.

A process was introduced where the Treasurer worked with the studio bookings manager to ensure hire payments were successfully tracked against invoices.

Studio Hire rates during 2009 were:

- \$10.00 an hour Unfunded artists/projects, working towards a performance OR individual coaching/rehearsal.
- \$20.00 an hour Small group workshop/lessons.
- \$30.00 an hour Income generating activity OR large group workshop for six or more people.

Hirers with six or more consecutive hires are entitled to a 10% discount on their hire fee.

A refundable key deposit of \$10 was required for all private hirers.

Rachael Hilton

Studio Bookings Manager

Financial Statements
to be provided separately.

