



I am really interested in using a child-centred approach to dance, particularly to make performance work which can be interactive for the audience and challenge the boundaries of professional performance. I am interested in the differences in the impact on young children when



they are able to engage with a performance both physically and through watching.

Inspiring practice no. 3: Wriggle Dance Theatre

Wriggle Dance Theatre, the company I set up with my Co-Director, Lucy Knight, has just completed a series of workshops in Children's Centres in Northamptonshire, where we devised and delivered a workshop with elements of both performance and participation to pre-school children with their parents/carers. The workshop is delivered by two dancers and a musician. It follows a story about the moon disappearing and we take the participants on a journey to find the moon.

In rural Warwickshire, we're running a project called *Families Connect 4 Movement*, focusing on bringing parents and toddlers together over a ten week period. The aim is to address rural isolation, offer a high quality cross-arts project and bring people together to have a shared experience through dance. We are looking at the theme of belonging and will be creating a dance piece with the participating families which they will perform at the end of the project. We are also making a documentary film of the process, following the journey of the families throughout the project, creating a record and memento of the project as well as informing our research as a company into the impact of dance on family bonds and children's learning. We will be offering training opportunities to volunteers from some of the local parent and toddler groups in order to support the development of their groups and introduce dance into their sessions.



Co-Director, Kath Kimber-McTiffen



I trained as a contemporary dancer and throughout my career have worked mostly as a freelance dance artist. Like many dancers fresh out of college, it didn't take me long to realise that it's very hard to make a living purely as a performer and that I needed to develop other skills in dance. This led me to begin teaching in a variety of settings and I spent many years working with children and young people in diverse settings from lecturing

BA Dance students to leading after-school projects in primary schools. My life changed completely as it does for most people when, nine years ago, I took a career break to have children. Like many dancers I know, once I had a child I was desperate to dance with her and expose her to creativity in general.

My journey with *Wriggle Dance Theatre* began when I met two other dancers with young children and we decided to do some dancing together. We spent some time in the studio with our children, playing and exploring together, facilitated by the wonderful Oxford based dance artist, Cecilia MacFarlane. The result was *Wriggle Dance Theatre* and our first interactive performance piece for 3 to 6 year olds, *Once in a Blue Moon*.

Kath Kimber-McTiffen was interviewed for ACA by Vicky Ireland