



THE HEAD WRAP DIARIES



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ABOUT THE COMPANY

Uchenna Dance (London, UK)

Uchenna Dance was formed in 2009 under the vision and leadership of Vicki Igbokwe. Igbokwe leads the company with support from Producer Grace Okereke, Assistant Producer Viv Rocha and PR Carol Ann Walters.

Since its inception in 2009, Uchenna Dance has grown from an informal explorative company to a tour de force within the dance sector.

The company's overarching aim is to empower, entertain and educate through dance in a diverse programme that includes the creation of dance theatre production experiences, coaching, dance based empowerment workshops and teaching in further and higher education.

Uchenna Dance is passionate about creating production experiences that:

- *Enable audiences to see themselves 'on stage' and have their stories told.*
- *Build the confidence of audiences enabling them to believe in their potential.*
- *Nurture conversations amongst audiences from diverse backgrounds, building community cohesion.*
- *Welcome non-dance audiences/first-timers to the theatre.*

The company's professional repertoire includes:

- **The Head Wrap Diaries** – *Mixing dance, theatre and storytelling with a good sense of humour in a fusion of House, Waacking, Vogue, African and contemporary dance.*
- **Our Mighty Groove** – *An immersive-interactive dance theatre production that transports you to a New York underground House Club.*
- **Life After** – *A personal perspective of how music can be used as a tool to ease the pain and suffering felt after the passing of a loved one.*
- **What Is Woman?** – *A piece that reflects and projects the notion of femininity and how it is embodied within a multicultural society.*
- **Moving Solo** – *An exploration of the body and its dynamic qualities whilst in motion.*



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ABOUT VICKI IGBOKWE



Vicki Igbokwe is Creative Director, Choreographer and Founder of Uchenna Dance, a Dance Company, based in London, UK.

Vicki's work focuses on empowerment, entertainment and education through the creation of dance theatre productions, coaching, dance based empowerment workshops, public speaking, and teaching in further and higher education. She has a BA (HONS) in Dance Studies from Middlesex University and an MA in Cultural Leadership from City University.

Her career highlights include a five-year sponsorship deal with Nike, work as a Mass Movement Choreographer for the London 2012, Sochi 2014 and Glasgow 2014 Olympic, Paralympic & Commonwealth Games and The Baku 2017 Islamic Solidarity Games. Vicki is also a trustee for One Dance UK, the UK body for dance.



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ABOUT THE HEAD WRAP DIARIES

Hair – worn long, worn short, worn wavy or in braids – is the subject of ***The Head Wrap Diaries***, a funny and uplifting dance theatre work by London based company Uchenna Dance. It's an interactive show set in a hair salon about people, and their ongoing relationship with hair. Mixing dance, theatre and storytelling with a good dose of humour, the performance venue is transformed into a Be-U-Tiful hair salon, with wig stands and chairs set around a performing space. Audience members are welcomed by stylists Linda and Riyah who will take you on a hair journey that will have you laughing out loud, thinking about your own (and everyone else's!) hair while you learn a thing or two about afro-hair, straight from the hairdresser's chair. This exciting dance theatre experience features a fabulously produced score by Ghanaian musician Kweku Aacht who provides a sizzling soundtrack of sounds from Afro house, folk and electronic dance music to jazz and Ghana gospel.

Why

Starting off as a title back in 2014, shortly after Vicki Igbokwe began her natural hair journey, *The Head Wrap Diaries* explores "women, beauty, hair and culture", told through the stories of three very different black women but the issues and messages are universal. Vicki created the production to empower all women to embrace and own their beauty; irrespective of how they choose to wear their hair. The inspiration came from the growing desire for natural hair and head wraps. The head wrap can cover up a bad hair day or it can complement the outfit you are wearing. At a past sharing – a showcase night – a man said: 'I'm white, I'm a man, I'm bald but I get it. I absolutely love it!'

What is a head wrap?

A head wrap is a cloth that is used to cover, wrap or tie around your head. It can be a scarf that you would tie around your neck, material handed down in your family, a bed sheet (cut to size), a sacred cloth or a fabric leftover. Men, women and children can, and do, wear head wraps. Anyone with hair, (no matter its texture), and those without hair, can wear one. They are a universal accessory worn by many, for many different reasons.



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Wrap around participatory experiences

We offer a range of participatory experiences to accompany and support the production, from 1.5hr workshops to a three or five-day residency. We can adapt our style and content to meet the needs of the learners and organisation, working in partnership to create a bespoke package.

Dance and Movement Workshops

Our workshop programme is adaptable to participants of all ages and dance ability, starting at 5 years. Workshops can include (but not limited to):

- Learning sections from the show
- Learning specific dance techniques
- Delivering a fun and empowering dance class
- Using the show as a stimulus to create individual or group work
- Developing a response to the themes within *The Head Wrap Diaries*
- Exploring the cultural origins of the Uchenna signatory blend of dance styles

Empowerment Sessions

Empowerment sessions celebrate African and Caribbean, heritage and customs, whilst celebrating other cultures and embracing the importance of head wraps to women, including illness, religion, fashion, protective styling and the loss of hair. We engage in a universal discussion (with the head wrap at the core) as hair and beauty affects women of all ages, races, hair types and religious backgrounds. These sessions are delivered through conversation and head wrapping (movement is optional!)

Aims for the sessions

- Encourage community cohesion
- Counteract the trend of young girls and women developing self-esteem
- Allow women to celebrate role models and who they are, to see themselves positively and feel uplifted

Residencies and Curtain Raisers

During a 3-5 day residency, participants can create their own performance piece. Building on the workshop offer, participants can create a piece to perform as a curtain raiser to open *The Head Wrap Diaries* at your venue.



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Who are the workshops for?

We can tailor workshops to your group, which may include:

- Primary and Secondary schools
- Dance Students and Recent Graduates
- Professional Dancers
- Community and Intergenerational Groups
- Hair Salons and Churches
- Hair and beauty students

COST

Workshop fees

Half day: £250

Full day: £350

3-5 day residencies: £800 - £1,500

Travel and accommodation to also be provided by the venue / promoter. Fees are based on one facilitator leading the workshop. Depending on the content and group size, an additional facilitator may be required.

We may be able to offer some subsidy and/or reduced rates to venues that are part of the Rural Touring Dance Initiative.

TO BOOK

For further information and to discuss your ideas, please contact the Producer via email: info@uchennadance.com



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TESTIMONIALS

"Vicki took the time to get to know us and didn't force us to do anything we didn't want to do... she believed in us every step of the way, even when we didn't believe in ourselves. I can't believe that I got on a stage in front of people and performed. I am going to seriously miss Vicki and Jo, please come back!"

Quay School Student (Poole)

"Vicki was really able to tune into the energy of the group, quickly understanding their fears and how this manifested itself in their behaviour. Despite a challenging group, Vicki demonstrated consistent energy and enthusiasm, not knowingly phased in redesigning the project so that it enabled the group to feel comfortable and relaxed about taking part."

"Vicki's approach was particularly commendable, she balanced a firm but friendly persona, providing the necessary boundaries for students which I believe was a vital element to the week. In instilling confidence in them, and creating a safe space, the young people were able to explore their own creativity."

Sophie Douglas, Youth and Education Coordinator, Pavilion Dance South West

"I have been a teacher for twenty years and have not met a character like Vicki; she is bold, encouraging, easy to relate to, and a great role model for young people. She had the task of creating an arts event with some of our most challenging students who have been chronically disengaged and tough to work with. Remarkably, Vicki found a way to connect with each individual student, making a great assessment of what would enable each one to have a productive week. The impact on the students was incredible. One girl had only been managing to attend school for an hour a day and with Vicki she was engaged for 6 hours daily. Two boys who declared at the beginning of the week that there was 'no way' they would go on stage, stepped out under the lights and communicated with the audience. Each and every student moved well out of their comfort zone and described how they had achieved far more than they thought they could. Their recorded commentaries interspersed the Friday night event. All of this done in a week!"

Barbara Brann, Head of Department Quay School



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MARKETING

Images

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/snxjhb5dhusv3by/AACvBYu4cCG3d2NHRksl_Mmpa?dl=0

Photo Credit: Camilla Greenwell



Video

Short Documentary <http://bit.ly/1XeITLU> / **Promo Film** <http://bit.ly/1UYZblU>

Social Media

Twitter <https://twitter.com/uchennadanceco>

Facebook <https://m.facebook.com/UchennaDance/>

Instagram https://www.instagram.com/uchenna_dance/

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/UchennaDance>

Social Media Assets

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/avvkttlk4fdnoao/AABLvDgBC0H2YmBubun9CSa5a?dl=0>

Hashtags

#uchennadance

#theheadwrapdiaries

Website

www.uchennadance.com



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GLOSSARY

African Dance (*Inspired by the richness of the many tribes in this beautiful continent with a particular connection to West Africa*).

Contemporary Dance (*Graham, Dunham and 'of the moment' influenced*).

House Dance (*a style that was born through House Music, which began in Chicago in the early 1970's, the House Music and Dance scene later moved to New York where it continued to develop*).

Vogue (*a dance style that began in New York, East Coast of the USA, in the early 70s. Created by the Black and Hispanic gay communities*).

Waacking (*a dance style that began in Los Angeles, West Coast of the USA, in the late 60's. Created by the Black and Hispanic gay communities*).



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Credits and Creative Team

Credits

Supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England and partnerships with The Rural Touring Dance Initiative, The Place, Ged Matthews, Central St Martins, The Albany, Bernie Grant Arts Centre and Trinity Laban.

Creative Team

Director, Choreographer and Co-Writer

Producer

Writer

Assistant Choreographer & Rehearsal Director

Performers & Creative Collaborators

Production Manager & Lighting Design

Assistant Producer

Music Director & Composer

Scenography

Costume Director and Maker

Dramaturgy

Film

Art Direction

Photography

PR & Marketing

Design Team Central St Martins

Installation Contributors

Vicki Igbokwe

Grace Okereke

Bola Agbaje

Ingrid MacKinnon

Shanelle Clemenson

Sheila Attah

Natalie Bailey

Emmanuella Idris

Pete Ayres

Viviana Rocha

Kweku Aacht

Original scenography design
by Rajha Shakiry

Jodie-Simone Howe

Funmi Adewole

Anton Califano

TM Studios

Foteini Christofilopoulou

Tony Hay

Carol Ann Walters

Fie Neo

Daniel Hall

Victoria Adebayo

Curlture UK

Looks Like Me

Lesley Asare

Mikela Henry-Lowe



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CONTACT

- Vicki Igbokwe, Creative Director, vicki@uchennadance.com, 07957 212 996
- Viviana Rocha, Assistant Producer, info@uchennadance.com, 07772 758 161
- Carol Ann Walters, PR & Marketing, carol@cawpr.co.uk, 07780 703 600

For bookings please contact Vicki Igbokwe on 07957 212 996 or email Vicki at vicki@uchennadance.com or visit www.uchennadance.com

For workshops, general enquiries and all other proposals please email info@uchennadance.com

For venue related enquiries, including venue layout, tickets, print, accommodation and travel, please contact Viviana Rocha on 07772 758 161 or email Viviana at info@uchennadance.com

For PR & Marketing enquiries please contact Carol Ann Walters on 020 8289 0460 or 07780 703 600 or email Carol Ann at carol@cawpr.co.uk



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