

Modern Theatre Dance



Modern Theatre Dance defies a single permanent definition. This is largely due to its ability to adapt, develop and evolve with the changing fashion in dance. Through a carefully planned and well-tried examination syllabus, which combines modern dance, jazz and other dance styles, young people are trained to become disciplined and versatile dancers who have a professional attitude towards dance.

Zelia Raye was a dynamic pioneer of dance in the 1920s. Her article *Limbering and Stretching*, which appeared in the *Dancing Times* (1927) and her book *Rational Limbering*, offered a revolutionary approach to dancing. As a result of Raye's ideas the *ISTD* established the *Stage Branch* (later to become the *Modern Theatre Faculty*) in 1932 and invited Zelia Raye to create the first syllabus. A series of examinations has been created from children's grades through to professional teaching qualifications.

The children's work is based on natural movements: walking, running, jumping and skipping. It is designed to encourage an imaginative and rapid response from beginners. The *Jazz Awards* provide a basic grounding in modern jazz, and are ideal for the late beginner or as a recreational course of movement. Boys' work has been developed to meet increasing demand for a modern dance training for boys.

