

Moving Voices - Moving On!

By Melanie Steer

On the Saturday 26 March 2011 the Lighthouse building in Brighton was definitely the place to be. South East Dance volunteers from all over the region came together, along with friends and family, to celebrate the success of moving Voices, a three year project, planned and delivered by the volunteers and exceeded all expectations.

It was inspiring to see so many of the young volunteers who had contributed over the three years talk about their experiences and explain what a huge impact moving Voices has had on them. As well as focusing on choreography and performance, moving Voices has raised the curtain on many different opportunities within the dance environment that are sometimes overlooked, such as event planning and marketing, web design and budgeting. Volunteers from Oxford, Surrey, Brighton and Hove touched on their experiences with the excellent use of power point presentations, which were also put together by members of moving Voices. They explained how dance can touch so many people in so many different ways, improving communication skills, gaining great work experience, working as part of a team and sharing experience with people of the same interests were among the many skills gained.

During the next part of the evening Flavi and Jasmin, two Moving Voices volunteers got everyone up on their feet with demonstrations and workshops in Meringue and African dance. Next we saw two very talented dancers from Canterbury High School who performed a beautiful duet to an Adele track, a fantastic contemporary group *The Physical Allsorts*, who described how moving Voices had enabled them to spread their contemporary style of dance to a much wider audience. There was also an ingenious hypnotic performance by the *Brighton & Hove Youth Dance Company*. The performances and workshops were without a doubt one of the highlights of the evening and were very well attended. All of the dancers performed professionally and with such passion, even though they presented only small snippets of their repertoire, it was enough to send everyone away inspired and motivated to get on and dance.

Of course, we cannot talk about the evening without giving recognition to the people behind the scenes. A huge thank you to everyone at South East Dance especially Catherine Gill who made this event happen. Also the event management team, a collection of twelve volunteers who worked together so attentively to put on such a fantastic evening of celebration. The event greatly exceeded its expectations and after the three years, I have every hope that moving Voices will be 'moving on' to attract a larger community of people to widen the audience to dance in all areas of the South East.