



# Dollie Henry MBE

**Jazz Theatre Artist | Choreographer | Creative Director | Educator | Author**

Dollie has led a respected career of 45 years, as a performer, choreographer, director, creative artist and educator and is recognised as one of the most formidable exponents of artistic and creative jazz theatre dance in the UK with a global reputation. She has shared her passion and philosophy of creative dance in every continent of the world, with a reputation that is widely revered and respected.

Dollie started dancing at the age of four and went on to professionally train at **Laine Theatre Arts (UK)** (1979–81) receiving her teaching qualifications with *ISTD for Ballet, Modern and Tap and National dance*, her *LAMDA Drama Certificates* (Bronze-Gold Medals) and was awarded 'Most Outstanding Student' in performance and choreography. At 17, she was invited to join **The Olivier Briac Dance Company** based in France as soloist dancer, later becoming resident choreographer/assistant director for the Briac Company. Returning to England at 19, Dollie was invited by director & choreographer *Dougie Squires* to join his company **The Second Generation** for TV work in the UK and Europe, numerous dance/musical productions, leading imminently to her position as Assistant to Mr. Squires over a further 3 years.

## As a Performer & Choreographer credits include:

**West End Musicals:** *Sophisticated Ladies* - Geilgud Theatre • *King the Musical* - Piccadilly Theatre • *Stop the World I want to get off* starring Antony Newley - Lyric Theatre • *Angels from America* - Shaftesbury Theatre • *Tribute To Sammy Davis Jr* - Theatre Royal, Drury Lane • *The Russ Abbot Madhouse Show* - The Palladium and numerous West End Charity performances.

**Provincial Repertory Theatre:** includes musicals: *Helene in Sweet Charity* (UK Tour) • *Hold Tight it's 60's Night* (UK Tour) • *The Crucible* playing the role of Tituba (Royal Theatre - Northampton) and numerous pantomimes nationwide.

**Films & TV includes:** Featured Dancer in the feature Film *WICKED* with Ariana Grande - Director Jon M. Chu – Universal Pictures 2023 • Supporting cast and dancer in the Feature film - *Grandma*, in the Netflix Film *Jingle Jangles* 2020 • Supporting cast and featured dancer of the film - *Finding Your Feet* - 2018 • Jo in the David Putnam film *Knights & Emeralds* (Enigma Films) 1987 • The Girl in '*Memories in Mind*', (BBC Documentary) • *The Tales of Anansi* (Carlton TV). Dollie has worked and performed on many dance productions and TV shows such as *The Russ Abbott Madhouse* (BBC) • *The Leo Sayer Show* (BBC) • *The Royal Variety/Command Performances* • *The BAFTA Awards* (BBC) and dance Videos and light entertainment TV shows, both nationally and internationally.

**As a Choreographer & Director projects include:** *Sweet Lorraine* - Old Fire Station Theatre, Oxford • *Ain't Misbehavin* - The Verin English Theatre, Frankfurt Germany • *The Sun City Extravaganza, "Come to the Sun"* Sun City, South Africa • The musical *Ragged Child & Aladdin* - Theatre Royal, Northampton • *Salsa Celestina* - Palace Theatre, Watford • The musical *Big Nose* and pantomimes *Cinderella & Snow White* - Belgrade Theatre, Coventry • *Up Against The Wall* - Tricycle Theatre, London • The soul musical *Blues Brother, Soul Sister* - The Bristol Old Vic, Bristol • *Tribute To Sammy Davis Jr*. Theatre Royal, Drury Lane • *The Russ Abbot Madhouse Show* - The Palladium & National Tour • *Sophisticated Ladies* – Lyric Theatre (now Guilgud), London. • *Godspell* (Tour) • *Oh What A Lovely War*, Cochrane Theatre, London • *Oliver* – The Play for Giant Olive Productions • *King the Musical Concert* - Hackney Empire Theatre.

**Other Creative Theatre and Dance works include:** *The Wiz, Wizard of Oz, Annie, Chorus Line, Blues in the Night, and Little Shop of Horrors*. Dollie also choreographed & directed the European Tour of '*Fire of Dance*' for Ulrich Schiller of Gastpiel - Und Theatre Productions Germany, the 70's Musical Extravaganza *Abbadabado* at Blackpool Royal Opera House and the Diamond Jubilee Show at the North Pier Theatre, Blackpool starring Alvin Stardust & the BOP Dancers and original choreographer & co-director for the hit musical *Inner City Jam* - Cockpit Theatre, London

Dollie was mentored in USA, by black jazz choreographers and theatre directors including, **George Faison** (Mentor), **Louis Johnson** (Mentor), **Charles Augins** (American School of Performing Arts) **Frank Hatchett** (Broadway Dance). Working with renowned choreographers and directors - **George Faison, Dianne McIntyre, Woody King Jr**, and performing opposite film actress **Lynn Whitfield** in the NYC theatre production *Zoraesque*, Produced/Directed by

George Faison (Tony Award Winner of the Broadway production 'The Wiz) performing at his Faison Firehouse Theatre in New York.

In her role as Co-Artistic Director & Choreographer/Educator, Dance Companies include: **The Bill Louthier Company (UK)**, **Jazzxchange Dance Company (UK)** and **Malmo Dans City (Sweden)**. **EBB Company (France & Madrid)**

Dollie has directed & choreographed over 15 National pantomimes for Paul Elliott of **E&B Productions Ltd**, (latterly **Qdos Productions**). She has choreographed/staged Opera and Ballet productions including, **Cry of Innocence** and **Carmen**, **'I Got Rhythm'** with **Northern Ballet Theatre** - National UK Tour. The Jazz Ballet **'Voyages'** with Artistic Director Stephen Jefferies (**Hong Kong Ballet & Suzhou Ballet Companies China**). With Director, Writer/Lyricist **Ray Shell**, and Music producer & composer **Paul Jenkins**, Dollie co-produced and choreographed the original RnB musical **White Folks - A Musical Fable**, with successful productions at **Nottingham Playhouse**, **The Cochrane Theatre**, **The Tricycle Theatre** and the off-West End, **Pleasance Theatre (UK)**. Other projects include producer and director for Ray Shell and his one man show **Back 2 Black** at **The Pheasantry**, **Crazy Coqs**, London and **Cornelias Street Café**, New York.

In 1996, Dollie put her artistic and creative passion into evidence and founded her Jazz Theatre Company **Body of People aka BOP Jazz Theatre**. In partnership with Composer husband and Jazz musician **Paul Jenkins**, the company, now in it's 27<sup>th</sup> year, have created and produced an array of productions and dance concerts performed both in the UK and internationally. A selection of BOP productions and theatre works include: **I, You, We ... Rise**, **Daughters of Eve**, **Touches of Miles**, **Sacred Space**, **Trumpet Trilogy**, **Dizzy Heights**, **Duke's Place**, **A Journey of Jazz**, **Up Close and Personal**. **Miles Ahead** - A double-bill program featuring new company works with **Footprints in Jazz** and their inaugural Jazz theatre production **Touches of Miles**, was presented at the off West End, Cochrane Theatre and subsequent UK tour supported by the Arts Council of England. The company's more recent production **Spirit of Jazz** was filmed for streamed online performances at the **Curve Theatre Leicester** as part of the the **LDIF nternational Dance Festival** (May 2021). Through the company's international recognition, Dollies' creative and commissioned works have been performed at dance and theatre venues worldwide. In 2012 BOP became artistic **Company-in-Residence at Morley College**, London.

**As part of her ongoing Educational Philosophy**, Dollie has initiated **The BOP Jazz Dance Education Programs 'Jazz Dance for Life'** in the UK, Europe and The Caribbean and over the last 35 years has presented her ever popular Jazz Dance Residencies, workshops, mentoring programs and masterclasses at dance venues throughout the UK and every corner of the world. Dollie has achieved creative commissions from the **State of Lithuania (The Baltic States)**, as the first international jazz artist to be invited by the State to present lectures/workshop and devise a jazz program and performance projects for the **Klaipeda Music Theatre**, alongside Jazz commissions with the **Austrian Youth Ballet** - (Graz Austria), **Rytmix Dance - Konin**, and **Kielce Dance Theatre Company** – (Poland), **Malmo Dance City** (Sweden). **Jazz Arts International Festival 2018** at **Wellington College** - Shanghai, China. Recent BOP international dance projects, include collaborations and commission with **EBB Contemporay Dance Company** (Madrid), **Associacoa Nos da Danca** (Portugal.)

Ms Henry is Jazz Practitioner and choreographer at **Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance** and **Mountview** and **Performance Preparation Academy (PPA Guidlford)** and continues to be in high demand as guest jazz practitioner/mentor at established UK and international dance and performing arts institutions. Dollie is an Associate Teacher of **ISTD (Imperial Society of Teachers Dance)** and Honorary Member with **IDTA (International Dance Teachers Association)**. Head judge and creative associate for the dance organizations, **Dance World Cup - International** and **Dance World Cup – Spain** and a sought after and respected judge worldwide in her capacity as a specialist and advisor in Jazz and Musical Theatre. Dollie is a regular guest Jazz choreographer/teacher at **Broadway Dance Center**, **Dance Space Inc** and **Faison Firehouse Theatre (NY)** and can still be found teaching her spirited open Jazz Mastrclasses globally.

As an experienced dance and theatre practitioner, Ms. Henry is instrumental in mentoring the careers of many dancers now performing in established dance companies, musical theatre, and concert dance shows all over the world and continues to mentor the next generation of jazz dancers and professional performers, through the educational and creative outreach of BOP Company and within performing arts organisations.

Dollie is a recognised advocate and voice for Black Dance Arts and jazz theatre dance, working to improve equality, diversity and inclusivity in UK dance curriculum delivery and is a progressive changemaker for equality within the performing arts sectors. Dollie is a Dance advisor for the **AOLE Welsh Educational Board** proposing for their new GCSE Dance program and the **ISTD**, both devising and advising the curriculum changes and implementation. Alongside, Dollie is Artistic Guardian and Diversity Advisor for the **CGO Institute**, working with the next generation of International Theatre Producers. Creative consultant with **Tired Movement (UK)** and **Audition Circle**, supporting and mentoring dancers and performers to attain and sustain a professional career in the Arts.

As an advocate for the Arts, Dollie is on the panel of the **The Black British Theatre Awards**, and appointed Patron of **The Hammond School, Cheshire** and **Ignite Dance Theatre Company UK** and **International Dance Teachers Association (IDTA)**.

Ms Henry is the co-author of the dance book **The Essential Guide to Jazz Dance**, published by **Crowood Press** (Oct 2019). This unique book is delivered for Jazz Dance and its inherent partner, jazz music, and offers a practical guide and insight to the history, lineage, practice and creative expression and so much more of jazz dance art form.

**The Essential Guide to Jazz Dance, Dollie Henry & Paul Jenkins** can be purchased direct from Crowood Press .

<https://www.crowood.com/collections/dance/products/the-essential-guide-to-jazz-dance-by-dollie-henry-paul-jenkins>

In January 2022, **BOP Company** launched and continues to lead, the *Member Lead Network Jazz Theatre Arts UK (JTAUK)*, partnering with **One Dance Uk** to advocate, advance and align greater visibility and delivery for our UK Jazz Theatre Arts and Artists and all practices of the form within our British Dance sector.

Aside of all her commitments, in May & June 2023, Dollie produced, devised and delivered through BOP, the inaugural event of **JAZZ ARTS REWIRED**. Presenting an arts program dedicated to support, shape and serve UK Jazz Dance Theatre Arts & Artists. The event brought together professional jazz dance masterclasses, Jazz Seminars, Guest Artist and Creative Panel Jazz Talks and a celebratory performance evening of UK Jazz Dance Theatre and creative artists with 'Up Close & Personal'. The events were all held at The Place, London and solidify a new creative and ongoing partnership between BOP, The Place & One Dance UK.

Dollie has been nominated for the **AWA Dance Charity - Women in Dance Leadership Award 2022** and was a nominee for the **Black British Theatre Awards 2020** for Best UK Performing Arts Teacher.

In June 2022, Dollie was honoured in the *Queens Platinum Jubilee Birthday Honours List*, receiving an **MBE for 'Services to Dance'**. A great recognition and acknowledgment to her 40 plus years of work, dedication, passion as a catalyst for Black Women in the Arts and tireless energy to uphold the art form of Jazz Dance Theatre and Diverse Dance Education.

Dollie Henry epitomizes all it is to be a consummate, all-encompassing creative dance theatre artist and educationalist who continues to work in all aspects of the performing arts industry and crosses between both the artistic and commercial landscapes. A fusion of immense expertise and genuine expression of creative spirit, allows this Lady to sustain her position as the catalyst for the Jazz dance art form and its legacy in the UK & Europe, enabling her to share her passion and creativity not just on her home ground, but all over the world.

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**Facebook:** Dollie Henry | BOP Jazz Theatre Company | Jazz Theatre Arts UK

**Twitter:** @DollieHenry | @BOPJazzUK | @jtauktribe1

**Vimeo Channel:** <https://vimeo.com/bopjazzuk>

**Youtube Channel:** <https://www.youtube.com/c/BOPJAZZTHEATRECOMPANYUK>