

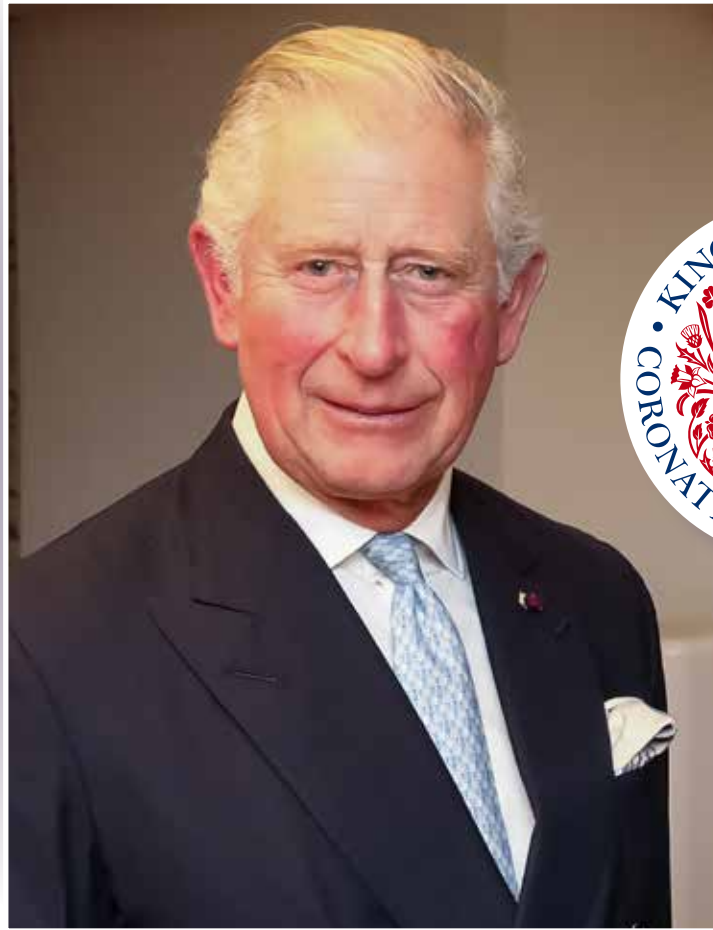
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The Crowning Glory of Dance



King Charles

Below: 4 Virtues from
*La Ballet Comique de la
Reine 1581*

A coronation is a rare occurrence, a very public performance that becomes fixed in the memory. So having a unique celebratory event at your dancing school this spring would be a memorable move. A special display, performance, or occasion to give a school coronation award to pupils should not be too hard to plan. Associating your school or choreography with any civic activities, events or street parties during the coronation festivities can only generate positive publicity for your work.

There are many connections between dancing and royalty of course. Dancing has been an important part of royal life from the Renaissance when classical ballet evolved. It was

from the time when the Florentine Catherine de Medici married Henry II of France in 1547 that an enthusiasm for the arts and dancing developed in the European courts. Examples were on the occasion when one of her sons, Henry of Anjou, became King of Poland in 1573 and the five hours long Ballet Comique de la Reine in October 1581. With the standards of dance becoming higher they were no longer achievable by the nobles as amateurs so professional dancing took hold under royal patronage. In France under Louis XIV and in Russia under the tsars.

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English court dancing developed out of the French and Italian tradition while the general populace enjoyed traditional country dancing and by the sixteenth century dancing performances developed out of court masques. It was Queen Victoria, who loved social and theatrical



dancing, who commissioned the ballroom at Buckingham Palace in the mid nineteenth century. Most of the Royal courts whether Scandinavian or European promoted the education of professional theatrical dancers and dance companies. For example, the Royal Swedish Ballet founded 250 years ago in 1773. Many commonwealth countries have developed ballet companies which have royal support such as the Royal New Zealand Ballet. So too companies with Royal in their title are found across the world such as the Royal Ballet of Cambodia.

Today dance is for all to participate in or view. Right from the mythological muse of dance, Terpsichore, at the courts of the ancient Greek gods social and theatrical dance have roots in royal courts so the occasion of the British and Commonwealth coronation on 6 May 2023 becomes an event we can use to also promote and celebrate dance and dance teachers.

Gavin Roebuck



Above left: State Ballroom Buckingham Palace

Above right: Royal Ballet of Cambodia

Right: St Edward's Crown



Above: Tsar Alexander II of Russia's 1883 coronation gala programme at the Bolshoi in Moscow A Life for the Tsar with choreography by Marius Petipa

Middle right: Le Sieur Ballon Premier Danseur of Louis XIV

Right: Coronation of Edward IV of England. Illustration from The Masque of the Edwards of England, published in 1902.

