

# Spanish Dance Society®

Patrons:

Antonio Najarro . Tamara Rojo . José Antonio Ruiz

## UK & Europe

Organiser: Conchita del Campo, 15 Belsize Road, London NW6 4RX

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## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2020



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# SDS UK & EUROPEAN Executive Committee



L to R Director/Events Organiser: Nuria Garcia, Secretary: Jacqueline Christie, Director and Organiser: Conchita del Campo, Director and Advisor: Cheryl Crossen White, Chair: Isabel Baquero

The Executive Committee sincerely hopes that you are all safe and well and trying to enjoy the family time that this crisis affords us. You are all very much in our thoughts and we look forward to the time when our inspiring dancing classes can resume.

As professional dancers and teachers we all remember performances or exams when having been presented with a crisis, be that minor or major, we have done everything in our power to adapt to the situation ensuring that 'the show went on' thus developing important life skills of perseverance, dedication and resilience among many others. We are very pleased that so many SDS teachers are teaching online classes, which gives everyone a feeling of normality and togetherness. We hope that you are also benefiting from the extra time to reflect and consolidate your teachers' instructions, to hone your skills, improve and strengthen your technique and develop your personal style and enhance your presentation skills to prepare you for your next exam session.

We really value your loyalty and commitment to the SDS and our Founders who created this unique syllabus that has helped so many generations become experts in this field of dancing, embracing the different Classical, Regional and Flamenco styles of Spanish Dance. There is no country in the world with such a diverse range of musical instruments, dance forms including Eastern, Nordic and African influences which converged together through human migration into this final blending of these different cultures, which is to this day continuously evolving and progressing.

We are all awaiting government guidelines as to when we can resume our classes and continue our progress. We tentatively projected to have the next exam sessions towards the end of the autumn term. So we are all keeping our fingers crossed.

In the meantime we wish you all excellent health and the mental positivity to endure this temporary situation.

Best wishes  
SDS UK and European Executive Committee

# President's Report 2020

**BY DAME MARINA KEET DE GRUT**

Dear members all over the world.

Terrible times, but the Spanish Dance Society is functioning as before, especially because we have as our "Organiser" - as she modestly wishes to be called - Conchita del Campo. Already as a child with her family company 'Los del Campo', she presented exactly what we do in the SDS: the true Spanish regional dances, the classical Escuela Bolera, and stylised Spanish dance.

This we have presented for 55 years - 40 years in Europe - and she from the age of six! I saw her on a visit to London dancing in a Gala for King Juan Carlos I!

As a ballet dancer Conchita was later a soloist with Ballet Rambert, and also performed with the companies Scottish Ballet, Festival Ballet, the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet and the Royal Opera Ballet. She was, with Harold King and others, one of the founder members of the London City Ballet. And she toured South Africa with Margot Fonteyn as a member of Ballet International. In 1988 she joined the Spanish Dance Society where she qualified as a teacher and subsequently an international examiner. She has also qualified as a teacher for the Royal Academy of Dance.

Our legacy or intellectual property stems from the founders of the Spanish Dance Society Mercedes Molina and Rhoda Rivkind. Later they were joined by other knowledgeable dancers and teachers who also added to the legacy. "You will read about Rhoda Rivkind and Geoffrey Neiman in our Members Profile page below."

Our work is now embraced all over the world, including in Spain where the teachers say that it has given them a "method" of breaking down the technique, and that it "has changed their lives". Conchita will tell you what has been happening since our last Newsletter and share her vision for the future of the SDS. So I can love you and leave you all to a future of exciting contributions from all who love to dance!

With my very best wishes to everyone, and happy 40th anniversary to the UK and European branch!

Marina Grut

Hon. Life President, Professor Emerita



# "From our '*Chair*' Isabel Baquero to your Home"

**Dear Friends, Colleagues and esteemed Members of the SDS,**

I hope you and your loved ones are all keeping healthy and safe. I would like to offer my heartfelt sympathies to all our members and their families who have been badly affected by the Corona Covid-19 virus recently.

The lockdown is and has obviously been very challenging for all of us globally with all the new constraints and worries that it brings. However, in the midst of all this chaos, it has also been the time for many of us to reconnect with our cooking skills, reading and enjoying more time at home with our families, whilst also juggling with our virtual dance tuition.

Nutrition & Wellbeing is my second passion...as Hippocrates said: "Let thy food be thy medicine" so this is also an excellent and unique opportunity for all of us to revise all our interests and culinary aptitudes. As my good friend Conchita del Campo, SDS Director UK & European Organiser, instilled in me when we first met many years ago at the London Studio Centre, it is very important for dancers to maintain a balanced diet especially rich in all the nourishing and immune system boosting nutrients. So we are enjoying our fruit and vegetable smoothies more than ever, and I would like to encourage you all to research some of the 'old' Spanish broths and stew recipes if you haven't yet done so.

We are considering starting a traditional recipe section in our future Newsletters. So we would appreciate it if you could send us some of your favourite delicious, healthy and traditional food recipes from your country to [info@spanishdancesociety.org](mailto:info@spanishdancesociety.org).

We just need a list of all the ingredients, a brief 'step by step' cooking method and also a picture of the final product!

I believe that at this strange time of confinement, and also in everyday life, we need to nourish our bodies, and also our minds and souls.

In terms of dance training, I am personally finding the time to do some stretching and Pilates exercises, and also the space to practise my 'zapateado' and castanets ...albeit my husband and my 11 year old daughter are not so keen on the latter...note to myself: bring back my "sordinas" from Spain! In the meantime, you can also make a pair of homemade sordinas to mute the castanets, with a wide elastic band which will go around the middle wider section of the inner castanet near to your hand...so you can keep practising your beautiful 'rolls & posticeos' with confidence. Ria-Ria-Pi-Ta!

I would certainly like to encourage you to keep up your dance technique by practising your SDS programmes of study daily and also referring to all your dance teachers' notes and corrections. Watching high quality dance recordings from YouTube, or other internet trusted sources, is a very accessible and valuable tool for increasing your dance knowledge.

By observing, reflecting and watching professional dancers from the Ballet Nacional de España, or dance artists of the magnitude of Antonio Gades, Cristina Hoyos, Merche Esmeralda, Antonio Najarro, Farruquito, Rafaela Carrasco and Sara Baras to name a few, you can develop your knowledge and understanding of our rich dance heritage, and all the diverse Spanish Dance styles.

Follow the link below to watch the Antonio Gades & Carlos Saura Dance production of 'Carmen' from the Teatro Real in Madrid: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYu9rxWrESU>

Click here <https://youtu.be/riOpG5qPbK8> to watch Gades' 'Bodas de Sangre'

Click here <https://youtu.be/se7DDEaarTU>

to watch Saura's 'Suite Flamenca'

One of my favourites dance channels is the Ballet Nacional de España, which displays the exceptional diversity of Spanish Dance from the Classical 'Escuela Bolera' to Danza Estilizada, Flamenco and of course the traditional and authentic Folkloric Regional Spanish dancing. <https://www.youtube.com/user/BalletNacionalEspana>

Also from the Ballet Nacional de España, and during this time of school-home learning, I would like to recommend to you the lovely illustrated book 'Bailando Un Tesoro' It's a special edition particularly designed for our SDS younger dance generation.

<http://balletnacional.mcu.es/actualidad/noticias/bailando-un-tesoro-acercando-la-danza-a-los-mas-jovenes> or you can also watch this link in Spanish <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLyO4e6jGqU>



In such unprecedented times, and during this period of uncertainty and confinement, I find that it is very important to stay grounded and positive, to live one day at a time, to look after ourselves and of course to keep dancing!

No Virus can 'kill' or mute our Music, our Palmas clapping or ever stop our eternal love of Dance. So let's stay strong, safe and stay home as necessary. Keep your rhythm and the 'fire' going...together we can and will beat this! The 'Spirit of Spanish Dance' is our medicine and antidote. It's keeping us all globally connected...now more than ever.

Abrazos and warmest wishes,

Isabel Baquero (Your UK & European SDS Chair)

# MESSAGE FROM CONCHITA DEL CAMPO ORGANISER UK & EUROPE



Dear Members, Affiliates, Friends and Colleagues

We have been very busy since our Autumn Newsletter, especially establishing a closer connection with our new awarding body GQAL. Under their expert guidance we have been directed to create eight levels for our General Graded Programmes of Study (POS) to meet OFQUAL specification regulations to be on a par with other leading dance societies in the UK and Europe.

To minimise confusion and disruption I chose to re-organise the original SDS Junior exercises and dances, and in order to complete the POS added seven new exercises interspersed within the levels. We also now have two new optional dances to add some variety and a more contemporary dance style. The feedback from teachers has been very positive, mainly because it has created an even more fluid progression from one grade to the next. We are hoping this will make your examination experience even more pleasurable, giving you time to hone in on all the details and nuances for increased artistry and mastery.

At the beginning of 2020 we decided to create an SDS European Council of Organisers (ECO) so that we can all benefit from our members' wealth of experience and expertise. The Organisers from each country are collaborating to communicate to the UK and European Executive Committee suggestions from all our teachers and members in order to improve the smooth running of the Society and also to include a community spirit and a sharing of ideas. You can contact your local Organiser Conchita del Campo (UK), Maria Louisa Ihre (Italy), Deborah MacNamara Caruana (Malta), Youla Papas (Greece) and Esperanza de los Reyes (Spain) via the Contact Us page on our website [www.spanishdancesociety.org](http://www.spanishdancesociety.org).

Due to the current unprecedented planetary situation we find ourselves in, and with careful consideration of global health and safety, the UK Executive Committee and ECO members decided in early March to postpone our April Examiners' Training, the UK Easter Course, our AGM and all the summer exams until the Autumn term.

We will continue to monitor and follow advice and government guidelines, praying that we can resume our dancing classes from September. In the meantime we are grateful to all our excellent teachers who have managed to use social media and give online classes to keep everyone inspired, in shape and connected.

I would like to thank all the people who have contributed in the past, and those who continue to contribute to the success and worldwide recognition of our beloved SDS, especially our Hon. Life President Dame Marina Keet for inspiring us to greatness, our SDS UK and European Executive Committee and Advisors for their excellent support, expertise and creativity which will lead us to a secure and expansive future, and also to Theo Dantes (Executive Administrator), Sue Hilton (Chair) and Chris Palmer (Treasurer) of the SDA for kindly cooperating and helping us with the eventual transfer of all the documents and funds back to the SDS, so that we can move forwards united once again.

Looking ahead to our future, we are preparing some very exciting and interesting workshops and possible online courses to enhance your knowledge of Spanish Dance music and to further your development in the Classical, Regional and Flamenco dance styles.

I wish you all a very healthy and active summer, emerging stronger and with even more resilience and determination to succeed and flourish in our chosen art form. It is now well known how beneficial dancing is for maintaining mental and physical wellbeing and its amazing ability to transform lives.

Conchita del Campo  
UK Organiser

## Member Profiles

The next page will be a feature in our future newsletters, where we will present a Spanish Dance Society members profile so that we can all network and more importantly, get to know each other.

Members will be invited to send in their profiles.



## MEMBERS PROFILE

# DAME RHODA RIVKIND

I started ballet at age 13 in Durban, South Africa. At 21 moved to Johannesburg, and because of my love of Spanish music, started learning Spanish dancing with the late Mercedes Molina. After one year I became a principal dancer, specialising in regional dancing. At the suggestion of Royal Academy Examiner, Ivy Conmee, Mercedes and I went around South Africa to create interest with teachers in a Spanish dance syllabus. In 1965 Mercedes and I founded the now worldwide organisation - the "Spanish Dance Society" and together with four other teachers, started setting the SDS syllabus which is now taught in 16 countries.



At the same time, I was appointed executive administrator for the Society, a position I still hold after 55 years. In 1968 I joined Luisillo Spanish Dance Company in Spain, travelling to many countries around the world. When I was back in Spain, I studied with well-known teachers such as Mercedes and Albano, Jota specialist Pedro Azórin, Ciro, El Cojo etc. On an invitation to go into partnership with Mercedes Molina, I returned to South Africa, where I have been teaching and choreographing for the past 52 years.

Enrique Segovia on his return from Spain joined Mercedes and I, and we all taught together for many years until the untimely death of Mercedes. Besides running the Society for South Africa, Canada, Thailand and Australia and teaching in my studio, I travel to all these places to examine the SDS examinations.

The Society celebrated 50 years in existence in 2015, for which I organised a show at the Johannesburg Civic Theatre with guest artist Angel Muñoz from Spain.

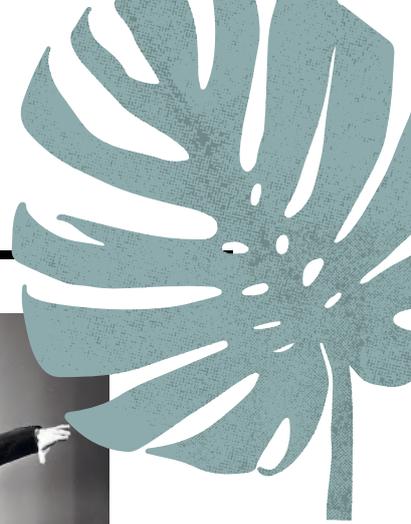
The highlight of my career was being knighted by the King of Spain in 2013, when I was presented with the Encomienda de La Orden de Isabel la Católica.





## MEMBERS PROFILE

# SIR GEOFFREY NEIMAN



Enrique Segovia was born Geoffrey Neiman on August 29th, 1939, in Johannesburg South Africa. When fourteen years old he started tap dance lessons, but decided he preferred Spanish Dancing and went to the then leading Spanish Dance Exponent – Reina Berman for classes. Knowing that ballet is a necessity for any dancer he did classes with Ruth Ingelstone.

In 1957 when Mercedes Molina opened her studio in Johannesburg, he joined her. She immediately saw the potential in this eighteen-year-old boy and encouraged him to make Spanish Dancing his career. It wasn't long before he became lead dancer and Mercedes Molina's partner.



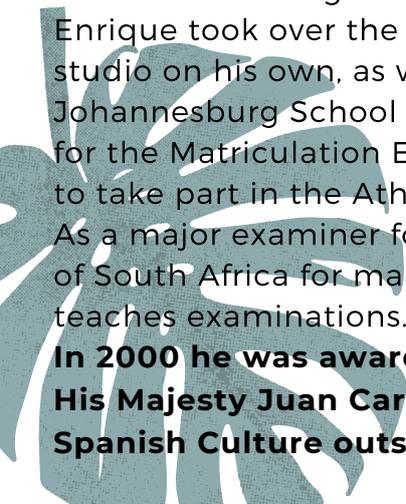
Together with the company they danced in all major centres of South Africa as well as small schools and church halls.

In 1959 the renowned 'Antonio' toured South Africa and after an audition at the completion of his tour, he invited Enrique to sign a year's contract. On completion of his contract and at the request of Mercedes Molina he returned to South Africa to dance with the Molina Company for nine months and take over the running of the studio. The world famous "Luisillo" and his company were on a visit to South Africa and after another audition Enrique joined his company. This contract lasted for four years and took him to various parts of the world. ... Europe, Far East, Australia, New Zealand and America. He later joined Antonio's nephew, Paco Ruiz who was forming a small group of eight dancers and did cabaret in Spain, Germany and France. After this he joined the group of Alberto and Marina Masuli Modern Dance Theatre. He had now been away from home for five years and, on an offer from Mercedes to be co-director of her company and partner in her studio he returned to South Africa. When the Spanish Dance Society was formed, Enrique was responsible for the compilation of the complete male syllabus. Mercedes and Enrique took part in the Festivals of Spain as well as performing in the United States, guesting with Joe Savino Ballet National.

Enrique and Mercedes co- choreographed the successful production of "Carmen" which was aired on the opening night of television in South Africa. They had great success with many television productions including "El Amor Brujo" "Three Cornered Hat" and "Misa Flamenco" amongst many others. On the death of Mercedes Molina in November 1978, Enrique took over the running of the Company and very successful studio on his own, as well as teaching the Spanish and National Syllabus at the Johannesburg School of Art, Ballet and Music. He was for many years the head examiner for the Matriculation Examinations. In August 1981 the Company was invited to Greece to take part in the Athens Dance Festival and toured the entire country.

As a major examiner for the Spanish Dance Society, he examined throughout the whole of South Africa for many years, continually adding to the male syllabus for major and teaches examinations.

**In 2000 he was awarded 'La Cruz De Oficial De La Orden De Isabel La Catolica' by His Majesty Juan Carlos, King of Spain, for his contribution to the furthering of Spanish Culture outside of Spain.**



# MEMORY LANE

LUISILLO AND HIS WIFE MARIA VIVO CAME BACKSTAGE TO MEET  
MERCEDES MOLINA AND GEOFFREY IN MADRID



GEOFFREY AND RHODA WITH JOSE GRECO

DAME R. RIVKIND (LUISA CORTES)



GEOFFREY. LUISILLO AND COMPANY MEMBERS



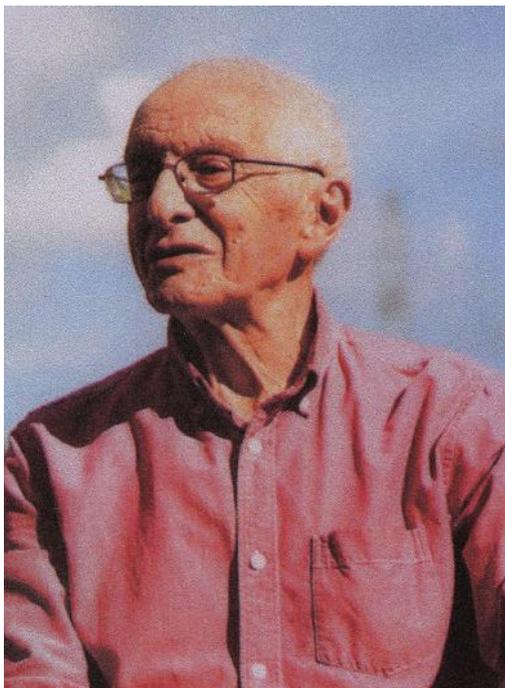
## MEMBERS PROFILE

# RICHARD GLASSTONE MBE

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Richard Glasstone was awarded the MBE (Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) by Queen Elisabeth for his services to British Ballet. It is a great honour for the Spanish Dance Society to have him as our Special Advisor - Marina Keet de Grut

Richard Glasstone is a graduate of the Dance Department at Cape Town University. He has worked internationally as a dancer, choreographer and teacher. Glasstone was Resident Choreographer and Principal Teacher of the Turkish State Ballet from 1965 -1969, before being invited by Dame Ninette de Valois to join the the staff of London's Royal Ballet School. During his 15 years there he held the posts of Senior Teacher for Boys and Director of the Dance Composition Course. He also choreographed numerous ballets for the students, in which many noted dancers of the Royal Ballet Company made their stage debuts. As well as teaching at the Rambert School in London for a number of years, he has also written several books on ballet and has contributed articles to to the International Encyclopaedia of Dance and the International Dictionary of Ballet and has written for publications such as The Dancing Times and Dance Now.



"As a long-time admirer of the Spanish Dance Society and, in particular, of Dame Marina's unique knowledge and understanding of the history and development of all forms of Spanish dance, it gives me great pleasure to accept to be the Spanish Dance Society's Special Advisor, assisting in any way which could be helpful.

Sincerely, Richard Glasstone"  
Feb 2019

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# UK EXAMINER'S REPORT

by Conchita del Campo

I examined Nuria Garcia's pupils, doing the original Grade 5 SDS exam, on the 8th of November 2019 at her Escuela de Baile studio in Islington, London.

The exam session was very well prepared and ran smoothly.

I was extremely impressed by the candidates' immaculate grooming and astounding dancing. It is always a great pleasure to observe excellent dancing throughout an exam session and this was no exception. All the exercises were presented with style and brilliant technique, and the dances were performed with flair, exuberance and passion as well as including the afore mentioned technical prowess.

Nuria has always insisted that her pupils study and follow the classical and regional route because she has always appreciated and valued the breadth, depth of knowledge and variety of styles that the SDS syllabus gave her in her formative years as a student of Spanish Dance. Her students demonstrated a clear understanding of the different styles and qualities of movement, and they each presented an exquisitely delicate Olé de la Curra, a buoyant and elegant Valenciana and finally pulling out all the stops for a fiery Tangos accompanied by Tito.

I congratulate the candidates on their disciplined approach, remarkable focus to detail, knowledge of the theory and for having finally achieved such a high standard. I take my hat off to Nuria for her dedication to the SDS and wish her students great success in their future dance careers.



Standing L to R:  
Nuria, Georgina Slaymaker,  
Ariana Armenakas,  
Aitana Sola, Conchita

Kneeling L to R:  
Genevieve LaTouche,  
Tito Herredia (guitarist),  
Alba Brito Villalobos

# In Fond Remembrance

OBITUARY of MARIA JESUS GARCIA DE BAYARRI,  
SPANISH DANCE SOCIETY (SDS) ORGANISER IN SPAIN



MARIA JESUS GARCIA DE BAYARRI,  
who passed away on 6 January 2020 in Valencia, greatly missed and  
mourned by the SDS internationally.

María Jesús García was born on 18 April 1937 in Tetuán in what was then Spanish Morocco, where her parents lived. There she met and married her Valencian forest officer husband, with whom she had seven children. María Jesús's large Academy of dance in Valencia, now closed, offered many subjects including ballet and Spanish dance. The ballet section, under the direction of her daughter Cristina, used the teaching method of the British Royal Academy of Dance. The Spanish section used the teaching and examination method of the Spanish Dance Society, which teachers claim "has changed our lives". It taught classical, regional, flamenco and Danza Estilizada. Her students were always immaculately groomed and attired. In 2015 she magnanimously hosted a 50th anniversary "Homage" for the Spanish Dance Society in the magnificent Valencian opera house, the Palace of Music, attended by worldwide Society members and altogether 150 invited persons from 15 countries with guest artist Angel Muñoz.

María Jesús was a woman of enormous energy, generosity and personality.  
We who had the privilege of working with her, will always remember her with love.

Prof. Emerita Marina Keet de Grut  
President of the Spanish Dance Society (SDS) Internationally Dame of the Order of Queen Isabel of Spain

# FREE AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP STATUS

We want to welcome all with a love for Spanish Dance to join us under the SDS umbrella.

Registered Teachers and Vocational Student Members of the SDS already benefit from many courses and workshops and Newsletters due to their professional dance qualifications. However we are aware that these benefits are not as easily accessed by our Graded students and 'loyal mature students' connected with the SDS through our Teachers dance schools.

The SDS is an inclusive society and it is important that anyone with an active passion for any form of Spanish Dance does not feel isolated from activities that may be advertised by the SDS or any other relevant dance events.

Therefore we have decided to offer our Affiliate Membership for free to any student who has taken an SDS General Graded exam and for external aficionados.

For students under the age of 18, we would need the consent and contact details from their parents or guardians.

The Affiliate Member will receive our Newsletters and will be entitled to affiliate discounts on various selected workshops and classes provided by the SDS, plus other Flamenco and Spanish Dance related events and products as advertised online during the membership year.

If you think you would be interested in this scheme to encourage everyone to be more connected to the worldwide SDS 'family' please contact us at [info@spanishdancesociety.org](mailto:info@spanishdancesociety.org)



# SDS Teachers Course at Summer School Jerez

## Important information:

Please note due to the Covid 19 lockdowns the dates for the Teachers Summer Course in Jerez have been changed from the 29th of July to 1st of August to the 24th to 28th of August.

For full details of the Course with Pilar Ogalla and Marta de Troya please contact [info@academiadebailejerez.com](mailto:info@academiadebailejerez.com)



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