



# WADA

***New Style Shaabi  
Tutorial on black Arabic eye make up  
How practicing yoga can improve your bellydance***



# CONTENTS

Issue 54 | Winter 2014

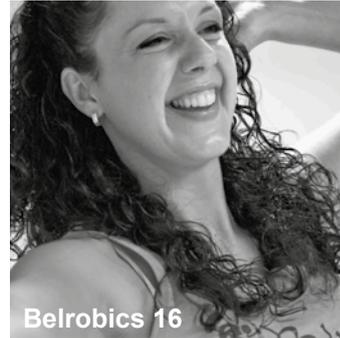
<b>NADA Editorial</b>	4
<b>The Heart of Bellydance</b>	5
<b>Glasgow Festival of Arabic Dance</b> <i>Review by Deirdre Macdonald</i>	8
<b>Egyptian Dreams Festival</b> <i>Review by Diana Mehira</i>	12
<b>NADA Day of Dance and AGM 2014</b> <i>Anna Bisco</i>	14
<b>Introduction to Belrobics</b> <i>By Julia Birchall</i>	16
<b>Dancers &amp; Social Media</b> <i>By Rosia Sedgwick</i>	19
<b>Just Because Update</b> <i>By Anne Kingston</i>	22
<b>From Cairo to Shanghai</b> <i>By Lorna of Cairo</i>	24
<b>Jewel of Yorkshire</b> <i>By Anna Bisco</i>	28
<b>What Katie Did</b> <i>By Katie Holland</i>	35
<b>Desert Blues</b> <i>Interview by Anne Kingston</i>	41
<b>Yoga and Bellydance</b> <i>By Helena</i>	43
<b>Bosom Buddies</b> <i>By Rita Williamson</i>	46
<b>Black Arabic Eye Funoon Style</b> <i>By Esther Edwards</i>	48
<b>New Shaabi</b> <i>By Yasmina of Cairo</i>	50
<b>NADA Members Insurance Form</b>	53
<b>NADA Diary</b>	54
<b>NADA Member Teachers</b>	55
<b>NADA Membership Form</b>	58



The Heart of Bellydance 5



Glasgow Festival 8



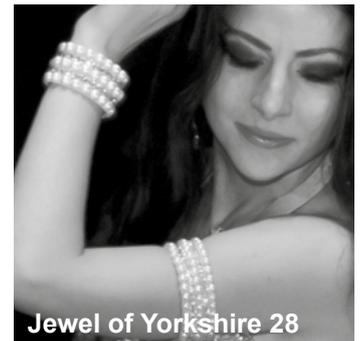
Belrobics 16



Just Because Update 22



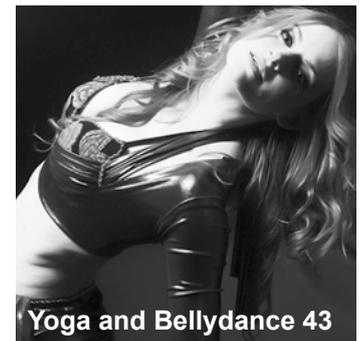
From Cairo to Shanghai 24



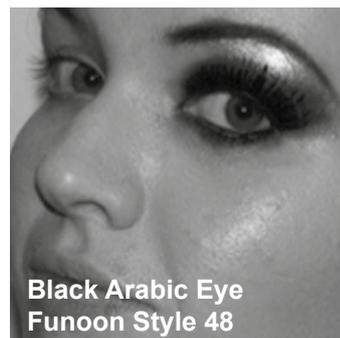
Jewel of Yorkshire 28



Desert Blues 41



Yoga and Bellydance 43



Black Arabic Eye Funoon Style 48



New Shaabi 50

Cover Photo by Philip Welsby.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of NADA.



Julia



Jenny

# NADA Editorial

Hi All,

Hope we are able to help brighten up the dark winter days with the latest edition of NADA magazine. Remember, there is still time to book and join us for the NADA AGM and day of dance on the 1st February.

We have been across the globe in this issue: to China with Lorna, India with Katie Holland, Vienna with Diana Mehira, and back to Cairo with Yasmina to discuss the new style of Shaabi.

A big thank you to everybody who entered our "Heart of Bellydance" photography competition to win the cover spot, and to all that voted on facebook.

I'd also especially like to thank Anna for her extra effort helping us put this issue together!

Happy New Year and happy shimmies!

*Julia and Jenny*

# NADA



www.nada.uk.com

## NADA Committee

### Co-Ordinator/Chair

**Anna Bisco**  
07710 403742  
info@nada.uk.com

### Web Co-ordinator

**Heather Charlton**  
07989 574734  
heather\_cc@hotmail.com

### Publicity

**Karen Hall**  
07968 716724  
krastall@diastart.net

### Magazine Editing

**Julia Birchall & Jenny Tobin**  
07775 331831  
editor@nada.uk.com

### Dance Diary Events

**Trish Champion**  
07976 973990  
membership@nada.uk.com

### Treasurer

**Katie Mulholland**  
07753 808061  
Tiphareth93@googlemail.com

### Insurance

**Sabrina Hall**  
07872 987021  
insurance@nada.uk.com

### Events

**Siobhan Waring**  
**Barbara Conroy**  
events@nada.uk.com

### Distribution

**Hilda Charlton**  
distribution@nada.uk.com

### Committee Assistants

Gwen Whittaker  
Sandra Thompson  
Sarah Arnett

### Proof Readers

Carolyn Ranson  
Trish Champion

### Layout

Richard Gibbs

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Trish Champion  
15 Faircross, Bracknell, RG12 7AP

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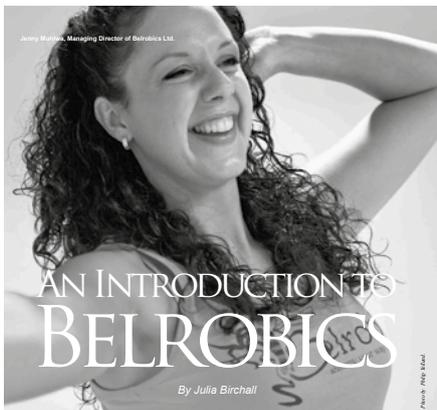
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magazine

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Jenny Muhwa, Managing Director of Belobics Ltd.

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BELROBICS

By Julia Birchall

NADA interviewed Jenny Muhwa the Managing Director of Belobics Limited to find out what this new dance fusion is all about, and how it could help improve our dancing. This is what she said:

### So Jenny, can you please explain Belobics?

Belobics is a belly dance inspired fitness programme like no other. Our aim is to inspire women of all shapes and sizes to have confidence in their own bodies while keeping fit. In each class, moves are broken down quickly and put to pre-choreographed Belobics routines. These routines stay the same, with different levels within a class, for 8 weeks and then the moves and routines change. Belobics is therefore suitable for all participants, for those who are beginners and for those who are experienced, as everyone learns new dances every two months to music that is carefully chosen to inspire and uplift the mind.

### What inspired you to create Belobics?

I have always loved dance and fitness and whilst working in the South of France I stumbled across a Moroccan belly

dance teacher and fell in love with the dance. I trained closely with her and was soon performing. I then had the opportunity to work as a dance teacher in Turkey and it was here that I started experimenting with different teaching techniques and found a formula in my belly dance class that seemed to really appeal. The women loved this new style: their dance improved, their fitness improved and their confidence improved. Belobics was born!

### How does a Belobics class differ from a standard belly dance class?

The Belobics dances are designed to work different areas of the body and the cardio circuit keeps the heart rate lifted. For simple moves are broken down quickly to allow more time for dancing. Each Belobics dance has a different influence: within a class a student will learn up to 6 Belobics



I started experimenting with different teaching techniques and found a formula in my belly dance class that seemed to really appeal. The women loved this new style: their dance improved, their fitness improved and their confidence improved. Belobics was born!

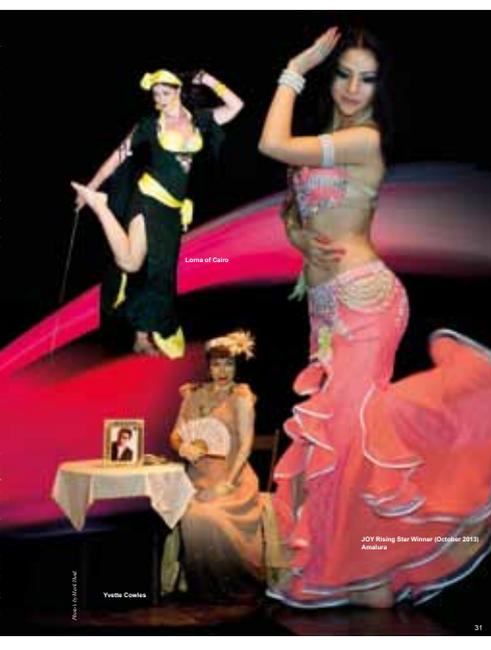
Kristy Marshall

17

theatre these days £15 for a sat evening show ticket to see international stars really is a bargain!

Speaking of money that's another thing that isn't a problem with JOY. Yes, if you book a masterpiece in every city and have travel and accommodation to cover, it adds up but you can also participate in JOY for just £8 by attending one of the shorter workshops. In fact you can browse the book for free if you want to! The top price point this time round was £28 for a 2hr Masterclass with Lorna which will have been money well spent for those participating and much cheaper than a trip to Cairo to track her down over there. Accommodation in Shanghai is also relatively cheap compared to London prices and it's right by the train station so those savvy enough to book well in advance can get a good deal on travel.

I spoke to a dancer from London who was at JOY for the first time and she decided to try saying she had come up just for the day drawn by the promise of workshops by Mercedes Neito. She was already planning to return in April as she had such a fantastic time not only because of the workshops but the venue. She described it as a unique and special opportunity to be in such a beautiful building and place and it really opened my eyes to what a privilege it is to attend a dance festival in a place like Victoria Hall surrounded by such rich heritage. If you are joined by your partner on your visit to JOY they would certainly not fall short of things to do in the surrounding area. In fact if you're not from these parts at all I'd recommend making a long weekend of it so you can explore everything else West



Lorna de Cairo

JOY Rising Star Winner (October 2013) Amalura

Yeveti Coates

31

### Dancer Spotlights

## JOY RISING STAR WINNER (OCTOBER 2013) AMALURA

I am originally from Ukraine and as a child lived in Siberia where I started dancing from an early age taking lessons and performing in a local ensemble of Russian folkloric dancers.

I started taking belly dance classes around ten years ago and relatively quickly moved into performing professionally as an entertainer. At the time belly dance was just beginning to gain its popularity in Ukraine and I was performing in newly opening Middle Eastern establishments. If I still lived in Ukraine now, I wouldn't have needed to travel far in order to get more training. There is a large number of internationally renowned dancers coming out of my country. However in the beginning of my belly dance career I was mainly reliant on teachers from Moscow as Russia was definitely ahead by far at the time.

In 2005 I went to Egypt and this opened a new chapter where I got inspired by Egyptian style. Since then I travelled to Cairo many times to take lessons with many well-known local teachers as well as to dance with live orchestras and to watch Cairo stars perform at various venues. This really helped me to develop my knowledge of oriental dance and to take it to a different level. I am also very grateful to the teachers I had while living in Canada

and France. Additionally I have been training and continue to do so in Israel and I have been fortunate to have exceptional professional dance mentors whose knowledge and feedback really helped me to shape my own style. I am a member of one of London's top de baller companies where I learn and perform adaptations of ballet classics like Swan Lake and Coppélia and many others. Currently I am based in London where I have been working as a belly dance performer over the last few years performing at various public and private events.

As much as it's tempting to have belly dance as a full time career I manage to dance in parallel to doing my business career and this is indeed quite hard. It's almost like having two different personalities! However I find that this way brings the most harmony into my life. I also truly enjoy teaching and have been giving private lessons and designing choreographies for people for quite some time now. I have found this type of work



Normally I am performing in Cairo, Egypt, but for this month I am teaching in Shanghai, China!

It's a country I never felt I wanted to visit before, I just didn't think I would like it. However, now I am here and I am loving it and I am already looking forward to my next visit! What an amazing place with fabulous food, and the friendliest people.

Earlier this year I gave a private class in Cairo to a male Chinese dancer. After one hour he decided that the whole of China needed 'Lorna style' and set about organising getting me to Shanghai. To be honest, I didn't really think it would happen. But here I am! The Scottish lass from Edinburgh, brought from Egypt, where she lives, in China to teach the Chinese how to Bellydance. If you had asked me as a wee girl what I thought I would be doing when I grew up I would have never ever had guessed this!

The course I am doing is pretty hardwork. 24 days of 4 hours per day, with one group of students. I am loving getting a chance to work so intensively with one group and seeing the changes developing in their dancing. I was a little worried they would learn very quickly and I would run out of material to teach! It's true, they do pick up technique extremely fast. The other staff dance how the musical understanding and interpretation and emotional response and interaction is more challenging for them and taking longer to sink in. They don't smelt any music theory in schools here at all, so explaining melody and rhythm to them, never

mind beats per bar, is rather tricky. I have a translator, but sometimes he finds it a little difficult to understand too. I teach a lot through music. It seems to work a bit of the time! I do end up completely knackered after each class, not from the physical exhaustion but from mental fatigue! (as with all this music I may need Botox by the end of the month!)

We have been doing different styles in the Egyptian style in addition to oriental. Nabab, saadi, iskandarani, baladi, saabi, and baheges. These girls have impressive hair 'n' wings! Now I know why so many hair braids come from China!

The students are keen to learn about Egyptian culture and how the dance fits into it. They have been fed many stories by many different teachers over the years about the way things should and shouldn't be done. One of the most difficult concepts for them to grasp is the shades of grey. And no, I do not talk about the book! Things in the Chinese must be good or bad, correct or incorrect. In fact, two Chinese words I have picked up because they are used so much in every conversation is 'correct' and 'incorrect'. They find it difficult to accept that there may be many ways of doing any a thing, and that they may all be suitable depending on the music and your own personal style. In fact, the idea of an individual style is rather new to many of my students too. I have to keep saying, this is 'Lorna style', but 'Randa



style' is like this, and 'Camelia style' is like that. Etc. The students can just about master that, but trying to persuade them to develop their own personal style goes against all their previous dance training! A work in progress!

I am enjoying learning about the Chinese culture and seeing things from a different perspective. For instance, when I was talking about arm movements and trying to get them to do less, a reference to tai chi helped. In discussing different types of love, because even that needed talked through due to the difference in culture, I learned about Chinese folk tales so I could give examples they would understand. I am enjoying being able to experience and witness in dance all the similarities and differences between the 3 cultures, British, Egyptian and Chinese. The ballet teacher was explaining how to turn by describing legs as chopsticks. It worked. Everyone got what she wanted, even on (yes occasionally) pop into the end of the ballet class and join in and discover my inner elephant!

The questions are always an eye opener too. What explains the lyrics of a song for Sarah, the Abdel Halim Hafiz song, I told about him being away from his love, but to still be her beloved and missed her and would return. One student became very nervous, concerned that if he did not return soon to her that she may become old and he wouldn't marry her! You wouldn't find a British dance student have the same reaction! The only way I could console her was to say that maybe he was only away for a week, but he felt like years because his love was so strong. She physically relaxed on hearing this! Such loving caring people. Such society based attitudes!

We had a big discussion about different styles, comparing Egyptian to American, Russian and Turkish, all three of which are prominent in China due to the foreign dancers from these places coming here to teach. The trend therefore is for lots of tricks and 'big moves' and very 'wham bam impress your audience'. You can imagine, lots of very fast spins and almost aggressive hair flicks. It has been my job this month to help them understand the subtleties of Egyptian style and what you do is actually less important than how you do it and what the music you do to! I am glad the Nile Group has started to come to China and Egyptian style is becoming more popular that will help too!

Yesterday I had them dancing to Fata Omri. As many of my friends and students know, it is a song which will always hold a special place in my heart. At the beginning of the course the students were technically good, but with very little musical understanding or emotional expression. We have been working hard on these issues, one student

25



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