



# The London Massage Company

## Newsletter 01

### Who are we?

Jane Johnson and Zoë Fitzpatrick present the London Massage Company -

Our name is new to the scene, but our principle tutor, Jane Johnson, Chartered Physiotherapist, is not. With over 7 years teaching experience and a jam-packed CV, her reputation as a fab tutor precedes her. Some of you I'm sure know her already.

Zoë is a sports massage therapist who's been in private practice overseas for more than 4 years. She's working behind the scenes in Morocco but will soon be taking to the teaching floor.

### What do we do?

We provide the best CPD workshops and courses the UK has to offer in advanced and sports massage techniques. We run them here in the UK as well as abroad. To see everything we're up to, check out our website.

But first, we'd like to celebrate our shiny newness with you in the form of our first of many newsletters. We'll send them out once every two months so as to keep things as fresh as possible.

### What's going on?

We'll make each one as informative and fun as we can

and seeing as the newsletters are for you, it's only right that you have your say.

### What can you do?

Get in touch! If you have a story you'd like to share or you've found a great book/website/CD that really inspired or helped you, then pass it on. We'll accommodate as many bits and bobs as we can.

### Welcome!

#### What's up?

//Who we are  
//What's to come  
//Ones to watch  
//RSM Dance Injuries conference  
//Hall of fab things

### What's in store for the future?

Loads of stuff! We'll give you info on up and coming events, articles you'll want to read and notes from conferences you were unable to attend past, present and future!

Most of the stuff we'll send you can count towards your CPDs too. We'll keep you informed and up to date.

### Ones to Watch: More For your CPDs

//Massagathon for charity – Be a body or a therapist, Moving Arts Base, Islington, London 26th Aug. Call Jane 020 72670029 or 07841 043307

//SportEX / SMA / BASRaT conference 2007 - University of Bedfordshire, 14th-16th Sept [www.sportex.net](http://www.sportex.net) Jane will be there on the 14th if you would like to say 'Hi'

//The New Science of Osteoarthritis, Royal Soc Medicine, 24th Sept... Jane will be at this one too. A must for those of you interested in orthopaedic conditions or those who work with older adults.

//Annual Fitpro Business Conference - Birmingham NEC, 25-27th Sept [www.fitpro.com](http://www.fitpro.com)

//Holistic Health 2007 - Donnington Park Exhibition Centre, 30th Sept & 1st Oct [www.beautyserve.com](http://www.beautyserve.com)

//CAMEXpo 2007 - ExCel London, 6th & 7th Oct [www.chexpo.com](http://www.chexpo.com)  
We'll be running workshops over the 2 days so come and say 'Hi' or grab a coffee with us!

//The Back Show - Olympia London, 6th & 7th Oct [www.backshow-expo.co.uk](http://www.backshow-expo.co.uk)

//Corrine Fitzpatrick came across this great software on stretching which might be useful for sports massage therapists or perhaps fitness instructors. Thanks Corrine!

[www.thestretchinghandbook.com/products/instantstretch.php](http://www.thestretchinghandbook.com/products/instantstretch.php)

### Know something we don't? Tell us about it!

As part of my own ongoing Continued Professional Development (CPD) I recently attended an evening of lectures at The Royal Society of Medicine here in London, all about dance injuries. I don't know about you, but I'm always curious to know who the other people in audience are so before the lectures began I read through the list provided and was intrigued to see a whole range of people interested in this topic, including doctors, physiotherapists, an osteopath, exercise physiologists, dance lecturers, a nurse, two rheumatologists, a radiographer, a PE teacher, and of course a small handful of massage therapists.

To start, we were shown a video demonstrating different forms of dance and noted that the skills required included many used by athletes, such as fast, explosive movements, strength and balance, but also some others, such as being able to spin without feeling dizzy and the need for outstanding proprioception. A Dance UK 2002 survey revealed 80% of dancers had been injured in the previous 12 months, with the low back being the commonest injury site. 38% of ballet dancers and 37% of contemporary dancers cited fatigue as their cause of injury. Interestingly, it is because dancers believe they are 'performing artists' rather than athletes that they prepare for their physical activity by performing skill drills rather than doing fitness training. To demonstrate how dancers warmed up, we watched a video of two typical dance training classes and I found myself wincing at the repeated spinal movements contemporary dancers used. The lecturer in this first section explained that as a dancer herself, she often had to perform in unusual environments (which could themselves be hazardous), and in the last year this had included The Old Operating Theatre in London, an old abattoir, a forest and even on sand.

In the lecture on dance physiology I was amazed to discover that despite what we see on stage, dancers are actually much less fit than athletes. I found myself thinking 'I'd be quite happy to be considered 'unfit' if my

body could look like that'. The lecturer posed the question, 'Do fitter dancers dance better?' A member of the audience asked whether dancers fatigued more because they simply don't eat enough and therefore cannot replace their glycogen stores. The answer is that because dancers rarely work aerobically to their full extent, dance was not a weight loss mechanism, so they often decrease food consumption in order to maintain crucial body image.

Then we went on to look at what was for me, the most interesting lecture of the evening, dance medicine. The lecturer took us through the standardized positions required by classical ballet dancers and explained what implications these had on the body. To start, we looked at the need to turn the feet out at an angle of 180 degrees, as in the '1st position'. We all stood up and tried it and, along with some of the audience next to me, my knees cracked. First Position requires 45-60 degrees of external rotation at the hip which dancers compensate for by tilting their pelvis anteriorly, and this in turn leads to increased lumbar lordosis. They also compensate by rolling over on the forefoot and the arch falls placing increasing stress on the 1st metatarsophalangeal (MTP) joint leading to hallux valgus, torsional stress on the tibia and fibula, compartment syndrome and torsional stress at the knee.

Next we looked at the consequences of standing on toes (*en point*). (Fortunately we were not asked to try this). This increases pressure at the posterior ankle leading to inflammation and fibrosis. There is posterior impingement and the result is posterior ankle pain, especially if there is an enlarged talus bone and 'os trigonum'. We were shown MRIs of MTP fractures and of inflammation of the posterior ankle which made some of us in the audience go 'urgh!'. Conversely, the *Plie* involves extreme dorsiflexion and anterior ankle problems. Traction spurs develop on the talus bone and on the anterior lip of the tibia.

Then we went through injuries by body part. The forefoot is the most common site of injury in 40% of dancers. Conditions include hallux valgus, hallux rigidus (in older adults, ie osteoarthritis), sesamoid injuries, midfoot disorders including cuboid subluxation, hindfoot disorders including flexor hallucis longus inflammation. 15% of injuries occur to the knee and include patello-femoral problems, iliotibial band problems, patellar tendon problems, posterior knee pain. This is due to the aesthetic requirement of the dancer being able to hyperextend the knee, stretching the posterior structures. Hip conditions include trochanteric bursitis, ischial bursitis, adductor strain, sacroiliac joint injuries, stress fractures at the femoral neck (especially in amenorrhoeic women) and snapping hip syndrome. Extreme spine hyperextension leads to both bone stress injury and stress fractures in the low back, usually at L4/L5.

The Consultant Radiologist showed us a whole range of beautifully gruesome images of stress fractures and torn tendons! She said that in a survey of 57 female ballet dancers, 17 reported 27 stress fractures. 63% had metatarsal fractures, 22% tibial fractures, 7% spine fractures. She particularly liked flexor hallucis longus which is commonly abnormal in dancers due to the long tunnel it has to pass through to get under the foot. (If you are not familiar with this muscle, have a look in your anatomy books!)

Sadly, the section I was looking forward to on the rehabilitation of dancers did not really go far enough in explaining the whys and the wherefores. There was no information on the soft tissue treatment of dance injuries and it would have been nice to see some case studies showing 'before and 'after' injuries. I have suggested to the Royal Society of Medicine that they do a whole series of lectures purely on rehabilitation. Watch this space!

Overall I was really impressed by the quality of the presentations and thought that they were really good value for a total of £35. Those of you



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who attend these kinds of events know that they can indeed be extremely pricey. A day of lectures entitled 'The New Science of Osteoarthritis' at £225 is on my September wish list.

If you'd like some extra bedtime reading, we can send you the full length 'Editor's cut'. Just drop us an email.

**H all of fab things:  
We love .....**  
Just for starters....

1) Books by SARK. She writes books with titles such as "Eat M angoS Naked", "The Bodacious Book of Succulence" and "Living Juicy". Makes you just want to eat them up doesn't it!?

2) The disclaimers written by "Sm oke :A London Peculiar". Heartwarming to know that there's an editor out there who has a photographic section in his magazine called *Pigeons in Pud- dles*. Some what relevant to those of us living in England right now.

3) Tessa, a five-and-a-half year-old ridgeback dog who's just adopted Jane. She licks egg shell from pavements and sleeps upside down with her head under a pillow. A good reason to get up at first light when there's someone fury licking the ends of your fingertips. Today she found two discarded burgers in the street. Any suggestions on a canine anti-flatulence blend from the araomatherapists amongst you gratefully received! If there's something you think deserves to be in our 'Hall of fab things' then share it. Go on!

4) Shopping in the local marke, local being Morocco. I'm loving the new banter in French and Arabic and the odd occasion when my fish-man, affectionately know as *Le m onsieurg rand* , shows me a 350kg sword fish caught that morning!!

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ask@  
thelondonmassagecompany .com

If you'd rather us leave you alone then no bother at all. Just reply to the email that this was sent on and simply tell us.

We hope you've enjoyed #01.  
Nice chatting to you.

Zoë & Jane

