

# LOCAL HEROES

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



## Denise Rowe

**Submitted by:** Nomads

**Location:** Launceston, Cornwall

Denise Rowe is a movement artist, choreographer, singer and mbira player with over ten years' experience performing and teaching traditional and contemporary pan-African dance, improvised and environmental movement.

Denise is co-founder of Tolo Ko Tolo dance company and a principle dancer in Idrissa Camera's Ballet Nimba. Denise also performs with Spirit Talk Mbira and works as a solo artist and on various cross-genre collaborative projects including the dance films Erw Dinmael and On an Incoming Tide and the issue based dance piece Obey the Wind. In 2010 Denise was commissioned to create a site-specific performance for ADADs Re:Generations conference at London Metropolitan University.

A recipient of one of ADAD's Trailblazers fellowships and supported by Dance Bristol, Denise has trained in African dance in the UK, Ghana, Gambia, Senegal, Zimbabwe and with the Baka hunter gatherers in the Cameroonian rainforest. In 2006 Denise completed contemporary dance training. She is also a student of Aikido and has recently completed Helen Poyner's Walk of Life movement training in non-stylized and environmental movement.

Denise has over ten years' experience of leading traditional and contemporary pan-African dance and improvisation workshops in schools, colleges, universities, dance companies and community settings around the world, including her own annual dance camp, Foot to Earth. Denise teaches regularly at the Tribe of Doris intercultural summer school, The University of Plymouth and as part of The Mbira Academy.

"My inspiration comes from contemporary and African dance, Aikido, non-stylized movement and improvisations in nature. I am interested in the connection between person and planet that is pivotal in traditional African dance forms and essential to our understanding of what it is to be alive.

For me dance is a powerful spiritual experience and there is an inherent interest in the honesty of a body moving. My work aims to access that place where we as audience and performers are playful, vibrant and awake, a place where truth is revealed in movement and simplicity, where we are brought to silence and stillness. "

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