

## THE BDF INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2023

### CONTENTS

#### PART 1 - Warren Boyce

**Mastering Space & Energy:** *Gaetano Iavarone & Emanuela Napolitano*

**Flowing Energy - The Dance of Connection:** *Fedor Isaev & Anna Zudalina*

**From Inner To Outer Harmony:** *Dusan & Valeria's Dance Philosophy*

**Unleashing Creativity In Motion:** *Natascha Karabey*

**Conclusion - Warren Boyce**

#### PART 2 - Damian Evans

**Jive Alive:** *Alex Ivanets & Lisa Bellinger-Ivanets*

**Q&A With Graham Oswick:** *Tal Liftshitz & Ilana Keselman*

**The Beauty Of Smooth:** *Slawek Sochacki & Marzena Stachura*

**Communicating Artistically:** *Victor Da Silva & Joanna Leunis*

**Personal Priorities:** *Colin James*

**One Point Wonder - Cha cha:** *Dorin Frecautanu & Marina Sergeeva*

**30 Years In The Making:** *Eugene Katsevman & Maria Manusova*

#### PART 3 - Alex Ivanets

**Musical Integrity:** *Andrej Skufca & Melinda*

**Making It Interesting:** *Richard Porter*

**Listening:** *Troels Bager & Ina Jeliaskova*

**Dancing Is Technique:** *Johan & Nadia Eftedal*

#### PART 4 - Ben Taylor

**Communication In The Couple:** *Stas Portanenko & Nataliya Kolyada*

**Priorities Of a Champion:** *Katusha Demidova*

**Devotion to The Motion:** *Lyn Marriner*

**The Viennese Waltz:** *Stanislav Zelianin & Irina Cherepanova*

**Shape In Waltz:** *Valerio Colantoni & Anna Demidova*

**Music Is My Passion:** *Massimo Giorgianni*

**Conclusion - Ben Taylor**



THE  
BALLROOM DANCERS'  
FEDERATION LTD  
PROUDLY PRESENTS

# THE BDF INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2023

27TH & 28TH MAY 2023  
THE SPANISH HALL WINTER GARDENS BLACKPOOL

ACTION  
AWARENESS  
Endurance  
Composition  
PRESENTATION  
PERFORMANCE  
MUSICALITY  
STYLE  
BODY  
BEAT  
MUSIC  
TIME  
RHYTHM  
HARMONY  
DANCERS  
FLEXIBILITY  
WALTZ  
TANGO  
VIENNESE WALTZ  
FOXTROT  
QUICKSTEP  
PHYSICALITY  
PREPARE  
JIVE  
RUMBA  
SAMBA  
PASO DOBLE  
CHA CHA  
BIO-MECHANICS  
CO-ORDINATION  
MOTION  
Posture  
NARRATIVE  
PHYSIOLOGY  
SYNCHRONICITY  
INTERPRETATION  
KINETICS  
ENERGY  
STORY  
DYNAMICS  
EMOTION  
SPACE  
SELF  
TECHNIQUE  
CHARACTERISATION  
CREATIVITY  
CHOREOGRAPHY  
INDIVIDUALITY  
BALANCE  
HISTORY  
LATIN AMERICAN  
BALLROOM  
EXPRESSION  
KNOWLEDGE  
UNDERSTANDING  
COMPATABILITY  
PSYCHOLOGY  
INVENTIVE  
MOVEMENT  
COMPOSITION  
CHARISMA  
CONNECTION  
TRAINING  
PHYSIOLOGY  
PARTNER  
COUPLE

*It's all in the*  
**Detail**

"If you have knowledge,  
let others light their candles in it." ~ Margaret Fuller

## THE BDF REVIEW - PART 1

*By Warren Boyce*

The BDF International Congress presented by the Ballroom Dancers' Federation Ltd brought together the brilliance of dance experts and enthusiasts from around the world. Enlightening workshops to electrifying performances, the wonderful guest lecturers were tasked with their title of "It's All in the Detail" but I have given an interpretative sub-header to each to represent the characteristic elements of each of these brilliant quickfire presentations.

### MASTERING SPACE & ENERGY Gaetano Iavarone & Emanuela Napolitano



One of the most captivating sessions was led by Gaetano and Emanuela, who delved into the intricacies of space, an often intangible yet vital element in dance. Dividing space into personal, couple, and musical domains, Gaetano and Emanuela emphasized balance and posture as you move into position.

Through their guidance, attendees discovered the magic of utilizing the space around them to enhance their presentation, lending each movement more depth and feeling.

# FLOWING ENERGY - THE DANCE OF CONNECTION

## Fedor Isaev & Anna Zudalina



The energy flow between dance partners is like a river with a direction, according to Fedor and Anna. They outlined five key points for controlling energy flow: ensuring continuity, allowing individual energy flow, exploring direct and indirect leads, extending energy in directions away from the couple, and internalizing energy for enhanced control.

This not only enriched the dance connection but also led to internalization and control of energy, a fundamental component of skilled dancing.

# FROM INNER TO OUTER HARMONY

## Dusan & Valeria's Dance Philosophy



Dusan and Valeria guided dancers in the art of fusing inner movements with outer expression. The principle of believing in the inner to project the outer was highlighted, as was the idea of movement emanating from the heart and translating through the body. The concept of an aura, where dancers meld and explore possibilities in the kinesphere, was captivating.

As they emphasized, dancing isn't just about executing choreographed steps or technique for technique's sake but about feeling the music and allowing it to shape your expression. Their encouragement to break rules and find the golden middle in dance was both liberating and inspiring.

# UNLEASHING CREATIVITY IN MOTION

## Natascha Karabey



Natascha Karabey's session on "Creativity in Motion" was a masterpiece of artistic insight.

She focused on the art of making something artificial into something special, a true testament to dance's power to convey messages beyond words. The dedication to balance, music, and efficiency in footwork stood out as vital principles.

Her wisdom on the significance of balance, especially through exercises like the "Heel Turn," left attendees with a new appreciation for foundational techniques.

While she could easily choose from an array of accomplished dance partners, including her career champions Sascha Karabey and Domen Krapez, Natascha surprised many by extending an invitation to none other than Mr. Andrew Sinkinson. Mr. Foxtrot, had previously chosen Natascha to accompany him at an unforgettable congress. In a beautiful twist of fate, Natascha returned the favour by inviting him to partner her at the BDF Congress 2023.

Mr. Sinkinson, known for his expertise and wealth of knowledge, laid down one simple condition for this collaboration: to select music that is not only memorable but also resonates with the heart of dance. This condition served as a poignant reminder of the emotional depth that music brings to dance, and how the right choice of music can transform movements into magic.

In the world of dance partnerships, Natascha's choice to dance with Andrew was a testament to the bonds that extend beyond the dance floor. It showcased that dance is not just about physical steps, but also about the relationships, mentorships, and the love for the art form. Natascha shared her perspectives on timeless dance principles, passing on the knowledge gained from Oliver Wessel-Therhorn, Andrew Sinkinson, Michael Barr, and Anthony Hurley with related principles, focusing on balance, music, and the harmony between lead and follow actions.

## CONCLUSION

A highlight of the session was a surprise appearance by Anthony Hurley through a voice recording, adding a touch of serendipity to this year's experience. The mention of Frank Alback's "The Gem" resonated deeply, revealing the enduring power of certain figures that become part of a dancer's journey, from the early days to the twilight of their career.

In conclusion, the BDF Congress 2023 was a breathtaking voyage through the heart of dance. From mastering space and energy to embracing inner and outer harmony, attendees left with a renewed appreciation for dance's transformative power. The Congress showcased that dance isn't merely about movements; it's about connections, expressions, and emotions that touch both the dancers and the audience alike. Thank you to President Kenny Welsh and the entire Executive Committee of The Ballroom Dancers Federation.

Finally, for me, Natascha Karabey's unforgettable dancing with her former teacher conveys a profound message, inspiring dancers to appreciate the teachers and mentors who have guided them, and to remember that dance is a beautiful journey that thrives on unity and reciprocity and how wonderful to encourage this in our world of dance today and forevermore.

**WARREN BOYCE**



THE  
BALLROOM DANCERS'  
FEDERATION LTD  
PROUDLY PRESENTS

# THE BDF INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2023

27TH & 28TH MAY 2023  
THE SPANISH HALL WINTER GARDENS BLACKPOOL

ACTION  
AWARENESS  
Endurance  
Composition  
PRESENTATION  
MUSICALITY  
STYLE  
BODY  
BEAT  
MUSIC  
TIME  
RHYTHM  
HARMONY  
CHARACTERISATION  
CREATIVITY  
CHOREOGRAPHY  
INDIVIDUALITY  
BALANCE  
HISTORY  
LATIN AMERICAN  
BALLROOM  
EXPRESSION  
KNOWLEDGE  
WALTZ  
TANGO  
VIENNESE WALTZ  
FOXTROT  
QUICKSTEP  
PHYSICALITY  
PREPARE  
JIVE  
RUMBA  
SAMBA  
PASO DOBLE  
CHA CHA  
INTERPRETATION  
MOTION  
Posture  
NARRATIVE  
PHYSIOLOGY  
SYNCHRONICITY  
KINETICS  
ENERGY  
STORY  
DYNAMICS  
EMOTION  
SPACE  
SELF  
TECHNIQUE  
CHARISMA  
CONNECTION  
TRAINING  
PHYSIOLOGY  
PARTNER  
COUPLE  
COMPOSITION  
MOVEMENT  
UNDERSTANDING  
COMPATABILITY  
PSYCHOLOGY  
INVENTIVE  
CO-ORDINATION  
BIO-MECHANICS

*It's all in the*  
**Detail**

"If you have knowledge,  
let others light their candles in it." ~ Margaret Fuller

## THE BDF REVIEW - PART 2

*By Damian Evans*

The BDF International Congress in Blackpool is always an event to be eagerly looked forward to. The Ballroom Dancers' Federation Ltd manage to organise a fabulous cavalcade of lecturers, always ensuring that either there are some new lecturers or some well-established with a new twist on a subject. The organising and running of the event is done so smoothly and it's definitely one of the figurehead events of the dancing calendar. This year was no exception, and there was an array of lecturers that truly showed their experience and knowledge.

### JIVE ALIVE

Alex Ivanets & Lisa Bellinger-Ivanets



Alex introduced the lecture by explaining that there are three important points to consider in producing a interesting and entertaining Jive:

1, Connection, 2, Music and 3, Performance. He then went on to add more detail to these points.

The first being the connection between one another as the Jive is a body dance with the body weight and spine pitched forward, bringing the spine into the hand and to utilise shaping leads, they both demonstrated this with the use of simple choreography and incorporating bodyweight.

Secondly, musicality and that specific things must be done on beats 2,4,6, and 8 being the accented beats in the jive action and in contrast to the swing variations which have accents on 1 and 3. These can then be used by the dancer to create light and shade within their choreography and evolve into a more complete dancer. They then demonstrated the use of accenting 1 and 3 in a series of jive kicks.

Thirdly Performance and your direction and focus which can be further broken down into 4 points. 1, connecting to your partner 2, to the space/audience, 3, connecting to yourself and 4 complete awareness of your partner.

Alex and Lisa demonstrated these points with great style and experience and finished on a quote about dance 'We are most alive when we are in Love'

## Q&A WITH GRAHAM OSWICK Tal Liftshitz & Ilana Keselman



The next lecture was unplanned because of the withdrawal of Klaus Kongsdal due to illness. In his place Graham asked Tal Liftshitz and Ilana Keselman, the new Professional Rising Star Latin Champions to be interviewed about their career and preparation for Blackpool.

They described the emotions of winning the title after 6 rounds coupled with the fact that it was their first professional competition as 'Unbelievable' and a 'Blast'

Ilana described their preparations in the run up to Blackpool and how they had changed their approach and how they used to use exuberant energy with no subtleness and now use internal energy which is stretch based rather than compression based with less

raw energy and more of a focus on partnering one another. Tal described his dancing as instinct and passion based to start with but now as they are elongating their career has progressed to stretch based globally not locally and that everything originates from the feet! They both try to communicate to their students in New York their love of dance and the basic principles they abide by....

They finished with a Paso Doble demonstration that received a standing ovation and as Tal said that today's phone call from Graham was 'the best wake up call of his life'!

# THE BEAUTY OF SMOOTH

## Slawek Sochacki & Marzena Stachura



The American Smooth lecture 'The Beauty of Smooth' was by Slawek Sochacki and Marzena Stachura from the USA.

They described how they first came into contact with this beautiful style of dance at the Emerald Ball in 2002 and how they found it so full of expression and a blend of different styles.

It is a complex style but is based on recognisable ballroom figures and foot work and that whatever shape you are doing can

always be taken back to a recognisable ballroom position usually promenade or counter promenade. The connection is a pull connection similar to West Coast Swing and there should always be a clarity of positions within the shapes and overshaping. They referred to their own rule of direction/rotation and shape and how the leader leads the shape and then in turn the partner.

The follower connects to the frame and not the body and mirrors a lot of what the leader is doing.

The right hand is the connection point and that they have a vertical connection to create a horizontal pull with the use of the frame and foot pressure. Everything should be leadable and show a true connection to and from the partner.

To add depth in the shaping we must go down, then up and then over. Slawek and Marzena gave very clear readable instructions on how to achieve some beautiful lines and shapes.

A truly balanced and informative lecture that showed how clearly they are so passionate about their style of dance.



# COMMUNICATING ARTISTICALLY

## Victor Da Silva & Joanna Leunis



The exhibition lecture 'Communicating Artistically' was by Victor Da Silva and Joanna Leunis. They opened with one of their fabulous exhibition numbers that was received by the audience with great appreciation. Joanna described how she had an individual presence and a massive sense of awareness and reaction when dancing with Victor, receiving energy and responding to the energy she received from the audience. She showed that there was an opportunity of reaching with energy with intention.

They related this to a piece from their choreography and said how challenging it was for them to communicate through the storyline

and that they had to pursue their dialogue through the steps and talking through non verbal communication and that they had to show full 100% commitment to the steps.

Victor gave us some of his background and that he came from theatre and dance training. He said that he has to be real enough and that it is important to be pure to the moment and that we can always be more prepared to allow our partner to be free to express themselves fully.

They practise together by ad-libbing and by having a story telling message and demonstrated this by connecting with one another through different body parts, the arms, the legs, the hips etc.

They both said that it was important to accept mistakes and learn how to deal with them in a positive way.

A very interesting and informative lecture that showed that 'they dare to take things to the edge'

# PERSONAL PRIORITIES

Colin James



Colin James and 'Personal Priorities' assisted by Troels Bager and Ina Jeliuzova. Colin categorized this into Hands, Feet and Body and communication in time and movement and continued to explain what he meant by this.

The hands and their function, how they are used and their purpose. They need to demonstrate a sense of security and indication of speed or pace. He made contact with Ina and explained communicating through the position of pressure and of the thumb.

The action of inviting the lady and that the lady follows the last direction given, giving her space and time.

He said that you always have to stay in contact with the hand to communicate security, direction and pace.

Next was the feet. The use of them, the pressure used and the importance of how much is used to maintain your balance. The pressure and the position of the pressure is important. The back foot is the leading foot communicated through to the hands to lead the lady where to go.

The use of the body through shaping and blending movements and directions and coordinating them all together creating a harmony.

Troels and Ina then demonstrated some of Colins ideas with him and produced a clever routine that involved them swapping partners and utilising each other through their connection all timed to the music.

A super experienced lecture from one of the leading latin american coaches of today.

# ONE POINT WONDER - CHA CHA

Dorin Frecautanu & Marina Sergeeva



Dorin and Marina started their lecture with a fabulous demonstration of their Cha cha and talked about how they worked as one and that magic has to be created by two people in their performance. They emphasised that the posture should be right and the utilisation of a small base is everything so that they can interpret the music and learn to dance the body between the beats from the usage of the feet. Marina stated that the lady should be responsible for her own interpretation of the music.

A fabulous display of super quality dancing from Dorin and Marina accompanied this lecture to express the points that they were drawing to our attention.

# 30 YEARS IN THE MAKING

## Eugene Katsevman & Maria Manusova



Eugene and Maria started their lecture by saying what an honour it was to be asked to lecture and how they loved preparing for Blackpool once more. They shared some history about how they got together 30 years ago. They met in Brooklyn, NY shortly after arriving in the US.

They had no money or resources, so developed their own principles and ideas worked out on their own and from videos.

Their ideas developed what's important and this came to Functionality and Feeling.

The function has to relate to music and action to timings and the technique helps you to dance and not hinder. Good dancing is doing the right thing at the right time and not dancing everything to the maximum but only do what's possible to the maximum. They then went on to describe their version of the leg action and what is possible depending on the timing through a clear quality demonstration.

Feeling of movement has to be a positive movement and an awareness of transferring weight rolling from the toe through to the heel to achieve a more together partnering. They stated that both should always contribute a 100% so that the parts should always be more than the sum of the parts.

Eugene went on to share their feelings on music and that it is the only common thing we share, the competitors, the audience and the judges so we should find a connection to the music being played. If you resonate with what you hear you will relate and receive a response from the audience. Musicality is your own rhythm related to the music. We have to see ourselves as an instrument and an extra layer on top of the music.

Eugene and Maria then danced a beautiful Rumba to demonstrate these ideas, a first class lecture from two very experienced coaches.



THE  
BALLROOM DANCERS'  
FEDERATION LTD  
PROUDLY PRESENTS

# THE BDF INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2023

27TH & 28TH MAY 2023  
THE SPANISH HALL WINTER GARDENS BLACKPOOL

ACTION  
AWARENESS  
Endurance  
Composition  
PRESENTATION  
MUSICALITY  
STYLE  
BODY  
BEAT  
MUSIC  
TIME  
RHYTHM  
HARMONY  
CHARACTERISATION  
CREATIVITY  
CHOREOGRAPHY  
INDIVIDUALITY  
BALANCE  
HISTORY  
LATIN AMERICAN  
BALLROOM  
EXPRESSION  
KNOWLEDGE  
WALTZ  
TANGO  
VIENNESE WALTZ  
FOXTROT  
QUICKSTEP  
PHYSICALITY  
PREPARE  
JIVE  
RUMBA  
SAMBA  
PASO DOBLE  
CHA CHA  
BIO-MECHANICS  
CO-ORDINATION  
MOTION  
Posture  
NARRATIVE  
PHYSIOLOGY  
SYNCHRONICITY  
INTERPRETATION  
KINETICS  
ENERGY  
STORY  
DYNAMICS  
EMOTION  
SPACE  
SELF  
TECHNIQUE  
CHARISMA  
CONNECTION  
TRAINING  
PHYSIOLOGY  
PARTNER  
COUPLE  
MOVEMENT  
COMPOSITION  
UNDERSTANDING  
COMPATABILITY  
PSYCHOLOGY  
INVENTIVE

*It's all in the*  
**Detail**

"If you have knowledge,  
let others light their candles in it." ~ Margaret Fuller

## THE BDF REVIEW - PART 3

*By Alex Ivanets*

The BDF International Congress 2023

After a very successful first day of lectures, the second day left everyone in huge anticipation and excitement. The first Latin lecture of the day was by great competitors in the past and now very popular lecturers and adjudicators - Andrej Skufca and Melinda.

### MUSICAL INTEGRITY Andrej Skufca & Melinda



Their subject was "Musical Integrity". Andrej started by going into the meaning of both words. "Integrity" is very meaningful word: honest, doing things in a right and reliable way and Andrej commented that a Champion does exactly that. "Musical" meaning to have an interest in Music.

Having put those two ideas on the table Andrej complimented Melinda on her musical background inherited from her Family.

They later chose different pieces of Music contrasting from soft and slow tracks followed by more percussive arrangements and they both performed a small routine in a different way which was a delight to the audience.

Andrej and Melinda encouraged dancers to perform to Music and used a quote: The best practice you will have is below your comp level...

# MAKING IT INTERESTING

Richard Porter



Next Latin lecture was by Richard Porter. Richard is now living in USA and travelled all the way to Blackpool to attend this Festival, unfortunately his case was lost by British Airways so he started his lecture by explaining the situation and making some jokes about it.

The subject of his lecture was; “Making it interesting”.

Richard’s idea was to take normal steps and making them interesting whilst keeping the route.

He presented tools which we can use to make this idea happen.

1. Choreography
2. Technique
3. Dynamics
4. Lead-Follow
6. Rhythm
7. Space
8. Design

Richard used 3 couples to show how a simple routine was transformed into a much more interesting version. He said he apparently met them on the streets of Blackpool and they were part of a local Formation Team, but of course it was a joke as they were Klemen and Sasha, Sasha and Irina, Troels and Ina, World Class Latin dancers. Richard left everyone with the conclusion: It’s your job to transfer steps into more interesting version. You take yourself into a magic place where only you and your dance exist... Another world class lecture.

# LISTENING

Troels Bager & Ina Jeliazkova



Next lecturers were Troels and Ina. Incredible World leading dancers. They were talking about “LISTENING” and especially listening to the sounds in our own bodies. Their idea was we have an imagination within us first and then we need to find tools to make it work. What does the song make you feel?

What energy level?

What tempo?

It all happens in a few seconds and then we are looking for tools to make it work.

Fabulous information, of course accompanied by incredible dancing.

# DANCING IS TECHNIQUE

## Johan & Nadia Eftedal



Last Latin lecture of the day was the fabulous Johan and Nadia Eftedel – they took us down memory lane of 40 years ago when a young man from Norway met a beautiful lady from the United States of America at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool.

This was the start of a very successful world class partnership winning many Championships and Titles all over the World.

They were saying that dancers view technique separate to dance. Their belief is 'Dancing is technique' and 'technique is Dancing' Technique is a base and we build on this base. Johan used a fabulous quote ' Be fast to be slow' ' Be slow to be full'.

Nadia spoke about the old times and that there were a lot less options for example in fan position: Nowadays is very different. She was encouraging people to experiment and explore- quoting the great Doris Lavelle,' the book is not a bible it is a guide'. Johan strongly believes in putting your own stamp on your dance routine.

The audience was very inspired and emotional seeing this fabulous duo back together in the room after so many years.



THE  
BALLROOM DANCERS'  
FEDERATION LTD  
PROUDLY PRESENTS

# THE BDF INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2023

27TH & 28TH MAY 2023  
THE SPANISH HALL WINTER GARDENS BLACKPOOL

ACTION  
AWARENESS  
Endurance  
Composition  
PRESENTATION  
PERFORMANCE  
MUSICALITY  
STYLE  
BODY  
BEAT  
MUSIC  
TIME  
RHYTHM  
HARMONY

WALTZ  
TANGO  
VIENNESE WALTZ  
FOXTROT  
QUICKSTEP

PHYSICALITY  
PREPARE  
JIVE  
RUMBA  
SAMBA  
PASO DOBLE  
CHA CHA  
BIO-MECHANICS  
CO-ORDINATION

MOTION  
Posture  
NARRATIVE  
PHYSIOLOGY  
SYNCHRONICITY  
INTERPRETATION  
KINETICS  
ENERGY  
STORY  
DYNAMICS  
EMOTION  
SPACE  
SELF

CHARACTERISATION  
CREATIVITY  
CHOREOGRAPHY  
INDIVIDUALITY  
BALANCE  
HISTORY  
LATIN AMERICAN  
BALLROOM  
EXPRESSION  
KNOWLEDGE

UNDERSTANDING  
COMPATABILITY  
PSYCHOLOGY  
INVENTIVE  
MOVEMENT  
COMPOSITION  
CONNECTION  
TRAINING  
PHYSIOLOGY  
PARTNER  
COUPLE

CHARISMA  
CHARISMA  
CONNECTION  
TRAINING  
PHYSIOLOGY  
PARTNER  
COUPLE

*It's all in the*  
**Detail**

"If you have knowledge,  
let others light their candles in it." ~ Margaret Fuller

## THE BDF REVIEW - PART 4

*By Ben Taylor*

After a truly spectacular day 1 of lectures, I had the pleasure of providing the ballroom write-ups for the second day.

As an avid follower of the The BDF International Congress as a young dancer, to then go on to lecture with my wife at the National congress, it was personally an amazing experience for me this year to experience the congress in a very different capacity.

To help prepare this congress with my fellow Executive Committee members on the BDF, who year on year work so hard to produce this congress, as well as providing absolutely outstanding services to dance all year round.

I congratulate the BDF and thank the team for the presentation of the 2023 BDF International Congress.

# COMMUNICATION IN THE COUPLE

## Stas Portanenko & Nataliya Kolyada



Stas & Nataliya titled their one point as "Communication in the couple" with quickstep as their chosen dance.

They highlighted the importance of finding your own balance, through the awareness of the center of gravity, the moving leg and standing leg as an individual dancer.

From here, awareness of a "couple or common center" is then required to find balance together. They used a prop in the form of a beach ball to represent the common center between the couple, and skilfully danced some quickstep runs in promenade position, some scatter chasses and ending with a swing variation, whilst beautifully maintaining the connection between each other.

The understanding of individual balance and coordination, combined with the couple's center, provided the audience with an insight into Stas and Nataliya's "Communication in the couple".

# PRIORITIES OF A CHAMPION

## Katusha Demidova



10x World Champion Katusha aptly named her lecture "Priorities of a Champion".

Katusha first outlined the importance of finding priorities. She quoted a legend of our dance world, Peter Eggleton, who once stated: "Dancing should look beautiful, and be able to continue".

The idea of flow whilst producing something natural and elegant was highlighted as extremely important. Katusha then started to present some ideas on how to do this, and referred to "Newton's cradle", and how it never stops and how it represents the swing dances the best.

It divides the swing into two parts. The swing in is equal to the swing out which was of great importance, as if you do not complete this action, you can't start the next swing.

To demonstrate this, Katusha as assisted by the new partnership of Eric Li & Mariya Polischuk. They initially danced some basic waltz, beautifully demonstrating this swing concept of an equal movement in and out of swing. They then went on to dance some more complex waltz variations, continuing to highlight this concept.

As Perer Eggleton had famously said, the movement was certainly continuing to flow and looked beautiful.



# DEVOTION TO THE MOTION

Lyn Marriner



Lyn commenced the lecture by dancing some marvellous slow foxtrot with her assistant, Michael Le. Lyn firstly explained there are 3 planes of motion, frontal plane, rotation and sway.

Frontal plane commences as a metronomic action to move the body weight first. The rotary action is located in the upper back and the sway action starts in the lower body (hips and legs) and completes in the head extension.

Lyn explained that these 3 planes of motion should be released into free space. Too much tension is an action blocker, so it is important that the body is relaxed enough to produce maximum range in these 3 planes.

Lyn outlined how she feels she is able to dance to maximum if the body weight is in the balls of her feet. She concluded the lecture by dancing some more beautiful slow foxtrot, dynamically expressing the use of these 3 planes of motion to a delighted audience.

# THE VIENNESE WALTZ

Stanislav Zelianin & Irina Cherepanova



Stas & Irina's one point wonder was the fastest of all the ballroom dances - the Viennese Waltz.

They started the lecture by dancing a full track Viennese Waltz with remarkable consistency from beginning to the end.

Stas then outlined how the Viennese Waltz is a dance that is easy to compare due to the limited number of figures within the dance. It is the fastest dance, where "moving portraits are compared".

Therefore, the importance of balance, posture and using the feet is paramount. Stas then explained how a moving portrait is a combination of posture, arm styling, center and connection.

These elements are extremely important when comparing Viennese Waltz. Consistency in such a repetitive is essential, and dancers should make sure they are as good at the end of the dance as they are at the start. A clear message reflected in the beautiful demonstration of this truly elegant dance.

# SHAPE IN WALTZ

Valerio Colantoni & Anna Demidova



Valerio & Anna were next up using the waltz as their dance choice for the lecture. Shape was the subject, which Valerio pointed out comes in many forms.

It could be the shape and articulation of the foot, it could be the shape of the leg, it could be the shape of the center. The combination of these shapes in actions produce what we see as shapes in the upper body.

Valerio then shared a wonderful quote to highlight this: " Base before the face to create the space".

From here, Valerio & Anna went on to demonstrate this idea. Firstly, they produced a beautiful silhouette and shape by dancing a right lunge, where the base and lower half moves in opposition to produce space in the upper body.

Secondly, they dance a throwaway oversway with magnificent control and balance using the same idea of the lower half counter balancing and producing what we see as a beautiful shape in the upper body. They concluded the lecture with a demonstration waltz, magnificently highlighting the theme of the lecture through elegant and flowing movements.

# MUSIC IS MY PASSION

Massimo Giorgianni



The final and hotly anticipated lecture of the congress was Massimo with his lecture title "Music is my passion", assisted by his lovely wife Alessia.

To be musical, Massimo stated you need 3 elements - movement, mood, music & your relationship to the music

Movement is the first element in which you need to be flexible. A dancer should not be too tense as this will limit flexibility.

Secondly, mood.

Finding or charging the right mood is important. There should be emotion.

Finally, music and the relationship to the music. Understanding silence and finding the silences in your movement to music can be key.

Silences in movement is hovering, or not moving so much, or stillness.

Massimo then passionately explained that being musical means playing with the music, and not being afraid to do so.

Don't be a slave to the music and challenge the music. Be emotional then you can be musical.

What then followed was then an amazing spectacle to witness in person. Massimo and Alessia danced a tango amalgamation to various pieces of music. Some of the music was traditional and classical, other pieces were extremely abstract!

What was amazingly clear was the difference in mood, energy and interpretation depending on the music playing.

What a treat to witness for everyone in the room.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the BDF International Congress left me with a range of emotions over the two days. Excitement, nostalgia with some personal tears, fabulously presented information, spectacular dancing - I could go on.

What was evident was the shared enjoyment of the audience, the dancers and the lecturers. There was a common theme throughout the two days whereby the importance of fundamentals, principles, expressions and emotion.

It is all in the detail that these elements all merge to produce the beautiful dancing we have seen in the past, and continue to see in the present.

THE BALLROOM DANCERS' FEDERATION LTD  
BDF INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2023



WITH SPECIAL THANKS



TOMASZ REINDL  
PHOTOGRAPHY

READ THE BDF REVIEW ONLINE

[WWW.BDFONLINE.CO.UK](http://WWW.BDFONLINE.CO.UK)

