



**ACADEMY
BREAKIN'
CONVENTION**
HIP HOP EDUCATION AT
SADLER'S WELLS EAST

PROSPECTUS



HIP HOP SOCIAL DANCE / POPPING / BREAKING / EMCEE / DJING / GRAFFITI / MUSIC PRODUCTION

WELCOME TO ACADEMY BREAKIN' CONVENTION

“ Academy Breakin' Convention's delivery of the UAL Level 3 in Performance and Production Arts seeks to establish a professional pathway that prioritises the development of hip hop as a theatrical genre for young people of all backgrounds. We are committed to decreasing barriers to enter and navigate the creative sector through an inclusive approach which centres the values of hip hop culture: peace, love, unity and having fun.

It is vital that students gain a transferable skillset, wide networks, meaningful cultural experiences and formal qualifications to prepare for professional life. Learners will become aware of their relationship to the wider world, take seriously individual responsibility while developing their creative practice with mentorship from a faculty of current artists and educators. We look forward to increasing opportunities for employment, further study and the production of high-quality hip hop theatre.

ABC are excited to nurture young cultural contributors, future leaders, and practitioners with integrity, community values, and a commitment to a lifelong love of learning. Hip hop is part of our creative future, and I am excited to create a blueprint for the next generation of polymaths to understand the importance of care, sustainability and intentional leadership. ”

Niquelle LaTouche
Head of Academy Breakin' Convention



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OUR HOME

Sadler's Wells is the world's leading dance organisation offering a year-round programme of performances and experiences including the internationally renowned festival of hip hop dance theatre Breakin' Convention. Founded by UK hip hop theatre pioneer Jonzi D, Breakin' Convention's first festival took place in 2004, when Alistair Spalding became the Artistic Director at Sadler's Wells. Over the past two decades, Breakin' Convention has evolved and expanded delivering several seasonal professional development projects for hip hop theatre makers.

Academy Breakin' Convention is one of the major initiatives at Sadler's Wells East, located at Sadler's Wells recently developed fourth venue in East London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Stratford. The new space is part of East Bank, alongside the BBC, UAL's London College of Fashion, UCL and the V&A. The site forms a new cultural hub for young creatives, presenting opportunities for collaboration and innovation between organisations and communities.



VENUE & FACILITIES

SADLER'S WELLS EAST

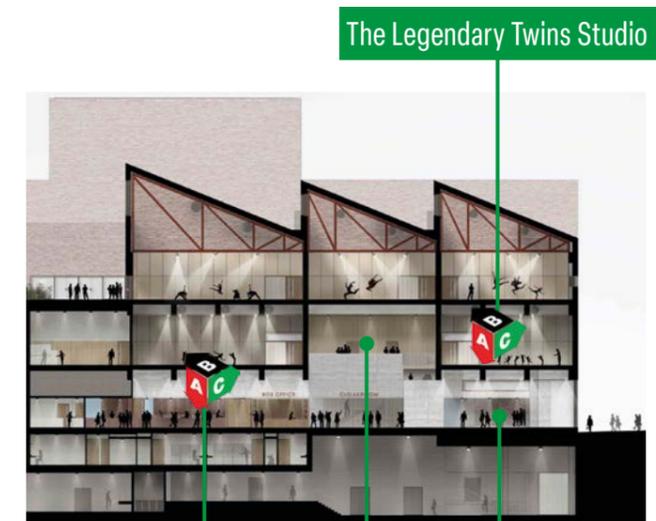
Sadler's Wells East is a hub for creativity, supporting artist development and training, plus the creation of new work. Designed with artists in mind, it is a resource for the whole of the UK, offering a destination venue for dance companies around Britain to tour to the capital, and hosting the best work from international choreographers. The Dance Floor, a public performance space in the theatre's large wrap-around foyer, will give a platform to community groups and guest artists and will be a welcoming space for all styles of dance.

FACILITIES

- 550-seat flexible theatre
- Six large dance studios designed to support dance makers
- Industry standard equipment
- Co-working study space
- Cafe with a selection of hot and cold food choices
- Open community space – The Dance Floor
- Terrace spaces with views over the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

HOW TO GET THERE

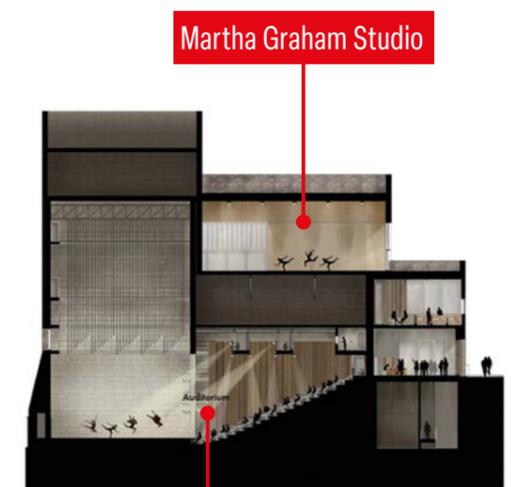
The entrance to Sadler's Wells East is off Stratford Walk, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London, E20 2AR



Cindy Campbell Studio

The Dance Floor

Study Space



Martha Graham Studio

Auditorium

“Sadler's Wells East will play a huge part in the world-class cultural offer at East Bank in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. We are bringing together leading institutions as part of our capital's biggest single investment in culture and education for over a century... putting culture and creativity at the very heart of East London.”

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan



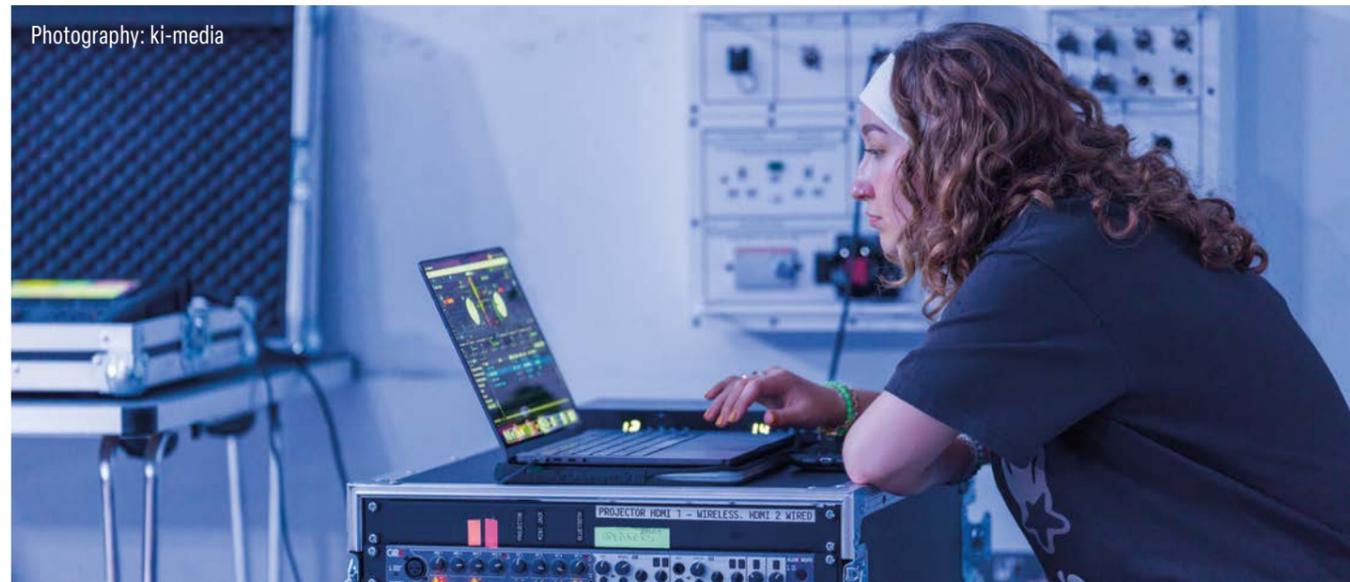
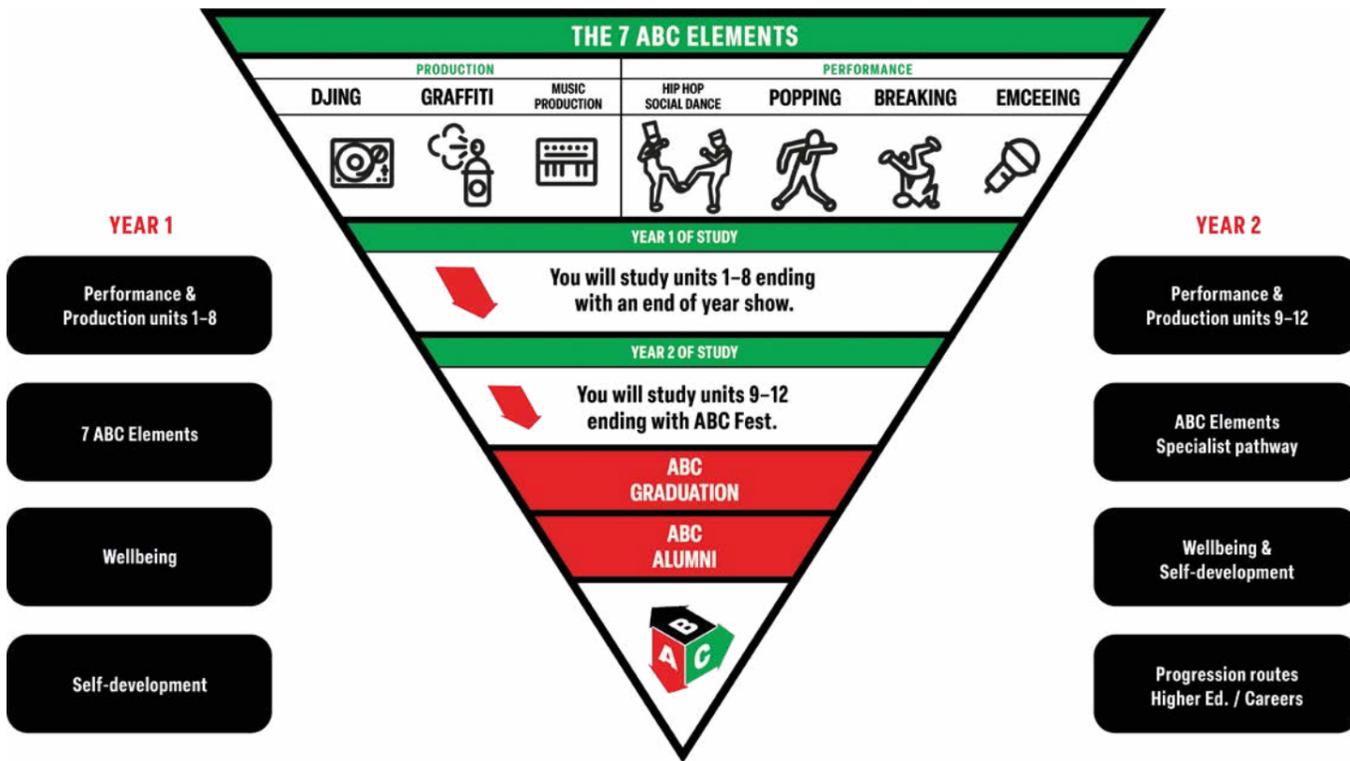
Plan your visit and view travel information by scanning the QR code.

THE COURSE

WHO IS THE COURSE FOR?

Academy Breakin' Convention is for students aged 16 – 19 or up to 24 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who have a passion for hip hop culture and an interest to learn and develop as young hip hop artists and leaders in the hip hop sector. We celebrate diversity and welcome artists from all backgrounds and levels of experience.

LEVEL 3 EXTENDED DIPLOMA IN PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTION ARTS (HIP HOP THEATRE)



Photography: ki-media

YEAR 1 INTRODUCTION TO HIP HOP THEATRE

Learn all seven ABC elements to gain a broad foundation of hip hop artistic practices.

Induction project and buddy assignment (pastoral)

Formative assessments (not graded)

PROJECT 1: HIP HOP THROUGH TIME

50 years of hip hop and counting: understanding the principles and pivotal changes in each artform.

PROJECT 2: HIP HOP REMIX OF A CLASSIC

Theatre in translation - what is hip hop in theatre?

PROJECT 3: BREAKIN' NEWS

Devising to a chosen theme or a social issue.

PROJECT 4: PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND REFLECTION PRESENTATION

ABC impact and 2nd year niche ideas.

SUMMER PROJECTS

Road to Breakin' Convention Festival - sharing foundational understanding as part of a collaborative showcase at Sadler's Wells East.

Exam Jam - producing a community event at Sadler's Wells East.

Graded assessments

FINAL MAJOR PROJECT: PROJECT 5 A hip hop theatre production.

YEAR 2 SPECIALISATION

Pick two elements: one performance and a second element to support your niche interests.

Each One Teach One mentorship (pastoral)

Formative assessments (not graded)

PROJECT 6: SPECIALIST PRACTICE

Developing a niche and work experience.

PROJECT 7: PLANNING ABC FESTIVAL

Progression routes and designing a festival.

SUMMER PROJECTS

Breakin' Convention - perform on the main stage at Sadler's Wells Theatre as part of Breakin' Convention's ground-breaking festival.

Exam Jam - featuring at a community event at Sadler's Wells East.

Graded assessments

FINAL MAJOR PROJECT: PROJECT 8 Producing a hip hop festival.

YEAR 1 & 2: WELLBEING AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (2 sessions a week)

- Mental health
- Wellbeing and mindfulness
- Digital literacy and new technologies
- Conflict resolution
- Work experience
- CV, portfolio and audition preparation
- Financial literacy
- Sex and relationships
- Gender: sexism and discrimination
- Coercive behaviour and industry risks

LIFE AFTER ABC

ABC students graduate and progress on to level 4 or industry. All alumni will join our freelance talent pool and receive support with their next steps.

STUDENT LIFE

A TYPICAL WEEK AT ABC

The course will be delivered Monday – Friday 09:00– 16:30 with show days ending at 22:00. ABC’s studios will open 08:30 -08:55 for breakfast club and remain open until 18:00 for students to use the space and equipment to produce their work and minimise additional costs.

Fridays are our extra-curricular day with flexible sessions to accommodate young carers and work commitments.

Every week students will:

- Learn hip hop and self-development skills from world-class artists and teachers who have decades of experience in the industry.
- Train intensively in our performance elements (Hip Hop Social Dance, Popping, Breaking and Emceeing) and production elements (DJing, Graffiti and Music Production).
- Expand their creative thinking and problem-solving, develop interpersonal skills, industry awareness and professionalism, to future-proof for multiple working environments.

ABC PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
08:30 - 08:55	Breakfast Club	Breakfast Club	Breakfast Club	Breakfast Club	Enrichment
09:00 - 09:15	Assembly	Form Time	Form Time	Form Time	Breakfast Club and Check-in
09:15 - 10:45	ABC Project	ABC Project	Wellbeing	ABC Project	Space and Time
	Assessment Check-ins				
10:45 - 11:00	BREAK AM				
11:00 - 12:30	Element: DJing	Element: Music Production	Element: Popping	Element: Emceeing	Marketing Club Space and Time
12:30 - 13:20	LUNCH				
13:20 - 14:50	ABC Project	Wellbeing and Conditioning	Self-development Programme	ABC Project	Artist Development
	Wellbeing Check-ins	External Visit			Space and Time
14:50 - 15:00	BREAK PM				Early Finish 3pm
15:00 - 16:30	Element: Breaking	Each One Teach One Studio Time External Visit	Element: Hip Hop Social Dances	Element: Graffiti	Critical Conversations Club (hip hop community)
16:30 - 18:00	Staff Meetings	Space and Time	Space and Time	Space and Time	

GCSE students will study an additional 3 hours of English or 4 hours of Maths each week.

Some evening and weekend attendance will be required for performances and events until as late as 22:00.

EQUALITY, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

At ABC, equity is a focal point of the course, our admissions process and timetabling has been developed to provide access to space, breakfast, industry standard equipment, student support and free specialist training.

Teaching and learning are tailored to meet the needs of each cohort. It is vital that all students are valued, respected and celebrated. We take an intersectional approach to ensure we are being inclusive, equitable and reflecting the experiences of demographics that make up our community. Our EDI calendar will be co-curated by students, staff as well as parents/carers.

All core ABC staff have received training in:

- Safeguarding and Prevent
- Emergency First Aid
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Trauma and Adversity
- Unconscious Bias, Diversity and Anti-Racism
- Teaching, Learning and Behaviour Management

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN

If you have an EHCP, you can enrol up to the age of 24. Documents will need to be reviewed by Big Creative Training and ABC to ensure we are able to help you throughout your time here. As we are a small provider, this support will be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

MATHS AND ENGLISH

Students are expected to have 5 GCSEs at grade 4 –9 including English / Maths (or equivalent).

If a student does not meet these requirements but is an exceptional candidate, we will consider supporting those who are committed to obtaining Maths or English during their studies. This will be assessed on an individual basis, considering workload and wellbeing as students will be required to study an additional 4 hours of Maths or 3 hours of English weekly.



Photography: ki-media

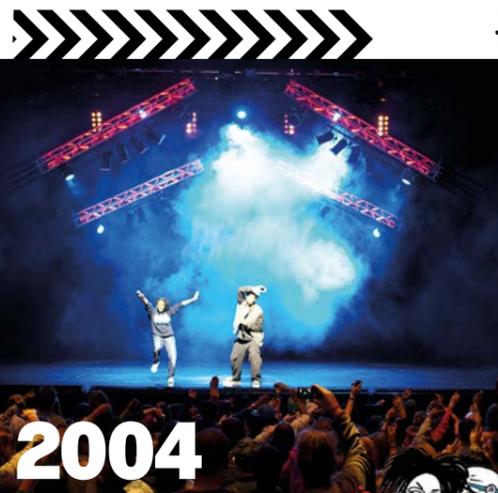
BREAKIN' CONVENTION: TWO DECADES AND COUNTING

The idea of bringing hip hop into a UK theatre started over a decade before Breakin' Convention's first festival. Let us take you back...

Jonzi D explored his influences in hip hop performance and contemporary dance creating the solo piece *Aeroplane Man* and the duet *Silence da Bitchin'* with UK popping champion and theatre maker Benji Reid. This was performed at the Oval House Theatre in 1995 and led to Jonzi D's artistic

residency at The Place Theatre where he created the seminal hip hop theatre piece, *Lyrikal Fearta*. Touring *Lyrikal Fearta* internationally exposed him to a growing scene in which b-boys, poppers and lockers were exploring their techniques theatrically. In 2000 Jonzi suggested creating a hip hop dance theatre festival to Alistair Spalding (now Artistic Director and Co-Chief Executive of Sadler's Wells) on the off chance that he'd listen... and he did!

Future Elements video project was launched, a week where Breakin' Convention offered aspiring dancers, MCs, producers, designers, film makers and artists to work with professional hip hop artists to create a music video within a week.



2004

The first Breakin' Convention took place bringing hip hop dance to Sadler's Wells.

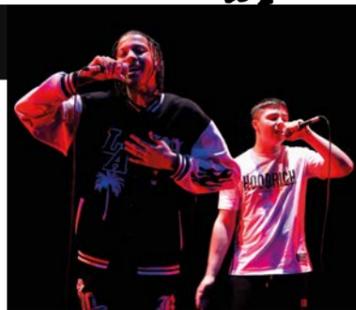


2005

Saw the founding of Jonzi D Productions, focused on education and professional development projects like *The Surgery* and *Hip Hop Hospital*.

2007

The launch of Breakin' Convention Pioneers brought over legends like Popin' Pete, Mr Wiggles, Suga Pop, Tony Go Go, Alien Ness, Trac 2, Shannon 'Whichway' Sha and Ken Swift. The festival moved up to a three-day weekend and was awarded a TMA Audience Award for Achievement in Dance and also embarked on its first UK Tour.



2009



2016

Breakin' Convention expanded to incorporate an education strand making learning a year-round activity, laying down the foundation for a hip hop academy in future.



2013

Breakin' Convention's 10 year anniversary and the first time they held Park Jam, a free annual event for the community. Breakin' Convention also went global with their first ever international showcase at the world famous Apollo Theater in Harlem, bringing international companies to perform a stone's throw of where hip hop began with a festival co-hosted alongside MC Lyte.

2011



Breakin' Convention launched the *Back to the Lab* course. Hand-picked choreographers were overseen by a choreographic heavyweight from outside the realm of hip hop to give participants another perspective on creating new work for the theatre.

2018



To mark their 15th anniversary they brought a 15-piece big band orchestra as they joined forces with Jazz re:refreshed to form The Sonic Orchestra.

2021/22



After having joined in 2004, Michelle Norton became the Director of Breakin' Convention and new hybrid professional development models such as *Emerge+See* launched.

2023



Celebrating 20 years, Jonzi D was awarded a citation from the New York State Assembly in recognition of his efforts for advancing and advocating hip hop culture in the UK and abroad. He was also nominated for an Olivier Award for his artistic direction of Breakin' Convention 2023, cementing the festival's two decades as a mainstay in the world of theatre and beyond.

2025

ABC opens its doors to the UK's first Level 3 Extended Diploma for Hip Hop Theatre, increasing opportunities for hip hop practices to be utilised within education. After two decades, one thing is certain: hip hop theatre is here to stay.



PROJECTS & ALUMNI

BREAKIN' CONVENTION PROJECTS

FUTURE ELEMENTS

A four day long workshop bringing together young people aged 11-14 to learn new skills and explore their talents. These aspiring dancers, MCs, graffiti artists and music producers work intensively with professional hip hop artists to write lyrics, produce music, choreograph routines, create artwork and shoot a music video, before it is shown to the public at their very own film night.



OPEN ART SURGERY

A one week development course for hip hop theatre artists and companies, from dancers and musicians to emcees and visual artists, to develop and experiment with new ideas, share new work publicly and receive mentorship from experienced hip hop theatre creators. With no pressure on an end product, Open Art Surgery allows artists to take creative risks, try something different or to test ideas.



BACK TO THE LAB

A two week intensive course for experienced choreographers to explore new ways of approaching choreography, direction and staging. Participants are challenged to try and work in different ways and gain new choreographic tools through practical and discussion-based lessons. Their new-found knowledge is put into practice as they devise a new work to be presented and discussed in front of a live audience.



BREAKIN' CONVENTION ALUMNI

IVAN MICHAEL BLACKSTOCK: OPEN ART SURGERY & BACK TO THE LAB 2011 ARTIST

Credits include:

- Choreographic and performance appearances at Sadler's Wells, 180 Studios, Factory International, La Villette in Paris, Kampnagel in Hamburg, and ITA in Amsterdam.
- Awarded Breakthrough Cultural Excellence in Film and Video at the Nowness Awards 2019.
- Founder of CRXSS PLATFXRM and ALTRUVIOLET.
- Partnered with Nike, Red Bull, Soho House and UAL: Central Saint Martins.
- Creator of TRAPLORD BLK MEME/RA for Channel 4 Random Acts in Autumn 2021.
- Choreographer for Beyoncé's grammy award-winning music video 'Brown Skin Girl'.
- Creator & Director of TRAPLORD the Olivier award-winning production.
- Artistic Director at 180 Studios 2020 -2023.
- Associate Artist at The Southbank Centre.



SHANNELLE TALI FERGUS: OPEN ART SURGERY 2015 & BACK TO THE LAB 2016 ARTIST

Credits include:

- Performed at Breakin' Convention's US and UK tour in 'VICE' - BirdGang / Ukweli Roach.
- Performer in 'TRAPLORD' - Ivan Michael Blackstock.
- Performer in 'Redd' - Boy Blue Ent.
- Choreographed 'Redlands' (Chichester Festival Theatre), 'Cinderella' (Northern Stage), and 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' (Chichester Festival Theatre, Unicorn Theatre).
- Choreographed 'Mum. Edit. More' appearing at Rich Mix, The Place, and Wellcome.
- Choreographed 'Let You Love Me' by Rita Ora and 'Killing' by We Are Shining f. Eliza Dolittle.
- Assistant Choreographer for artists such as Griff, NAO, Rita Ora, and Years & Years.
- Agency Manager of ZooNation: The Kate Prince Company 2011-2024.
- Founder, producer and lead facilitator of identity. ideas. industry.



ADMISSIONS

01

APPLY

Visit academybreakinconvention.com and submit a 60 second video of you doing one of our ABC elements. You will also need to answer, "What do you hope to develop at Academy Breakin' Convention?"



02

SHORTLISTING

Your video and answer will be marked by 10 judges. A conditional offer will be sent to successful applicants within 2 weeks of applying (or from the 1st September if you are an early bird applicant) to start the admissions process.

03

SUPPORT SESSIONS

Attend our free support sessions to prepare you for your admissions workshops (optional).

04

ADMISSIONS WORKSHOPS

You will do workshops in Breaking, Popping, and Hip Hop Social Dance, and apply your learning in short drama task, followed by your Emceeing task (with and without music). The day will end with a conversation and questions about the course with the ABC team.



05

RECEIVE YOUR OFFER

After the admissions workshops, you will receive one of the following:

- Unconditional (if you already have your GCSE results and pass eligibility checks)
- Conditional
- Reserve list
- Unsuccessful

06

GET READY FOR ABC

Attend Breakin' Convention Festival, Exam Jam and Summer Session with ABC to get familiar with your cohort and the team. During this time we will work with parent/carers/schools/local authorities to plan support for your needs on the course.

07

ENROLMENT

If you are eligible and have the required grades you will enrol in August.

08

WELCOME TO ABC

Complete Sadler's Wells East induction and begin the Hip Hop Theatre course in September.



CAREERS

The Level 3 Extended Diploma in Performance and Production Arts provides students with the knowledge, skills and understanding to progress to degree level or employment in the performing arts sector.

At ABC, we want to reflect how our professional market is constantly changing, and this course develops skills and networks for a lifelong career. We will foster talent and give students the tools to build sustainable creative careers and the confidence to know they belong within a local and global market. Their increased awareness of industry needs and transferrable skills will open a range of higher educational and vocational courses, self-employment opportunities, and progression routes within the cultural industry as emerging producers, directors, choreographers, programmers, script writers, marketers and performers.

Extended Diploma UCAS points:
Pass - 72 / Merit - 120 / Distinction - 168

PROGRESSION ROUTES



HIGHER EDUCATION

Universities / Level 4 Courses



FURTHER EDUCATION

Apprenticeships /
Technical and Professional Courses



EMPLOYMENT

On Stage / Off Stage / Back Stage



Photography: Jay Kasitz

OPEN DAYS & EVENTS

Attend one of our **FREE** events to get a feel for the course and learn what we are all about. We invite you to meet the ABC team as we showcase some of the flavour and finesse the course has to offer.

OPEN DAYS: NOVEMBER & JANUARY

Our Open Days welcome students, teachers, parents and carers to experience Sadler's Wells East, a thriving new theatre with state of the art facilities. You will be given the opportunity to ask all your burning questions face to face, get a taste of the action with free taster workshops, and discover how you can become a part of our cohort.

Suitable for: all ages

IN MY ELEMENT: MAY

During Breakin' Convention's festival weekend, we offer beginner level workshops in Breaking, Emceeing, Popping, and Hip Hop Social Dance. Join us for the opportunity to work with industry professionals whilst developing your confidence and creativity.

Suitable for: 14 -18 year olds or up to 24 with an EHCP

EXAM JAM: JULY

Head down to Sadler's Wells East as we bring together the East London community to celebrate the end of exam season! Expect showcases from a range of student, community and professional artists, exhibition battles, a graffiti zone and a head-to-head between our DJ's.

Suitable for: all ages

SUMMER SESSIONS: AUGUST

Across 5 high impact days we will break down the basics of Breaking, DJing, Emceeing, Graffiti, Music Production, Popping and Hip Hop Social Dance. To wrap up the week, you will bring your skills to the stage showcasing what you have learnt or work behind the scenes to bring the production to life.

Suitable for: 14 -18 year olds or up to 24 with an EHCP

For more information and to register for our Open Days and events scan the following QR code:



ARE YOU A SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY GROUP?

Bring Academy Breakin' Convention to your doorstep and discover the importance of hip hop education. We provide FREE assemblies on careers and progression routes in the creative industry focusing on hip hop culture as well as free hip hop theatre workshops, so students interested in the arts (Dance, Music, Art, Poetry, and Drama) can give it a go!

Get in touch for either:

- Whole year group assembly and careers talk for Year 10s/11s
- Hip hop theatre workshops

Send your expression of interest via email: academy@breakinconvention.com

FAQs

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Do I need any qualifications to study at ABC?

Students are expected to have 5 GCSEs at grade 4 –9 including English / Maths (or equivalent). If a student does not meet these requirements but is an exceptional candidate, we will consider supporting a student who is dedicated and committed to obtaining this during their studies. This will be assessed on an individual basis.

How old do I have to be to apply?

You must be aged 16, 17 or 18 on the 31st of August in the year that you enrol at ABC (unless you have an EHCP in which case you must be 16-24).

What support can you offer if I have additional educational needs?

ABC has a committed pastoral support team who can provide relevant support in lessons where necessary. If shortlisted, you will be asked to provide details on your educational needs. If you have an Educational Health Care Plan, we will review your documents to assess whether we have the support available to help you throughout your time at ABC. As we are a small Further Education provider, we will need to assess required support on a case-by-case basis.

Is there a fee?

There is no fee to attend ABC.

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

When can I apply?

You can submit your application for Academy Breakin' Convention between the 5 May and 31 January.

Once I have submitted my application, when should I expect to hear from you?

Early bird applications (between 5 May – 31 August) will receive a reply within two weeks from the 1 September regarding whether you have been shortlisted. General applications (between 1 September - 31 January) will receive a reply within two weeks of applying regarding whether you have been shortlisted. You will be sent resources and key dates to prepare for your admissions workshop.

What will I be expected to do in my admissions workshop?

- DANCE - You will take part in three workshops learning some beginner level Breaking, Popping and Hip Hop Social Dance.
- EMCEE - You will perform your pre-prepared rap and spoken word piece to a small panel.
- DRAMA TASK - You will be set an improvised hip hop theatre task by a small panel.
- CONVERSATION - A chance to look at the course detail, return to your first application questions, and ask any questions to the ABC team.

How many students will be accepted?

We will recruit 20 students for the 1st year, then next year another 20, therefore, there will be rolling total of 40 students in the academy every year.



More FAQs can be found on our website



KEEP IN TOUCH

Postal address:
Sadler's Wells East
101 Carpenters Rd
London, E20 2AR

 academybreakinconvention.com

  @academybreakinconvention

 academy@breakinconvention.com



Academy Breakin' Convention is run in conjunction with Big Creative Training.



**ACADEMY
BREAKIN'
CONVENTION**



MAYOR OF LONDON

