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The Jewel of Downtown Santa Monica

Dancing with the Stars; get ready to do so with Santa Monica's T=Dance Doctor, John Casses

By Adrienne Papp | August 03, 2010

There is hardly any day passing by without us hearing something somewhere about the most popular show on the Planet, Dancing with the Stars. And I mean that in the literal sense. For one, my home continent Europe adopted the show and reporting success-rates shooting off the roof. Most everyone I know makes it a point to get home for the show, and if the country was to be invaded by aliens while they are glued to the silver screen, they would not notice a thing. Movie stars, TV stars, stars of one kind or another, professional dancers, politicians and ordinary people go to extraordinary measures to carve a spot one way or another to be on the show, but at least in the audience. Some diet to unimaginable degrees, train with unbelievable devotion and dance till they drop dead for a reason that we do not really understand.

Why is this show so popular? For the love of the sport, the spirit of the dance, the love of the movement of the body that is so human. One of the oldest traditions of mankind is dance. In all cultures dance had a medicine affect, fear dance, fire dance, rainmaker dance, and a long list of all kinds of spiritual dances, all of which is naturally carried in our genes throughout thousands, if not millions of years. Everyone loves to dance. From the teenagers in nightclubs, to the adults at corporate events, fundraisers, and weddings. Is there anyone who has not danced with the love of his/her life? Was not that something to remember forever? Dancing is in our genes. Not to mention the fact that it is one of the best exercises there is. The competition is another aspect. It makes your blood boil.

It is however not that easy to find a real good instructor, a studio where learning it all is not only possible but is really enjoyable. Leaning to dance should be a process of true joy, not a measure of struggle. In my quest to find out where all these amazing people on the show or off learn to dance, and upon interviewing countless number of people to find something local in Santa Monica, I happened upon a very prestigious studio right in the heart of the city, called: The Dance Doctor, John Cassese.

Who is he and why is he so popular in this gorgeous beach city with toned and slimmed down bodies, the city of Santa Monica? Step by step it comes to light that John Cassese's story is more than inspirational, hence his success with the locals as well as everyone else from Los Angeles. He's not only one of the successful survivors of the entertainment world, but he ended up following his dream at all costs and becoming the most highly respected professional in his field.

Cassese is not only referred to as the most talented and sharing icon in the world of music and dance, but his story also has a number of layers that can teach and help generations after generations, and those who dare to care. He's a multitasking creative artist who has excelled in the musical arts through sheer will and unquestionable talent, but who also is a magnetic and creative master of new age, classical and ballroom dance with a talent so unique it has made him become the most sought-after dancing and musical megastar of our time. And, the best thing about him is that he lives in Malibu and teaches in Santa Monica. A well kept secret of the West Side. He is known as the Dance Doctor, a well-deserved and hard earned title, but one that surely makes him a "doctor of the body's dance spirit." He also teaches you how to eat and looks 30 years younger himself than his age. Watch any of his videos and you will see that this man was born to dance.

Not a surprise that he taught some of Hollywood's biggest names and appeared in countless shows as well as wrote some. But, John Cassese does not stop at dancing; he's also a fabulous vocal performer, with a number of recordings that deserve a wide audience and even Grammy mention. His CDs serve him well in his classes and has a long-range of fan base.

Cassese had an intuitive understanding at the age of ten of what made boys popular with girls. "I had heard that the best way to a man's heart was through his stomach," he says, "but I knew that the quickest way to a girl's heart was through her feet." Well put and funny, yet true!

Over the past thirty years in television and film, there's hardly a venue in Los Angeles that hasn't called on John Cassese for his dancing expertise. Chances are if there's a dance sequence in a TV or movie production, he has been involved in either creating choreography or coaching the performers. John is one of those people that inspire the rest of us. Parents take their kids to him because he is not JUST a dance coach. He is a life coach. Success comes at a price, pay it and it will pay you! Cassese not only proved, but also teaches you that those who risk, win, and that talent eventually wins over everything else, no matter what! That is the law! And, "coincidentally" enough that is the law of the single most popular show, Dancing with the Stars. Here we are Westsiders, we got a doc to go to, let's become part of the fun and victory we see on TV instead of just watching others do it.

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