

Your daily guide to the county's entertainment scene, with a 20-page pullout every Friday



Young talent: Hannah Martin will be at the Royal Concert Hall on January 26. She has been a member of the Retina Youth Dance Company for the past three years and has now been accepted into the U.Dance Ensemble 2012.

PICTURE: BRIAN SLATER. IMAGE COURTESY OF YOUTH DANCE ENGLAND

Hannah one step closer to dream of becoming professional dancer

A dancer from Woodthorpe has been selected to join the first UK-wide youth dance company. **Riah Matthews** finds out more about how she juggles school and her budding dance career

FOR Hannah Martin the childhood dream of becoming a professional dancer is now one step closer.

The 17-year-old has been selected to dance as part of U.Dance Ensemble 2012 and will be working with choreographer Hofesh Shechter.

Hannah says: "I feel rather privileged. It excites me because it's a great opportunity to work with an amazing choreographer. I know it's going to be hard work but I'm excited already."

The young dancer has been a member of the city's Retina Youth Dance Company, where she focuses on contemporary dance and ballet, for three years.

She went through a rigorous

process to be selected for U.Dance including two heat stages in Manchester and London where she danced against the other 16 to 21-year-olds eager to take part.

“When I was young I was always dancing. I love it. I don't care how much effort it takes

Hannah Martin

Hannah now has three vigorous rehearsal sessions in Glasgow, Cardiff and London before the performance at London's Southbank Centre on July 13 and 15.

The busy Woodthorpe teenager juggles her dancing with studying for her A-levels at Trinity College.

She says: "It's pretty hard; I have to use every minute I have. I dance every day after school so any minute I'm free at school I have to do my homework."

"When I was young I was always dancing. I love it. I don't really care about how much effort it takes."

The hard work is paying off for Hannah, who's been accepted to study a BA in dance at the Northern Contemporary Dance School, which she'll start in September.

Hannah credits much of her dance success to being part of Retina Youth Dance, based in College Street.

She says: "I've learnt a lot about creating and preparing a piece to then dance. That experience has made me want to do it professionally."



Dedicated: Hannah Martin

"My dream is to get a job performing dance. Retina opened me up to a lot more opportunities, it's helped me understand how a dance company works. They are great support."

Retina's artistic director, Filip Van Huffel, believes Hannah's achievement shows that the dance company is producing world-class dancers.

He says: "It's a big achievement and it proves that what we are doing is setting people up for a career, it's not just for fun, although it is fun as well."

"We train them so that one day they might become professional dancers."

■ On Thursday Hannah will be performing at Nottingham Playhouse at 2pm and 8pm as part of Retina's latest work *Layers of Skin*. Tickets can be booked by calling the box office on 0115 941 9419 or going to the website at www.nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk