

SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



ANTHONY IKIN CONTESTANT

AGE	26
HOME CITY	GOLD COAST
OCCUPATION	DANCER/FITNESS STUDIO OWNER
DANCE STYLE	ACROBATIC CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

If life gives you lemons, make lemonade – that has got to be Anthony Ikin's motto. The 26-year-old trained for years as a gymnast and was not only a five-time Australian Elite Aerobics Champion from 1998 to 2002, but also picked up a Bronze medal in Las Vegas at the World Aerobic Championships in 1999. Anthony had his heart set on competing at the Olympic Games, only to have his dream shattered when he was told he was too tall to be an elite gymnast (he's 188cm!).

But instead of throwing in the towel, Anthony discovered a new passion – dance. His formal dance training started at the relatively late age of 17, but his background in gymnastics and aerobics saw quick success, winning roles in the 2005 musical production *Grease: The Arena Spectacular*, and the world famous cabaret *Moulin Rouge* in Paris. He also performed at the opening ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

Anthony's style is Funky Jazz, in which he has formal training, as well as a little in Contemporary. And when you see him doin' his thing, it's obvious how handy all that gymnastic training was in producing a trick-filled, eye-catching routine.

Brother of famous rugby league player Ben Ikin, Anthony owns a dance and fitness studio in his hometown of the Gold Coast, Ikin Dance, and loves working helping with kids' fitness.

Key quote: "I can't wait to learn all the different styles of dance - I love a challenge!"



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CAMILLA JAKIMOWICZ CONTESTANT

AGE	25
HOME CITY	BRISBANE
OCCUPATION	PERFORMER / DANCE TEACHER
DANCE STYLE	JAZZ

Unlike most teenagers, Camilla's first job wasn't at a check-out or as a burger flipper – she landed a dancing role in the big budget Baz Luhrmann extravaganza, *Moulin Rouge*! Not bad for a 16-year-old gal from Ipswich.

The now 25-year-old started training in Tap, Jazz and Ballet from the tender age of three years old and has never looked back. After strutting her stuff alongside Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor, she went on to make her musical theatre debut as a swing dancer in *Saturday Night Fever* and performed as an ensemble member in both Hugh Jackman's *Boy From Oz* and *We Will Rock You* in Japan and Osaka. She also performed at the opening of Stadium Australia in Sydney to a full house, so she's no stranger to performing for enormous crowds.

Grounded and honest, Camilla undertook a full time performing arts course at Sydney's Brent Street Studios in 1999 which allowed her to hone her experience with the benefit of formal training.

Her Dad's parents are Polish, and her mum a former Tap Dancer. Describing herself as a little stubborn, Camilla is set to give the Top 20 a run for their money when she gets out on the floor!

Key quote: "What you see is what you get. I am who I am and I love to dance"



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COURTNEY WALTER CONTESTANT

AGE	23
HOME CITY	MELBOURNE
OCCUPATION	DANCER
DANCE STYLE	COMMERCIAL/JAZZ

Free-spirited, fun and down-to-earth, the bubbly explosion of blonde curls who is Courtney Walter has packed more experience into her 23 years than most of us will in a lifetime. The St Kilda local describes herself as an even mix of her dad – calm, hard-working, intelligent and grounded – and her mum, a sassy city girl who grew up singing on TV's Stars of the Future.

Business-savvy Mum ran her own performing arts school, where Courtney was able to hone her dancing skills from the tender age of four. She consequently began performing when she was 11 years old. After high school, the ambitious Courtney dipped her toe in acting at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts but quickly realised her heart was waiting for her on the dance floor.

This intrepid performer then began working around Perth, in everything from corporate gigs to club nights. She then packed her bags and jetted off to Asia, dancing and choreographing for Ministry of Sound, which lead her to Spain to do the same. After these adventures, she was back on a plane to Melbourne to study dance full-time.

She currently teaches Commercial Jazz and Hip Hop at the Melbourne Music Academy (her fave styles to perform) and also still performs around town (keep an eye out for her when the NBL South Dragons hot the field!). But for all this experience in the biz, Courtney maintains she's still a bit of a hippy at heart who loves nothing more than a long day at the beach with her boyfriend. As we saw in the auditions, Courtney fears her lack of technique training could work against her in this competition, but is determined not to let her weaknesses overshadow her considerable strengths.

Key quote: "Dance is about expressing yourself, and as long as you're doing that, it's ALL good."



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DEMI SORONO CONTESTANT

AGE	28
HOME CITY	MELBOURNE
OCCUPATION	PROFESSIONAL DANCER/ PERFORMER/MC HOST AND TEACHER
DANCE STYLE	STREET DANCE / HIP-HOP

Get ready Australia: SYTYCD's only b-girl, Demi Sorono, is about to prove that breakin', lockin' and poppin' ain't only for the boys! This pint-sized dancer has successfully battled many obstacles in life, including poverty and depression, to emerge as an inspirational ball of energy with enough spirit to fill the entire Carriageworks complex!

Demi, 28, began dancing from the age of five, expressing herself either at home with her family (we met siblings - and fellow dancers - Lorraine and Carlo in the audition process), at a Filipino party or disco. She fell in love with Hip-hop and break-dancing after watching Run DMC's music video clip, remix 'It's Like That', featuring b-boy superstar, AsiaOne.

Immigrating to Australia when she was seven, from the ages of 15 to 24 Demi worked in odd jobs like cleaning, data entry, customer service – the list goes on! Meanwhile she was training with Carlo's hip-hop group, and in 2004 took herself to LA to check out the world's best b-boys at Freestyle Session 5. Inspired and fired up, she was, in her own words, "Demilition B-Girl on a mission"! Aww yeah!

She's been a part of The Movement Hip Hop Crew since 2005, which included gigs at the Big Day Out with Digital Primate and Queen Khadeeja, dancing with Wicked Force Breakers as support acts with TV Rock for Rogue Traders, and performing at the Indigenous Dreaming Festival. She also won the 2005 Australasian B-Girl Supremacy Competition in Wellington, New Zealand.

Now teaching break-dancing for a living, Demi is living proof that if you want it bad enough, you'll make it happen. Initially she wasn't going to audition because she didn't have training in any styles except street. But luckily her plucky spirit and natural talent cut through her fears as she showed the judges her potential to develop. Watch out Australia – Demi is about to RIP IT UP!

Key quote: "I am Demolition B-Girl on a mission who is ready to learn every style of dance there is to learn on SYTYCD!"



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GRAEME ISAAKO CONTESTANT

AGE	18
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	JUST FINISHED A FULLTIME PERFORMING ARTS COURSE
DANCE STYLE	LYRICAL/JAZZ

"Pure. Honest. A dancer." Those were the words Graeme's first audition inspired from judge Bonnie Lythgoe, but they only go part of the way to describing this good-looking lad. What about vivacious, out-going and class clown!?

As someone who lists their greatest strength as their heart, Graeme is an emotional performer who gives everything he's got on the dance floor, and that includes his incredibly positive, warm outlook on life. His journey into being a dancer branched off from his original love of singing - he was actually in Idol's Top 100 the year Kate Dearaugo won, and still performs in Carols by Candlelight.

Having moved around a lot as a child, Graeme finds it easy to adapt to new surroundings and people, and that goes for his ability to pick up different styles of dance too. Beginning lessons at the age of 12, it wasn't long before this fast learner landed a role in the critically acclaimed Olivier at the Lyric Theatre in 2002, a show which ran for six months. Graeme then received a scholarship for performing arts, for Years Seven and Eight at Ashcroft High School in Sydney's south-west. He completed his training with Janice Breen Performance Studios (JBPS) from 2003 til 2005. He's performed at Disneyland in LA and Florida, and in New York with JBPS. Then in 2006, he completed the Urban Dance Centre's fulltime course. Graeme's preferred styles are Lyrical and Jazz, the quick, sharp moves a particular favourite.

Over his dancing career, Graeme has had to face bullying and name-calling as a result of being a male dancer, but this has made the young performer even more strong and joyous about what he does. Graeme dances because he feels true joy, so get ready for an emotional rollercoaster Australia!

Key quote: "The beauty of being a dancer is there are so many ways to involve yourself in happiness."



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HENRY BYALIKOV CONTESTANT

AGE	22
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	STUDENT
DANCE STYLE	BALLROOM/LATIN

Henry's dance career began when he was nine years old. He was at a friend's birthday party, and everyone began dancing. He'd never seen his friends dance before – but instead of leaping onto the floor and laying down his signature sharp moves, Henry convinced his mum he was feeling sick and to take him home. When she got the real reason for his quick exit out of him - stage fright - she signed him up for dance lessons at their local school. And the rest as they say, is history!

Now Henry, 22, loves performing all styles exposed to him, especially Ballroom, Jive and Latin, and he's a big fan of the smooth style of superstars Patrick Swayze and John Travolta.

Born in Sydney but with a Russian background, he's performed in Melbourne for the Australian Dancesport Championships, Sydney for the South Pacific Dancesport Championships, Queensland and Adelaide for Dancesport Championships, and World championships in England and Australia, plus many others.

Describing himself as dynamic, passionate, rhythmical and powerful, Henry is also a student completing majors in Finance/ Agricultural Economics – in fact he was doing his final uni exams right before and straight after his audition for SYTYCD, which meant he was studying instead of celebrating after his win! Henry feels it's important to maintain a balance between academia and dance – but his ambitious streak will mean the book-learning will be put on hold for the duration of the competition. Henry is determined to show Australia he KNOWS he can dance!

Key quote: "I thrive in competitive environments. I will give all I've got - and then some."



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HILTON DENIS CONTESTANT

AGE	18
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	PERFORMER
DANCE STYLE	ORIGINAL, A MIXTURE OF CONTEMPORARY AND HIP-HOP

Out of all the amazing stories of the contestants' lives in SYTYCD, Hilton Denis' is the one begging to be made into a rag-to-riches blockbuster. Recognising the talent in their son, Hilton's supportive parents sacrificed their own careers to clean his dance school (Brent Street) to pay for his lessons.

The quietly confident Haitian dancer has trained in Ballet, Acro, Hip Hop and Contemporary and has been doing his thing for 11 years. Hilton's professional career kicked off age nine, when he and his older brother David were cast in the musical Show Boat at the Lyric Theatre, and he returned to that stage four years later for a part in the world famous Oliver.

Now 18, Hilton has already graced the stage with the Black Eyed Peas' Fergie at the Australian MTV Awards, danced in music videos for Idol's Paulini and even been cast in Hollywood film King Kong as a tapper in a vaudeville act! The ambitious Hilton has also started his own professional dance and choreography company Milk 'n' Cookies with mate BJ Rorke, the aim of which is to produce innovative stage shows which revolutionise theatre and the way that dance is viewed.

As he showed in his assured audition piece, his fave style is fluid, surprising and intricate New School Hip Hop. Describing himself as laidback and soulful, Hilton is set to give the Top 20 a run for their money, 'cause one thing's for sure about this contestant – he's not the only one who thinks he can dance.

Key quote: "I have a great relationship with my family. I love them to death and I'm doing this for them."



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



JACK CHAMBERS CONTESTANT

AGE	19
HOME CITY	BRISBANE
OCCUPATION	PROFESSIONAL PERFORMER
DANCE STYLE	FUNK/HIP-HOP

"If you can make it there, you can make it anywhere: New York, New York!" That's our boy Jack's dream, to make it as a Broadway performer in the famed Big Apple. From the experience this talented triple threat has (that's a singer, dancer and actor), we reckon that dream is in the bag!

The Queensland local with a passion for musical theatre began formal dance classes when he was four years old. His first performance? Copying his sister's eisteddfod solo for a local seniors' group! Jack went on to do his training in Jazz, Tap, Funk, Hip Hop and Contemporary at the Julie-Ann Lucas School of Dance. His professional career took off in earnest at the age of 12 when he played Kurt Von Trapp in *The Sound of Music*, alongside industry stalwarts Lisa McCune and Bert Newton.

Jack is currently part of an all male tap group, Raw Metal, and works as a teacher/choreographer/performer with the Raw Dance Company. This has taken the talented teen around Australia, and to London, Singapore and New Zealand. He's performed at the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards, with Nikki Webster for her 'Dancing in the Street' video clip and even at the Neil Young concert (he describes this as more a thrill for his parents than himself!). The company recently performed in Holland, Den Haag, as part of last year's Holland Dance Festival.

But it's not just Jack representing the Chambers family at Raw – his older sister Jess is the general manager and Lucy a performer and choreographer. Charismatic Jack's fave styles are the loose, free-moving Funk and Hip Hop, where he feels he can really show who he is. Bring it on Jack – we can't wait!

Key quote: "I have always appreciated dancers like Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly and Hugh Jackman, but I have never wanted to follow in their footsteps. I want to make it my own way!"



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JEMMA ARMSTRONG CONTESTANT

AGE	20
HOME CITY	PERTH
OCCUPATION	DANCE TEACHER
DANCE STYLE	LATIN

When Jemma's mum Sue first took her along to her sister Tara's dance class she had no idea the passion she'd unleash in her – they couldn't keep this tiny dancer off the floor! Her mum promised she'd enrol her when she turned six and from there, Jemma became addicted to what she describes as "the love of her life".

Born and bred in Perth, Jemma, 20, finished Year 12 in 2005, and went on to complete a Certificate III in Fitness at TAFE. She was planning to start a Health and Physical Education (primary) degree at the University of Notre Dame this year until she landed a position in the Top 20.

She shouldn't be too surprised - after all, this is the girl who won the South Pacific Championships in Sydney in 2002 after only dancing with her partner for a couple of months, coming from the previous National Championships in Canberra where they placed 6th! She currently teaches at a studio called Dance Power.

Her personal style references Latin and Ballroom, in which she's formally trained, as well as New Vogue. Her technique on the floor is honest and natural-looking, and she works hard to portray herself as sensual and elegant. Jemma's not short of experience on the floor – she's danced every year at the Australian Dancesport Championship in Melbourne from the ages of eight to 16. Her best personality trait? Compassion. And her worst? "Wanting to please everyone".

Key quote: "I believe I am the quiet achiever and hopefully will improve and surprise the judges each week".



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



JOEL DE CARTERET (JD) CONTESTANT

AGE	26
HOME CITY	MELBOURNE
OCCUPATION	CHOREOGRAPHER/ ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
DANCE STYLE	HIP-HOP

Our Top 20 dancers all have an incredible story to tell, and the Melbourne-based choreographer/ performer JD is no exception. Named after the taxi driver who dropped him off at an orphanage in Manila after his parents abandoned him, JD has had to overcome many obstacles to achieve what he has. And that's a lot.

At the age of 26, JD has built from scratch the dance faculty at the Melbourne Music Academy, the premiere urban dance school in Melbourne. He's toured with Usher, Destiny's Child, Ja Rule and Ashanti, Koffee Brown, Guy Sebastian, Holly Valance, Tina Arena, Jade Macrae and JWowh. He's choreographed for heavyweights Israel, Christian Alexander and Jade Macrae. He's taught and performed all around Australia, as well as in Chicago, San Francisco, New York, Vegas, Los Angeles and Taiwan. Oh, and he's also the founder of the Dance2XS Australian Branch in Melbourne and the Artistic Director of Kulture Break.

And it all started with Michael Jackson... As a kid, JD would imitate 'Beat It', 'Bad' and 'Thriller' in his living room and perform the routines for his family (who adopted him when he was five). First dance appearance? A presentation night in year six, which culminated with him moon walking off the stage! He studied Jazz and Ballet at Sefra Burstin School of Dance in Ormond, and began competing. He studied Hip Hop at Dance World, and from there taught and studied all styles of Hip Hop at United Styles, an urban dance school in Melbourne. He travelled interstate, taking different classes at different schools, and then went to LA to study dance and culture.

The focussed and committed JD auditioned at SYTYCD to challenge his idea that he was primarily a choreographer, not a dancer. Luckily for the viewing public, this introspective, intelligent young man discovered he was definitely still a performer! For JD, this competition is about finding out who he really is, and using dance to inspire and empower Australia. Throughout this competition, JD's aim is use his old and new skool flavours to destroy the myth of Hip Hop culture being an aggressive and sexual dance.

Key quote: "I move in a way no one has ever seen in Australia - it's the way I listen to and interpret music that will set me aside from other dancers."



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



KASSANDRA LEE (KASSIE) CONTESTANT

AGE	21
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	DANCER
DANCE STYLE	HIP-HOP

Sexy, sassy and fierce: that's our big city gal, Kassie. Described in her first audition as the 'perfect candidate for the competition', her cheeky charm and years of training paid off, securing this blonde bombshell a place in the Top 20. It's a long way from her first routines at the age of three to the strains of 'How Much Is That Doggie in the Window' and 'Teddy Bears Picnic'!

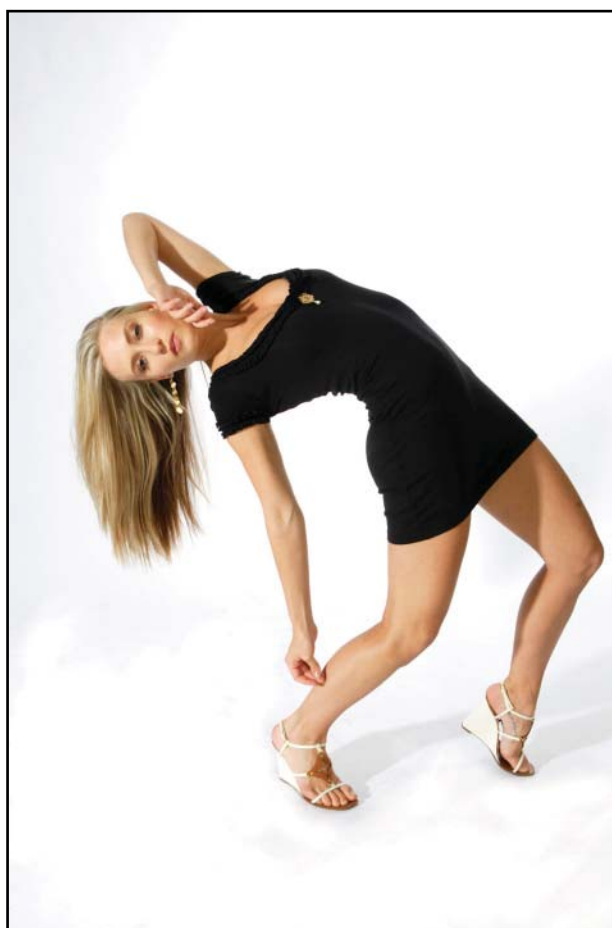
Moving from her hometown of Coffs Harbour to Sydney on the back of a scholarship to the McDonald College of Performing Arts, Kassie began her dance training in Ballet, Tap, Jazz and Contemporary. She then joined the prestigious Sydney Dance Company when she was 16, and performed in Tivoli the Musical, choreographed by uber-choreographer, Graeme Murphy. Returning to high school to complete her HSC, Kassie began saving to live and train at the Broadway Dance Center in New York, which she did on her own at the tender age of 17.

From there the opportunities have come thick and fast, and Kassie has performed at the MTV Awards for Jared Leto, in Sneaky Sound System's 'I Love It' video clip, with Jade Macrae on both The Today Show and in her 'In The Basement' video clip, on Australian Idol as part of Ricki Lee's live performance and in the Australian Opera's version of Taunthouser. She also models and does commercial work.

But it hasn't always been such a dream run for Kassie – at the age of 12, she was diagnosed with a chondroblastoma (tumour) in her right leg, resulting in the bone being removed in surgery. She was unable to dance for three months – but luckily she healed fine and got right back on that dance floor!

Her fave style is Contemporary and Hip Hop, and a background in gymnastics helps with her versatility to pick up new styles. And her weakness? "I'm easily distracted by cute boys!" One thing's certain; Australia is definitely going to be distracted by the hard-working, foxy Kassie!

Key quote: "Bite off as much as you can and then chew like hell!"



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



KATE WORMALD CONTESTANT

AGE	29
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	DANCER
DANCE STYLE	JAZZ/COMMERCIAL

When Kate Wormald was born, the doctors found a hole in the bottom of her spine. Her parents were told she may never walk. However they successfully operated on her at just three days old, and this talented dancer has not stopped dancing since.

Kate took classes three or four times a week throughout high school on the Gold Coast, then trained with Robert Sturrock for six years before moving to Melbourne at 19 years of age. In fact when it comes to years spent on the dance floor, Kate, 29, is one of the competition's most experienced dancers – she's never worked as anything else!

With thirteen years of professional dancing experience under her belt, Kate's experience is wide and varied, a definite bonus in a competition that demands versatility from its participants. Kate's experience also extends to London, where she performed with the likes of Jamelia, Charlotte Church, Will Young and Atomic Kitten. Back home, she's done musical theatre including Fame (her first big show), Footloose and Oh What a Night, corporate gigs, film clips and film work. She's performed on television many times, including the Logies, Video Hits and at the Domain's Carols by Candlelight, to name just a few. She's no stranger to entertaining massive crowds either, having performed to 80,000 people at the opening of the State of Origin 4 years ago in Sydney for Saturday Night Fever, and to a TV audience of 13 million on the UK's The X Factor. Her fave style is Jazz (which she names as her greatest strength) and Commercial. She's danced with Will Young, Jamelia, Charlotte Church, Gary Sweet, Marcia Hines, John Paul Young, Jade Macrae... Is there anyone she hasn't busted a move next to?!

But for all these brushes with fame, Kate describes herself as comfortable, fun and casual, and enjoys a loving relationship with her partner of four years, Michael.

Key quote: "My moves come from the heart - I will work night and day to get them right and show you the absolute best I can possibly do."



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



KHALY NGETH CONTESTANT

AGE	19
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	ASSISTANT BODY-PIERCER
DANCE STYLE	HIP-HOP

Confident? Check. Talented? Check! Outrageous? Check! Get ready to meet one of SYTYCD's cheekiest contestants, Khaly. Part-time body piercer, full-time b-boy, the 19-year-old breakdancer didn't start dancing till he was 12 years old. The tune that inspired it all? 'Freestyler' by Bom Funk MCs. "From that day," says Khaly, "it was on like Donkey Kong."

His two crews, The Next Step and Juse (Just Us Element), have danced for big names like Telstra and NRMA, and he's performed everywhere from the Nickelodeon Kids Choice Awards (twice) to Melbourne's Crown Casino to Sydney's Big Day Out.

The easy-going dancer's family comes from Cambodia, with his sisters being born in Thailand and he and his brother born in Australia. Our boy with the rad tats and piercings describes his dancing style as capital 'F' Fun, so this breaker is sure to keep everyone on their toes each time he's on the d-floor. He may not have formal training and a billion trophies, but his natural flair and fearlessness will help him embrace the new styles he must master in order to have a shot at winning the competition.

Key Quote: "Life's too short to be serious ALL the time!"



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



LAURA BROUGHAM CONTESTANT

AGE	20
HOME CITY	ADELAIDE
OCCUPATION	DANCER/WAITRESS
DANCE STYLE	JAZZ

Our beautiful dancer with the wholesome girl-next-door looks is Adelaide-based Laura, 20. Laura grew up in her mother's dance school – the Fascinating Rhythm School of Dance – and started learning the basics when she was just three years old. The school gave Laura the chance to train extensively in Jazz, Tap and Classical, as well as a couple of years studying Hip-Hop and Funk.

Her first professional dance experience was performing in the opening of the 2000 Olympics for the soccer. She was only 13 years old at the time, and was cast with the Australian Drill Team to perform at the opening ceremony at the Hindmarsh soccer stadium in Adelaide. Here the young Laura first experienced the long hours and gruelling days of rehearsals that helped prep her for the exhaustive audition process for SYTYCD. But her professional experience doesn't stop there! After completing her secondary education at Siena College, she moved to Melbourne to further her dance training at Dance Factory.



Not long after relocating to the city of good coffee and cosy cafes, she landed a role in a big-budget Bollywood movie, Salaam Namaste. Shooting on location at Rye beach in Melbourne for a week, Laura danced alongside Tania Zaetta, a high profile actress in the Bollywood scene. After the shoot finished and just two weeks after her 18th birthday, Laura was off to Hong Kong for the opening of Hong Kong Disneyland. Here she played Ariel (The Little Mermaid), a role requiring her to fly through the air with the greatest of ease doing aerial tricks in a harness! After returning from Hong Kong, she moved back to Adelaide, and now works part-time at a local café in between continuing to dance and train.

Laura feels most at home performing Jazz, and displays incredible confidence with all artforms. Loving, friendly and dedicated to her craft, the angelic Laura is definitely one to watch on SYTYCD!

Key quote: "Dancing is my life, my heart and my soul. It defines who I am."

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MARKO PANZIC CONTESTANT

AGE	23
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	DANCER/ CHOREOGRAPHER/ TEACHER
DANCE STYLE	CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

Passionate, adventurous and vivacious. Marko Panzic, 23, brings all these qualities to the competition... and it all began with Michael Jackson. "I always danced in front of the TV when Michael Jackson was on," remembers Marko with a grin. "He was a huge influence for me and helped start my journey in dance." Lucky for Marko, his mother clocked this passion more quickly than you can say 'smooth criminal'.

With mum a Kiwi and dad from Croatia, Marko's family moved to Western Australia from New Zealand when he was four, where he was enrolled in the Johnny Young Talent School.

Here, and in various dance studios around Perth, Marko trained in all genres of performing arts. At the age of 17 he travelled to New York, Los Angeles and London to further his training, travelling back and forth to the USA to train under many well-renowned choreographers.

Marko has been dancing professionally for over five years, and now works as a teacher at Brent Street in Sydney and as a freelance choreographer (he admits working a retail gig after relocating to Sydney, but being fired after four weeks!). He has worked for many Australian and international artists such as Jade MacRae, Vanessa Amorosi, Che'nelle, Samantha Jade and Cosima DeVito. This talented dancer has also performed and choreographed at many major events across Australia. He's no stranger to TV, but usually as a back-up dancer serving a pop star or as part of a big stage spectacular, such as the Australian Idol Grand Final show at the Sydney Opera House. Now, SYTYCD puts Marko in the spotlight.

Stylistically, Marko enjoys Lyrical Jazz as it allows him to combine technique with expressing emotion. His personal style is fluid, grounded, technical and smooth. All his life he's wanted to be a dancer. And now it seems the boy from Perth with big dreams and fast feet is making it all come true.

Key quote: "The way I dance comes from a real place with real emotion. I am true to myself so I will be true to the audience."



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



RHIANNON VILLAREAL CONTESTANT

AGE	19
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	ENTERTAINER
DANCE STYLE	JAZZ

As one of the younger competitor's in SYTYCD, the talented triple threat that is Rhiannon Villareal began dance classes when she was just two years old. "I can't believe I actually did dance classes at that age," she laughs. "You think I would only just be walking then!" But dance she did and the down-to-earth nineteen year old simply hasn't stopped dancing, acting or singing since then. She describes going to school at Brent Street's Talent Development High School as one of the best things she ever done, as it gave her the confidence to pursue performing as a professional career. She started classes at the Sydney school when she was 11, and trained fulltime in performing arts there last year.

Now a teacher herself at Talent Zone, a dance school in Merrylands, Rhiannon brings a wealth of performing and TV experience to the comp which belies her young age. She was a semi-finalist in Australia's Got Talent, performing with a dance group called Raptous. She performed on Mornings with Kerri-Anne, at the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Award and the Australian and New Zealand Urban Music Awards. She was part of a TV series called Dare to Dance, which followed four performers' lives for nine weeks whilst training at Brent Street. And she's no stranger to the world of video clips either, having performed in big-budget clips for Aussie pop acts Rogue Traders, Girl Band, Nikki Webster and Young Divas. She was even part of Michael Jackson's HISTORY tour in 1996, where she got to give him a rose as part of the act and he kissed her forehead ("I didn't wash it for a week!").

Rhiannon loves all styles of dancing but feels most comfortable with the sharp, fluid moves of Jazz, a style she says she picked up straight away. Bubbly and caring, Rhiannon brings one of the most important qualities a dancer can possess to the competition: honesty. She can't stand people who are fake or pretend to be someone or something they're not, and her open, generous performances on the floor are sure to win many fans.

Key quote: "I'm very real and very down to earth. I don't like fake people, and I believe that if you work hard, you will succeed."



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



RHYS BOBRIDGE CONTESTANT

AGE	26
HOME CITY	MELBOURNE
OCCUPATION	DANCER/SINGER/ACTOR/ MAKE-UP ARTIST
DANCE STYLE	CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

There is no doubt that Rhys Bobridge has star quality, in fact, he oozes with it. Where to start with this absolutely fabulous Adelaide-born, Melbourne-based dancer? The fact he jokes that when he was born, he fell out of his mother and into the splits? What about fave colours listed as neon yellow and electric purple? Nah, let's go with what he reckons are his weaknesses; vanity ('I never met a mirror I didn't like') and anyone with a cheeky smile and a killer bod. With this performer in the Top 20, rest assured: hilarity will ensue.

Rhys, 26, started his career as a child model at age five for the agency Mostly Kids, where he worked on fashion shoots, TV commercials and runway shows. He studied Dance, Drama and Voice from the age of seven to 16 at the Johnny Young Talent School in Adelaide, and perform locally at shopping centres, fetes and fairs in the school holidays. After a brief stint at the Victorian College of Arts Secondary School, he moved to Taiwan at age 17 for four-and-a-half months to perform in a theme park, Leofoo Village. Back in Australia he began work as an elf for children's entertainment group, The Fairies, which he still maintains a commitment to.

At age 20, Rhys left the city of churches for the culture capital of Australia, Melbourne. He now works as a commercial dancer/performer, as well as a freelance make-up artist (he once did Deborah Lee Furness' make-up). He's also been working as a drag performer since he was 17, for corporate functions, night clubs and dance parties. He describes it as "incredibly liberating to take on another persona and do things you wouldn't have the guts to as your everyday self".

Liberated and gutsy – that's our Rhys! Stylistically, Rhys is a Jazz/Commercial dancer and his background in various types of performance means he knows how to keep audiences' eyes trained to his every twist and every turn. Free, interpretive, stylised and sharp. Y'all ready for this?

Key quote: "I am fire - watch me burn up your screen!"



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



SERMSAH BIN SAAD CONTESTANT

AGE	30
HOME CITY	PORT HEDLAND
OCCUPATION	PERFORMING ARTIST
DANCE STYLE	TRADITIONAL ABORIGINAL /CONTEMPORARY

A survivor. A dancer who brings something unique to the competition. Australia, meet Sermsah. The way SYTYCD crossed this amazing dancer's radar sounds like a movie scene: "I was working as a pool attendant at the Cable Beach Resort in Broome, and flung a towel over my shoulder. It flicked open a magazine, which turned to the page of the audition ad!" After a little help from his family chipping in for his plane ticket, Sermsah, 30, began his emotionally testing trip to the Top 20.

An avid fan of all the arts while at school, Sermsah's journey into dance began in earnest when he was 17, when he left home to attend the Aboriginal Dance Development Unit in Perth. Whilst living there he kept in contact with the Nyoongar Theatre Yirra Yaakin, and spent time teaching acting and completing dance workshops with all primary and secondary schools. He then attended the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association in Sydney for nine months, before continuing his training at Brisbane's Aboriginal Centre of Performing Arts.

After this, the dedicated Sermsah got into Broome's Notre Dame University where he undertook the Aboriginal Performing Arts course. Now based in Port Hedland, WA, he is a member of a Sydney dance company called Stalker (aka Marrugecku). The company recently toured to Switzerland with a show called Burning Daylight. The busy Sermsah has also performed around Australia with numerous plays and musicals, played small roles in TV shows such as The Circuit, and has performed at the Sydney Opera House for the Deadly Awards. A little known fact is he's also had a children's book published!

Sermsah's style incorporates Traditional Aboriginal, including the imitation of animalistic movement, combined with Contemporary, Acrobatics and Hip Hop. He prefers performing to music either high in energy or grounded traditional aboriginal instrumentation. Adaptable, determined and sensitive, this dancer is nothing short of inspirational.

Key quote: "I'm black and I'm beautiful!"



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



STEPHANIE GOLMAN CONTESTANT

AGE	18
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	STUDENT AND WORKS IN RETAIL
DANCE STYLE	BALLROOM

Sexy, womanly and passionate. That's how Stephanie Golman, 19, describes her favourite dance - the hip-swivelling Rumba - but it's also a pretty good description of the gal herself! A Ballroom dancer with a love of luscious Latin rhythms, Stephanie auditioned with fellow Top 20 finalist Henry at his request, and ended up wowing the judges herself.

From her early dance memories of playing dress-ups to entertain her parents' friends at dinner parties, the confident Stephanie has risen through the dance ranks quickly to establish herself as a force to be reckoned with! She began training in Tap and Jazz when she six years old, before starting to learn the dances where her heart lies, Ballroom and Latin.

She began competing in the 'Juvenile' category for these styles when she was just six years old, and then in 'Junior' at the age of eleven. Four years later she was awarded a scholarship to represent Australia in Blackpool, England, at the British Open, and straight after that was sent to Asia to compete. All up, the talented Stephanie has been competing in Latin American and Ballroom for 12 years.

As well as dance, she has a passion for media. The self-confessed workaholic somehow manages to juggle a university degree in Journalism at Sydney's University of Technology, and work as a cosmetics consultant at the same time. Stephanie's strengths are not only her technical ability, but her rock solid confidence as a performer and her determination to bring strength and emotion into every dance she performs. Outgoing, passionate and 'a drama queen', Stephanie's got her eyes and prize, and will give it her all to become Australia's favourite dancer.

Key quote, "I am sexy, powerful and elegant – all at the same time!"



SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE AUSTRALIA: TOP 20



VANESSA SEW HOY CONTESTANT

AGE	22
HOME CITY	SYDNEY
OCCUPATION	PILATES INSTRUCTOR
DANCE STYLE	BALLET / CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

Beautiful. That was the much repeated word Vanessa's first audition piece inspired in judge Jason Coleman, and he's certainly not alone in that assessment. However, the gentle 23-year-old quickly proved during Top 100 week she's not just innocent and sweet, but incredibly determined and versatile when it comes to dance.

Vanessa didn't originally want to audition for SYTYCD because she didn't think her quiet, shy personality would be right for a TV show. Luckily she overcame her reservations to secure a place in the Top 20. The Australian born Chinese dancer started Ballet For Fun classes when she was just three years old. "I remember when we had to skip around in a circle," she recalls. "Mum said I actually jumped like a kangaroo rather than skipped!" She started proper ballet classes two years later. At age 14 she attended a year-long full-time dancing course at Tanya Pearson's Classical Coaching Academy, and left home at age 15 to attend The Australian Ballet School, before continuing onto QLD University of Technology to complete a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Dance). Following this, she completed a Post-Graduate Certificate in Pilates at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Vanessa is now a full-time Pilate's instructor, teaching at Modern Pilates, Mantra Yoga and Dance Fitness International in Sydney. In 2004 she jetted off overseas to dance in Taiwan at the Asia Pacific International Dance Conference and Festival – a ten minute routine involving a dance partner and a couch! But for all her training and achievements, it might surprise you to learn the hard-working Vanessa almost gave up dancing to pursue her faith. From 2005 to 2006, she was training herself to become a spiritual minister, and tried to give up dancing – unsuccessfully. At the beginning of 2007, she realised that her passion and heart did indeed lay in dance, so now Vanessa dances to feel close to God.

Vanessa loves performing Contemporary, and her Pilates training means she displays incredible flexibility and strength on the floor. And her weakness? "I get self-conscious when I have to act sexy. It's so not me." Let's see if SYTYCD brings out Vanessa's inner vixen!

Key quote: "I enjoy dancing so much because I feel like my life is heading in the right direction. I've found my calling in life"

