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Daniel Harder

It's been a pleasure traveling across the UK. The people, the culture, the sights, the energy have been different in every city, but exciting nonetheless. I would love to have the chance to come back and venture across the UK as a tourist and get the chance to immerse myself in all each city has to offer. With the schedule that Ailey keeps, it's often hard to experience a place fully. From getting on a bus, traveling from city to city, then heading to rehearsals and performing every night... it can be quite grueling. And trust me, waking up extra early in a new city to go sightseeing isn't ideal. The little bit of rest and relaxation we get is sometimes just enough to get you through the performance.

However taxing the schedule might be, the love of the art is what makes it all worth it. Once that curtain rises, it's ON! It amazes me that I can communicate so much and relate to audiences from different backgrounds all over the world using a language that relies solely on movement. I consider it a blessing.

Bradford and Edinburgh were the last two cities we'd performed in. We danced the same program in both cities (*Hymn*, *Anointed*, and *Revelations*) and all three pieces seemed to touch the audience a great deal. Although each ballet has its own story, the commonality they share is their connection to the human spirit. The spirit of what was here before, the spirit of what is here now, and the spirit of what is to come... it's all there in each ballet. It's beautiful to know that the art of dance can connect people in a way that goes beyond race, gender, religion, etc.

As I sit here on the bus headed to our last stop in the UK, I can't help but reflect on all of the amazing things I've experienced since this new chapter in my journey began. I'm humbled by the opportunity I have to share something I consider so divine with people everywhere. Hopefully, moving audiences and giving them a chance to see deeper into themselves. It's funny... as dancers we spend most of our lives looking in the mirror, constantly trying to improve upon, reshape, and correct many different things about ourselves. Yet, I think the best and most honest reflection we can see of ourselves is in the audience. Seeing their lights shine because of what they've just witnessed. There's no mirror image that can give you that same kind of joy. And for that, I am so thankful.



AAADT in Christopher L. Huggins' *Anointed*. Photo by Paul Kolnik.



Behind the Scenes of Christopher L. Huggins' *Anointed*. Photo by Amanda Householder.



The Street of Edinburgh. Photo by Daniel Harder.