

HIT CITY

For Ashley It's Balle Balle Ballet

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Do you remember the character Tutu in the recently released Hollywood flick, *Moulin Rouge*? If you don't remember her, see the film again and watch out for the character which was played by the Australian ballet dancer Anastasia (which is her screen name) but she now prefers to go by the simpler Stacey Flewin.

Describing her experience of working on the film, Stacey says: "All of us were wearing make-up which took five hours to put on and made us look hideous. I guess that was their way of making Nicole Kidman look the prettiest," smiles Stacey. Filmmaker Baz Luhrmann

Last seen in *Moulin Rouge*, Australian dance teacher, Stacey Flewin, is joining Ashley Lobo of Danceworx in setting up an institute for classical ballet

cast about 50 gymnasts, circus performers and ballet dancers who worked on the film for over an year. "The rest of the crowd you see in the film were just hanging around in the background, while we did the actual dancing. But it wasn't much hard work, it was pure fun," she says.

Stacey is currently in the city to take ballet classes for Ashley Lobo's dance academy Danceworx. "We are going to set up the first institute for people to be trained in classical ballet," says Ashley, who has been teaching jazz and ballet at various centres in the city for almost a decade.

Ashley plans to set up a curriculum with the help

of Rosetta Cook (principal soloist of Queensland Ballet for the past seven years) who is expected in Delhi later this year. "After a person trains at our academy they will get a Royal Academy of Dance accreditation which will enable them to teach anywhere in the world," says Ashley.

Coming back to Stacey, she has been dancing since she was three. At 14, Stacey had begged her mom to let her drop out of school and to pursue classical ballet full-time. "But I continued my studies through correspondence and learnt classical ballet for two years. Later, I switched to performing arts for couple of years since I had decided to pursue musical theatre," she says.

She subsequently worked for the Sydney Dance Company for four years but then took a break for three years because of an illness. "I got the Compartment Syndrome which is common to footballers and ballet dancers and affects the arc of the foot and calf muscles. I was very depressed and it was a very tiring time for me," she says. She got over the rough times by taking acting classes.

Stacey is excited about teaching in India because she feels that the Indian body is good for ballet. "Indians are very flexible," she feels. And when she teaches ballet in the city, we are sure there will be more people who will appreciate this fine dance form.