



in conversation with  
*Katja Paus*

Dance. Something physical yet emotional. Something that differs yet overlaps, no matter where you are in the world. Something that spurs creativity yet encourages discipline. A beautiful expression of the heart and soul. Dance.



For Katja Paus, owner of decade-old Tanglin Arts Studio, the art of dancing evokes indescribable feelings unlike any other. To her, dance is not just a form of expression but also a seamless way to develop self-esteem and confidence. From ballet and tap, to jazz and hip-hop, everyone involved at Katja's studio works hard to instil an everlasting love of dance and fitness in everyone who walks through the doors.

Whether it is appreciating music, developing creativity, excelling in social situations and exercising mutual respect for others, dance is an art form that enriches every aspect of life no matter where you are from, how old you are or what your beliefs are. To Katja, one of the major goals of Tanglin Arts Studio is to offer her students the chance to experience dance as a personally fulfilling foundation for their future. In our bid to understand just what drives Katja's passion for dance, WeekendIn paid a visit to Tanglin Arts Studio and got the chance to sit down and chat with this passionate and forward thinking individual.

**WI: How did you get involved with Tanglin Arts Studio?**

**KP:** After many years as a homemaker, I jumped at the chance to manage the studio's front desk, which back then was run by Kathleen Quinn, the former founder and owner. A year after I joined the studio, the Quinns decided to leave Singapore and I was offered the opportunity to buy over the studio. After much thought, my husband and I decided to do it!

**WI: You seem to have a very international team. What is the studio's main goal?**

**KP:** Yes, we are truly a melting pot of nationalities and have instructors from Australia, the UK, Philippines and Germany. Our main goal is to offer our students a fun and supportive environment that focuses on positive reinforcement. It is very important that kids enjoy what they are doing, which in turn makes it easier for them to develop a healthy body image.

**WI: We know that your team is very international, but what about your students?**

**KP:** 95% of our students are children from expat families. We have young kids who are new to dance whereas others have been dancing for years. Most of our students dance recreationally and that is why we want their experience to be a personally fulfilling one.

**WI: Your students may dance recreationally but are there recitals or exams that they have to undergo?**

**KP:** We adhere to the Australian Teachers of Dancing (ATOD) syllabus and thus conduct annual exams in November.

**WI: Are you selective when hiring dance instructors?**

**KP:** Definitely. All my teachers are certified dance instructors and my international instructors hold university degrees in either dance or dance education.

**WI: As a dance studio that caters to an international clientele, do you pay special attention to anything in particular?**

**KP:** We have a big emphasis on performances and recitals. Not just that, the presence of our international teachers offer our students a very open and international environment. We also tailor our schedule to be in line with the international school calendar.

**WI: I know that you have three kids. Do all of them dabble in dance?**

**KP:** My 21-year-old and 10-year-old daughters are both dancers. My son on the other hand prefers spending time outdoors and focuses on swimming and rugby.

**WI: I couldn't help but notice that you are in great shape. I suppose that comes with the territory. Any secrets you would like to share with our readers?**

**KP:** Well, I try to eat healthy and exercise at least

twice a week at a fitness studio. I also dance a lot here. I adore Zumba!

**WI: Tell us a little more about your performances and recitals.**

**KP:** We have our annual recital in May and we conduct an Open House mid-August to introduce everyone to the new term, not to mention our annual exams in November.

**WI: Your studio offers a myriad of dance styles. Is there any one in particular that is more popular than the rest?**

**KP:** No not really, although I have to admit that shows such as So You Think You Can Dance and Dancing with the Stars have popularised the more modern dance styles. Kids, especially boys, are starting to pay more attention to dance.

**WI: You must be a very busy woman. Tell us what a typical day looks like.**

**KP:** After shuttling my daughter to school in the mornings, I work remotely from home and manage the studio's administration such as accounting, answering emails, phone calls and organising the performances. In the afternoons, I tend to head over to the studio to manage the front desk. Thrice a week, you will find me there in the mornings to manage the sign in for our adult classes.

**WI: Tanglin Arts Studio has a strong focus on living a healthy life. Do you offer nutritional programmes?**

**KP:** No, because the great thing is that parents are more aware of nutrition these days. We add on to that and educate our students on the importance of a strong and healthy body in dance as it will prevent short term and long term injuries.

**WI: As fitness is at the core of dance, do your instructors take extra measures to maintain their fitness levels?**

**KP:** All my instructors are trained in Pilates and take regular classes during the week to strengthen and lengthen their bodies. We believe in a good and healthy lifestyle and take measures to maintain a weekly fitness regime.

**WI: As the head of such a well-known dance studio, what would you say drives you harder than anything else?**

**KP:** Seeing my students performing on stage and watching them improve year by year. It also warms my heart to see how proud their parents are at their accomplishments. This in turn drives me to do better every year.

**WI: How do you usually spend your weekends?**

**KP:** Call me a workaholic, but you will usually find me working on Saturdays. However, Sunday is family time and we usually kick back with friends over a barbecue.

**WI: Any last words for our readers?**

**KP:** Never give up and no matter what, move on with your life.