

The Ballet & Dance Center

Faculty 2011-12

Karen Menter – Ballet, Pointe, Creative Movement, Pilates

Karen was born to dance and has reinvented herself many times in her long dance career. Her father wanted her to be an educated dancer, so she received her BA and MA in dance from Butler University in Indianapolis, IN. She has performed with dance companies in Indiana (most notably Dance Kaleidoscope), in Virginia, and New Jersey and has had the privilege to work with brilliant teachers, such as at the Joffrey School and Marjorie Mussman and innovative and world renowned choreographers. She has taught at A&M University in Alabama, Butler University and Northern Virginia Community College. When her sons started school, Karen created and implemented creative movement curriculums in pre-schools and movement curriculum syllabi in elementary schools in Virginia and New Jersey. She has been active in many organizations such as the Indiana Arts Commission and has been a board member of many arts and business organizations. Karen is teacher trained in Stott Pilates on mat and reformer and is certified in active isolated stretch. She has continued her teacher training at the National Ballet School in Toronto, Canada. She now devotes herself to The Ballet & Dance Center teaching ballet, pointe and creative movement. She is also adjunct professor of dance at Syracuse University in the Musical Theater department and teaches Pilates at Mary Lou Corcoran's and at the JCC.

Danya Wikowski-Eades – Ballet, Pointe, Modern, Tap

Danya's early training began at the Lorraine Havercroft School of Dance and The Center of ballet and Dance Arts in Syracuse NY. She continued her training at Boston Ballet, Ballet West, with Madame Darvash, Martha Graham and as a Merritt Scholarship student at Alvin Ailey's. Danya has danced professionally in Texas, Connecticut and North Carolina, as well as in T.V. and Film. She graduated from The Hartford Ballet's Teacher Training Program, and continued her teaching training at the National Ballet School of Canada. Danya has worked with the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra as the Children's Rehearsal Mistress for the North Carolina Dance Theatre's production of The Nutcracker for 8 years (1999-2007) and has choreographed for the SSO on various projects for their Education and Family Series. In previous seasons this included Colors in Motion, The Polar Express, All Star Musicians, and the Holiday Pops. She has collaborated with Karen Menter for the SSO's Halloween Spookapalooza. Danya has taught and choreographed in CT, NC and NY for 18 yrs.

Larry Crabtree – Ballet, Partnering, Men's Class, Theatre Dance Teen

Larry Crabtree was Assistant to the Director/Principal Dancer & Ballet Master for the Anglo-American Ballet for over 20 years in NYC, where he trained with Catherine Kingsley. He has performed as a Guest Artist/Principal Dancer with the New York Theater Ballet, Shore Ballet, Staten Island Ballet, New Jersey Ballet and Peter Pucci Plus Dancers. His varied career in Ballet, Modern, Musical Theatre and Jazz has traveled him throughout the United States and Europe, in addition to national television programs. He is the Founder/Creator of "Body by Me-Torture by Larry", Personal Training Workouts, established in 1998. He has been a Faculty Member of the Anglo-American Ballet School, Circle in the Square Theater School and STEPS Studios in NYC; Dance Centre North and Center of Ballet & Dance Arts in Syracuse, NY, and at the Center for Dance & Theatre in NJ. Mr. Crabtree is originally from the Syracuse area where he received his training at the Center of Ballet & Dance Arts, under the Direction of Deborah Boughton. Since returning to the Syracuse area, Larry has taught and choreographed for Le Moyne College, served as Adjunct Faculty at Syracuse University, directed and choreographed a "Community Wide Dance Project" for the International Healthy Building Conference at the Syracuse OnCenter, teaches annually at the Bill Reed Musical Theater Intensive in Vermont, and is pleased to be a part of the School & Faculty at the Ballet and Dance Center.

Andrea Leigh Smith – Jazz

Andrea Leigh-Smith attended SUNY Purchase for Dance and followed with a scholarship to The Joffrey Ballet and further training at The American Dance Machine. She continued to create her training program of dance, voice, and acting with numerous recognized artists in New York City throughout her career. Andrea performed on Broadway (Jerome Robbins' Broadway, Smile) and at Radio City Music Hall. She has also choreographed and performed Off-Broadway, in regional U.S. theatres and with national touring companies.

Andrea moved to Syracuse, New York from Halifax, Nova Scotia. Andrea is resident choreographer for The Irondale Ensemble Project Theatre Company and maintains a full choreographic and teaching calendar throughout the year. While living in Canada Andrea created over 25 new works in the contemporary world of dance as well as choreographing numerous musicals. She was also an artistic core teacher at Halifax Dance for sixteen years. Andrea headed the Tap and Theatre Dance programs as well as being a core teacher to the Jazz Department. She is particularly proud to have collaborated with Canadian dance legend Don Gillies on the creation and presentation of “Zing! Pop! Zap!” She has been a dance/ movement instructor at Acadia University and Dalhousie University in Canada as well as Humboldt University in Northern California. Andrea was an adjunct teacher at SUNY Cortland and Le Moyne College and is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor of Dance at Syracuse University. Andrea is also a certified instructor of Stott Pilates mat and reformer.

Lisa Stuart – Tap, Theatre Dance Youth

Lisa began dancing at a young age in New Jersey learning technique through the Royal Academy of Dance Ballet Program, a Modern dance scholarship at the Princeton Ballet, and studying with Joe Villane, a former Martha Graham dancer. Living close to Manhattan, her parents exposed her to the magic of Broadway, and gave her the opportunity to take dance classes in the “Big Apple.” Lisa holds a B.A. from the University of New Hampshire - Anthropology Major, Minor in Dance; Teaching Assistant in Dance, Jean Mattox Dance Scholarship Award. After college, Lisa performed in Latin Fever Revue at the Condado Plaza Hotel in San Juan, PR, with Holland America Cruise Lines & Royal Caribbean Cruises (formerly Admiral Cruises), where she also held the title of Production Manager. Lisa has also danced in and held the position of dance captain in various musicals. Favorite performances include *42nd Street* at the Jupiter Theater (Fla), *Chicago* at the Miami Shores Theater (Fla), *Oklahoma* at Buck County Playhouse.

Lisa has over 20 years of teaching experience in New Jersey, and Upstate New York. She is the currently the choreographer at CNS High School.

Krystin Paci – Jazz ,Tap

Krystin Paci is originally from Westchester, New York. She attended college at Syracuse University where she was a member of the SU Dance Team her freshman year. She was also a dancer, choreographer, and board member in Danceworks, a student run dance company, in her last three years at SU. Krystin has been trained in various styles of dance including tap, jazz, ballet, and hip hop. She has taught jazz, tap, hip hop, and creative movement at various studios as well. Krystin has performed in a number of venues in and around New York City, including Radio City Music Hall and Madison Square Garden and for a variety of benefit events, including DRA: Dancers Responding to Aids.

Laurie Devo - Modern

Laurie has taught, choreographed, and performed as dance faculty at Syracuse University and with local area studios and artists since moving to Syracuse in 1984. She will be teaching Limon-based modern, inspired by the teachings, technique and style of Jose Limon and Doris Humphrey—a genre of modern dance founded upon the movement principles of ‘fall and recovery’ and ‘suspension and release,’ and one still performed on professional stages throughout the modern dance world. Laurie has her Master's in Dance and Dance Education from New York University.

Becky Richardson – Modern

Becky graduated from James Madison University, where she trained and performed with the Contemporary Dance Ensemble, focusing the majority of her training in modern dance. While in Virginia, she choreographed for and taught at Centreville Dance Academy, became a certified Pilates instructor and choreographed for and danced with several community theatre companies. Since moving to Syracuse, she choreographs for and teaches dance and Pilates at Syracuse University and several local studios. Her New York performance credits include Syracuse Contemporary Dance Company, Take Away Dance (in New York City), 'Vision of Sound' with the Society of New Music, and Syracuse University's Faculty Dance Concerts. She continues her training through local classes and at DNA in New York City, through Master Classes, including those with Bill Evans, Finis Jhung, Joe Tremaine, and Roni Mahler and by attending DanceLife Teacher Conferences. She is thrilled to be joining the wonderful staff and students at the Ballet and Dance Center!

Cheryl Wilkins-Mitchell – Ballet, Jazz, Modern

Cheryl earned a B.F.A. in Ballet with a modern dance minor (Horton) from the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music (CCM). She has performed nationally and internationally. Some of her credits are: Syracuse Ballet Theatre, Dance Theatre of Harlem (apprentice), Contemporary Dance Theater of Cincinnati, Theater Under The Stars (Houston), Bill & Jacqui Landrum Dance Theater (LA), R' Wanda Lewis Afro-American Dance Company (LA) and the Ruby Millsap Dance Theatre (LA). Cheryl spent over a year performing in South America with Walt Disney Productions & NBC Entertainment. Locally she performed with Syracuse Stage and the Paul Robeson Performing Arts Company.

Most recently Wilkins-Mitchell received an Individual Artist Grant from the Cultural Resources Council toward choreography of The Pearl Fishers for the Syracuse Opera. Wilkins-Mitchell has served on the New York State Council for the Arts (NYSCA) as a Dance Panelist.

Wilkins-Mitchell's notable teaching credits include such institutions as the Dance Theatre of Harlem, as assistant to Karl Shook children's classes, Inner City Cultural Center in Los Angeles, the Northwest Houston Dance Academy, Syracuse University and Le Moyne College. She served as a Teaching Artist for several arts institutes throughout CNY and the Southern Tier for many years. She is currently on the faculty of SUNY Oswego.

Karen McNary – Creative Movement, Ballroom, Belly Dance, Zumba

Karen McNary is a former professional Ballroom Dance Competitor/Instructor and BellyDance Performer, as well as a licensed Zumba, Zumba Tone, Zumba Gold, and ZumbAtomic Instructor. Karen has a Master's Degree in Elementary Education and has been dancing for over 20 years both as a professional and as a hobby. Karen has been collaborating with Karen Menter in the Creative Movement curriculum for the past ten years, and as the mother of a young dancer, loves to be able to introduce children to the wonderful world of dance.

Brandon Jones – Urban Motion Hip Hop

Biography coming soon

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