

The Ballet & Dance Center

Faculty 2013-14

Karen Menter – Ballet, Pointe, Creative Movement, Tap, 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, as well as 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, creative movement and Pilates for dancers. She is also adjunct professor of dance at Syracuse University in the Musical Theater department and teaches Pilates at Mary Lou Corcoran's Physical & Aquatic Therapy 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. In the Spring of 2012 Danya choreographed for an Independent film directed by Scott Coffey which was being filmed on site in the Syracuse area. Danya has taught and choreographed in CT, NC and NY for 18 years and will continue do so in the future.

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.

Cheryl Wilkins-Mitchell – Ballet, Modern, Jazz

Cheryl Wilkins-Mitchell is currently on the faculty of SUNY Oswego as Dance Instructor and has choreographed several of the theater productions—*The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *The April Witch*, *1940's Radio Hour*, *Big: The Musical*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Devils*, *Soldiers and Souls*. Most recently Wilkins-Mitchell collaborated with pianist Robert Auler to present *John Cage: Sonatas and Interludes Choreographed* at Oswego State. Wilkins-Mitchell co-choreographed the Syracuse Opera production of *The Pearl Fishers*. Cheryl Wilkins-Mitchell is also a select choreographer for the Society for New Music Vision of Sound performances.

Ms. Wilkins-Mitchell was founder and director of the Onondaga Dance Institute established in 1994. She served on the New York State Council for the Arts (NYSCA) as a Dance Panelist. Cheryl Wilkins-Mitchell is the recipient of numerous community awards including the Community Service Award from the Syracuse Chapter of the LINKS, Inc., the 2000 Martin Luther King Jr. Unsung Heroes and Heroines Award by Syracuse University and a 2008 Builders of Communities and Dreams Award by the Syracuse Commission for Women.

Cheryl Wilkins-Mitchell happily joined The Ballet and Dance Center staff teaching Modern, Jazz and Ballet.

Andrea Leigh Smith – Jazz, Tap, Theatre Dance

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.

Laurie Devo - Modern

Laurie has taught, choreographed, and performed in the Syracuse area since 1984. She has her master's in Dance and Dance Education from NYU where she studied with members of the Limon, Graham, and Cunningham Modern Dance Companies; continued her ballet training at the Joffrey School and with David Howard; and studied jazz at S.T. E P.'s and other NYC studios. She spent 15 years as Dance faculty at Syracuse University and has taught ballet, jazz, creative movement for the classroom, tap, and aerobic dance. Laurie will be teaching the advanced modern class this year.

Lisa Stuart – Tap

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.

Hanni Schwarzlander - Jazz, Tap, Zena Rommett Floor-Barre®

Raised in Syracuse, Hanni began her early training at the Lorraine Havercroft School of Dance. She danced her way through a BA at Oberlin College and Syracuse University, after which she spent time performing extensively in Europe for revues and national television. Back in the U.S., she continued performing primarily in musical theatre, touring nationally and working at regional theatres. Between shows, she returned to NYC to take classes with many notable teachers at Steps, Broadway Dance Center, Djoniba's, and the David Howard Studio.

Returning to Syracuse, Hanni taught ballet, jazz, musical theatre, tap, and modern at the Onondaga Dance Institute, the Dance Arts Studio, and the Dance Theater of Syracuse. She has worked in the Utica public schools with their Arts in Education program as a teaching artist, and facilitated teacher workshops for both the Utica and Syracuse Arts in Education institutes during the summers. In addition, Hanni has taught ballet at the Syracuse University Drama Department as an adjunct professor.

Most recently, Hanni was instrumental in helping build and expand the Dance program for the Performing Arts Department at Manlius Pebble Hill School, where she devoted her time to teaching dance classes, and directing and choreographing the Upper and Middle School musical productions.

Hanni is happy to be joining the Ballet and Dance Center family this year! In addition to her regular classes, Hanni is also very excited about bringing Zena Rommett Floor-Barre® technique to the Syracuse area!

Cristina Battle

Cristina Battle is a graduate of Le Moyne College where she served as Head Choreographer of the Le Moyne Student Dance Company. She continues to teach and choreograph for the Le Moyne Student Dance Company as well as other local schools and studios. Cristina has been classically trained in ballet, jazz, and modern. Much of her modern study and training in Syracuse has been under the guidance of Laurie Deyo. Cristina is also a certified Zumba instructor and continues to teach locally, as well as travel for workshops and master classes.

Larry Crabtree – Guest Teacher

Larry Crabtree was Assistant to the Director, Principal Dancer & Ballet Master for the Anglo-American Ballet in NYC for over 20 years, 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, among others. 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 since 1998. He has been a Faculty Member of the Anglo-American Ballet School, Circle in the Square Theater School and STEPS Studios in NYC; the 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 he has served as Adjunct Faculty for Le Moyne College and Syracuse University, is currently on Faculty at Dance Centre North, has taught and choreographed for the Le Moyne Student Dance Company, directed and choreographed a “Community Wide Dance Project” for the International Healthy Building Conference at the Syracuse OnCenter and teaches annually at the Bill Reed Musical Theater Intensive in Vermont. Larry is pleased to be a part of the Ballet and Dance Center.

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