

## Training Students for Professional Careers

Last Updated Friday, 10 October 2014

### Founder and Executive Director

Vasile Petrutiu - (Ballet, Character, Partnering, Pointe, Variations) - was born in Transylvania, Romania, Mr. Petrutiu trained at the Romanian Academy of Fine Arts and graduated at the top of his class with the highest degree in the field of dance. After graduation he joined the Romanian National Opera and Ballet in Bucharest where he was spotted by the great director/choreographer Oleg Danovski, who invited him to join The Classical and Contemporary Ballet of Romania, as principal dancer and touring extensively throughout Europe, Canada and the United States. In 1982 he defected while on tour in USA. In 1984 Mr. Petrutiu established his residency in the United States and later got his US citizenship. He held the Principal Dancer position with several companies including Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Cleveland-San Jose Ballet, Dallas Ballet, Tulsa Ballet Theatre, Nevada Dance Theatre, Royal Winnipeg Ballet and Alberta Ballet. His distinguished career encompasses an extensive list of leading roles in the great classical ballets and many contemporary master pieces. During his dance career, Mr. Petrutiu worked with noted personalities such as Frederick Franklin, Reid Anderson, Natalie Krassovska, Laura Alonzo and Flemming Flindt. In addition to dancing, Mr. Petrutiu also acted as master teacher, school director, ballet master, choreographer, and artistic director for several companies, most recently Southern Ballet Theatre, now Orlando Ballet, in Florida. Under his direction SBT, now Orlando Ballet, successfully eliminated its trailing deficit of over 400K, tripled season subscriptions and earned a surplus of 100K by the third year of his leadership. In the year 2000, Mr. Petrutiu founded and incorporated The Ballet Academy of Central Florida and the Central Florida Ballet, guiding the two organizations to great success. The Academy reached an enrollment of over 300 students in just four months, and the professional company made its debut with Tutus, Tangos, and More. This program featured several of Mr. Petrutiu's ballets and was a smash-hit debut for the new company. In year 2004 Mr.

Petrutiu's Nutcracker Production reached international attention being featured in USA Today and later highlighted by CNN Headline News as one of five outstanding Productions in the nation. Mr. Petrutiu engaged many international stars including Gelsey Kirkland, Fernando Bujones, Angel Corella, Irina Dvorovenko, Maxim Beloserkovsky, Sascha Radetski, Yanis Pikiaris, David Palmer and Dragos Mihalcea. Mr. Petrutiu is excited to continue working with professional dancers and students and to bring quality in dance to Central Florida. Artistic Director Vladimir Bykov - (Ballet, Character, Partnering, Pointe, Variations) - Mr. Bykov graduated from the Kiev State Ballet Academy (Ukraine) in 1988 and joined the Malyi Theatre of Opera and Ballet in Kiev as a principal dancer. In 1995, he received a Master's Degree from the Kiev National Institute of the Arts. Vladimir has performed in leading roles including The Nutcracker, Sleeping Beauty, Harlequinade, Romeo and Juliet, and the Rite of Spring. Vladimir toured throughout Europe and came to the U.S. in 1996 where he danced with El Paso Ballet, New Mexico Ballet, Albuquerque and Dallas Metropolitan Ballet. He has been a ballet instructor at the University of Texas and was awarded Outstanding Male Newcomer by the El Paso Association for the Performing Arts in 1988. Before joining Central Florida Ballet as Ballet master, Mr. Bykov danced with Southern Ballet Theatre (now Orlando Ballet) and also served as a teacher and coach for the company. In year 2004 Mr. Bykov was appointed and accepted the Artistic Director's position with Central Florida Ballet. In 2007, Mr. Bykov accepted the Artistic Director position with the World Ballet Competition. Academy Instructors Christye Alan - (Ballet, Pointe, Variations) - Christye Alan began her dance training under Pat and Tanju Tuzer at the Tuzer Dancecenter in Dallas, Texas. At 19, she became a member of the Fort Worth/Dallas Ballet where she performed from 1989-1993 under Paul Mejia and Suzanne Farrel and then went on to join Ballet Dallas in 1994. Christye left the ballet to sail around the world performing for several high end cruise lines. From the seven seas, her talents then took her to Las Vegas in 1996 where she performed in the Siegfried and Roy Show. It was from here that she then became the Principal Dancer for "Enter the Night" at the Stardust Hotel and Casino. In 2000, Christye moved to Orlando, Florida to perform in Disney's show "Tarzan Rocks" at Disney's Animal Kingdom. That same year, she also joined the Central Florida Ballet and has remained to the present. Christye is currently the Aerial Director for Metropolis Productions and Director of its school, Metro Movement and Aerial Arts. Her newest and most prized role is "Mommy" to 2 year old twins, Aidan and Ashton. Natalya Bashkatova (Ballet, Pointe, Variations) - Born in Russia, Bashkatova trained at the prestigious Bolshoi Ballet Academy in Moscow and Bolshoi Ballet University. She became a principal dancer for the prestigious Bolshoi Theater Grigorovich Ballet from 1989-1994 and immediately after was a guest principal dancer with the New York City Ballet. Her repertoire included many title roles in the great classics including Aurora in Sleeping Beauty, Kitri in Don Quixote, Swanhilda in Coppelia, Odette/Odile in Swan Lake among many others. Awards include "Best Ballerina of the Festival" at the 1992 Spoleto International Arts Festival held in Spoleto, Italy. She has toured worldwide to countries including Holland, Greece, Egypt, Hong Kong, France, and Belgium among many others. After moving to the United States, she joined the Cirque du Soleil in Las Vegas as a lead dancer in Mystere. In 1998, she moved to Orlando to perform in Cirque du Soleil's "La Nouba" where she currently performs. She has been featured in numerous television commercials, interviews, and videos with Cirque du Soleil.

Dawn Branch - (Modern) - Certified by Dance Educators of America, Ms. Branch is a guest lecturer at colleges across the state and teaches master classes throughout the country. Ms. Branch is a native New Yorker and graduate of the world-renowned LaGuardia High School of the Performing Arts. She holds a BA in Media and Communications from State University at Old Westbury. Ms. Branch was a soloist with the Bernice Johnson Dance Company and a scholarship student with the Ailey School, the official school of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. She studied under the tutelage of Madame Darvarsh, Penny Frank, Denise Jefferson, Kevin Austin Hunt and Kevin Iega Jeff, Founder and Artistic Director of the Chicago-based Deeply Rooted Dance Theatre and artist-in-residence at Ballet Chicago.

Ms. Branch's career highlights have included co-choreographing with Michael Peters for "On Stage America"; performing in New York City with Ben Vereen at Avery Fisher Hall and with Diana Ross in Central Park. She was the rehearsal director for The Chocolate Nutcracker (Orlando, FL), the co-Artistic Director of Momentum Arts (Longwood, FL) and performed with Moore Dance Project, the area's first African-American professional contemporary dance company, founded and operating out of The Center for Contemporary Dance.

In May of 2012, Ms. Branch founded Dawn Branch Works Contemporary Ballet Company, a professional ensemble that emerged out of a project sponsored by The Center for Contemporary Dance. She is also the Founder and President of Dawn Branch Master Dance Series and Performances, a workshop program which gives Central Florida dancers the opportunity to work with master instructors from the New York City area. She is also the director of the NAACP's local division of the Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO), a yearlong achievement program designed to recruit, stimulate, and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among African-American high school students.

Gina Hatch (Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Musical Theater) - Gina was born in Provo, Utah. She began training at age 4 with Colleen Collins Smith School of Performing Arts. She became a member of The Company at age 15, dancing the lead in Swan Lake, Carmen, Nutcracker, and Jekyll and Hyde. Gina was the recipient of the William F. Christensen scholarship to the University of Utah. She went on to graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in addition to teaching at the University for two years. She performed with Utah Ballet and Ballet West, working with Jaque Debois, Atilla Fizzaire and William F. Christensen. Soon after graduation, Gina became a member of Hubbard Street Dance Company working with Twyla Tharp, Alonzo King, and Lou Conte. Gina directed the dance department at Payson High School for two years, then moved to Florida to perform with Walt Disney World Entertainment. Gina performed in The Magical World of Barbie, Jolly Holidays and numerous conventions. She became a Radio City Rockette for the 1996 Christmas Spectacular and returned to complete four full seasons. Gina performed for Universal Studios in the Grinchmas show in 2009. She is currently a dance clinician for Disney Magic Music Days Dancing Seminars. She also performs and teaches at Central Florida Ballet and Movement Arts Studio. Gina can currently be seen performing the principal role in "Allure" at SeaWorld Orlando. Most recently Gina has been chosen to choreograph Universal Studios largest and most ambitious live show to date "Universal Studios SUPERSTAR Parade". She has also choreographed Despicable Me, Bikini Bottom, Hop and Macy's High Kick Girls for Universal Studios.

Gina is a mother to Ellexis Skye, Ledger Gregory, London Maurice, and Leyton Cole. Whether performing, judging pageants/competitions, or teaching around the nation, Gina loves participating in the performing arts. She especially appreciates Colleen Collins Smith's patience and gift to learn and to excel. Gina hopes to pass on her knowledge and love of dance to all.

Lorraine Spack (Pilates, Body Conditioning) - Originally from Queens, New York, Lorraine has been living and working in Orlando since 1997. Along with having a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and being a registered nurse, she has always had a passion for health and fitness. A former long distance runner, she has completed multiple marathons, half-marathons, and many other races over the years. She has been working in the fitness industry for the past 12 years. What started as a part time job in order to raise her family, blossomed into a full blown career. Lorraine is an AFAA certified personal trainer and group fitness instructor and holds multiple other certification including Spinning, yoga, sports nutrition and pilates. Her extensive pilates training is through STOTT PILATES and includes mat work, reformer, Cadillac, chair, barrels and props. Lorraine absolutely loves working with the dancers and feels it has brought an entirely new perspective to her fitness career.

Shayna Tevaga (Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Lyrical, Modern) - Ms. Tevaga was born in Honolulu, Hawaii and raised in the Central Florida area. During her training at South Beach Dance Academy, she was invited to attend the Bolles School in Jacksonville, Florida on a full year merit scholarship and also trained in the summer at Virginia School of the Arts on a full merit scholarship. She graduated from the Dr. Phillips High School Visual and Performing Arts Dance Magnet Program. Immediately after, she joined the Netane Polynesian Productions as a professional dancer performing in corporate conventions, special events, and private productions. She traveled the world and the U.S. including New York, Georgia, Indiana, and California. For more than a decade, Ms. Tevaga performed full-time in the Makahiki Luau at Seaworld Orlando and also Walt Disney World Entertainment.

As a Master Instructor she trains students in a variety of dance styles: ballet, tap, jazz, musical theater, modern, and contemporary. Her teaching career spans nationwide and her choreography has won countless awards at the competitive level. In 2012 she joined the Ballet Academy of Central Florida's teaching faculty and in 2014 she accepted the position of Academy Coordinator. She currently resides in the Orlando area with her husband and four children. She is thrilled to be a part of the talented staff at Ballet Academy of Central Florida and dedicated to inspiring the community youth.

Academy Guest Instructors Shata Ben-Avari (Yoga) has been practicing and sharing her love for yoga throughout Florida for the past 20 years and has led Yoga-Healing retreats in Costa Rica, North Carolina, and across the state of Florida. With a degree in Holistic nutrition, Shata facilitates yoga inspired personal training, yoga therapy, and transformational Thai bodywork. Her lifelong experience in dance and movement has inspired her flowing vinyasa teaching style, with a strong emphasis on Core strength. She began her healing journey with yoga during a life-threatening illness and emerged transformed and passionate to share. She has been the owner of Yoga Central in Mount Dora, Florida for the past 12 years as well as directs and facilitates a 200-hour Yoga teacher certification program, "Teaching from the

Heart". Nikolai Moroz - (Ballet, Character, Partnering, Pointe, Variations) - Born in Bilopillia, Ukraine, Nikolai received his dance education from Kiev State Ballet Academy under Dr. Valery Parsegov. He began his professional career with Odessa Theatre Opera and Ballet in Ukraine. Later, he joined the Kiev State Theatre of Classical Ballet as a soloist, then principal dancer. He toured Germany, Austria, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Italy, France, and several other countries. In 1995, Nikolai was invited to the El Paso Ballet company where he spent two seasons and then joined Ballet Arizona in 1997. Nikolai has performed principal and soloist roles in many ballets including Giselle, The Leaves are Fading, The Nutcracker, and George Balanchine's Agon, Theme and Variations Serenade Allegro Brillante and Prodigal Son. After retiring from dancing, Nikolai moved to Florida serving as ballet master teacher and choreographer at Mary Jo Performing Arts Academy in Tampa and The Dance P.A.D.. He is also a faculty ballet teacher and a frequent guest artist for the Central Florida Ballet. Nikolai's teaching experience includes Odessa School of Ballet (Ukraine), Kiev Ballet School (Ukraine), School of Ballet El Paso, University of Texas at El Paso, School of Ballet Arizona, and Brigham Young University Summer Workshop.

Deedee Sherman &ndash; (Ballet & Tap) - Deedee began dancing with Betty Kovach, in Raleigh, N.C., studying the Vaganova method. She received her BFA, in Dance, from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, in Winston-Salem, NC. After graduation, she had a 15 year stage career in Reno, Nevada dancing with Maggie Banks' newly formed, Nevada Festival Ballet. At the same time, she was performing in the MGM Grand's production, "Hello Hollywood" on the world's largest stage. This was a dream job that allowed her to dance in 2 shows a night, 6 nights a week, for 10 years. While in Reno, she also performed with the Nevada Opera, Karen Burns Productions and numerous special events at MGM Grand and Bally's Hotel & Casino. Deedee has taught dance in the Orlando area for the past 20 years, joining Central Florida Ballet, in 2001. Deedee, also, works with Virginia Trudeau Photography.

Genevieve Tallarico-McKay &ndash; (Ballet, Pointe, Modern) - Genevieve began her dance training with Movement Laboratory under the direction of Ms. Judith Williams-Henry, and later, under Marcia Dale-Weary at Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet. Following High School graduation, Genevieve continued her passion for dance at Belhaven University where she received a Bachelors of Arts in Dance, specializing in Pedagogy. She danced through her college career with the Belhaven Ensemble, Belhaven Worship Team, Urban Dance Club and the Belhaven Dance Team.

Throughout her summers, Genevieve continued to train at Ballet Magnificat!, Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet and Dance Ad Deum. She also was a part of Belhaven University's dance ensemble to the National College Dance Festival in Oxford, Mississippi. After graduation she went on to dance with Ad Deum Dance Company in Houston, Texas under Artistic Director, Randall Flinn. Moving back to Jackson, MS, Genevieve accepted the position as the executive assistant for the USA International Ballet Competition. She now lives in Orlando, after getting married to her wonderful husband, David. She enjoys teaching all disciplines and levels of dance and is thrilled to be teaching for Central Florida Ballet.

Daniela Veliz Wilk - (Ballet) - is from Caracas, Venezuela. She began her training at the Central Florida Ballet Academy in 2003, and since then has performed in various ballets with the company; her favorites being Paquita, La Bayadere, and Swan Lake. She has also trained at the Orlando Ballet, Universal Ballet Academy (Kirov), and Ballet Florida where she received a full scholarship. Additionally she performs at Universal Studios and local theater companies including The Garden Theater and Titusville Playhouse.

Diane Withee - (Ballet, Pointe, Variations) - Ms. Withee brings more than 20 years of teaching experience as a former professional ballet dancer who served as Artistic Director for 2 performing Arts Schools; Owned and Directed the New Orleans based ballet academy: Ballet Workshop; and was the Founder and Director of Attitudes Ballet Company. Ms. Withee is also a graduate of the Boston Ballet School and has studied under many world renowned ballet masters. She received her instructor training in Vaganova, Cecchetti and RAD methodologies. Ms. Withee strongly believes in the vision and mission of the Central Florida Ballet Academy. She is dedicated to inspiring students of all ages and abilities to achieve their highest potential.