

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH DEPARTMENT OF BALLET FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES

Bené Arnold, Distinguished Professor Emerita, Interim Chair

Bene' received her B.F.A. and M.F.A. from the Department of Ballet, and her B.S. in elementary education and Masters of Education in special education (teaching the deaf as her specialty) from the University of Utah.

In 1963 Bene' was asked by Willam F. Christensen to be the ballet mistress for the future company, Ballet West. She served in this capacity until 1975 when she joined the University of Utah Department of Ballet faculty.

In 1985 Bene' created the role of Fatme, in *Abdallah*, an August Bournonville ballet. This began her career as a guest artist in various character roles with Ballet West. For many years she was the rehearsal assistant for the young dancers in the Ballet West *Nutcracker*.

In 1984 Bene' received a citation from the Utah State Senate recognizing her contribution through ballet to the state. In 1997 she received the Chamber of Commerce Award in the Arts and the Governor's Award in the Arts. She served on the NEA dance panel in 2007. In 1998 Bene' was the first woman and only faculty member from Fine Arts and Humanities to be named, Distinguished Professor. In 2001, Bene' received recognition for her teaching as the KSL Teacher of the Month. When Bene' retired from the University of Utah she was named Distinguished Professor Emerita. Bene' willingly answered the call when asked to return to the University of Utah and in 2008 became Interim Chair of the Department of Ballet.

(Faculty and staff are listed alphabetically)

Cole Adams, Associate Instructor Production Director and Lighting Design

B.F.A. Utah State University. Cole serves as the Production Director and Lighting Designer for the Marriott Center for Dance. This is his fourth year at the University of Utah's renowned Ballet and Modern Dance programs. Credits at the University of Utah include Spring and Fall productions of Utah Ballet and Performing Dance Company (PDC). Cole has served in many positions at Utah State University and has spent five years designing concerts and outdoor theater for the Sandy Amphitheater with artists such as Toto, Kansas, Air Supply, Taylor Swift, Josh Gracin, Miranda Lambert, Mary Wilson, The Bellamy Brothers, Rita Coolidge, Billy Dean, and Gladys Knight. In addition, Cole enjoys freelancing around the Rocky Mountain region. Highlights include *The Comedy of Errors* at the International Fringe Festival, *Missa Solemnis*, Tuacahn Center for the Arts, Rick Robinsons: *Vibe Dance. Co.*, The SCERA Theater, The Egyptian Theatre Co. in Park City, Center Stage, and The Hale Center Theater. Recent projects include Brent Schneider's *Perspectives: Men, Motion & Media* in conjunction with RDT's LINK series, Ririe Woodbury's *Alchemy*, *The Gift*, the recent production of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* at The Hale and *Cabaret* at the Egyptian in Park City for which he won the Edwina award for best lighting design.

Vilena Barekyan, Accompanist

In 1977 Vilena graduated from Baku Conservatory where she received her Masters degree from the Piano Department. In 1988 she moved to Moscow, Russia where she attended many competitions and performed as an accompanist. In 1998 she moved to Salt Lake City, Utah. In 2004 Vilena was hired by the University of Utah Ballet Department and Ballet West Company as an accompanist. Since she moved to the United States she has had many private students, who attend musical competitions every year. Since 2000 she has accompanied many viola, violin, and cello player and in 2007 she was asked to attend the 1st Stradivary Competition.

Rowland Butler, Instructor

Rowland Butler celebrates a half-century in the arts. His many accomplishments include: charter member of Ballet West, resident choreographer for Pioneer Memorial Theater, assistant professor in both the Ballet and Theater Departments at the University of Utah and owner of Butler Dance Academy. He has been a performer and guest instructor in the United States, Asia and South America.

Mr. Butler's credits as a director/choreographer are too numerous to list they include all arts and entertainment fields. Many of his students have performed on Broadway in, *Cats*, *A Chorus Line*, and *Les Miserables*. His students can be seen in the movie, *Footloose* and the current movies, *High School Musicals 1-2-3*. Mr. Butler still performs occasionally and can be seen as Clarence in Odyssey's production of, *It's a Wonderful Life*.

Michelle Butterfield, Instructor

Michelle Butterfield has choreographed and performed for Coca Cola (2002 Winter Olympics), Touched By An Angel, Let It Be (Odyssey), The Dance (based on Richard Paul Evans Book), Thriller (Odyssey), Sledgehammer (Odyssey), Deep Forest (Odyssey), Stayin' Alive (Odyssey stage production), Novell, Mountain Dew, The Venetian, Gus Giordano's Jazz Dance World Congress, Stadium of Fire, multiple NBA Half Time Shows and at various studios throughout the U.S. Michelle was one of only two girls chosen in the United States to tour with the once all male tap dance show Tap Dogs. She is currently on the faculty at the University of Utah where she enjoys teaching tap and jazz for the Ballet Department. She is the Assistant Director of TAMJAMS, the original in-studio convention. For six years she danced with the professional, contemporary jazz company Odyssey Dance Theatre. Starting in January 2007 she decided to continue her Grandmother's tap dancing legacy (her Grandma Bobbie Butterfield is 72 years old and still teaching tap!) and started her own tap company, LEGACYTAP. In the summer Michelle enjoys traveling to work with young dancers at summer intensive workshops. Michelle has a powerful energy and love for life that is evident on stage, in the classroom and in everyday life. She is passionate about teaching, performing and sharing her love for DANCE!

Jeff Detton, Accompanist

Barbara Hamblin, Professor

Barbara Hamblin was a charter member of the Utah Civic Ballet and principal ballerina with Ballet West from 1964 to 1972. She received her early training from Edna Howell in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Her principal teachers in Utah were Willam Christensen, Mattlyn Gavers, Gordon Paxman and Bené Arnold. Barbara met with critical success in several leading roles including Balanchine's *Serenade*, *Concerto Barocco*, *Symphony in C*, and Willam Christensen's *Coppelia*, *Cinderella* and *Firebird*.

Barbara began teaching as an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Ballet, University of Utah, in 1972, and taught for the Academic Outreach and Education program from 1972 until 1984. From 1980 to 1984 she also directed the pre-university ballet program for students ages 8 to 18. She accepted a full-time teaching position in 1984 and was appointed chairwoman of the Department of Ballet in 1988, serving in this capacity until 2000. She taught ballet technique, pointe, pedagogy, ballet history and the dance fitness and injuries course until her retirement in 2007. She currently teaches ballet history, a fully online course, which fulfills the Fine Arts requirement for General Education for non-majors and is required for ballet majors. Barbara enjoys working with students and served as undergraduate advisor for ballet for many years.

Jamie Hawke, Graduate Teaching Assistant

Jamie is in her second year of her graduate studies at the University of Utah. She graduated from the University of Calgary in 2007 with a BA in Dance (with Distinction) Ballet Emphasis. This undergraduate degree was part of a collaborative program between the University of Calgary programs of Dance and Kinesiology. Jamie's focus at the University of Utah is on Teaching and Choreography of Ballet.

Glenda Holt, Office Coordinator

Glenda began at the University in May 2008 after many years with Granite School District in such capacities as, a Secondary School Bookkeeper and an Elementary School Principal's Secretary. Prior to that she was a Medical Assistant, but due to a severe allergy, had to choose a new career path. One of her philosophies in life because of this career change is, "Challenges in life are often hard, but we are all given tools and abilities to overcome what at first, seems impossible."

Glenda has a special insight into the Department of Ballet because her daughter, Susan, graduated from the Department in 2008. Besides doing the bookwork required of the job, she hopes to be a good influence to the students and that they will feel free to come into her office at anytime to ask questions and seek advice.

Lisa Hoyt, Graduate Teaching Assistant

Lisa Hoyt is currently studying to receive her MFA in Ballet from the University of Utah. Ms. Hoyt is emphasizing in the fields of Character dance, dance rehearsal methodology, as well as some arts marketing. During her Master's studies Ms. Hoyt has participated in the Character Dance Ensemble including their tour to St. Petersburg, Russia. Ms. Hoyt was also awarded a Teaching Assistantship during which she served as Ballet Mistress for Utah Ballet and assisted with their cultural exchange to Seoul, South Korea.

Ms. Hoyt previously received a BFA in ballet performance and a minor in business in 2005 from the University of Utah. Lisa Hoyt attended the University of Utah with scholarships including the Willam F. Christensen Scholarship and the University of Utah Leadership Scholarship. Ms. Hoyt was active on campus participating in Utah Ballet, Character Dance Ensemble, the Ballet Departments Student Advisory Committee, and the Asian American Student Association.

Olivia Kunst, Graduate Teaching Assistant

Olivia received her BFA with an emphasis in Performance in May 2008. She is now a candidate for her MFA in Teaching and Choreography. During her time as an undergraduate she performed with Utah Ballet for three years, as well as participating in the cultural exchange with Kyung Hee University and performed in Seoul, South Korea. She has had valuable experience working with guest choreographers through the University of Utah as well as American Ballet Theater's Summer Intensive. In the past she has also had the honor of performing with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir Christmas show in Salt Lake City, Utah, with East West Dance Theater in Maryland, a benefit performance for the Chinese Embassy, as well as performances at the Baltimore Museum of Art in Maryland. She hopes that her continuing education will lead to many more great experiences and opportunities.

Carol Iwasaki, Professor

Carol N. Iwasaki, Professor and former Chair of the Department of Ballet at the University of Utah (currently on sabbatical) received her B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees from the University of Utah, where she was the recipient of a teaching fellowship.

Professor Iwasaki received her early dance training from June Purrington Park in Salt Lake City, Utah. She then began intensive training in the ballet preparatory and collegiate programs at the University of Utah with Willam F. Christensen, Gordon Paxman, Yurek Lazowski, Mattlyn Gavers, Bene' Arnold, Gilbert Reed, Ramon Segarra, John Callendar, Terri Port, Barbara Hamblin, and Marianne Hatton. She was also a member of Utah Civic Ballet Company, forerunner of Ballet West.

Prior to her return to the University of Utah, she was Head of the Dance Division at the College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) at the University of Cincinnati, where she was named the first chair holder of the Corbett-McLain Distinguished Chair in Dance. She was also Director of Dance at The Wichita State University, and Executive Director of Dance at Wichita Children's Theatre and Dance Center.

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330 SOUTH 1500 EAST, RM 112, SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84112-0280 * www.ballet.utah.edu * 801.581.8231

Maureen Laird, Associate Professor

Maureen Laird received her early training at Point Park College and the Pennsylvania Ballet School. She continued her studies at David Howard's School and Melissa Hayden's Studio in New York and then went on to study at the University of Utah. Maureen performed with the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Ballet El Paso, and the American Dance Ensemble as a Soloist before dancing with Ballet West from 1980-87. While with Ballet West, Maureen appeared in the Peasant Pas de Deux in *Giselle*, White Girl in *Etudes*, Waltz Pas de Deux, Lead Merlton, the Doll Solo in *Nutcracker*, Blue Girl in *Les Patineurs*, the Moth Fairy in *The Dream*, Bluebird Pas de Deux in *Sleeping Beauty*, and the title role in *Pineapple Poll*. Maureen teaches for the Ballet West Conservatory and currently teaches pointe and technique classes for upper and lower-division ballet students. In addition, she teaches dance conditioning classes and her research interests include dancer transition and health issues.

Sharee Lane, Associate Professor

Professor Lane's vast ballet career began with Ballet West, where she danced under the direction of artistic directors William F. Christensen and Bruce Marks, from 1970-79. In 1981, at the invitation of William Christensen, she joined the faculty at the School of Ballet West. Professor Lane became a part of the Ballet West artistic staff in 1989, as assistant director of the Ballet West Conservatory under new artistic director John Hart, and continued in that position under artistic director Jonas Kåge from 1997-99. Having served as adjunct associate professor from 1989-2001 in the Department of Ballet, she was promoted to associate professor in 2001. Professor Lane has been a recipient of two Thomas D. Dee Grants, in 2001 and 2004, and received the prestigious Philip and Miriam Perlman Award for excellence in student counseling and advising in 2006. Nominated for the Fine Arts Scholars in 2005, Professor Lane recently presented her research "Through the Looking Glass: Examining the Impact of Mirrors in Technical and Artistic Development in Female College Ballet Dancers" for the Corps de Ballet International Conference at Western Michigan University (2007), and the Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities in 2008. As well as being a frequent guest teacher for the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet and the Northwest Professional Dance Project, Professor Lane was adjudicator for MusicFest in Spokane, Washington in 2008, and for the Montana Dance Arts Association in 2007.

James Larsen, Associate Instructor Technical Director and Lighting Design

James is excited for another year at the University of Utah. James is a lighting designer and Technical Director for the Modern dance and Ballet depts. He graduated with his BFA from Utah State University in Lighting Design. James also has been seen as lighting designer/Technical Director/Stage Manager for Repertory Dance theatre. This summer James was a Carpenter in Hawaii for the Army Community Theatre doing "Oliver," and in Crested Butte CO with RDT for the Crested Butte Music Festival. James looks forward to doing shows this year and keep on Dancing!!!

Conrad Ludlow, Professor

Conrad Ludlow had an illustrious twenty-year career as a principal dancer with both San Francisco Ballet and New York City Ballet, where he was especially known for his skill in partnering. He established exciting partnerships with such well-known ballerinas as Violette Verdy, Melissa Hayden, Maria Tallchief, Allegra Kent, Suzanne Farrell, and Patricia McBride. Now a professor, Mr. Ludlow joined the University of Utah Ballet Department (Salt Lake City) in 1985 as resident choreographer, after founding and directing Ballet Oklahoma. He frequently acts as artistic director for Utah Ballet and Ballet Ensemble productions. At the 75th birthday party of the San Francisco Ballet this spring Conrad was asked to speak on stage at the War Memorial Opera House where as a principal dancer with the New York City Ballet and the San Francisco he represented the close connection both have enjoyed together past and present. On a panel discussion he was spokesman for the 50's decade and the contributions they contributed to the present state of what has become one of the finest companies in the world.

Steve Rasmussen, Associate Professor, Lecturer, Costume Shop Director

Steve has a BS from the University of Utah in Clothing and Textiles, with an emphasis in textile soft sculpture. He has had several art shows in local galleries and has done theater costuming for the Salt Lake Acting Company, Dance Theater Coalition, and Theater Works West in Salt Lake City and the Egyptian Theater in Park City. He has created the costumes and props for the Saliva Sisters, a well-known local performing group and has created a line of unusual soft-sculpture playwear products for adults and children. For nine years, Steve co-wrote and acted in a radio musical comedy variety show, *Desertaire*, on KRCL. Photography is one of Steve's hobbies and he is working towards having photographs published and shown in galleries.

Steve has designed costumes for the Ballet and Modern Dance Departments since 1996. He has also designed costumes for Repertory Dance Theatre and Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company. In 1995, he received the Utah Arts Council Awards Grant to study costumes and masks of the Commedia del Arte in Venice, Italy.

Kirstin Riehl, Graduate Teaching Assistant

Kirstin is delighted to be attending the University of Utah as she begins her studies in the M.F.A program in Teaching/Choreography (Ballet). Ms. Riehl began her training in classical ballet in the Royal Academy of Dance Method and has completed all her exams up to Majors Elementary. She continued her studies abroad at Bush Davies School of the Arts in East Grinstead, England. Upon moving back to the U.S she trained in New York City with Valerie Taylor, David Howard and Diane Frankel. Ms. Riehl also attended North Carolina School of the Arts, and the Houston Ballet Academy. Where she was trained by instructors: Melissa Hayden, Frank Smith, Gina Vidal, Richard Gain, and Duncan Noble, Clara Cravey and Steve Brule. Ms. Riehl also attended the Royal Academy of Dance, Pennsylvania Ballet, Houston Ballet and David Howard's summer intensive programs. Ms. Riehl has performed in various roles over the years. Weeks before Ms. Riehl turned seventeen her dreams were redirected. She sustained a back injury in a car accident, which ended her hopes of a professional performing career. Ms. Riehl redirected her energy and the love of the "art of dance" and began on a path of teaching and choreography. She has been teaching dance for the past sixteen years as a Director of Ballet and teaching master classes in Houston TX.

Ms. Riehl has not only trained in Ballet but has been educated in Modern, Improvisation, Laban Movement Analysis, Pilates, and Massage Therapy.

I am thrilled to be given this opportunity to be a Teaching Assistant. I believe dance in higher education is important in an individual's growth as a dancer and artist. To gain the knowledge of understanding one's body and the abilities to communicate with others the powerful impact and significance, dance can emote. It is essential to keep the "art of dance" recognized and active in the community. It is the true rhythm of life that leads us through our own personal dance, and it is the diversity in the art form that makes dance truly powerful.

Cati Snarr, Instructor

Cati Snarr's vast performing experience has taken her around the world. She began her professional career as an Apprentice with Ballet West; in 1986 joining Ballet West to perform at the Kennedy Center to dance *Sleeping Beauty* and *Abdullah*. Since then, she has danced ballet roles in *La Bayadère*, *Serenade*, *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, *Graduation Ball* and many others. She has worked in television with stars like Carol Burnett, Tim Conway and Rita Moreno. Her musical theatre experience has taken her in tours across the United States, Europe and Russia. Her favorite roles have been Anita in *West Side Story* and on roller skates in *Starlight Express*. She received an Emmy Award for the choreography of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the 2002 Winter Olympics leading her to do work on Super Bowl XLII, Disney's *Hannah Montana 3D Movie*, *High School Musical 3* and more. Cati was invited to teach at the Edinburgh International Festival with Ballet West, Central Ballet of London and many other master classes. She is currently the Children's Ballet Mistress, Education Associate and an Academy instructor for Ballet West. She also teaches jazz at the University of Utah.

Tamara Squires, Instructor

Tamara Squires is an internationally acclaimed Master Teacher, Choreographer and Performer with numerous TV, film and live performance credits. She was the Assistant Choreographer for Michael Jackson's production of *Sisterella* in Europe and worked with Paula Abdul on the *Academy Awards* and the film *Dance To Win*. Other credits include *The Tonight Show*, *Broadway on Tap*, *Kids Incorporated*, and was featured on NBC's *Saved by the Bell*, *Guys Next Door* and *Murder She Wrote*. She has performed in *Music Man*, *A Chorus Line*, National Pepsi Commercials, Asics and Danskin Industrials, as well as MTV videos and singer/dancer for *Stacy Q* and *Cheyenne Concert Tours*. Tamara has a national line of instructional dance videos called "Dancer's Body". She has choreographed for dance companies, stage productions, NBA halftimes, private studios, universities and NBC soaps including *Days of Our Lives* and *Generations*, winning numerous choreography awards. Tamara is currently the Executive Director of TAMJAMS! Dance. She continues to travel, perform, judge and teach with national conventions, at universities, and for hundreds of private studios throughout the United States, Australia, Mexico, Asia, Canada and Europe.

Mikhail Tchoupakov, Instructor

Born and raised in Moscow, Russia, Misha graduated from the famous Bolshoi Ballet Academy. He had danced with the renowned Bolshoi Ballet. Amongst his teachers are Asaf Messerer and Boris Akimov. Misha is also a graduate of the Moscow State Choreography Institute. Under Professor Peter Pestov, he received his M.F.A. in Dance Pedagogy and Choreography.

Misha is an official representative and appointed trustee of the Kasyan Goleizovsky Foundation.

Since 1990, Misha has been residing in the U.S. Misha has taught for the Houston Ballet, Oregon Dance Theatre, Ballet West, David Taylor Dance Theatre, State Street Ballet, Ballet Arlington, Guangzhou Ballet of China, and Galili Dance in Netherlands. He has been a guest teacher in Brazil, Japan, Germany, Netherlands, and Great Britain.

Mr. Tchoupakov serves as a judge and master teacher for Youth America Grand Prix Ballet competition in the U.S. and Japan as well as other international dance competitions.

Mr. Tchoupakov's students are now performing with such companies as Royal Ballet, ABT, San Francisco Ballet, Het National Ballet, Colorado Ballet, Houston Ballet, Northern Ballet, Norwegian Ballet, etc.

Maggie Tesch, Instructor

Svetlana Vasilenko, Associate Principal Accompanist

Richard Wacko, Associate Professor

Rick Wacko's early studies began at the Ukrainian National Federal School of Dance and continued at the Alberta Ballet School. He received private instruction with Maria Bokor at the Dance Art Academy, and has studied in Kiev, USSR, at the Virsky State Academy and at Les Ballets Russes de Montreal. He has served as artistic director of the Cheremosh Ukrainian Dance Ensemble. In addition to giving master classes in character and classical folk dance, Rick has also been a guest choreographer for dance companies in Canada and the United States. Rick is the Artistic Director of our Character Dance Ensemble and assistant grad advisor. He recently published a CD ROM on Character Dance and co-published an audio CD on Character Dance.

Under his leadership, CDE has toured many exciting places including Canada, England, Russia, Spain, and China. On these tours the students not only learn of the culture behind the dances they have learned, but also are able to participate in master classes arranged with the country's instructors.

Rob Wood, Adjunct Associate Professor, Director of Music

Rob Wood has been Adjunct Associate Professor, Director of Music and Principal Pianist for the University of Utah, Department of Ballet for the last ten years. Rob's professional music-for-dance career spans 30 years having worked closely with many professional dancers, teachers, and directors. This includes recording ballet CD's with international master teacher David Howard, which are marketed worldwide by Roper Records. It also includes performing on stage with ABT Principal, Ethan Stiefel at the Vail international Dance Festival. He has accompanied classes taught by such teachers and directors as Willam Christensen, Alonso King, Laura Alonzo, Bruce Marks, Toni Lander, Edward Villela, Violette Verdi, Gilbert Meyer, Suki Schorer, Patricia Wilde, Margo Sappington, Patricia Neary, Gretchen Ward-Warren, and many others. From 2004 thru 2007 he served as Music Director of RDA's national CRAFT of Choreography Conference working closely with renowned choreographers Alan Hiline and Kathryn Posen. Rob is known for the wide variety of inspiring music that he brings to the ballet class.

Regina Zarhina, Assistant Professor

Regina Zarhina received her initial education in St. Petersburg, Russia. She fortified that with a Film Degree from Columbia College – Hollywood and further cemented it with an M.A. in Theatre and Dance from the University of Colorado in Boulder. In the meantime, she's managed to hold many jobs, including teaching in what felt like every dance school in Southern California, assisting her friends in film productions, dancing with every company that would have her, getting married and moving to Colorado, running her own (very distinguished and strictly ballet) school for 10 years, having a daughter, and embarking on a dance critic career in her free time. Then she moved to England, and for 3 whole years, she was learning how to drive on the left side of the road, while teaching at the prestigious Elmhurst School for Dance in association with the Birmingham Royal Ballet. There, she has made a few good friends and watched many of her students go onto prosperous European jobs. She's also traveled the world, teaching, coaching and staging ballets extensively in Japan and just enjoying herself in France, Spain, and Greece. However, she then discovered that while driving on the left now came naturally, it was driving on the right that caused her confusions. She then elected to return to America, particularly because she received the most spectacular offer to become a Professor from the University of Utah, where she now teaches classes in ballet technique, pointe and variations, repertoire, and character dance. She is the also the head of the teaching program at the department and lectures on teaching methodologies. Besides, she wrote a dance appreciation course for the general public, titled *The Frocks, The Trocks, and The Dancing Poodles: Traditions and Conventions of Classical Ballet*. Professor Zarhina continues to publish articles and critical reviews, participates in conferences and festivals, and is often invited to teach master classes in the US and abroad.