

VARIATIONS

Winter 2008

The Connecticut Ballet Newsletter

Vol. 2.7

STAMFORD CENTER FOR THE ARTS
PRESENTS

scalive.org
THE RICH • FORUM • THE PALACE



ZIG ZAG
Ballet

live AT THE FORUM

'Dancers from around the planet with a thirst for the new.' The New York Times

ZIG ZAG

World premieres by Olivier Tarpaga and Brett Raphael
and a revival of Raphael's 'Upside Down, Right Side Up'

Saturday, February 23, 2008 at 8pm
Tickets: \$35•\$40•\$45

Corporate Sponsors:


NEW HARTFORD OFFICE

Connecticut Ballet has opened a Hartford office at 99 Pratt Street in downtown Hartford. "This signifies a long-term commitment to serving the greater Hartford region," stated Artistic Director & CEO Brett Raphael. Administrative offices for Hartford Stage Company and Hartford Symphony Orchestra are located in the same building. The Connecticut Ballet Hartford office number is 860-293-1039.

Zig Zag Ballet, Connecticut Ballet's contemporary offshoot, will perform an evening of premieres and revivals when it returns for a one-night only performance, **February 23, 2008, at 8:00pm** at the **Rich Forum, 307 Atlantic Street, Stamford**. Zig Zag Ballet is the resident dance company at Stamford Center for the Arts and last performed during the 2003-2004 season.

"The company strives to explore new directions in dance," explains Artistic Director Brett Raphael, "providing local audiences with an opportunity to see innovative works by some of today's most exciting contemporary dancers and choreographers." In its short history, Zig Zag Ballet has commissioned eleven new works by well-known and lesser-known choreographers from around the world. The February 23 performance adds to that list with the world premiere of *Visages* by **Olivier Tarpaga**, a West-African choreographer now based in Los Angeles. *Visages* will include live music by West African master djembe drummer, Amadou Kienou, and New York-based singer/songwriter Laura Wolfe. The *Visages* work is sponsored by Stamford-based UBS.

The program will also feature two works by Brett Raphael: a revival of *Upside Down, Right Side Up* (1999) to music by Bohuslav Martinu, and a new work to the music of Canadian singer/songwriter Veda Hille. Audience members are invited to a post-performance open discussion with the artists at no additional cost. Tickets are priced at \$45, \$40, or \$35. For reservations, call 203-325-4466 or visit www.scalive.org.

Guest choreographer Olivier Tarpaga is a co-founder (with his wife, Esther Baker-Tarpaga) of Baker Tarpaga Dance Project and is in demand as a master teacher and performer throughout the world. Previously, he co-founded Compagnie Tâ in Burkina Faso, West Africa. He currently teaches African Dance at UCLA and is a member of the dance company, David Rousseve/REALITY.



Olivier Tarpaga

As part of the company's continuing effort to interest new audiences, Brett Raphael has invited documentary filmmaker Tony Arzt to produce a segment on the works in progress to be posted on the Stamford Center for the Arts website (www.scalive.org) and *YouTube* on or before February 11th. Check it out!

COMINGS, GOINGS & DOINGS

Thomas L. Kent, Esq. has been elected Treasurer of the Board of Directors.

Leo G. Meyer, distinguished scenic designer and founder of Atlas Scenic Studios in Stratford, Connecticut, has joined our Executive Advisory Board.

Nancy Cohen, former Director of Marketing, has moved on to pursue other professional opportunities. We wish her well!

Annie Mayer, founder of the Brooklyn-based tap company, Metronome, has joined the faculty of Connecticut Ballet Center. She replaces tap instructor **Parker Hall** who has joined the national tour of *Riverdance*.

Company member **Yoko Callegari** has joined Angel Corella's new 70-member company based in Spain.

We welcome Hip Hop artist **Pop-Korn** to the faculty of the Juvenile Justice Outreach and Mentoring Program. He is currently teaching at the Washington Street Detention Center for Girls and Hartford Detention Center.

Connecticut Ballet was one of several arts organizations which received a pleasant surprise in the form of a supplemental organizational support grant of \$9,645. The grants are a direct result of Governor Rell's recently announced \$4 million increase in the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism budget.

Connecticut Ballet Center is now host to American Ballet Theatre & Waterside School's *Make a Ballet* program. Once a week, two levels of Waterside students study with Artistic Associate for Educational Outreach **Ian Spencer Bell**. The students will participate in a culminating performance at the Metropolitan Opera House in June. Artistic Director Brett Raphael has also invited them to participate in CBC's May 24th *Education of the Dancer* performance at Rich Forum, Stamford Center for the Arts.

DANCE EXPOSURE PROJECT NEWS

Connecticut Ballet Teaching Artist **Alli Ruzkowski** has been conducting a 10-week residency at the International School at Dundee in Riverside, Connecticut, teaching Creative Movement Workshops for third graders around the theme of *community*. Principal Terry Ricci has arranged for the students to observe a Zig Zag Ballet rehearsal in February.



Neelima Beri has relocated back to India with her family. Over the past six years, Neelima has shared the Kathak style of Indian dance with thousands of Connecticut school children as part of our *World of Dance* assembly program. She will be missed.

For the second year in a row, Teaching Artists **Alli Ruzkowski** (Modern dance) and **Peniel Guerrier** (Haitian dance and drumming) will spend a week in residence at Riverside School in Riverside. Over the course of one week, they will instruct all K-5 students during their physical education classes.

SAVE THE DATES

ZIG ZAG BALLET

Saturday, February 23 - 8:00pm

Rich Forum, 307 Atlantic Street, Stamford

Tickets: \$45, \$40, \$35

Call 203-325-4466 or visit www.scalive.org.



CONNECTICUT BALLET: TRIBUTE TO BROADWAY

A tribute to the Great White Way of yesteryear with choreography by Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins, and Brett Raphael. Broadway soprano Culver Casson and baritone Paris Cheffer will entertain. Shows include *The King and I*, *Carousel*, and *Brigadoon*.

Friday, April 4 - 8:00pm

Ridgefield Playhouse,
80 East Ridge, Ridgefield
Tickets: \$48, \$40 students.

Call 203-438-5795 or visit
www.ridgefieldplayhouse.org.

Saturday, April 5 - 8:00pm

Sunday, April 6 - 2:00pm
Rich Forum, 307 Atlantic
Street, Stamford
Tickets: \$50, \$35, \$25

Call 203-325-4466 or visit
www.scalive.org.



EDUCATION OF THE DANCER

Saturday, May 24 - 7:00pm

Rich Forum, 307 Atlantic
Street, Stamford
Tickets: \$20

For reservations, call
SCA box office at
203-325-4466 or visit
www.scalive.org
(after April 1st)



Connecticut Ballet Makes History in Granby



Issa Coulibaly and Granby students.

On a crisp November evening, a sell-out crowd of more than 700 came together to witness a celebration of movement, costumes, color and culture. They traveled to exotic places such as Brazil, India, Mali, and Peru without ever having to leave their seats. On November 9, 2007, the Granby Education Foundation in conjunction with Granby Public Schools and with generous support

from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, Holcomb Farm Learning Centers, Adams & Knight, Nutmeg's Dance and Theater Company and New England Financial Group, presented *The World of Dance* at Granby Memorial High School. The result could not have been more spectacular, invigorating the sell-out crowd through the power of the arts and raising more than \$3,000 for the GEF Arts Endowment.

The extravaganza featured four artists from the Connecticut Ballet who performed multi-cultural dances in a culminating event to a residency program conducted in the Granby schools. More than 80 Granby students showcased what they had learned by performing the Peruvian Carnivalito, a festival dance; traditional African (Malian djembe) drumming; East Indian Kathak Dance; and the martial arts form of Brazilian Capoeira.

Beginning in October, the four artists from Connecticut Ballet served as artists-in-residence at Kearns, Kelly Lane, Wells Road and Granby Memorial Middle Schools. Each school had an assembly to present the program and to introduce the four cultures that would be explored and interpreted through dance. Following this introduction, students in each school studied one of these cultures in-depth through a four-day residency (one day each week for four weeks) hosted by the unified arts team in each school.

While all students in these schools benefited from the residency, students in specific grade levels met weekly with the artist during a physical education or music class to study the art form in more depth. Grades 2, 4, 7 and 8 participated in the weekly programs. The four featured artists were Edith Ortiz, who taught Peruvian Dance; Issa Coulibaly who delighted audience members and students with his talent on the Malian djembe drums; Neelima Beri who taught the East Indian Dance (which, by the way, is performed wearing a costume adorned with a total of five pounds of bells sewn around the ankles); and Guilherme Torres, who thrilled the crowd with his effortless and seemingly weightless flips and acrobatic skills when performing Capoeira.

Second grader Cheryl LaTona has this to say about her experience: "I felt happy to be onstage. My instructor, Miss Ortiz, was very nice. I liked learning a new dance from a different part of the world." Her sister, Celine LaTona, a fourth grader at Kelly Lane said, "I loved my instructor, Issa Coulibaly. He was fun to work with and he always encouraged us. He knew just what to say to keep us focused. He made the experience fun, exciting and not at all scary. I wish that they could come back again to share more of their talents with us. If all of the performers could stay in Granby longer, I would love to get to know each of them."

RECENT GRANTS AND AWARDS

Bank of America granted \$2,500 in support of Dance Exposure Project in Stamford/Norwalk.

Daphne Seybolt Culpepper Foundation granted \$1,000 in support of the Dance Exposure Project in Norwalk.

Renee B. Fisher Foundation granted \$5,000 in support of the Juvenile Justice Outreach and Mentoring Program.

M.E. Hart Foundation granted \$2,000 in support of operating costs.

Estate of Ruth Krauss granted \$2,000 in support of the Dance Exposure Project in Bridgeport.

People's United Bank granted \$5,000 in support of Dance Exposure Project in Bridgeport.

Pepperidge Farm granted \$1,500 in support of the Dance Exposure Project in Norwalk.

UBS granted \$5,000 in support of Zig Zag Ballet's new work by Olivier Tarpaga.

Linford & Mildred White Charitable Fund granted \$2,500 in support of the Waterbury Dance Initiative.

Thank you to all of our donors for your continued support!

"You have to love dancing to stick to it. It gives you nothing back, no manuscripts to store away, no paintings to show on walls and maybe hang in museums, no poems to be printed and sold, nothing but that fleeting moment when you feel alive. It is not for unsteady souls."

— Merce Cunningham



20 Acosta Street
Stamford, CT 06902



**A romantic night of dancing and delicious food
to benefit Connecticut Ballet**

Saturday, February 16 — 6:30 - 10:30pm

Connecticut Ballet Center - 20 Acosta Street, Stamford

\$25 in advance — \$30 at the door

6:30 - 7:30pm

Ballroom Dance Lesson with John Vitti

7:30 - 8:30pm

Buffet Dinner and Dessert - Cash Wine Bar

8:30 - 9:00pm

ZIG ZAG BALLET performance and ballroom showcase
by MARIUSZ ZAKRZEWSKI and partner

9:00 - 10:30pm

Ballroom and Latin dancing with music by DJ Sensation

Casual attire - Raffle tickets, a door prize and more...

Call **203-964-1211** to reserve your dancing spot
(limited capacity) for this exciting evening!

Visit **www.connecticutballet.com** to learn more!

**CONNECTICUT BALLET • CONNECTICUT BALLET CENTER
ZIG ZAG BALLET**

20 Acosta Street, Stamford, Connecticut 06902

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Zig Zag Ballet is the resident dance company of Stamford Center for the Arts.

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