
VARIATIONS

Spring 2009

The Connecticut Ballet Newsletter

Vol. 2.8

NEW BALLET FEST – June 20-21

Connecticut Ballet's 2008-2009 season comes to a close with **NEW BALLET FEST**, featuring new works commissioned from three exciting choreographers: **Betsy Cooper**, free-lance choreographer and Associate Professor of Dance at the University of Washington, **Katie Stevinson-Nollet**, Artistic Director/ Founder of Full Force Dance Theatre and faculty member at the University of Hartford, and **Rodney Rivera**, principal dancer and resident choreographer of Andanza Contemporary Dance Company of Puerto Rico.



The company performance at Riverfront Recapture in August 2008.

All three works will be premiered on **Saturday, June 20th at 8:00pm** when the company makes its return to Riverfront Recapture in Hartford with generous support provided by Ensworth Charitable Trust, Greater Hartford Arts Council, and Edward C. and Ann T. Roberts Foundation. Admission is free.

A pre-performance ballroom class with master teaching artist **John Vitti**, will take place on the Riverfront stage from 6:30-7:15pm. Bring your dancing shoes and a picnic (it's the summer solstice!). For info, visit www.riverfront.org. Friends of Connecticut Ballet/Hartford County are planning a special pre-performance event honoring David and Sara Carson, longtime Connecticut Ballet supporters. For info about the pre-performance benefit, please call 860-293-1039.

The program will be presented in Stamford on **Sunday, June 21 (Father's Day) at 2:00pm** at the Palace Theatre, Stamford Center for the Arts, 61 Atlantic Street, Stamford. Tickets are priced at \$20 & \$30 (plus \$5 handling charge). For reservations, visit www.scalive.org. Friends of Connecticut Ballet/Fairfield County will hold a post-performance meet-the-artists reception.

Connecticut Ballet launches new in-school assembly program: **PIONEERS OF AMERICAN DANCE**

On a bitter cold February morning, Connecticut Ballet performed our newest in-school offering, *Pioneers of American Dance*, for five hundred eager Riverside Elementary School students. Ten dancers brought to life the choreographic legacies of the likes of Isadora Duncan, Alvin Ailey, and Gene Kelly. Narrated by Brett Raphael, the students and educators sat in rapt attention throughout the 50-minute program (except when they were encouraged to try out signature movements or gestures).



On March 12, the program was showcased for art and music supervisors and pto reps from the around the state. Laurie McTeague, a *Friends of Connecticut Ballet* member, brought a representative from her son's Montessori School. In a follow-up email, she commented: "*(The program)* masterfully traces the arc of modern dance development and innovations in this country (and by extension, the world). This is an historic, artistic context to which very few people are ever exposed. It's a powerful and joyful story

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Connecticut Ballet Awards First Khalda Logan Dance Scholarships in Danbury



Khalda Logan was a gifted professional dancer in Nicholas Leichter Dance Company, professor in dance at Western Connecticut State University, and a founding member of Connecticut Ballet's Danbury Dance Initiative in 2005. She passed away from cancer in 2007. In memory of her dedication to dance education, Connecticut Ballet and the Khalda Logan Memorial

Foundation jointly created the **Khalda Logan Dance Scholarship** to provide accelerated training opportunities for middle and high school students.

The 2009 awards were presented at the Third Annual Danbury Dance Initiative benefit performance, Sunday, March 8th, at Broadview Middle School in Danbury. Broadview Middle School students **Victoria Lemme**, **Roslyn Perkins**, and **Kathryn Sullivan** shared second prize (\$500 each). First prize was awarded to Danbury High School junior **Mariel Vicente** (\$1000), a longstanding student at Dody Flynn's Dance Dimensions studio in Danbury. Khalda's husband, Michael Eaton, was on hand to meet the winners and represent Khalda's legacy.

An exciting documentary short about the 2009 audition/awards process produced by **J.C. Barone**, Digital Film/ Video Production & Aesthetics professor at WESTCONN and filmed by Ronald Rosario, film intern, will be posted on Connecticut Ballet's Facebook page and on YouTube shortly. Stay tuned and congratulations to all four winners!

Footnote: In the fall of 2005, Connecticut Ballet launched the **Danbury Dance Initiative**. The program brings annual assembly programs to all the elementary and middle schools, public performances by the ballet company at the Ives Center, Danbury High School and CityCenter Summer Series on the Green, dance showcases featuring local schools and choreographers, and special outreach classes to under-served youth in partnership with agencies such as Escape to the Arts and Department of Children and Families. A task force of prominent educators, social service directors, dance school owners, arts administrators, and funders guides the Initiative and meets quarterly.



"As of today, I'm a 16 year old aspiring dancer. I'm very conscious that I have much to learn in order to grow and become a better dancer. I still have one year left of high school, but when I do get into a university, I plan to continue dancing there. Dance is a part of me, and I've promised myself to keep it in my life. I believe it's worth committing to, and I'm focused on looking for colleges that offer dance education. I've got a positive attitude, and I'm determined to keep dancing for as long as I can because it's something I love and live for."

— Mariel Vicente, 1st prize winner

WORLD OF DANCE on Tour Around CT & NY

Following a citywide tour of Danbury Public Schools in January, our ever-popular in-school assembly program, *The World of Dance*, featuring artists from across the globe, will be seen by thousands of young people and educators in the months of April & May.



- April 6-7 - Holland Hill School, Fairfield
- April 8 - Mary Morrison School, Groton
- April 13 - Canton Intermediate School, Canton
- April 14 - West Stafford School, Stafford Springs
- April 15 - Hackley School, Tarrytown, NY
- April 20-23 - Orchard Hills Elementary School, Milford
- April 24 - Columbus Magnet & Brookside School, Norwalk
- May 15 - Ponterio Ridge School, Rye, NY

Pioneers of American Dance, cont'd

and I'm very glad it is being told. I was also impressed by the extent to which strong, male dancers were included in the program, underscoring the universality of dance as an expressive language and inviting ALL children and adults who watch the program into the conversation."

Pioneers of American Dance will be available to interested schools and districts beginning in September 2009. It is hoped that several weeklong residencies with Connecticut Ballet teaching artists will result. For information about bringing *Pioneers of American Dance* to your school, please contact Dana Rodriguez at 203-964-1211 or 860-293-1039.

"Pioneers of American Dance fulfills Connecticut Ballet's mission of providing a broad range of educational programs. With the new addition of modern dance, we now offer schools a complete menu - from ballet to Broadway to multi-cultural dance forms."

— Dana Rodriguez, Director of Education

SAVE THE DATES

FRIENDS OF CONNECTICUT BALLET HARTFORD COUNTY

cordially invites you to a special dance lovers delight!

Wednesday, April 15

Wadsworth Athenaeum
600 Main Street, Hartford

4:00-5:00pm
Group tour of *The Ballet Russes: Celebrating the Centennial* exhibit

5:00-6:00pm
Dinner at the Museum Café

6:00-7:00pm
Lecture by Alastair Macauley,
Chief Dance Critic, *The New York Times* on Diaghilev and Style



\$100 includes Basic Contributing Membership, museum tour, dinner, and lecture
\$50 museum tour, dinner, and lecture only



Reserve by email to ctballet@ix.netcom.com or by phone to Connecticut Ballet office: 860-293-1039.

Visit www.connecticutballet.com for directions, parking info and more.

• On **Thursday, April 15th**, Friends of Connecticut Ballet/Hartford County will hold a special event around the Wadsworth Athenaeum's exhibit celebrating the 100th anniversary of the famed **Ballet Russes de Monte Carlo**. Museum director Susan L. Talbot will personally welcome our group to the museum before dinner gets underway. Tickets are still available for this special evening. (\$50 for the exhibit tour, dinner at the Museum Café, and the lecture by Alastair Macauley, *New York Times* chief dance critic). Please call 860-293-1039 to reserve your seats.

• **Connecticut Ballet Center presents Michael Parchment Exhibit** – Back by popular demand, the fine artist Michael Parchment will exhibit his new works at Connecticut Ballet Center from **May 17-June 21**. For the third time in four years, the Center will present Parchment's acrylic paintings and watercolor drawings for the enjoyment of students, parents, and the general public.



Ballerina 2009

The exhibit will open with a special reception on **Sunday, May 17 from 3-5pm**. All are welcome and there is no charge. As is customary, a showcase of dance will take place in the main studio and Mr. Parchment will be on hand to introduce his work, much of which is inspired by the dance art.

Connecticut Ballet Center is located at 20 Acosta Street, Stamford, just off I95 exit 6. Visiting hours are 10am-6pm, Monday-Saturday. For information, please call 203-978-0771.

• **99 at 99: Dancers on Display – Thursday & Friday, June 11 & 12 from 12-1pm** – Connecticut Ballet will present a site-specific original dance work, *99 at 99: Dancers on Display*, in the unique art deco lobby space of 99 Pratt Street, the downtown property owned by Alkon Trumbull Street LLC. The building houses administrative offices for several prominent arts organizations, including Hartford Stage, Hartford Symphony Orchestra, and Connecticut Ballet. Choreographed expressly for this occasion by Artistic Director Brett Raphael and

using the eight glassed-in display areas in the lobby space, the event will celebrate Pratt Street as a 'downtown arts destination' and help promote the ballet's June 20th Riverfront Recapture performance.

"My idea was to create a piece to celebrate our arrival in downtown, to bring dance into the gorgeous lobby space of our building," stated Raphael. "My challenge will be to choreograph 99 separate movements for each of eight dancers on display in a very public, but very confined space. It's our version of the old-fashioned penny arcade for the enjoyment of the downtown lunch crowd."



99 Pratt Street, Hartford

• On **Friday, June 12, from 10:30-11:30am**, Friends of Connecticut Ballet/Hartford County will hold a members event at one of downtown's special cafes, Jo-Jo's Coffee & Tea, 22 Pratt Street. Ballet patrons will enjoy a coffee tasting featuring gourmet blends from around the world prior to walking down the block to view the ballet performance. For information about that event, call Connecticut Ballet at 860-293-1039.

99 at 99: Dancers on Display may be viewed by the public during lunchtime. Downtown businesses will be approached to sponsor the event along with the Greater Hartford Arts Council whose offices are located a few doors down at 45 Pratt Street.

Connecticut Ballet Board of Directors Welcomes Five New Hartford Members

With the help of Leadership Greater Hartford, Connecticut Ballet has been able to identify and elect five talented individuals to its Board of Directors. Board members Dorothy Krugman and Leonard Vignola participated in a board orientation meeting with the new members at our Hartford office in March. They are already hard at work on a benefit event planned for June 20th.

Lori R. Clark is partner in the law firm of Hinckley, Allen & Snyder, LLP, where her practice is focused on Labor & Employment Law. Her law practice is based in Hartford, and she has contacts in the Hartford business community. Lori's other board experience includes serving as the Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of Covenant to Care for Children and serving as a member of the Board of Directors of Gifts of Love. Lori and her husband, Tom (also a lawyer and former state legislator) live in Windsor, Connecticut, where Lori serves on the Town Historic District Commission.

Betty K. Domer retired two years ago from Select Energy, the unregulated subsidiary of Northeast Utilities which sold electricity and natural gas on the open market. She was in charge of all data and market analysis involved with these commodity sales. Betty has been active as producer in community theater for 25 years, with more than a dozen productions to her credit. Betty had served on the Board of Leadership Greater Hartford (LGH) for six years, ultimately as their chair in 1999. She also was chair of the four-day international leadership convention hosted by LGH in April, 2006.

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Become a *Friend of Connecticut Ballet!* Visit www.connecticutballet.com and join online.

Connecticut Ballet Welcomes New Board Members, *cont'd*

Richard Fortier is a retired attorney formally with The Travelers Corporate Law Department. His last area of responsibility was in the Employment and Human Resources area, dealing with all facets of employee issues. Since retiring, he has been a member of Leadership Greater Hartford, served on the Advisory Board of Strive, an organization working with the hard core unemployed, and became a member of St. Mary's of Simsbury Social Action Committee. During the winter, he teaches skiing at Ski Sundown.

Edward Song is currently the Vice President of Finance & Administration for Saint-Etienne Corporation in Glastonbury, CT. He recently graduated with top honors from University of Connecticut with an MBA in Finance and Management and is currently finishing his studies in the Executive Education Program at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business. He has served on the boards of several nonprofit arts organizations including the Tacoma Philharmonic Association (Tacoma, WA) and was the Chairman of the Board for SONOS Chamber Orchestra in New York City. In addition, he has studied violin with Itzhak Perlman at the Juilliard School of Music.

Marjorie Wilder is a retired attorney who had a distinguished career with a member of the law firm of Pullman & Comley and Corporation Counsel for the Town of West Hartford. A Smith graduate who did her masters at Tufts University in economics, she finished UCONN Law School with high honors and has worked pro bono for Connecticut Bar Association's Women in the Law Committee and the West Hartford Pension Board. She is a former board member and chair of the board for Producing Guild, a non-equity theater group.

Special thanks to the following funders who have recently renewed their support for our organization:

- Daphne Seyboldt Culpeper Foundation
- Anne S. Leonhardt Fund, donor-advised fund of Fairfield County Community Foundation
- MBI
- Pepperidge Farm
- Purdue Pharma Fund
- Rosenthal Family Foundation
- Savings Bank of Danbury
- Sempra Energy

We couldn't continue the good work without you!

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20 Acosta Street, Stamford, Connecticut 06902 • TEL: 203-964-1211 • FAX: 203-961-1928
99 Pratt Street, Suite 209, Hartford, Connecticut 06103 • TEL: 860-293-1039
EMAIL: ctballet@ix.netcom.com • WEB SITE: www.connecticutballet.com



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