

FALL 2013
VOLUME VI / ISSUE I

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TO THE POINTE!

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Louisville
Academy
of Dance



COMMENTS FROM KRISTEN



We are happy to welcome back our publication, “To the Pointe” after a brief hiatus. This is our chance to share our happenings, our goals and our dreams. In past issues, we have learned about the technological side of dance with articles, “Anatomy of a Pointe Shoe” and “The Fine Art of Costume Building.” We have studied dance history. We have shared the experiences of our dancers’ summer adventures and we have talked with some of our instructors. This issue will continue along those lines.

We are in the midst of another exciting year at Louisville Academy of Dance. The young dancers bounce into class ready to learn. The intermediate dancers are consistently developing their technique as they grow from one year to the next. Our advanced dancers continue to grow and expand their abilities as they prepare for the next stage of their careers. With that in mind, we will be bidding adieu to three of our Academy Division F dancers this year. Megan Franz, Kinsey Jarm and Kathleen Meyer will be graduating and moving on. Although we will miss them, we wish them all the best in their new adventures.

Although we have had some turnover in instructors over the last couple of years, we still feel that our faculty is the best in the area. Our core group of Alexis Antolic, Theresa Bautista, and Donna Richards continue to provide the quality instruction that we have come to expect. In addition, our new instructors include Kara Gardner teaching ballet, Nikki Goley teaching tap and Kim Root and Walt Strange teaching modern. Check out their bios on our web site.

Our non-profit dance company, River City Ballet, has been as busy as ever. In the last two years we have performed for schools in the area as well as our other regular events. This year we continue our association with the Girl Scouts’ Festival of the Arts. Last year saw us move into a new theater at Lincoln Elementary. It is the perfect environment for our intimate show. We wish more people could attend, but please note, this is a private performance. We will, however, be hosting our annual public performance of “The Gift of the Nutcracker.” It is performed by the members of River City Ballet with help from Jr. members, made up of younger dancers of Louisville Academy of Dance. Come join us for this holiday classic! It will once again be held at the Clifton Center on December 8th at 3:00 pm. And make sure to stay for the “Nutcracker Tea” immediately following. This is your chance to meet your favorite characters, enjoy some good food and mingle with the dancers. It’s a great way to start the holiday season. Ticket information will be posted on the bulletin board soon.

The one thing we are always happy to do with this newsletter is to thank all of the dancers and parents for their energy, time and commitment to making Louisville Academy of Dance and River City Ballet the best we can be.

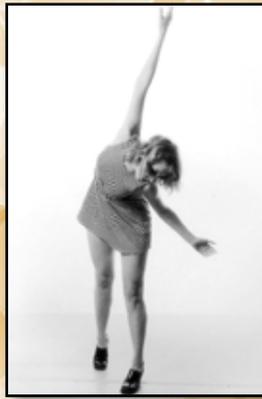
Thank you.

MEET OUR NEW TEACHERS

by *Marisa
Sabbak*



NIKKI GOLEY



KIM ROOT



KARA GARDNER

Where did you do most of your study?

NIKKI GOLEY: *Most of my studies were done at a local studio. I started at age 4, went on to dance at YPAS then got my BFA at Stephens College.*

KIM ROOT: *My background is very eclectic, but the most transformative part of my training and finding my core as a dancer happened in New York and Seattle with the Pat Graney Dance Co. I also studied dance in college and graduate school at Hunter College and The Ohio State University. I have also studied with post modern choreographers such as Trisha Brown, Bebe Miller, and Bill T. Jones.*

KARA GARDNER: *I did most of my studying in California at the Performing Arts Center in Van Nuys. I was there for 6 years from the age of 11 to 17 before moving to NY to study with ABT.*

What was your favorite role in a show and why?

NIKKI GOLEY: *My favorite role was a piece created by Elizabeth Hartwell, a former Louisville Ballet dancer, when I was in college. We used our bodies to build a house, it was insane!*

KIM ROOT: *Probably my favorite role was basically playing “myself” in a piece called “sleep: making peace with the angels.” I was part of a lengthy and deep creative process with a group of amazing creative artists and performing at the end of all of that process was a gift.*

KARA GARDNER: *I can't say I've ever had one favorite role. I loved performing itself. The rehearsals, stage and atmosphere of the excitement associated with being on stage (especially with a live orchestra) is truly a feeling like no other.*

If you could describe your dance classes in three words, what would they be?

NIKKI GOLEY: *Fun, Engaging & Sweaty*

KIM ROOT: *Discover, Experience & Engage*

KARA GARDNER: *Enjoyable, Informative & Challenging*

How do you inspire your Students?

NIKKI GOLEY: *By relating to my students and telling them my struggles & strengths which most of them will face in their careers. I also try to inspire them by always asking for more and encouraging them to keep trying.*

KIM ROOT: *I want to encourage my students to be creative artists, to discover and connect with their interior world in their dancing, and to connect their body/mind/spirit in every movement, even the simplest gesture. I also want to challenge students to move out of their physical comfort zone and to own their experience.*

KARA GARDNER: *I try to inspire my students through my personal experiences. My lessons learned, my regrets and the things I'm most grateful for throughout not only my training but also my professional career.*



ACADEMY D-F



ACADEMY C

*Pictured Above - Back row: Emma Rose Strybel, Lilly Payne, Megan Franz, Claire Donovan, Kathleen Meyer, Kennedy Ricci
Front row: Raquel Jones, Lucy Samuel, Kinsey Jarm, Mary Laura Leake, Julianna Sabbak*

*Pictured Left - Back row: Isabella Ramsey, Aubrey Youngman, Haley Doerr, Alexis Petersen
Front row: Alena Strange, Celia McKinney, Brooke Jarm*

Dancers in Academy B/C to F	Why do you enjoy ballet?	What is the hardest thing about ballet?	Dancers in Academy B/C to F	Why do you enjoy ballet?	What is the hardest thing about ballet?
Claire - 15, been dancing for 13yrs, 6th yr at LAD	Ballet is so much more than something I enjoy doing. Ballet is me and without doing it I wouldn't be myself.	The hardest thing about ballet is controlling my legs and body.	Celia - 11, been dancing 4yrs, 5th yr at LAD	I enjoy the challenge of it.	Arabesques
Megan - 17, been dancing for 5 yrs, 2nd yr at LAD	Because I like the challenge and feeling of dancing.	petite allegro	Julianna - 14, been dancing 11 yrs, 5th yr at LAD	Ballet is a great artistic challenge that builds up strength, confidence, and self esteem.	En dehors turns from fourth and keeping my back from arching too much.
Kinsey - 17, been dancing for 15 yrs, 6th yr at LAD	It is beautiful, artistic & challenging. A unique & personal way to worship God.	Making Pointe work look natural and smooth.	Lucy - 14, been dancing 11 yrs, 5th yr at LAD	It is fun, and I like to be challenged.	Adagio and my arms
Raquel -13, Been dancing for 4.5 yrs, 5th yr at LAD	I enjoy ballet because there isn't any style of dancing like it. It is very pretty yet extremely hard to do the simplest thing.	Dancing fast. It is very fun, but also really hard.	Aubrey - 14, been dancing for 10 yrs, 2nd yr at LAD	It's a way to express yourself without speaking. You can just put all of your emotions into dancing & it's like you're the only person that exists.	Thinking of a about 1,000 things at once. Straight legs, point your feet, turn out, use your abs and so on all in 1 combination.
Kathleen - 17, been dancing for 4 yrs, 5th yr at LAD	Ballet for me is a means of expressing myself. It is so freeing and so beautiful. I love that it is unlike anything else.	Time. Ballet is so time-consuming and you have to be completely committed to it in order to be successful. But in the end it is all worth it.	Alena - 11, been dancing since 3, 6th yr at LAD	Because I love it and it gives me a challenge sometimes.	When combinations are really fast.
Lilly - 17, been dancing since 3, 2nd yr at LAD	I enjoy ballet because it's what makes me feel grounded, it's something I can throw my whole self into. I love trying and learning something new.	staying flexible	Mary Laura - 15, been dancing 13 yrs, 4th yr at LAD	Since the age of two, my mom has taken me to the ballet. As I watched the dancers, I knew that's what I wanted to do. Dancing has always been a beautiful and emotional experience for me. My desire is to make others feel this way when I perform. I hope to dance with the artistry of a professional.	The hardest thing for me is not being able to dance as much as I would like. It's also hard for me to keep my fingers relaxed, my arms smooth, and to use my épaulement.
Kennedy - 15, been dancing for 9 yrs, 2nd yr at LAD	It's what I love to do-I can forget everything else and focus on my dance.	Getting all the little things in my technique and the artistic side of it all together.	Emma Rose - 15, been dancing since 3, 2nd yr at LAD	I enjoy ballet because I love to perform on stage, you can express your feelings.	Pirouettes, both en pointe and in ballet shoes. I work on them all the time to get better at them.
Isabella - 12, been dancing since 4, 5th yr at LAD	Because I love the feeling of being light and weightless and I get to really feel the music with graceful movements.	I think sometimes I am so focused on the choreography I forget all about my technique.	Brooke - 10, been dancing 6 yrs, 6th yr at LAD	I feel like I can fly when I jump. I feel loose and flowing.	Always having beautiful arms when doing a hard combination/making it look easy.
Alexis - 12, been dancing 8 yrs, 1st yr at LAD	I enjoy ballet because I can express myself.	Pointe	Haley - 14, been dancing 4 yrs, 1st yr at LAD	It is a great form of artistic expression and it's helping me prepare and excel in fundamentals of dance for musical theatre.	Keeping my balance and turnout, especially in pirouettes.

chart created by Marisa Sabbak



Kinsey Jarm

Ballet Magnificat! – 4 weeks

Area of growth: *The ballet Kinsey performed at the end of the 4 weeks was challenging artistically.*

**SUMMER
2013**



Kathleen Meyer

Orlando Ballet –

2 weeks

Governor’s School for the Arts –

3 weeks

Area of growth:

Kathleen became a lot stronger in her core and in her partner work as well as really focusing on the artistry and self-expression in dance.



Lucy Samuel

Houston Ballet – 6 weeks

Area of growth: *Lucy grew in her jumps and pointe work.*

Megan Franz

Ballet Magnificat! –

2 weeks

Area of growth: *Megan learned to push herself to work harder.*



Emma Rose Strybel

Emma Rose Strybel

Orlando Ballet – 2 weeks

Louisville Ballet – 2 weeks

Area of growth: Emma Rose grew the most in her pirouettes and she learned to go for something she's never done before.

Mary Laura Leake

Louisville Academy of Dance – 2 weeks

Area of growth: Mary Laura learned different teaching styles of ballet making her feel more diverse. She improved in her extensions, `epaulement, and finishing her combinations with elegance.

Kennedy Ricci

Cincinnati Ballet – 3 weeks

ABT North Carolina – 4 weeks

Area of growth: Working everyday for almost 8 hours a day, Kennedy grew most in pirouettes, jumping, and flexibility.

Lilly Payne

Alonzo King LINES Ballet – 4 weeks

Area of growth: Lilly gained overall coordination, strength, and in diversity among different styles of dance.



Lilly Payne

INTENSIVES



Claire Donovan

Claire Donovan

Carreño Dance Festival – 3 weeks

Kaatsbaan – 3 weeks

Area of growth: Claire gained higher extensions and grew in her artistry of dance.



MS. KRISTEN



HELLO DANCERS! I recently had the wonderful opportunity to interview Ms. Kristen Wenrick. When I first learned that I would be writing about your teacher I was a little intimidated. I don't know much about dance and I was afraid that I would not be able to keep it very interesting. I quickly learned that was a mistaken notion. I want to thank Ms. Kristen for her open and detailed answers to my questions. Her easy conversational style of writing has made this a true pleasure. Her words speak from the heart and with humor and wisdom. I hope you enjoy getting to know Ms. Kristen a little better.

L.A.D.: Besides dance what did you enjoy doing as a child? Did you have a favorite outdoor activity?

MS.K.: *As a child I enjoyed hiking a lot with my parents, brother and two sisters. I still enjoy it and my own daughter does too. I love being out in nature.*

L.A.D.: Were your parents involved in the Arts when you were growing up?

MS.K.: *As I became interested in ballet, they did too. They took me to see Ohio Ballet (in Akron, near where we lived) and to see dance companies that toured to the area. I remember seeing Nureyev dance.*

L.A.D.: What were some of the crazy fads you went through?

MS.K.: *I remember a middle school teacher who spoke to our class once about fad vs. fashion. She brought out a lot of good points. I think that helped to shape my views on what is classic and enduring and what is just a fad. Fads come and go and usually we feel pretty silly for having indulged them afterwards!*

L.A.D.: Did you ever play a mischievous prank on someone and how did it affect you?

MS.K.: *I used to love playing pranks! When I was in Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre I played a number of pranks. I once put up a fake cast list for "Scooby Doo" the ballet, a signup sheet for bungee jumping, had a whole group of men fervently practicing a particular jump with goofy hats on thinking that the choreographer coming in was using hats, and I convinced a friend of mine over the phone, by impersonating a faculty member who had a British accent, that they had won*

by Stacey Ricci

a prize in a raffle. The best prank happened when I was a company member in Milwaukee Ballet. A local dance critic had interviewed my roommate who was also with the company and really made her out to sound like a flake. A bunch of the dancers were really upset about this. For our last performance of the Nutcracker we were doing a “Nutty Nutcracker.”

This was a special performance that included all sorts of unusual but funny elements and happenings. Patrons paid three times the cost of the usual ticket to attend. Local celebrities were part of the cast, and this critic was part of the party scene. Because I wasn’t on stage during the party scene I was elected to put on a mouse costume and give him a whipped cream pie in the face during the scene. I did it, but was shaking in my boots! It’s a really good thing that reviewer didn’t find out who did it!

L.A.D.: Who was / is your greatest inspiration as a dancer?

MS.K: *Ying Li was a dancer who gave me a great deal of inspiration that I feel even impacted my career. Ying was a fellow Principal dancer with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. I loved watching the artistry with which she moved. She moved back to China when she retired.*

L.A.D.: What led you to teach?

MS.K: *While I was dancing, even though I taught from time to time, I always thought I would go into a different field when I retired. When I was pregnant at the end of my career I started teaching full time and found out I loved it. I also thought I would never open my own school, but it seemed that there was a need for it in the community and so I did.*

L.A.D.: What do you find to be the most remarkable thing about teaching young dancers?

MS.K: *How passionate and dedicated they can be about it at a relatively young age.*

L.A.D.: If you could pass on 3 tried and true pieces of advice to your students what would they be?

MS.K: *Work hard. Don’t compare yourself in a negative way to other dancers; you will just end up feeling lousy or envious. Don’t compare yourself in a proud way to other dancers. There will always be somebody who can do it better than you out there in the world and pride instills complacency. Learn what is good from other dancers.*

L.A.D.: What advice would you give your students about balancing the discipline of dance with their social and academic lives?

MS.K: *Having been an honor student myself, I always say that dancing comes second to academics. Even if you become a professional dancer, you will need your academics when your career is over. In school, I found that my best friends were also dancers. These were the people with whom I felt I shared common ground. It was hard for my other friends to really “get it.” Although, I did have some swim team friends that shared a similar dedication.*

L.A.D.: What are some of your most memorable experiences while teaching young dancers?

MS.K: *I was teaching a college freshman class once and they weren’t getting the small jump combination I had given. I was 8 months pregnant at the time. I finally asked them if I needed to demonstrate it for them – they quickly answered no and got to work!*

L.A.D.: How has your career been different than you imagined it would be?

MS.K: *When I was training I, along with many other dancers, didn’t know if I’d be good enough to be a professional. I was very surprised that within my first year of being a professional I was being given soloist and principal roles. I never imagined that I would become a Principal Dancer.*

L.A.D.: What is your all time favorite performance in your dancing career?

MS.K: *When I performed the lead role in George Balanchine’s “Theme and Variations” I was quite nervous because it was very difficult –*



sort of like a technical minefield. I always spent quiet time mentally preparing for each performance. I felt so calm and happy when the curtain went up. The performance went beautifully, I couldn't have asked for anything more. I was in such awe of it for the entire night afterward; I could hardly get to sleep!

L.A.D.: What is one thing you don't think your students know about you, but wish they did?

MS.K: *I'm not sure that many people know how much time a studio like ours requires of its Director. I work 12- hour work days during the week and many 9 hour days on Saturdays. During Winter Break, Spring Break and before and after the school year I don't have time off. I am always gearing up for the next thing: written evaluations for Academy B-F, choreography and picking out music for Showcase, placement letters in the spring – there is always plenty of employment. One year I even had to work on my computer on Christmas Eve! I usually take one week in July for a vacation, and hopefully now, I'm to the point where I can take off the time between Christmas and New Year's except to come in and teach some interim classes for the advanced students. You have to love what you do to handle a demanding job like this.*

L.A.D.: Is there something you wish you could do over again?

MS.K: *I wish I could have my career to dance again. It is a short, but wonderful, time in a dancer's life.*

L.A.D.: What things do you find yourself doing that you said you'd "never" do?

MS.K: *I friend introduced me to mountain biking this summer. I never thought I'd do anything quite like that!*

L.A.D.: What are some of the changes in dance that you have seen in your lifetime?

MS.K: *The most noticeable is a diminishment in ticket buyers for professional ballet companies and the arts in general. It is a sad reflection on our society.*

L.A.D.: When people look back at your life, how do you want to be remembered?

MS.K: *As a good person who made a positive impact on the world and in people's lives.*



Alumni Updates



Katherine Sawicki

has joined the Cincinnati Ballet as a trainee. She most recently performed in the company's production of Swan Lake.



McKenzie Dirr

is a freshman at the University of South Carolina. She is enjoying being a double major in Dance as well as being a Pre-Med student.



Elizabeth Walton

a founding member and 2013 graduate of the Louisville Academy of Dance and the River City Ballet, now attends the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. She currently studies biomedical engineering and supplements her schedule with a business ethics class at the Wharton School. She squeezes in modern dance classes as often as she can. She states she must keep the arts a part of her life. She volunteers at an inner city high school and is involved in Engineers without Borders. She will be modeling for a childhood cancer benefit in December. Liz "loves life in Philly."





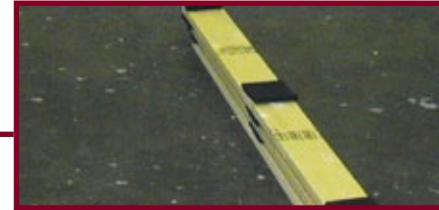
SPRUNG

by Stephanie Walton



What is the point of talking about dance floors? The better question is what is under the pointe...shoe? Flooring in dance is actually quite important. A dancer's greatest assets are her healthy, strong, flexible legs, hips, back, and feet. An appropriately "sprung" floor, sometimes called a "floating" floor, enhances a dancer's performance and greatly reduces the risk of injury. The Louisville Academy of Dance (LAD) has such a "sprung" floor. Walt Strange adapted a blueprint of a floor design used at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre to create the floors at LAD. Thanks to Walt for sharing his knowledge and pictures with us.

CLOSED CELL NEOPRENE PADS, 1 inch thick, 3x3 square, are laid out every foot along the bottom layer of a 1x4 piece of wood. The neoprene pads are very dense and provide less give.



THREE LAYERS OF 1x4 PIECES OF PINE WOOD are laid in a basket weave pattern. The basket weave absorbs the energy or "shock" created in a jump across all layers.



A LAYER OF 3/4 INCH PLYWOOD is placed tongue and groove on top of the basket weave. A second layer of 5/8 inch plywood is placed in the opposite wood grain direction to the 1st layer. The second layer of wood gives the structure more rigidity.



JOINTS AND SCREW HOLES ARE FILLED with an elastic crack-filling floor compound to give a flat, smooth, surface.



The final layer is a vinyl composite material, **REFERRED TO AS "MARLEY"** which is made specifically for dance floors. The Marley can be laid on top of the 2 layers of plywood loose or attached with glue or double-sided tape. Stationary Marley comes in battleship gray (seen in picture) and black colors. It is thicker and more durable than the Touring Marley which is thinner and transportable (the type used when dancers do outreach performances).



Voila! *Sprung dance floors must be constructed properly. They are as important as well fitting pointe shoes or appropriate technical instruction in the making of a ballerina. A floor that is too hard will transmit the energy of a jump back up a dancer's leg. A floor with too little support is referred to by dancers as being "bouncy." A well sprung floor relieves stress on dancers' joints and tendons yet provides enough support to reduce the risk of injuries.*

Fun Times AT THE FALL FESTIVAL 2013

by Lee Anne Meyer

Every year LAD offers a Fall Festival party.

It is a chance for parents to get a night out while the kiddos have fun dressing up, dancing, and spending time with friends.

This year we saw everything from ballerinas and Belle to Harry Potter and the Hulk. Party goers enjoyed making crafts, eating pizza, and playing fun games. Pass the “hot” pumpkin was a crowd favorite, along with guessing how many candy corns were inside the pumpkin jar. There were so many fun games that everyone left with a prize. After eating candy treats, the kids formed groups and took turns showing each other what they had choreographed to some fun music. They burned off all that sugar in time to get home and have a good night’s sleep. *Keep an eye out to sign up for next year’s party in October 2014.*



RCB's The Gift of The Nutcracker adds sparkle with New Snow Queen role

by Lee Anne Meyer



Exciting changes in this year's Nutcracker will include the addition of the Snow Queen. This new role will be danced by RCB's Kinsey Jarm. As River City Ballet continues to grow it gives the dancers the opportunity to learn new roles. The Snow Queen is sure to be a beautiful addition to this year's production. Make plans to see the Snow Queen, Clara, and all your favorite characters in this year's show. **The Gift of The Nutcracker will be performed at 3pm on December 8, 2013 at the Clifton Center.** Check the studio bulletin board for ticket purchase information.

And remember...you, your family and all your friends are invited to join us for this year's **NUTCRACKER TEA**. The Tea is a fun opportunity for you to meet the cast of RCB's Nutcracker. You can get autographs and pictures taken with the dancers. The Tea includes delicious holiday goodies, festive decorations, and a special prize raffle. The Nutcracker Tea takes place following the performance. Ticket information for the Tea will also be listed on the studio bulletin board.





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