

DANCE



The Dance Department at the SCGSAH offers pre-professional training in classical ballet and in modern/contemporary dance.

The three-year program (grades 10-12) offers students a systematic and diverse curriculum that is both physically demanding and rewarding. It is designed to educate and prepare students for entry into a highly fluid and competitive post-secondary and professional ballet world.

The dance training program aims to be both formal and forward thinking, blending traditions with the moving trends of the 21st century. Through sound training and a progressive curriculum, this systematic approach ensures increases in technical, artistic, and intellectual scope. The Ballet Program is based on long-established concepts and ideas taken from the Vaganova, Cecchetti, R.A.D., and Cuban Schools, while the Modern/Contemporary component exposes students to theoretical concepts that touch on principles based on the Graham, Horton, Limon, and Cunningham techniques.

The Department provides professional guidance, training, and support through its inclusive program to care for and nurture developing dancers. World-renowned instructors instill patience, tenacity, and motivation along with the necessary well-rounded technical and artistic development required for a successful career in dance.

Faculty members train and prepare students for the critical process of auditioning for summer and professional training programs and for competitions. In addition, they assist students who will pursue further dance education in establishing contacts with reputable company trainee programs as well as with college and university dance programs.

Students learn ballet repertoire and the repertoire of other dance styles to promote a wider range of technical proficiency and strength, a deeper level of expressiveness, and a more sophisticated musicality. All play an integral role in our students' technical and artistic growth. By developing versatility, broadening knowledge of movement philosophies, vocabulary, styles, and dynamic range, students gain confidence and maturity as performing artists and become better prepared for national and international careers in dance.

ADMISSION

The Dance Program accepts students at intermediate and advanced ballet levels entering the tenth or eleventh grade. Dance students are chosen based on audition, future dance aspirations, and whether the maturity and responsibility levels they portray meet the levels necessary to be successful in the residential campus setting.

COURSES

Honors Ballet Technique
Honors Pointe/Variation/Partnering/Pas de Deux
Honors Men's Technique/Variation/Partnering/Pas de Deux
Honors Modern/Modern Fundamentals/Contemporary Techniques
Honors Repertoire

Additional Courses per Grade Level

Sophomore Year:

Historical and Character
Ballet Coaching/Stretch and Stretch
Methodology
Dance History
Pilates
Special Seminars: Nutrition, Yoga, Aspects of Production

Junior Year:

Improvisation/Composition
Pilates and Anatomy for Dancers
Music for Dancers
Career Preparation
Special Seminars: Alexander Techniques, Stretch and Strength, Yoga, Aspects of Production

Senior Year:

Audition Preparation/Senior Showcase
Special Seminars: Alexander Techniques, Stretch and Strength, Aspects of Production

FACULTY

Josée Garant

Dance Department Chair, Senior Modern/Contemporary Technique, Modern/Contemporary Repertoire, Audition Preparation & Senior Showcase, National High School Dance Festival Coordinator, Youth America Grand Prix Competition Coordinator, Junior Career Preparation Mentor

Josée Garant has had an active career as a dancer, choreographer, teacher, and administrator. A Native of Canada, Ms. Garant received an MFA in Dance from Hollins University/American Dance Festival, a BFA (honors) degree in Dance from York University in Canada and graduated from the National Ballet School of Canada Teacher Training Program.

After a successful career as a freelance modern dance performer, Garant shifted her focus to choreography and to the education of young dancers. She joined the faculty of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School. During this long association, she created the Modern Dance and Choreographic Programs, was the director of the postgraduate Aspirant Program, and collaborated as a choreographer on many productions with Winnipeg's GroundSwell New Music Series.

As a choreographer, Ms. Garant has garnered numerous choreographic awards, including the Youth America Grand Prix competition in Connecticut and at the International Choreographic Competition in St-Sauveur, Québec. In 1988, Ms. Garant was nominated by l'ADISQ for a Felix for Stage Direction and for Scenographer of the Year for her work with singer songwriter Daniel Lavoie. Ms. Garant's choreography has had an international impact and has been presented on many stages around the world ranging from the Olympia Theatre in Paris to the New York Joyce Soho Theatre. Her work has been produced by diverse organizations such as by the Festival of Women in the Arts in North Dakota, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra's Du Maurier New Music Festival, and by the 1999 Pan American Games. She has created works for international dance competitions held in Istanbul, Tokyo, Jackson (Mississippi), and New York City.

Prior to joining SCGSAH, she founded Josée Garant Dance in Miami, Florida, a company with a dedicated mission to educate, promote, and increase the public's awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of contemporary dance and arts. While living in the Miami area, she also worked at New World School of the Arts and Harid Conservatory and was awarded the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs Choreographer Fellowship Award. Ms. Garant served on the Board of Directors for the Florida Dance Association from 2008 to 2012.

Miriam Mesa-Pelly (Gonzalez)

Ballet Technique, Pointe, Repertoire

Miriam Mesa-Pelly, BFA, was born in Havana, Cuba, where she was a 1st Soloist with the world renowned National Ballet of Cuba (BNC) under the direction of Fernando and Ballerina Assoluta, Alicia Alonso. In 1948, this couple, along with choreographer Alberto Alonso, founded the Cuban Ballet Company where Ms. Mesa-Pelly danced for 24 years.

Ms. Mesa-Pelly danced principal roles in works by such prominent choreographers as Alberto Alonso, Brian McDonald, and Alberto Mendez, and performed throughout Europe, Latin America, United States, and Canada in such venues as the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow; The Opera Theater of Les Champs Elysées; the Colon Theater in Buenos Aires; La Scala in Milan; the Beaux Arts

Theater in Mexico City; the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City. Additionally, Ms. Mesa-Pelly taught ballet at the National Ballet School of Cuba in Havana and received a Golden Diploma of Performing Arts and Dance from the Cuban Superior Institute of Arts from Havana University.

Ms. Mesa-Pelly also taught ballet at the Fomento Artistic Cordobes (PROVER) in Cordoba, Veracruz, and taught Ballet, Pointe, and Repertoire. She was also a teacher for the Bachelor of Methodology in Ballet at the Mexican National School of Classical and Contemporary Dance (ENDCC) in Mexico City where in 2004, she wrote a text book for ballet teachers, *Classical Dance Technique*, edited and published under the National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA).

In the United States, Ms. Mesa-Pelly has also participated as a juror for the Valentina Kozlova Regional International Ballet Competition in New Orleans. Ms. Mesa-Pelly currently teaches ballet at South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities. She is the Dance Department Coordinator for the Youth America Grand Prix International Competition (YAGP).

Thomas Shoemaker

Men's Ballet Technique, Junior and Senior Ballet Technique, Men's Technique, Men's Ballet Variation, Pas de Deux, Repertoire, Dance History, Junior Career Preparation, Aspects of Production, Coaching/Stretch and Strength, Audition Preparation and Senior Showcase Mentor, Assistant Production Coordinator

Thomas Shoemaker was an acclaimed principal dancer with companies including the Atlanta Ballet, Miami City Ballet, Louisville Ballet, Augusta Ballet, and Charleston Ballet Theatre in a professional career that spanned 25 years. As a guest artist and choreographer, he has worked with numerous dance and theatre companies throughout the U.S. and abroad. As an educator, Mr. Shoemaker has taught elementary through college-aged students in studios, schools, colleges and summer programs throughout the southeastern United States. He received a Master of Fine Arts degree in Dance from Hollins University/American Dance Festival.

Before joining the faculty of the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, Mr. Shoemaker taught and choreographed for the Vanderbilt University Dance Program and was Artistic Director of Vanderbilt Dance Theatre. He also served on faculty with Middle Tennessee State University Dance Program, Austin Peay State University Dance Program, Tennessee Governor's School for the Arts Summer Program, and American Dance Festival. Mr. Shoemaker also served as Associate Artistic Director for StillPoint Dance Theatre.

In May 2009, Shoemaker's ballet *just let go* was awarded Best Ballet at the Panoply Choreographic Competition. In 2010, he won the same award for *VS*. His ballet *Foreverly* (based on the lives of the Everly Brothers) was awarded Best Live Performance of 2005 by the Augusta Chronicle.

As artistic director and ballet master, Mr. Shoemaker has staged or restaged numerous works including

Nutcracker, Cinderella, and Les Sylphides; George Balanchine's Allegro Brillante and Tarantella; Fernand Nault's Carmina Burana and many classical pas de deux.

Irina Ushakova

Junior and Senior Ballet Technique, Pointe, Variation, Repertoire, Historical Dance and Character, Methodology, Aspects of Production, Junior Career Preparation Mentor, Audition Preparation and Senior Showcase Mentor, Costume Coordinator, National Honor Society for Dance Arts Teacher Sponsor

Irina Ushakova was born in Chelyabinsk, Russia, and trained at the Perm State Choreographic College. Upon receiving her diploma with honors, she became a soloist with Chelyabinsk State Opera and Ballet Theatre. Shortly after joining the company, she danced the roles of Maria (*Fountain of Bakhchisarai*), Aysha (*Gayane*), and Giselle (*Giselle*) before being promoted to principal dancer. She was awarded the Best Role of the Season prize for the role of Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*. In 1986 and 1988, she became a bronze and silver medalist at the International Ballet Competition Arabesque in Perm, Russia. In 1989, she toured the United States with the Donetsk Ballet, and Israel and Turkey with the Bolshoi Ballet. She was invited to join the Donetsk State Opera and Ballet Theatre (Ukraine) as a principal dancer in 1989. Ms. Ushakova was a finalist in the 1990 International Ballet Competition held in Jackson, Mississippi.

Since her arrival in the United States in 1990, Ms. Ushakova has been a principal dancer with both Ballet Mississippi and Tulsa Ballet. She has performed leading roles in many classical ballets such as *Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, Don Quixote, Nutcracker, Coppelia, La Sylphide*, and others, as well as neoclassical works such as Andre Prokovsky's *Anna Karenina*, Val Caniparoli's *Lady of the Camellias*, Ronald Hynd's *Rosalinda*, George Balanchine's *Theme and Variations, Four Temperaments, Concerto Borocco*, and *Who Cares?* She has also danced contemporary and modern works. In 1997, she returned to Russia as a guest artist to dance the role of Anyuta in Vladimir Vasiliev's *Anyuta* with the Chelyabinsk State Opera and Ballet Theatre.

Since 2002, Ms. Ushakova has been a faculty member of the Dance Department at the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities in Greenville, South Carolina. In 2007, she graduated from Chelyabinsk State Pedagogical University (Russia) with a Master's Degree in Dance and Education.

Tracy Vogt

Modern Technique, Partnering, Improvisation/Composition, Jazz, Repertoire, Aspects of Production, Junior Career Preparation Mentor, Positivity Program Coordinator, Audition Preparation and Senior Showcase Mentor, Youth America Grand Prix Assistant

Originally from Pennsylvania, Tracy Vogt was a fellowship student at the Lake Erie Ballet, and PA, Governor's School for the Arts, Jacob's Pillow Modern Intensive, Point Park Summer Dance, and the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. She was a scholarship student at the Alvin

Ailey American Dance Center in New York City, where she was personally chosen to demonstrate Graham technique by School Director Denise Jefferson. Her professional experience includes Assistant Rehearsal Director and Principal Dancer with the Philadelphia Dance Company (PHILADANCO) for twelve years, Rehearsal Director and Principal Dancer for the Wylliams Henry Contemporary Dance Company in Kansas City, Missouri, Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theater and Verb Ballets in Ohio, under the direction of Hernando Cortez. She received the Philadelphia Rocky Award for Dance Excellence, and has performed works by Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, David Parsons, Elisa Monte, Talley Beatty, George Faison, Bill T. Jones, Dianne McIntyre, Dwight Rhoden, and many other Modern and Contemporary choreographers.

Ms. Vogt has taught at the National Regional Dance America and Northeastern and Southeastern RDA Festivals, and at numerous schools and universities, both nationally and abroad. She is also a faculty member for MindLeaps, and has taught most recently in Uganda, Rwanda, and Guinea, Africa. She was Dance Director for North Atlanta High School in 2009, and her choreography was selected and performed at Danco on Danco 2007-9, SERBA festival 2011, Dance Canvas Atlanta 2012 and 2013, and Atlanta Dance Connection. She is currently on faculty at Tolbert Yilmaz School of Dance and Roswell Dance Theater, where she is the Director of the Modern Company. Ms. Vogt is extremely excited to be a part of the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities Dance Department.

Adjunct Faculty

Alisa Caldwell: African

Emma Finley Alonso: Anatomy for Dancers, Pilates

Shellie Cash: Alexander Technique

Beth Dill: Yoga

Keeley Mezzancello: Nutrition

Carla Quintero: Music for Dancers

Elizabeth Wright: Modern Fundamentals

Class Accompanists

Gregory Belton Chesney

Irina Peace

Donald Shabkie

Ben Weston

Dance Department Assistant

Adair Kempf

GUEST ARTISTS

Week-long guest artist residencies offer students exposure to various styles or genres of dance through technique classes and repertory.



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