

# THE FOLK DANCER

2012 Spring Newsletter

Editor: Emilee Wright



## NEW IN OUR DIVISION

We are so excited about the addition of Living Legends to the Dance Department and the World Dance Division here at BYU. We so love having Janielle Christensen and her wonderful dancers in our World Dance Family!

## Spring Festival of Nations

Our annual Spring Festival of Nations will be on March 10<sup>th</sup>, a Saturday this year. The pre-show will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the show at 7:00 p.m. in the Wilkinson Center Ballroom. We plan to recreational dance together as cast and audience after the show! We'd love to see you there!

## Last semester's guest choreographers

Luba Grekov came from Toronto, Canada where she and her husband Yuri direct a Desna Ukrainian dance company. Luba set our new Ukrainian dance from the area of Volyn, Ukraine. Luba was very professional to work with. We were all in awe of her skill and knowledge. She danced professionally with Pavlo Virsky Ukrainina Dance ensemble. She worked the students very hard and long for the three days she was here in September. The students danced and moved in ways that they had never moved before. They made leaps and bounds of improvement during her mentorship. We all loved working with her, and she did have a very good experience with the students. She was very touched by the work ethic and dedication of the students. The Volyn dance has a very bright and energetic feel, and is definitely a challenge that the students have taken on in stride.



Richard Balazs came in October 2011 to set a new Hungarian Gypsy dance choreography from Szászcsávás, Romania, where many Hungarian settlements still exist today. Richard grew up in Szatmar, Hungary where he was trained from a very early age in Hungarian dance styles and in the Gypsy dance style. His father is Gypsy and has done much research in preserving Gypsy dance in the Carpathian basin. Richard learned along with his father. Richard is very knowledgeable and skilled in the Gypsy style. He choreographed and taught a suite of three dances; a men's Pontozó, a men's Verbunk, and then a Csingerálás couple's dance. It is a very difficult dance suite that showcases the strength and agility of the men, and past furious turning movements of the couple dance. It was a great experience learning from Richard.

## THE INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE UPCOMING SHOWS FOR 2012

**Friday, March 2 - Elko, Nevada**  
Elko Convention Center – Laurena Moren Theater

**Thursday, March 29 - Provo, Utah**  
Covey Center for the Arts

**Saturday, March 3 - Odgen, Utah**  
Austad Auditorium, Browning Center WSU

**Saturday, April 21 - Richfield, Utah**  
Sevier Valley Center

## The International Folk Dance Ensemble extended tour for 2012

April 26-May 21, 2012  
Including the following cities:

- ✓ **Farmington, NM**
- ✓ **Alamogordo, NM**
- ✓ **El Paso, TX**
- ✓ **Midland, TX**
- ✓ **Austin, TX**
- ✓ **San Antonio, TX**
- ✓ **Laredo, TX**
- ✓ **Corpus Christi, TX**
- ✓ **Beaumont, TX**
- ✓ **Houston, TX**
- ✓ **Dallas, TX**
- ✓ **New Orleans, LA**
- ✓ **Shreveport, LA**

Please contact Performing Arts Management at [pam.byu.edu](http://pam.byu.edu) or 801-422-3576 to get specific information on dates and venues. We hope to see you at one of our shows in 2012!

## 2011-2012 Scholarship Recipients

- ∞ **Mary Bee Jensen Scholarship Endowment:** Katrina Lewis, Justin Kelly
- ∞ **Excellence in Folk Arts Scholarship:** Lynette Yorgason, Mike Romney
- ∞ **Viltis Scholarship:** Brittany Leavitt, Ion Cervinschi
- ∞ **Harman Scholarship Award:** Tyler Walker
- ∞ **Norma Pardoe Anderson Performance Award:** Tanner Pearson
- ∞ **Performance Missionary Award:** Cody Phillips, Reed Carter
- ∞ **Cherill Liptak Scholarship:** Jarelle Fuller, David Lewis
- ∞ **Additional Scholarship:** Jessica Philbrick



We wish to thank all who have generously contributed in supporting our program by providing students with scholarship opportunities. Your contributions are greatly appreciated. If you are interested in providing scholarship funds for the folk dance program and its students, please contact Jennifer Lloyd at 801-422-9219 or visit [give.byu.edu/folkdance](http://give.byu.edu/folkdance).

## Costumes for Sale!

12 rainbow colored women's Slovak vests  
12 rainbow colored pleated skirts  
12 rainbow colored matching hair bows  
Sold as a set for \$1200 plus shipping

3 women's Slovak jumpers w/ matching apron -  
Jumper has a mint green top w/ a yellow pleated skirt attached. Aprons are pleated and mint green.  
Sold as a set for \$375 or \$125 each plus shipping

8 pair of men's royal blue wool w/ yellow trim Slovak pants.  
Sold as a set for \$400 plus shipping.

13 Western shirts  
\$15 each plus shipping

7 Western vests  
\$15 each plus shipping

3 pair Western pants  
\$15 each plus shipping

2 denim Western women's jackets  
\$25 each plus shipping

Contact:  
Amy Handy  
294 Richards Building  
Brigham Young University  
Provo, UT 84602  
801-376-0444  
[amy@sewhandy.com](mailto:amy@sewhandy.com)



## *A Little Update on Mary Bee*

We were pleased that Mary Bee was able to spend some time up in Provo for Thanksgiving and stayed around for *Christmas Around the World* and then some. It's always wonderful to see her, and to feel of her continued love and energy for the program that she created. The new students always warm up to her in an instant, and are excited to get to "rub shoulders" with the infamous Mary Bee! Her health is still very good, and her recovery from hip surgery last spring is remarkable. Her doctors called her their "Poster Girl" for how well she handled it and bounced right back . . . We weren't surprised in the least! She's back in St. George, so if you get a chance to go, give her a call (801) 787-1123 for directions and then stop by and say "Hi!"

## World Dance Showcase (aka SPAC)

We have another terrific group this year and we're almost through Hopak--again! We have a set of twins in the group this year, a few 2nd generation folk dancers, recently returned missionaries, and just a lot of talented and dedicated kids. As far as dances that we'll be doing, I'm pulling a few out of the vault this year and performing Chu Diao from China (mid 1990's), along with Debka and Dances of the Yemenite Women (long time ago - choreographed by LaVona Jenks Comsa). I'm extending the very fun "Jumbleberry Hoedown" from CAW 2011, choreographing a new dance from Puerto Rico, and bringing back another old SPAC "interaction" dance/game from Nigeria called "Aki Doso". The children have loved in in the past, and I know they'll enjoy it just as much now. "Steppin' at the Club" is our clogging piece for the show. We're also doing the Moldovan dance we did about 10 years ago, as well as Troika from Russia and other favorites. We're pretty close to having a full schedule of shows this spring and our dates are April 23-May 19, 2012. If you're in the SLC, Davis, or Utah County and would like to come and see performances just email Vickie Austin at [vickie\\_austin@byu.edu](mailto:vickie_austin@byu.edu), or me at [delynnpeay@gmail.com](mailto:delynnpeay@gmail.com) for information. Or you could just ring me up at (801) 592-0835; I'd love to see you again!

## Sabbatical 2012 - Ed Austin

I believe by now that most of you know that I was given the opportunity to take a sabbatical during this past fall semester, 2012. It was amazing and I thought I would give you all glimpse into my experience.

As I turned in my first proposal for a research project to be conducted during my leave, Dean Stephen Jones of the College of Fine Arts and Communications indicated that he would like to have me think of something more "outside the box"—something that was not as closely tied to the work I had been doing for the past 26 years.

Immediately I had an idea leap into my head. What could be more "outside the box" than returning to the islands of Samoa where I had lived for two years as a missionary and revisit my past and the people I had grown to love so much. And so on October 2, 2011, after 37 years, I hopped on a plane with only a few preparations in place and returned to Samoa. (It turns out that trying to make detailed plans for my stay in Samoa was not as easy as I had hoped.) Jumping on the airplane required taking a huge leap of faith.

Now—in-between the initial idea for research—and my day of departure, there was indeed a lot of preparation made ... formulating the research topic, formulating questions, a review of literature, trying to make contacts in Samoa, the buying of equipment, and the attempt to re-learn and study a language that is not easily practiced in the United States.

But there were also many unknowns and items that could not be arranged for prior to my departure. 1) I did not know for sure where I would be staying for the month. 2) I could not reach former friends and families I had lived with—I did not even know how or where to contact them. 3) I had no list of names of the people I would be interviewing. 4) I was not able to make any reservations for the final leg of my flight, American Samoa to Western Samoa—my final destination. I left the United States knowing that I would need to make any further arrangements as the adventure unfolded. That's the Samoan way.





Prior to leaving I did, however, have the opportunity to meet His Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi, Samoa's Head of State during his visit to BYU. His Highness holds the same position held by kings of similar nations. His bloodline is that of royalty. Upon telling him of my objectives while visiting Samoa, he invited me to contact him once I arrived in his country.

Most importantly, this entire experience re-taught me the importance of following the Spirit. Every step of the way I was extremely blessed. Unseen angels seem to guide me and take care of my every need. Additional angels in the form of wonderful, caring people assisted me and supported me in my work. Every moment was an adventure, and I came away with new, wonderful friends and an enlarged vision of our Father in Heaven's plan and His love for each of us.

My research is still being assembled and compiled. My topic surrounds the function and role of the Tauluga in Samoan culture. The tauluga is a dance formerly performed by the virgin princess ortaupou of an area or village. It is still a rich and important part of the fa'asamoa, or the Samoan way. I quickly learned that little if any historical writing or documentation of this important dance tradition exists—thus the importance of documenting as much as possible--as quickly as possible—before all remembered information slips away.

My time in Samoa was filled with emotion and adventure as I revisited the places I lived, searched for families I had grown to love, and experienced the warmth and charm of the islands not available to an LDS missionary (i.e. some of the best snorkeling in the world, etc.) But what I will remember most are the people—local Samoans, and Caucasian and Samoan LDS missionaries who supported and assisted me in my work.

And the best part is still yet to come.

## FROM OUR ALUMNI

Catherine Leavy, the daughter of Deon and Jeff Leavy (Eastern Canada Tour 1982 and China Tour 1983), danced with the folk dancers from winter semester 2008 through Fall semester 2010. She graduated from BYU in April 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a World Dance minor. She is currently finishing her Master's degree in Performance Studies at NYU. This graduate degree uniquely builds on the two areas she studied during her undergraduate work. As part of the World Dance minor she took Dance 477—Dance as Cultural Expression and Dance 260—Dance History from Suzanne Davis. Included in the anthology of written material used in these courses was the works of renowned dance ethnographer, Dr. Barbara Browning. While at NYU Catherine has been studying the origins, evolutions, symbolism, and effect of world dance with Dr. Browning in addition to researching dances of the Ukrainian-Canadian Diaspora and how they have mutated from the original forms. Currently Dr. Browning is advising Catherine on her thesis which looks at the dances of the Soviet satellite nations and how they have developed within and outside the USSR including political, social, and cultural implications.

# Christmas Around The World

We enjoyed seeing many of you at our *Christmas Around the World* show this year! Some of you will recognize some of these photos from the show.





