



The Folk Dancer



The Official Newsletter of the BYU Folk Dance Alumni

Spring 2023



That's a WRAP!

Christmas Around the World 2022 was all about gifts.

By Jeanette Geslison, IFDE Artistic Director

Christmas Around the World – Gifts 2022 was centered around the concept of sharing and receiving gifts of many different kinds, such as the first gifts of the Magi presented to the Savior two thousand years ago, gifts we give and receive during the Christmas season, gifts of love and friendship shared anytime during the year, and acts of service. Students expressed their thoughts on sharing the gift of cultural heritage in festivals during this past summer tour and its life changing impact.

The most evident miracle of *Christmas Around the World* week is seeing a show of this magnitude come together in its performance space in only 2 days. The students and production team have been working towards the concert for months, but the physical set up and technical production of the concert starts only Tuesday afternoon following the BYU campus devotional. It takes an immense amount of planning and organization to make this happen, and with the student's help, we see it all come together. I will say that witnessing the students come together to make this happen is truly one of the biggest impacts of this concert. Students make new friends and feel the power of working together for a joint cause.

Upcoming Performances

- **Feb. 10-11, 2023:** Provo, Utah
 - (Journey - Dance Performance Theater)

Mid-Semester Tour:

- **Feb 14, 2023:** Grand Junction, Colorado
- **Feb 15, 2023:** Montrose, Colorado
- **Feb 16, 2023:** Alamosa, Colorado
- **Feb 17, 2023:** Colorado Springs, Colorado
- **Feb 18, 2023:** Denver, Colorado



- **Mar 11, 2023:** Salt Lake City, Utah
- **Mar 25, 2023:** Ogden, Utah
- **April 19, 2023:** Provo, Utah
 - (Festival of Nations - Dance Performance Theater)

International Tour:

- **June 10-17, 2023:** Danube Carnival, Budapest, Hungary
- **June 18-19, 2023:** Prague, Czech Republic
- **June 19-26, 2023:** Strážnice, Czech Republic

You can purchase tickets to shows [here](#).
Except the Feb. 10-11 show tickets can be found [here](#).





Some of my favorite highlights of this year's concert:

- The new Indian dance suite, choreographed by Vaishali Sagar from Mumbai, India. She came at the beginning of fall semester to set these new pieces. Her energy and vibrancy were so contagious and the joy of working together was mutual.
- The Ukrainian Opener and Finale pieces of the concert: *Opener* and *Pryvit* (by Amy Jex), *With Chernivtsi with Love* (a Bukovynian piece by Tym Haddock), and *Hopak* (by Colleen West and Jeanette Geslison). They presented beautiful "bookends" to the concert, and several Ukrainian refugee families were able to attend the concert with the help of student donations.
- Premiering a new Hungarian dance piece, *Dulandle* from the region of Kalotaszeg, choreographed by Zsolt Juhász, director of the Duna Ensemble in Budapest. The dancers wore a beautiful new set of costumes constructed in Hungary over the past year.
- BYU Living Legends guest performers of a new Maori dance suite choreographed by Fili Sagapolutele, especially for this concert.
- The amazing life-sized camel puppet in the nativity scene created by Nat Reed.
- My mother was able to fly in from Denmark to see the concert and see a new Danish dance medley that I choreographed. She LOVED the concert and said that seeing it three times was not once too many!



Photo credit: Jaren Wilkey @ BYU Photo



Alumni Auction

During the alumni reception, the Folk Dance office held a silent auction of memorabilia collected over the years. Over \$850 was raised for scholarships & replenishment grants!

"It was so fun to see people enter the reception room and walk down one side of the display tables... viewing and even handling the memorabilia as they went, and engaging in lots of conversation [and reliving memories]."
-Jared Fugal, Alumni Chair



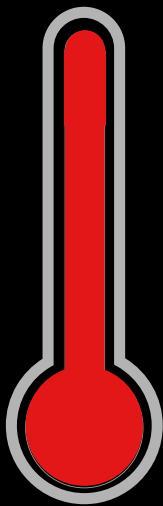
Change to Host Family Policy Leads to Successful Crowdfunding Effort

\$75,000 A recent BYU policy change has significantly impacted all BYU Performing Arts Management groups. Students can no longer stay with host families on any tour. Staying with host families provided not only housing, but also two meals a day. With this policy change, the cost of student tours has increased dramatically. The gap in funding now falls to students and donors. On the heels of COVID & this gap in funding, tour opportunities for students are not available at the level that alumni experienced in the past.

A generous alumni donor made a gift of \$50,000 to the Folk Dance Travel Fund. With this gift, the donor was hoping to encourage other alumni and friends of Folk Dance to help reach the goal of \$75,000 in order to create an endowment before the end of 2022.

We are happy to report that with the help of 42 donors, we surpassed our goal with **\$75,130!!** THANK YOU to those who donated! The payout from this endowment is small, but is a great start to help tours continue.

At this time, we invite all alumni to continue donating to this fund to increase the endowment. Please spread the word to other alumni or friends that might be interested in donating. Donations can be made [here](#) or by following the QR code. Donations are tax deductible! Let's keep touring alive!



Announcements

We need your help! If you were on the 2003, 2016, 2018, or 2020 teams, we need your help to finish the histories!

Please email to find out how to help:
gjrawlings@gmail.com



SCAN ME

In Memoriam

Dennis Wayne Hill (1951-2022)

Dennis was born in Idaho Falls, Idaho. He graduated from BYU and was an avid BYU fan. He had his greatest adventures while traveling the world performing with the BYU International Folk Dance Ensemble. He continued his love for dancing throughout his life and loved to be involved in any way he could. Dennis is survived by his mother, 4 siblings, & many nieces and nephews.

Emily Rachel Smith Bills (1988-2022)

As a child, Emily lived in Salt Lake City, Utah and Honolulu, Hawaii, but Provo, Utah was the hometown where she valiantly cheered for her BYU Cougars and performed with the BYU Folk Dancers. She danced on the touring team from 2009-2011. Emily graduated from Timpview High School in 2007 and from Brigham Young University in 2012. Emily is survived by her husband Kelly, and her 3 sons.

John Scott Horman (1944-2023)

Scott was born in Salt Lake City, Utah. He graduated from the U of U with a bachelor's degree in Speech Education. Scott worked for more than 30 years in Media Services at BYU. He and his wife Karen toured the world with the BYU International Folk Dance Ensemble. Scott was the Technical Director for the group. He also designed and constructed the sets for 19 Christmas Around the World performances. He is survived by his wife, 3 children and spouses, 11 grandchildren, his mother, and his sister.





Folk Dance Rewind

As part of our newsletter, we would like to highlight some fun moments from years past that can be found in our brand new BYU Folk Dance Archives.

This time we're revisiting 1962-1963.



Cheryl Clark & Brent Reynolds in Hungarian



Yvonne Murray & teammates in Polish



Folk dance class



Mary Bee teaching



Marilyn Margets in Mexican



Hungarian rehearsal for Christmas Around the World 1962

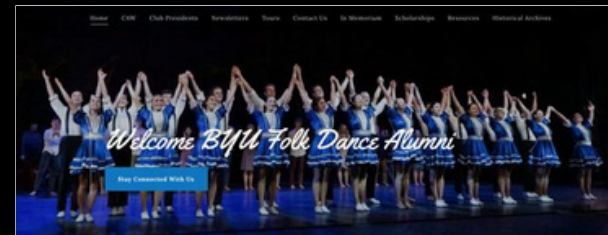
Stay Connected

Visit our website at byufolkdancealumni.com to see Tour Histories, CAW programs and posters, newsletters, the archives, and more!

We also have a "[BYU Folk Dance Alumni](#)" Facebook group. Join us!

Stay up-to-date with the current team:

- [BYU Folk Dance](#) on Facebook
- [byu_folkdance](#) on Instagram
- [byufolkdance](#) on Tiktok
- [BYU International Folk Dance](#) on Youtube



Aren't getting our emails? Then please email alumni@byufolkdancealumni.com