



Brigham Young University's
International Folk Dance Ensemble
2010-2011



Hungary

Czech Republic

Croatia

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Brigham Young University's
INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE
2010-2011



TOUR PARTICIPANTS & LEADERS

Dancers

Emily Bills
 Reed Carter
 Ion Cervinski
 Brittany Christensen
 Emily Dance
 Jarelle Fuller
 Brandon Gassaway
 Scott Johnson
 Tesha Jones
 McKenzie Keene
 Justin Kelly
 Brittney Leavitt
 David Lewis
 Katrina Lewis
 Emily Park
 Joshua Park
 Tanner Pearson
 Jessica Philbrick
 Cody Phillips
 Greg Rawlings
 Michael Romney
 Michael Steele
 Tyler Walker
 Liahona Walus
 Brian Watson
 Lyndsey Watson
 Lynette Yorgason

Hometown

Provo, Utah
 Memphis, Tennessee
 Cantemir, Moldova
 Farmington, Utah
 Fall City, Washington
 Phoenix, Arizona
 Vancouver, Washington
 Farmington, Utah
 Burley, Idaho
 Bountiful, Utah
 Tucson, Arizona
 Las Vegas, Nevada
 Pocatello, Idaho
 Highland, Utah
 Draper Utah
 Central Point, Oregon
 Merrimack, New Hampshire
 Orem, Utah
 Anchorage, Alaska
 Albuquerque, New Mexico
 Alpine, Utah
 South Jordan, Utah
 South Jordan, Utah
 Wellington, New Zealand
 Fairfield, Montana
 Holladay, Utah
 Plain City, Utah

Major

Home and Family Living
 Exercise Science
 Business Management
 History Teaching
 Dance
 Family & Consumer Science Education
 Biochemistry
 Exercise Science
 P.E. Teaching/Coaching
 Elementary Education
 English
 Exercise & Wellness
 Family Studies
 Family & Consumer Science Education
 Art History
 Psychology
 Exercise Science
 Therapeutic Recreation
 Spanish Translation
 Business Management
 Family Studies
 Business Management
 Therapeutic Recreation
 Biology/Dance
 Exercise Science
 Family History
 History Teaching

Musicians

Jared Bennett
 Ashlee Carroll
 Alina Geslison
 Tim Krumwiede
 Javier Misiego*
 Erin Patterson
 Drew Sorber
 Jay Tibbitts**

Hyde Park, Utah
 Mesa, Arizona
 Provo, Utah
 Boise, Idaho
 Madrid, Spain
 Ventura, California
 Orem, Utah
 Mission Viejo, California

Open
 Communication Disorders
 Communication Disorders
 Math
 Broadcast Journalism
 Asian Studies
 History
 Music Jazz Studies

Leadership and Technical Support

Ed Austin Artistic Director
 Vickie Austin Chaperone
 Ron Nuttall Dance Trainer
 Leslie Nuttall Chaperone
 Mark Ohran Technical Director
 Marianne Ohran Technical Support
 Doug Olsen Technical Support
 Jonathon Wood Tour Manager

*Mid-semester only
 **Extended tour only

Saturday, January 22, 2011
Mesquite, NV
Tesha, Scott, and Greg

We began our busy season of touring this semester in beautiful Mesquite, Nevada! And what better way to begin than a long bus ride?! After an uneventful bus ride, we got to the theater and set up for the show. After setting up, we all hung out outside in the nice warm sunshine (glad to be away from cold wintery Utah). We laid in the sun, played cards, and generally goofed around. We had dinner outside as well! There was loads of delicious food that included different salads... it was like summer! At the show that night, we were thrilled to see Mary Bee sitting front and center! We had three standing ovations tonight!!!



The fun definitely did NOT stop at the show... We can never forget that epic bus ride home from Mesquite!!! We almost died... but really. First of all, the driver was an hour late to get us after playing the slots all day, which should have been a bad omen. He was acting funny, so Ed and Jon were up at the front of the bus talking to him constantly. A member followed since he was driving to St. George. He said the driver was swerving all over the place through the canyon from Mesquite to St. George and some of us literally thought we were going to crash! We hit the rumble strip A LOT. Then we got escorted by a cop car to the check point where they escorted our driver into a building and had him in there for 15-20 minutes and we were all speculating as to what was happening. Come to find out, he was high on prescription meds. He had filled a narcotic prescription the day before and it was GONE. Awesome. Afterwards, Jon Wood said something to the affect of, "Make sure to say a prayer of thanks tonight, because from what I know, it's a miracle we made it this far." The bus company couldn't get another driver to us until the next day, so we stayed the night in St. George. Local church members came to shuttle us to a hotel and some people even got to ride in the back of a cop car! The next day we had Sunday school on the bus ride home.

Saturday, January 29, 2011
Pocatello, Idaho
Tesha and Greg

Word Of The Day: Defenestrate (to throw out the window)
Used in a sentence? "If ya'll mess up in the show, ya'll gonna be defenestrated from the bus."

You might think that we didn't remember our trip to Pocatello very well because it was, in fact, four months before we wrote this. HOWEVER, you underestimate the mental powers of the Tesha/Greg duo. Take that Cody Phillips, take that!

Our trip started with some apprehension since our last bus driver got arrested and almost killed us all in a canyon. However, we discovered this bus driver had grown up with Tanner, and he's generally trustworthy, so we figured he was okay. We were further put at ease with a delightful lunch on the bus. After arriving safely in Pocatello, we loaded into our beautiful theater. This theater was more for music concerts, so there were acoustic panels instead of wings. There was also a beautiful hard wood floor we were sure to ruin. Eek.

Some people worked hard... some of us played “Set” in the hallway trying to be sneaky. It was incredibly productive. Jeanette and Ed then called a little rehearsal for Mehk and all the women to practice Russian and Ukrainian turns. They were all SO thrilled about that. Meanwhile, Cody found a little surprise in his costume box... instead of boots he found a nasty mannequin head! Oddly, he was more scared about having no boots than he was about the creepy head. In retaliation, Cody and Josh mummified Tesha’s beloved bear Ningbo by wrapping him in toilet paper and placing him serenely in Ashlee’s violin case for a coffin. Greg also suggested some Romanian flowers be tucked in his little dead paws. Tesha was strangely not sad, but rather thought it was brilliant.

We were served dinner at a nearby church. A meal’s not a meal without potatoes in Idaho... and we did have potatoes. Then it was off to the show! David Lewis was a little nervous in his home town because lots of his family and clogging teachers were coming to the show. Scottie was a bit nervous too because Ed told him, after his spectacular performance in St. George, that he better nail the men’s Elkridge trio or he would be cut! Slice! Good thing he pulled it off!!! Go Scottie, go! The rest of the show was pretty good for our second one!

That night, a big group of guys got to stay at David’s house. It was a pretty awesome time complete with smoothies provided by David’s dad and a “slumber party” to boot. You know the kind I’m talking about...

Sunday, January 30, 2011
Pocatello, Idaho
Tesha and Greg

Sunday morning, the group gathered at David’s house to pack sack lunches and practice our fireside songs. At church, we all had to sit on the stand for the whole meeting... lame. Our song went well. Many of us struggled to stay awake. I, Greg, took it upon myself to keep Mike Steele awake through the meeting... no small feat! I mostly did it. The band performed their Joseph Smith medley, which was lovely. One of our favorite parts was Tim’s coat buttons that rattled when he shook his hand for vibrato.

The bus ride home was mostly uneventful. Except... Ningbo was taken hostage and tied to a hanger in the bus. Tesha and Scottie gave the most AMAZING Sunday school lesson on the bus ride home. Greg and McKenzie were both ill and a few others were getting sick. Perfect. Bus rides are no fun when you’re sick. The band decided to jam in the back of the bus which was fun for some and drove sleepers crazy. Thus ends our adventure in that Land of Spuds.

Friday and Saturday, February 18-19, 2011
Salt Lake City: Conference Center Shows
Reed, Brittany, and Tesha

Still at the beginning of our touring careers, we were all excited and a little nervous about our shows this weekend. Having already survived our Mesquite and Pocatello shows, we were feeling pretty confident as we boarded the bus to meet the advance party already setting up the stage with Mark.

The first surprise on Friday was arriving at the beautiful theater only to find everything already done, thanks to the six guys who went early. We blocked and set up in the gorgeous dressing rooms. And then we realized they were forever away and created a pseudo-dressing room in the hallway.

For dinner, we got individual meals from Brick Oven. Hooray! Best part: the MASSIVE cookies. They were an instant hit and we looked forward to more the next night. During our downtime both days we spent time getting to know each other better, touring Temple Square, and Voguing. Both shows were a success despite any individual mistakes, the number of which shall remain unwritten.

Some highlights:

- The custodians appalled at us getting ready in the hallway.
- The lady during intermission refusing to let the boys help with the Indian change of death.
- Reed hiding in the girls' room despite the lady kicking everyone out.
- Exploring the Conference Center (with appropriate supervision, of course).
- Listening to somebody rehearsing on the organ.
- Hearing the audience freak out when Greg "flew" during the Hopak tag.
- Being able to perform for all our friends and family and sharing our testimonies through dance.
- Jeanette gave us scores out of 10 for both nights shows. The first night was a 7.5, and the second night was a 9! So good improvement.
- During Russian on the second night Lindsey's scarf got caught on Tesha's arm and so Tesha had two scarves and Lindsey had none. In an amazing sneaky display, Tesha was able to surreptitiously pass the scarf back to Lindsey in the circle.

MID-SEMESTER TOUR: NEVADA AND CALIFORNIA

FEBRUARY 25 – MARCH 6, 2011

MAP



ITINERARY

Friday, February 25 Reno, NV 561.12 mi/9 hrs

4:45 am Bus arrives at RB
5:00 am Meet and load bus at north doors of RB
Bus departs for Reno
1:00 pm Load in at the venue
7:30 pm Performance – Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts (1,100 Seats)

Presenter Reno Nevada Stake

Saturday, February 26 Paradise, CA 160.52 mi/3hr 31min

9:00 am Meet and depart for Paradise
1:00 pm Load in at the venue
7:30 pm Performance – Paradise Performing Arts Center (762 seats)

Presenter Paradise Performing Arts Center

Sunday, February 27 Paradise, CA 38.7mi/1hr 5min

Attend church with host families
7:30 pm Fireside at Chico Building

Presenter Paradise Stake

Monday, February 28 Modesto, CA 165.91mi/3hr 22mi

8:00 am Meet and depart for Modesto
1:00 pm Stockard Coffee Elementary School Assembly
6:00 pm FHE with YSA ward

Tuesday, March 1 Modesto, CA

8:00 am Meet at the Sylvan Chapel
TBD Sherwood Elementary School Assembly
12:00 pm Lunch
1:00 pm Load in to the venue
7:30 pm Performance – Gallo Center for the Arts (1,251 seats)

Presenter Central Valley Alumni Chapter

Wednesday, March 2 Rohnert Park, CA 132.06mi/2hr 49min

8:00 am Load bus at Sylvan Chapel
1:00 pm Load in at the venue
4:30 pm Dinner
7:00 pm Performance- Spreckels Performing Arts Center (540 Seats)

Presenter North Bay Alumni Chapter

Thursday, March 3 San Jose, CA 93.63mi/2hr 15min

8:00 am Host families bring students to depart for San Jose
11:00 am School Performance-Pinewood High School
1:00 pm Load in at the venue
4:30 pm Dinner
7:30 pm Performance- San Jose Center for the Performing Arts (2,691 seats)

Presenter South Bay Alumni Chapter

Friday, March 4 Oakland, CA 40.36mi/1hr 27min

8:00 am Host families bring students to depart for San Francisco
10:00 am FREE TIME in San Francisco (*Wharf, China Town*)
12:00 pm Load Bus and depart for Oakland
6:30 pm Reception for VIP Guests – in Visitor’s Center
7:30 pm Performance – Oakland Interstake Center (1,800 seats)

Presenter East Bay Alumni Chapter

Saturday, March 5 Folsom, CA 81.84mi/2hr

8:15 am Load bus at Danville Stake Center
8:30 am Depart for Folsom
Load in at the venue
1:00 pm Workshop with Galena Street East
3:30 pm Performance- Folsom Lake College Performing Arts Center (847 seats)
6:30 pm VIP Reception
7:30 pm Performance- Folsom Lake College Performing Arts Center (847 seats)

Presenter LDS Business Association/Sacramento Alumni Chapter

Sunday, March 6 Provo, UT 694.76mi/10hr 41min

8:00 am Meet at chapel
Hold Sacrament service
8:30 am Depart for Provo
10:00 pm Arrive at RB and unload

Friday, February 25, 2011
Reno, NV
Tesha and Greg



We woke up to 6 inches of new snow the morning we left for mid-semester tour. Cindy Swenson was a doll and carpoled a number of people to the RB so they wouldn't have to walk in the snow. It was 5 am once the bus pulled out of the parking lot. A little bit later, we were in the middle of a blizzard, and had to stop while Frank put chains on the bus. Of course, some of us took the opportunity to have a snowball fight. Perhaps the most popular person on the bus was a cardboard cut-out of Sally Boyle that Greg brought to be his bus buddy. They spent HOURS talking, eating, laughing, etc.

After watching Toy Story 3 and eating lunch at Wendy's, we were back on the road again. We were running late because of the snow, and had only 40 minutes to help Mark finish setting up the stage. Our venue, the Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts, was a crazy looking building. It was gold and looked like the top of the Epcot ball. We quickly set up for the show and then had dinner at 4:30, which was Hawaiian haystacks. The show went well and then it was off to bed!

Saturday, February 26, 2011
Paradise, CA
Tesha

We woke up to more snow the next morning before making our way to California. As the bus crossed Donner Pass, however, the skies cleared and there wasn't a speck of snow to be seen upon the ground. It was almost like a scene from Narnia. The team learned that the venue that night was going to be opened only twice that year because of the bad economy. The first was for the BYU folk dance team and the second for the BYU ballroom team. The venue was Paradise Performing Arts Center and it kind of looked like a big log cabin.



Sunday, February 27, 2011
Paradise, CA
Drew and Lynette

Sunday was truly a day of rest for all of us. After two days of traveling we got to stay in the same place for more than just a night time stay. Oh, and we were in Paradise! Literally. We were all staying at different host families' houses, nestled among the forests and hills of Paradise. As Alina said, it always smelled like we were camping. Seeing as we were all staying in separate houses, it may be difficult to convey correctly the day for each of us. This is our task. We hope we do not let you down.

Let's just assume that breakfast was good for everybody. That's one assumption we feel safe in making. Let's also assume that each one of us attended a church meeting, and felt the Spirit insofar as we were willing to invite it. Yes? Are we safe so far? Good, let's move on.

About 1/3 of the team¹ were impressed into the service aboard the ward choir². Apparently, before their practice, a prayer was said for the presence of angels. And apparently, we were those angels. Go figure right? Debatable as to the outcome of whether we were or not. Needless to say it was lovely to sing with these people, and even Ed joined us in the end. Due to the abundance of snow³ only Sacramento meeting was held for at least a certain portion of the inhabitants of Le Bus.⁴

Back to our list of assumptions. We did not perform a full-length show. Unless your host family was really lucky, which most were not. We are assuming of course. We also assume that you survived this day with all of your limbs and body organs intact and functioning, despite, perhaps, that best efforts of some of our younger hosts. A small group of us got to drive to a scenic overlook, which was lovely.



There is one thing that we can do more than assume, and that would be the fireside experience we were able to have at the Chico Stake Center. True to form, we were hurried in our arrival and practicing words and music on the bus with our fearless fireside leader, Tyler. We did a quick run through of all of our musical numbers before entering the chapel whereupon the youth of the surrounding area were gathered. Songs were sung, testimonies were given, hearts mended? Our program was as follows:

- **Music:** His River, His Peace (accompanied by Lynette)
- **Talk:** Ashley Carroll
- **Talk:** McKenzie Keane⁵
- **Music:** In This Very Room (Angie Bush, Emily Park, Katrina Lewis, Lynette Yorgason, Mike Romney, Justin Kelly, Cody Phillips, and Tanner Pearson, accompanied by Tyler Walker)
- **Talk:** Greg Rawlings
- **Music:** Where Can I Turn for Peace (accompanied by Lynette)
- **Music:** Christ the Lord is Risen Today (Ashley, Alina, Lynette)
- **Talk:** Brian Watson
- **Music:** There is a Green Hill Far Away (band)
- **Music:** My Shepherd Will Supply My Need (accompanied by Emily Park, led by Tyler because we didn't know the words)

After the fireside we were able to mingle, eat brownies, and lemon squares (which were suspiciously like the lemon squares we had for dessert the night before...interesting? I think so. Well, Drew thinks so, the subject of that sentence is Drew, he was speaking there. Just so you know. I was unquestionable in my interested intentions. The subject of that sentence, was Lynette. Just so we're clear.)

After the fireside we all went home to our respective host families. But one experience must be written down in the annals of time. Many of us stayed with host families that were related to each other. Tonight, those families gathered to show us their performing skills! One of those performers was none other than Brynn... you all remember her as the dear who recounted to us a lovely poem about a bird on the bus the next morning. She is a former YA and her family was much like her. Apparently they put on a show every year for Christmas on the same stage on which we performed. So Brynn and her family put on a parody of our performance the day before. I would try to write about it, but I just don't think it can be done. Hopefully Greg will lovingly donate his video of the experience, because it was priceless.

1 Many boys+Alina and Lynette.

2 Think British maritime practices here. Drew and I are both history nerds, get over it.

3 Though this snow did not seem to visible to us...

4 Especially the impressed inhabitants.

5 Apparently the old, married girl.

Apparently, Katrina and Jarelle's host wasn't able to see the show, but the host dad and one daughter drove down to our last show of the week to see us perform. It meant so much for them to be there!

Monday, February 28, 2011

Modesto, CA

Tesha



On the bus this morning, Brynn came onboard to say thank you and wish us well... and tell us her bird poem. Her family also blessed us with this delightful photo in which they photoshopped Alina's hair on all of us. Classic. As we rode the bus to Modesto, Doug and Scottie had conspired to color Sally's skin purple with a crayon. (The cardboard cut-out of Sally that Greg had brought along to be his seat buddy) Thanks to Tesha, they were unsuccessful. Jon treated the team to a buffet for lunch. Next up was a performance at the Stockard Coffee Elementary School. The dancers performed their

"Spectrum" number with sock puppets that they had done for the Winter Gala. After the show the teachers commented that their students had never been so enthusiastic at an assembly. We loved performing there because it seemed like SPAC all over again.

After that we all went to the movies and saw "I am Number Four". It was awesome to go to a movie together, but most people didn't love the movie... That night was FHE with the young single adults in the stake. We ate pizza and mingled. The band played some music. We taught a cup game, a REC night dance (La Bastringue), and a stomping sequence Javier knew. After a rousing good time, we separated with our host families.



Tuesday, March 1, 2011

Modesto, CA

Jarelle

Today was the fifth day of tour
And the dancer's bodies were perfectly sore
It was our second day in Modesto
Too soon we would end tour in Sacramento

We met at a church to pass some time
However, Ed took this chance as prime
We learned a Gathering formation
Then headed off to a school location

We performed for Elementary peeps
And taught them some Ukrainian leaps
We joined them for cafeteria school lunch
Afterwards our stomachs took quite a punch

At recess we climbed, chased, and ran
But too soon had to return to our van
They thought we had poise and fame
We left not believing we are lame

These children touched our heart
Perhaps we gave their hopes a jump-start
They said we made their day
But for us the reward had no pay

At the Gallo Center was our show
We hoped to fill every row
We had time to prepare and rest
But sickness spread among us like a pest

We gave the show all we had
And the performance was not half bad
Us Provo kids love the California sun
And cannot believe that tour is half done



Additional anecdote from Tesha: After the school show, when we got back on the bus, the dancers passed around the microphone and told stories about the kids they had eaten lunch with. Justin didn't feel like sitting next to any kids so sat down by himself. When he felt a tap on his shoulder he turned to find a little boy who asked him, "Will you be my buddy today?" Of course, Justin said yes and ate lunch with him. His name was Omar. They played at recess too. As they played, Omar began to talk more and more. When recess was over, he said goodbye to Justin and went to line up. A few children from Omar's class asked Justin if Omar was really talking to him, because they said Omar NEVER talks. When they found out that he had talked to Justin, they went to their line and talked to Omar who was talking back to them!

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Rohnert Park, CA

Tesha and Greg



The devotional was given on the bus by Justin Kelly and Ion Cervinski. They talked about being non-members at BYU. We made a stop at the Jelly Belly factory to take a tour. It was AMAZING! We got to see how jelly beans are made. There were carts of full of jelly beans all over. It was like Willy Wonka's Factory. Plus, to top it all off, there were free jelly beans for all! There was also a fabulous store at which you could buy practically any flavor of jelly bean and other merchandise. Some people played Syracovi with their fun little paper hats.

While setting up the show, a few dancers enjoyed dancing like maniacs to "Proud Mary" in the dressing room. The presenters made us lasagna and salad for dinner. The marquee outside the Spreckles Performing Arts Center said the wrong time, but the show went on!

Thursday, March 3, 2011
San Jose, CA
Tesha and Greg

The bus was loaded by 8 am and the bus made its way to San Jose. The scenery that we drove by was beautiful! The vineyards that went on for miles were especially fun to see. At 10:30 am we arrived at Pinewood School, which is a K-12 school. One of the teachers there was a clogger and had danced on SPAC his freshman year on scholarship, but had changed to Young Ambassadors for the rest of his BYU career. We tried not to feel betrayed. He was very excited to welcome the folk dancers to his school though! We performed in the gym, and afterwards did a small presentation of Elk Ridge clog by request of the theater teacher who wanted his students to see what clogging could really look like. Jared thought it would be funny to start the song off impossibly fast, and his fingers were moving like lightning! Ed stopped him before he got very far and Jared restarted at normal speed. Nice try, Jared. He usually plays super fast, just not quite this supersonic. Next, we had lunch out in the sunshine. Greg, Angie and Tesha made a game of trying to see who could throw the most bark into other people's lunch sacks. Angie won.

The dancers then headed to the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts to set up for the show. This theater was large with beautiful architecture. After we set up everything, many of us had the chance to do a little exploring of Silicone Valley. We took fun pictures in front of the theater and wandered the neighborhood. We eventually stumbled into a HUGE Monopoly board, which we proceeded to entertain ourselves with by having a photoshoot. The show that evening went well, then once again it was off with host families.



Friday, March 4, 2011
Oakland, CA
Scott and McKenzie



We all woke up rather early to meet at the local stake center. Once we all arrived, we headed out toward the grand city of San Francisco. After Frank took us on a little bit of a tour around the city, we were all dropped off and given two hours to go exploring and enjoy the bay. Most everyone went over to Ghirardelli Square to revel in that wonderful thing known to man as chocolate! The city was a fun place to tour. Many students also went to Fisherman's Wharf to have some delicious fish and chips, clam chowder, and sourdough bread. The seals were another great attraction. They have returned to the bay, and as Ashley said, "They look like BIG yams!"

We were all told to meet at the bus at 11:55 am SHARP! As this time approached, many obedient students loaded into the bus. By noon the bus was ready to take off. Sadly, some students were still lollygagging in the city watching some street performers. The folks in the bus could see them walking slowly to the bus late. This did not stop Edwin and Jon from telling Frank to take off. They wanted to teach these students (Javier, Rylan, Erin, Justin, Tesha, and Ion) a lesson to NOT be LATE! As Edwin said, "They must learn now because this cannot happen in Europe."

So... we left them. Yes, we left them all in the big city of San Francisco to fend for themselves and find their way to our show... which was in Oakland- about thirty minutes away. They found a nice man in a camera store who told them how they could get to the venue, which was on the same property as the Oakland Temple. A taxi ride, a bus ride, and a trolley ride later, each of these students made it to the show site with \$10 less in their pockets. Many were worried about little Rylan, the freshman. Others called and heard Javier vent his anger for being left. But, they made it just fine about an hour later. It seemed many of them enjoyed their extra adventure, so we do not really know if they learned their lesson.



In Oakland, we all enjoyed the temple right next to the venue. It was an absolutely beautiful view on top of the hill! During our free time before the show, a few students slipped out to go into the temple. Some students did baptisms and others were able to do initiatories. "It was a very spiritual and uplifting experience!"-McKenzie. Others steamed costumes, took naps, played games, and walked around the temple grounds.

Our show was very special tonight! We were especially honored to have the Presidian Dancers share the stage with us. These dancers are a young group, ages 8 to 18. They are also very talented and full of energy. They kicked off the show with a Chinese, Kurdistan, and Mexican number. We then began our show and, in order to keep the show a good length of time, we took out our Southern numbers. After intermission, the Presidian dancers also performed a Turkish dance suite choreographed by Ahmet Luleci (a frequent Turkish choreographer for our ensemble). It was a wonderful Black Sea dance that many of us recognized from our own Turkish dance we have done in previous years. We just loved being with the younger dancers who were full of grace and energy. They pushed us all to also give our best for this show. The audience was full and very fun. There were over 1,000 people that attended the show! We even had some alumni folk dancers there such as Rustin. Overall, the show was a great success! We ended the night with our relaxing cool down, loaded up the van, and headed out with our host families. It was a late night and even later for our strong and diligent technician Mark Ohran. Sadly, he locked his keys in the ignition of the truck while it was running. It took him some time to get it unlocked, but he found a way and headed to the hotel around 1 am! We thank him for all of his hard work and sacrifice for this team!



Saturday, March 5, 2011
Folsom, CA
Tesha

The dancers and musicians dragged themselves onto the bus this morning to head to Folsom. Everyone was so exhausted that morning that devotional was skipped so we could sleep. Thank you. When we got to the Folsom Lake College Performing Arts Center, we set up shop for the show. We had a delightful room to warm-up and cool down in with posters from Broadway shows all around. Ron did an especially epic job with our warm-up today. He knows just



how to make our bodies feel awesome and we have a good time doing it! The show went well tonight, despite everyone's exhaustion. We shared a big dressing room for smaller costume changes and the bathrooms for the major ones. Tim may have gone onstage in his Hungarian costume with the tummy stuffed to make him look GIGANTIC. He did not ask permission. It was hilarious.



Sunday, March 6, 2011
Provo, UT

On our last day of tour, we attended church early in the morning and had a quick Sacrament meeting. We met very early at 8 am, partook of the sacrament, and then hit the road. A long ride to Provo was ahead of us. The skies were cloudy and it was slightly raining. It was clear that the California skies were crying because they would miss us... a lot!



We spent the entire day on the bus driving through several beautiful natural sights full of mountains, pine trees, and SNOW! At one point we needed to chain the tires to help us make our way through the snow. Thankfully, the road was not as bad as it was on the drive to California.

A wonderful Sunday school lesson was taught by the lovely Jessica Philbrick and Tim Krumweide, which helped remind us that it was still the Sabbath day. Later in the day, we also watched the movie Secretariat to help pass the time. That did a good job at keeping some of us awake.... And not so much others. We have learned to keep ourselves pretty entertained on long bus rides by now.

We then stopped and had lunch at Texas Roadhouse... thanks to the one and only Jonathon Wood (the best tour manager we could ever ask for!) and, of course, Ed advocated it as well. We ate a lot of great food and were full to our hearts content. We later changed drivers and said goodbye to our loyal driver, Frank, who had been our bus driver for the entire tour. About an hour before reaching Provo, an epic pillow fight broke out... and by pillow fight we mean pillow fights (there were at least 3 in a row). Lots of laughter, blood and tears ensued. Justin proceeded to find a blood stain on his pillow. GROSS!!! But it was epic, so it was worth it.

We arrived safely in Provo very late, but were all very glad to be home considering how exhausted we all were. We had completed a successful tour full of wonderful memories, great shows, lasting friendships, and really neat experiences. California was a beautiful place to be together as a team. We felt very lucky and privileged to be apart of such a wonderful program that influences people's lives for the good. Mid-semester tour was now officially over but was well worth the time and the effort that it took to prepare for it.

Friday, March 11, 2011
St. George, Utah
Tesha

The bus was loaded and headed out of Provo by 2:00 pm. On the way to St. George, the team watched Tangled-the latest and greatest Disney movie yet! Tyler and Drew had left with Mark before the dancers to set up the show, so there was no set-up to do when the team arrived! Dinner was served, then we went straight to the show. The audience's age was on average.... around 75. In the girls dressing room that night, the girls were commenting that it was weird to be back performing so soon. It was almost as if mid-semester tour never ended! We have done A LOT of shows this semester.

Saturday, March 12, 2011
St. George, Utah
Tesha

The next morning was time spent with host families. Then, we all met up at the venue to have our very first Culture Class for Europe!! Our fearless leader Jon was the instructor (since he is so full of cultural knowledge). Next was lunch at a Mongolian BBQ! Some of the dancers had never eaten at one before, and it was fun to pick their own items for the bowl and watch it being cooked on a grill out on the floor. After lunch, it was time for some sun and swimming at Tanner Pearson's grandparents house! Some girls - Tesha, Erin, and Angie - got into the pool by their own free will. Others - Brittany and Alina- had to be coaxed into the water by Reed and Tyler. The boys did crazy tricks from the side of the pool into the water, took turns trying to catch a frisbee mid-air, and enjoyed racing each other. Tesha beat Reed in a race of the butterfly stroke! The members of the team that did not get in the pool occupied their time with studying, playing games, sun bathing, or soaking in the hot tub.

It was a memorable afternoon, but soon it was time to go. Back to the venue for an early dinner, and then the dancers had some down time. The band took some time on stage to fiddle around, and was joined by a band alumni, Nabby, for a couple of songs. Nabby also sang a few songs in the show, including Southern. Mary Bee was at this show, once again, and the dancers felt great about the performance! Angie and Doug shared a beautiful poem with Ashlee over the headset while the boys danced Mech. It was the story of a young fiddle player falling in love with a dancer. After the show, it was back "home" with the host families. The next morning the team met at the church for sacrament meeting and then loaded the bus to go home.

EXTENDED TOUR: HUNGARY, CZECH REPUBLIC, CROATIA

JUNE 9 – JULY 5, 2011

MAP



ITINERARY

Thursday, June 9

Provo to Budapest, Hungary

Main Group:

4:00 am Meet at RB
4:30 am Depart for SLC Airport
7:28 am Fly to Dulles-United 659
1:35 pm Arrive in Dulles
5:25 pm Fly to Vienna-Austrian 94

Deviations Group: (Ed, Vickie, Alina, Ion)

4:50 pm Fly to Paris- DL 0170

Friday, June 10

Budapest, Hungary

Main Group:

8:30 am Arrive Vienna
Meet Bus and depart for Budapest
1:00 pm Arrive Budapest
Check into Hotel

Deviations Group:

11:10 am Arrive in Paris
3:25 pm Fly to Budapest-DL 8638
5:35 pm Arrive in Budapest
Dinner at hotel as group

Hotel Canada
1095 Budapest
Soroksári út 132
+36-1-2195711

Saturday, June 11

Budapest, Hungary

11:00 am Travel to Budapest Stake Center to Set up for interactive afternoon

3:00 pm Interactive Afternoon with Youth and YSA

(Special Note: This will be after a seminary graduation. A local religious TV program will be shooting a 13 minute piece on the youth and the young single adults of the church. They will film us performing, teaching, and interview some of our people.)

6:00 pm Picnic Dinner provided by Stake

Sunday, June 12

Budapest, Hungary

DANUBE CARNIVAL FESTIVAL

9:30 am Change hotels
12:00 pm Departure to Szentendre, sightseeing
2:00 pm Lunch at Labirintus Restaurant
5:30 pm Transfer to Budakalász

5:30 – 6:15 pm Matinee show, dance house
8:00 pm Gala
10:00 pm Reception, dinner

Sunday, June 19 Budapest, Hungary

DANUBE CARNIVAL FESTIVAL

Morning Free morning
2:00 pm Lunch at Vágóhíd Street
3:00 pm Transfer to the Békásmegyer Culture House
5:00 pm **30 min. show at the culture house**
6:30 pm Travel to Üröm
8:35 pm **50 min. show at the village festival**

Monday, June 20 Prague, Czech Republic (530 km/5:30)

9:00 am Depart for Prague
2:30 pm Arrive in Prague
6:00 pm Dinner-provided by YSA group
7:00 pm **Interactive YSA Fireside for Church-Prague Chapel**

IBIS Praha Wenceslas Square
Katerinska 36
12000 - PRAGUE
CZECH REPUBLIC
Tel. : (+420)2/22865777
Fax. : (+420)2/24941201

Tuesday, June 21 Prague, Czech Republic

Morning Free time in Prague
1:00 pm Load-in to Venue
7:30 pm **Performance-Municipal Library of Prague (380 seats)**

Wednesday, June 22 Prague, Czech Republic

Morning Free time-Possible visit to Terezin Concentration Camp
Afternoon Free time- Prague
Dinner provided by Dvorana
6:00 pm **Clogging Workshop (1 hour)**

Thursday, June 23 Zagreb, Croatia (711 km/7:30)

9:00 am Depart for Zagreb
4:30 pm Arrive Zagreb
Check into hotel

Hotel Jadran
Vlaška 50, 10000 Zagreb
Tel: 385/1 4553 777
Fax: 358/1 4612 151
E-mail: jadran@hup-zagreb.hr Web: www.hoteljadran.com.hr

Friday, June 24 Zagreb, Croatia

Morning Free time
1:00 pm Load in to venue
7:30 pm Performance –City Square

Saturday, June 25 Zagreb, Croatia

10:00 am Interactive fireside/activity for church members at the church building
Afternoon Free time

Sunday, June 26 Poreč, Croatia (248 km/3:20)

10:00 am Attend church with Zagreb branch
2:00 pm Travel to Poreč
5:00 pm Arrive in Poreč
Check in to hotel
7:00 pm Parade
9:00 pm Opening Ceremonies Performance- Main Stage

Monday, June 27 Poreč and Umag, Croatia

ZLATNA SOPELA FOLK FESTIVAL
Morning Animation Town Square
Evening Performance – Umag, Croatia Stage

Tuesday, June 28 Poreč, Croatia

ZLATNA SOPELA FOLK FESTIVAL
Morning Animation Town Square
Evening Performance – Main Stage

Wednesday, June 29 Poreč, Croatia

ZLATNA SOPELA FOLK FESTIVAL
Morning Animation Town Square
Evening Performance – Main Stage

Thursday, June 30 Poreč, Croatia

ZLATNA SOPELA FOLK FESTIVAL
Morning Animation Town Square
Evening Performance – Main Stage

Friday, July 1 Poreč, Croatia

ZLATNA SOPELA FOLK FESTIVAL
Morning Animation Town Square
Evening Performance – Main Stage

Saturday, July 2 Poreč, Croatia

ZLATNA SOPELA FOLK FESTIVAL
Morning Animation Town Square
7:00 pm Parade
9:00 pm Closing Ceremonies Performance – Main Stage

Sunday, July 3 Vienna, Austria (373 km/4:00)

Am Depart for Vienna
Pm Arrive Vienna
Check into hotel
Dinner as a group at the hotel

Hotel Ibis Wien Mariahilf
Accor Hotelbetriebsges.m.b.H.
A-1060 Wien, Mariahilfer Gürtel 22-24
Tel: +43-1-599 98-233
Fax: +43-1-597 90 90
E-mail: h0796-dm@accor.com www.ibishotel.com

Monday, July 4 Vienna, Austria

FREE DAY

Tuesday, July 5 Provo, UT

8:00 am Depart for Vienna airport
10:25 am Fly to Dulles-Austrian 93
2:10 pm Arrive in Dulles
5:43 pm Fly to Salt Lake City-United 637
8:18 pm Arrive Salt Lake City
9:15 pm Travel to Richards Building, Provo

Thursday, June 9, 2011
Salt Lake City, Utah to Vienna, Austria
Brandon and Brittney

Chapter 1

BYU International Folk Dance Ensemble drive to the SLC airport and board their plane—They arrive at the Washington Dulles airport and continue on to Vienna, Austria.

- 1 In the beginning, there was folk dance, and the folk dancers were with Jon.
- 2 The same were not in the beginning with Ed¹...
- 3 And the folk dancers came for a witness to bear witness of the light, that the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe, through them, might believe². And I know that the record which I make is true; and I make it with mine own hand; and I make it according to my own knowledge.
- 4 They were not that light, but were sent to bear witness of that light through song and dance...
- 5 And they arrived at the airport in Dulles, and the airport was made comfortable by them for their layover, and the airport knew them³.
- 6 And they came unto their flight to Vienna, and their flight knew them⁴...
- 7 And the folk dancers were made tired by the flight, and slept among them, (and they beheld the glory, even the glory of the country of Austria) full of green pastures and cool architecture.

¹ Ed, Vickie, Ion, and Alina flew through Paris on a much later flight (about 4 pm).

² However, we did not come as quickly as we had anticipated because our flight was delayed an hour and a half.

³ We were hard to miss with our BYU blazers and matching purple outfits.

⁴ All except Greg and Jon, whose names were spelled wrong on their tickets, which may be the reason why only half of their luggage arrived the next day in Vienna

Friday, June 10, 2011
Vienna, Austria to Budapest, Hungary
Justin and McKenzie

We started off the day by landing in EUROPE – Vienna, Austria to be exact!!! It was the first time for many of us being in this surreal place. Upon making our way over to the terminal and waiting at baggage claim, we soon came to realize that one of our tech boxes was nowhere to be found and surprise – Greg’s costumes were gobbled up in the depths of the Atlantic Ocean!

After getting to the parking garage where our very own bus was waiting for us, we set off for our first destination – Budapest! While on our two and a half hour ride, we were instructed not to fall asleep so that the effects of “jet-lag” would be reduced ... seeing as how we are nine hours ahead of Utah time. However, people couldn’t resist the temptation and let their eyelids win the battle.

Our Hungarian tour leader with the coolest name ever, Zoltan, tried to keep us awake by giving us a quick Hungarian lesson. Needless to say, we all pretty much failed. Upon our arrival at Hotel Canada (shout out to Rylan), we unloaded everything and prepared for lunch.

HOTEL LUNCH MENU:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Entrée: | Hungarian Fruit Soup (some people may or may not have loved this) |
| Main Dish: | Chicken Paprikash (Paprikash/paprika is a staple ingredient in Hungary) |
| Dessert: | Hazelnut Crepe (with either raisins, or dates or something???) |

After lunch we had a few hours of free time to go around and do whatever we wanted to. Some people stayed at the hotel and rested. Other groups went to exchange money, and one group walked all the way downtown and discovered a cave church. They also walked all the way up a giant hill to see a huge statue and a beautiful view of Budapest.

One of the great stories came from a group that ventured down to TESCO. Emily Bills decided that she needed to buy some band-aids because her shoes were hurting. After looking around the grocery store for a few minutes and having no luck, Bills decided she would attempt to use her “charade” skills on a Hungarian employee. With a group of five Americans standing around, Emily walked up to the target person and started motioning on her arm like she was putting on a band-aid. It appeared as though she was cutting her wrists and we thought the employee would most likely take her to the razor section. Alas, little did we know that Bills had attained a black belt in foreign charades and the employee took her straight to the band-aids! After getting a good laugh, the group proceeded to walk toward the register to check out. While deciding which register to go to, another employee walked straight up and started speaking to Emily ... in Hungarian. Instead of Bills saying she couldn’t understand the language, she just smiled and nodded her head like she was following every word. Then the lady realized she didn’t understand a thing she just said and she walked away. The rest of us totally thought that Emily was having a wonderful conversation with this Hungarian woman in English! Bills – let’s just keep it to foreign charades and presents in the corner. All in all, everyone walked a lot and had sore feet by the end of the afternoon.

Back at the hotel, Ed, Vickie, Alina and Ion finally caught up with the group. They had reservations on different flights which took them through Paris, and then on to Budapest. In Salt Lake City, they had been a few minutes late and were told they could no longer check-in for the flight. As they were explaining the importance of being allowed on the flight, Ed noticed another airline employee nearby and saw that she was Samoan. He immediately began speaking politely with her, in Samoan, and she eventually asked what was going on. When he explained the situation, the employee looked at her colleague, told her to immediately check them in and process their luggage. That turned out to be the saving miracle that got them onto their flight.

HOTEL DINNER MENU:

Entrée:	Pea and carrot soup
Main Dish:	French fries with mystery sauce and meat on top
Dessert:	Watermelon

In the evening we all went downtown on the bus to watch the performance of the China Disabled People’s Performing Art Troupe. It was in an outdoor theater and they even gave us little cushions for our bums! The show was amazing and they dabbled into many areas of dance. They did a little ballet, modern, ballroom, and folk ... not to mention some Ricky Martin! The truly amazing thing about this group was that all of the dancers are deaf and all of the musicians are blind. During each dance number there were two directors on the sides of the stage to help keep the dancers in sync and rhythm. One of our favorite dances was *The Dance of a Thousand Hands* -- they were all in yellow and had long golden fingers. They did some “Indian-esque” arm positions and their precision was impeccable. Another dance that we enjoyed was a solo Peacock Dance. The Drum Dance was also awesome and the musical ensemble was amazing.

By the end of the evening, everyone was tired. We returned home to the hotel where we slept off our travels. Our first day in Europe was great – full of fun and energy – everything going as planned. Cheers to Europe!

Saturday, June 11, 2011
Budapest, Hungary
Author Unknown

We woke up bright and early to enjoy a continental breakfast at Hotel Canada. Right after breakfast, the missionaries showed up to take us out for the day. First of all, they took us behind the hotel to talk to us about Hungarian culture, the state of the Church in Hungary, and (most importantly) how Hungarians view Americans. Mostly, Americans are seen as just unnecessarily LOUD.

Next, they led us to a tram for our first adventure with Hungarian public transportation! Jon made sure to tell the team to stay as a group as we walked to the tram, but we still seemed to spread out across the sidewalks like a big train of wandering foreigners. The tram took us straight to Parliament, one of the most beautiful buildings in Budapest. Jon gave us a great cultural lesson on both the structure and the activities that it houses inside. The missionaries told us something very interesting... all of the bricks on the Parliament building (40 million) are turning black, and the damage can't be reversed. Washing them has had no effect. Instead, the Hungarians are meticulously replacing each individual brick.



We continued to walk around the Pest side of the city where we saw and learned about the Soviet War memorial (a monument honoring the Soviet liberation of Hungary in World War II from Nazi



German occupation). Then we headed to St. Stephen's Basilica... named for the first King of Hungary. It is built in the Neoclassical style. It is tied with the Parliament building as the tallest buildings in Budapest at 96 meters (315 ft). Before going into the church, Jon suggested we look around on our own for about twenty minutes before meeting at the metro station. In the basilica, we were all speechless when we saw the mummified hand of St. Stephen still on display. One wonders... WHY?! We learned a lot of history and culture seeing these interesting sites in Pest.

This was our first free time in the city! Many of us were most excited to get some delicious treats of ice cream. Brittney and Emily found that a small size of ice cream really is SMALL; they got a golf ball scoop while expecting a bowl of ice cream like we usually get in America. The metro stop we were supposed to meet at was Deak Ference Ter, which was actually very well hidden and hard to find, considering that it was our first time using the metro. Surprisingly, we all found it, and the missionaries complimented us on our ability to find the correct stop!

We continued on a very nice walk as a mass of dancers to the Budapest Stake Center. A television crew for a special Hungarian religious network (which we affectionately dubbed "Religious MTV") was waiting for us; they watched us rehearse in the parking lot and also interviewed Ed for a 13 minute piece

about the young single adults in our Church. Later they would film us performing, and interview some of the students.

Our team then went inside the stake center where the youth were having a seminary graduation. We took a quick break to wait for lunch, relaxing in some rooms in the church. Lunch was a delicious pizza – from Pizza Hut! Yes, it exists in Hungary! We were really hungry finishing all of the pizza that we were given!

After lunch, we prepared for the show we were to perform for the youth. Greg got to borrow

pieces of Josh’s costumes to try to make his own since they went missing on the flight over the pond. During lunch, the youth seemed very shy and a little reluctant to interact with us. This quickly changed as we began dancing. Our show was full of energy! We performed *Running Sets*, *Down Yonder* (Five-Man Clog), *Elk Ridge Clog*, and *Country Western Swing*. The band also played some of their greatest hits and the audience was ecstatic. At the end, we got to know the youth more personally by actually bringing them into a huge circle to dance “*Oh Susanna*,” “*Cotton Eyed Joe*,” and the *Waltz Round*. The young members were fun to dance with, and it was great to find out that several of them knew enough English to communicate with us.



Dinner came next. We ate more paprikash chicken on a sandwich and had lots of other delicious dishes. By this time someone very special showed up to see us - NIKKI! She is a part of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble and knew many of us from the year before when she and Mihalya Gabor, “Misi,” the talented director of Hungarian State Folk Ensemble came to Utah to choreograph *Rabokuzi*.

As the night went on, lots of new friendships were made. The youth members sent papers around to all of us dancers so that we could write our names down and become their facebook friends. We all added over ten new friends to our facebook accounts. It is so great that we can keep in touch with all of these wonderful people! They seemed to cling to us, hoping to learn everything about our group and activities. They also wanted to find out how they could keep hanging out with us while we were in Hungary. A few of the youth (including Timi, Barbara, and the missionaries) took some of us out on the town to see it lit up at night.

Other dancers, with Vickie and Ed, went with Nikki to a Romani (Gypsy) Festival at the Deak Ferenc Ter Park. The festival was an amazing cultural experience, filled with musicians. Our favorite group played some amazing music fused with traditional and modern elements. This night could not get any better! Our eyes were opened to the nightlife of Hungary, and we loved how incredible the buildings lit up and glowed in the absence of daylight. We were all filled with excitement to be in this beautiful city and had an enjoyable first evening.

Sunday, June 12, 2011
Budapest, Hungary
Tyler and Lynette

This morning would be our last at Hotel Canada. We had to be checked out by 7:45 a.m. Of course we were running late – so once we dropped our bags off at the Tulip Inn, the girls had only 3 minutes to change from our white tulle shirt and black skirt into our church dress (even though they are essentially the same thing and the boys couldn't even tell the difference). The bus then took us to church where we had had the interactive fireside the day before. We were about 15 minutes late, which Jon thought was a "great start to our day." He was being sarcastic (FYI).

As we entered the building we were handed little receivers and an ear piece so we could listen to a translator. Even though we initially headed to the back in our shame of lateness, Ed encouraged us to fill in the pews. The chapel was quite empty because of the holiday weekend.

Our translator was great! She only had to break briefly to accept her institute diploma. She was talking and then suddenly said "Oh! That's me!" and literally ran up to the front of the chapel.

The bishop's remarks were especially touching to us. He mentioned a New Testament story in one of the Gospels (Tyler almost wants to say Matthew, but he is unsure) when Christ & His apostles are on the Mount of Transfiguration. The Apostles who were with Christ said they wanted to build mansions on the mount so they could stay there forever. The bishop said he wanted to build a mansion for us so we could stay with the members in Budapest forever. He said we did so much more than dance; we were instruments in God's hands. He was wonderful and very inspirational.

Today was also our first day with the most adorable tour guide ever, Andi. She actually came to church with us as well. She speaks Hungarian first, Spanish second, and English third. So sometimes she would say a word in Spanish and have one of our many Spanish speakers give her the English equivalent.

After the church services were over, Jon bought us Magnum bars at the gas station. For some of us it was our first experience; for all of us it was a delight.

We then headed to Szentendre (St. Andrew), only the most picturesque place ever. It had cobblestone streets, little shops and churches, cool rooftops, and tiny walkways. Precious. Andi showed us around and vigorously encouraged a certain wine. After seeing our lunch destination, we all split off for some free time with lots of picture taking and shopping.

We went to lunch in a wine cellar, at the Labrintus Restaurant. It was pretty cold for the girls. We had fish and potatoes. After a little more time for shopping and a tour of the dusty wine cellar, we left. We loaded into the venue and then were there for approximately... forever. We added a finale to *Buckin' Appalachia* on a tiny stage that thankfully wasn't ours. Andi helped Ron out a little. We discovered she was a "healer," and she and Ron had some interesting discussions.

We watched some Slovak dancing ... maybe? They looked and sounded to some of us a lot more Hungarian, but then, they performed *Syracovy*. And they had some adorable old ladies – a little boring, but cute – right?! Before our show, we were fed our first taste of goulash. It was surprising to a lot of us because it was more "soupy" than "stewy," which many of us had expected. But it was delicious! We also got some strudel to eat after the show. Hungarian food is so good. Speaking of Hungarian food – they also gave us some bread with butter, paprika, and onions. It was interesting.

Our show was behind schedule, so we got to watch some belly dancing. Tyler thinks it was awkward, and I'm sure most of the men felt similarly. I think it was awesome, and maybe kinda want to learn it.

The dressing room situation was... manageable. It was dark, dirty, and small. It was actually a tent. The show wasn't great, but it wasn't an epic failure. It was our first show, and maybe the audience could tell. But the audience, which was larger than expected, and very near the stage, loved it. Later that night, Andi called it "a gift that we had given her."



Show mishaps: Cody's chaps fell off, half of Lynette's costume broke in Buffalo Gals, and she didn't come on until halfway through. Oops.

After the show we held a táncház with people who had had too much to drink. Brittany C. got a little action but Reed didn't seem to mind; he must not be threatened by drunk Hungarian men. There were a lot of people dancing, but not much understandable communication. Despite

the difficulties of communication, everyone enjoyed themselves. We then loaded up and headed to our new hotel. It was a hard Sunday for some of us – very different from what we are used to.

Monday, June 13, 2011
Budapest, Hungary
Emily Dance and David

Today we went sightseeing as a group! We visited what I believe to be the prettiest spot in Budapest, namely the Fishermen's Bastion, St. Matthias Church, and Buda Castle, all of which is also known as the castle district. Fishermen's Bastion was quite crowded, but it boasts spectacular views of Pest across the Danube River. We could see the gorgeous Parliament building and St. Stephen's Basilica that we saw on Saturday.

After roaming around there for awhile, Jon bought us all tickets to go inside Matthias Church. Inside this lovely church is the statue of Mary that we learned about in culture class. The Ottoman Empire occupied Budapest for almost 150 years and Matthias Church was used as a mosque during part of this time. In 1686, during the siege of Buda, a cannon went off causing a wall inside the church to collapse, revealing a statue of Mary. The Turks considered it a sign from God. Their morale collapsed the the city fell that same day!



After spending time inside the church, we walked through quaint streets to the lovely Buda Castle. Along the way we saw stone walls that had been damaged by artillery during WWII. Budapest sustained heavy damage during the war. After walking around the castle grounds, we took a nice group picture overlooking Pest. We were then let loose for a little bit to explore the castle district. Some went to the open air market to buy chocolate and others ventured off to the underground labyrinth! Apparently the labyrinth was epic and featured lots of scary music. After sightseeing, we went to Vágóhíd for an authentic Hungarian meal! Then it was off to Tököl for our second show.

Things started out a little rough when we got there. Ed was trying to rehearse us, but we didn't realize that, so many people left for ice cream. He wasn't pleased. The show itself was a little crazy. But we all pulled it together and actually had a great show despite very tight quarters for dressing rooms. The audience was small, but very enthusiastic, and they loved us!



During the show there were some funny moments in between numbers. Josh was outside looking up to a window where Brittany Christensen was looking out. He said, "Rapunzel, let down your hair!" We had the idea of throwing a curly wig down but she had to go onstage. So Jessica stepped in, decked out in her Southern dress, and she played the part of Rapunzel as we filmed the scene. Reed took Josh's place as the man at the bottom and "Rapunzel" let down her curly hair. Brittany also had a lovely moment to herself as she got ready for Southern and gazed out the window, waiting for her carriage to arrive. It actually came! A horse-drawn carriage actually drove by, creating a picturesque moment.

The audience cheered for us and joined us for a táncház! Some of the audience members were quite good! They got the dances really well and had a lot of fun. They enjoyed yelling with us loud Americans. After the show, Andrea and the Hungarian group from Tököl served us dinner. Something worth writing about is the apple juice – it was AMAZING. Towards the end of the meal, Ed suggested that we sing for our hosts. Janos was also there. We sang "God Be With You 'til We Meet Again." It was very beautiful. The Spirit was so strong and I think it had a hand in making our voices sound even better than they normally would. Our hosts were all very touched. Andrea translated for the director of the Hungarian group as he expressed his gratitude for our dancing and singing. Andrea tried to relay how the director felt about our song and how he felt something different. She called it sensitivity –that we sang with sensitivity. They felt the Spirit, but they just didn't have words to describe it. Janos and Andrea also added their own appreciation for the singing. I think everyone present felt a warm feeling that united us all in one common joy tonight. And it wasn't because of the apple juice.

Right before we left, Ed asked the Hungarian group to dance for us despite the fact that they were short a few members, so Drew hurriedly retrieved the accordion and the director played as his group did "REC night" type dances. Of course, Ed jumped right up to join in, and others were soon to follow. By the end of the dancing we were all happily tired.

Upon leaving Tököl, the bus almost got stuck in a ditch, but we were delivered safely once again back to our hotel. What a blessed day on tour!

Tuesday, June 14, 2011
Budapest, Hungary
Jay and Emily Bills

Today was a delightful day of free time. In the morning, we had the privilege of watching the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble practice for a show tomorrow night. It is a more modern show about the sun, but we saw hints of styles we know. It was fun to watch Nikki and all the other amazing dancers. Seriously, flawless.

After lunch at the West End Grill Restaurant, the group went to Heroes' Square where Andrea gave us a great tour. The group also traveled to a place that looked like Disneyland and was apparently a replica of places that were in Hungary years ago. There was a really cool pond where people were riding paddle-boats.



The group was then set free to do as we pleased. Many took advantage of the free time to go to the Great Market Hall. The Market contains many souvenirs, including beautiful lace and secret boxes. It also had a lot of good food and produce. Others took this time to go back to Fishermen's Bastion or to go through the Labyrinth. The sightseeing caused us to become very tired from all of the walking and so many of us were found relaxing in the Burger King located near the Octogon metro stop.

Tonight we had the best dinner ever! We went to a place called Trofea Grill Buffet, which had everything you could ever want. Finally, a place with fresh salad and fruit! The best part was that it was David Lewis' birthday, so the waiters brought out a cake with sparklers on it as a cool Latin-sounding song came on. We were all really tired and wanted to go to sleep, but Jon kept eating and wouldn't let us leave. We were FINALLY able to go back to the hotel to get the rest we so badly needed. It was a fun day.

Wednesday, June 15, 2011
Budapest, Hungary
Katrina and Tanner

It's only one month until Katrina and Tanner get married!

The group gathered at 9:00 am, excited for the day. We had no shows today and were full of energy. We went to a studio overlooking the Danube River and the Parliament building to learn some lovely Hungarian dances from Tezan Miklos (Miklos). He brought an assistant to help him demonstrate, and we all had a great time learning Mezosegi and Mehkereki steps. He fed us cherries from his yard and



we all enjoyed the wonderful view out the windows of the studio. Each of us got to dance with either Miklos or his assistant, Rene, which helped our technique a lot. While the dancers sweated in our warm-ups at the studio, the band went to the baths and sweated in the saunas.

Later, we all headed over to Vágóhíd to eat a lunch of – you guessed it – bread, chicken, and potatoes. Afterwards, we traveled to the House of Terror. It is a moving, yet haunting monument to the victims of the fascist party. The dungeons were particularly chilling and it was a memorable experience.

We then split for a few hours of free time. Some went to Gellert Hill, others to the Great Market Hall, and elsewhere. After free time, we returned to Vágóhíd with Ron and Leslie, while Ed, Vickie, Jon, Mark, and Marianne went to a performance of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble, which we suspect they enjoyed. Misi had surprised them with tickets. The group ate dinner and then we were also treated to a beautiful show in an amazing theater with the Duna Folk Ensemble. It was such a wonderful show. They were so precise, their costumes were beautiful, and we were so very impressed. Embarrassingly, some of us nodded off at times during the show. It's not that it was boring, it's just that we were really tired. Jarelle and Tanner even had dreams! It was a wonderful day. We learned so much and loved exploring the city and learning more of the rich history of this great place.

Thursday, June 16, 2011
Budapest, Hungary
Jarelle and Cody

Today started off with free time, so everyone in our group was able to do what they wanted. One group went to the Labyrinth beneath Castle Hill on the Buda side of the city. The labyrinth's tunnels were built in 1939 and served as a hospital during World War II. A handrail leading through the pitch-black "Tunnel of Courage" guided this group safely through the darkness just as the iron rod guided people safely to the tree of life in Lehi's dream.

Another group went to the Hungarian thermal baths. These baths are on the Pest side of the city and are one of Hungary's most popular tourist attractions. They feature several pools of differing temperatures and minerals ... and a few outstanding saunas. The team's favorite part of the baths was the whirlpool. It was most enjoyed by Emily Bills, who was spotted in the pool alone – chuckling and sporting the famous Billsie smile!

After our free time, the team traveled to a district within Budapest called Mátyásföld where we performed at the Erzsébet Liget Theatre. We ate lunch at the college's cafeteria, rehearsed *Last Night* and *Cumbia*, and then were set free to get some ice cream.

Our show tonight featured two awesome children's Hungarian dance groups and a Chinese group. The young Hungarian dancers were our favorite part of the show. Several of them spoke basic English and became instant friends with members of our team. We took pictures with them, gave them autographed postcards, and exchanged email addresses. These children were not only friendly... they were also talented performers. They looked adorable in their traditional Hungarian costumes.

After the show, we had a táncház onstage with the Hungarian children and with members of the audience. We taught them some square dancing and even some beginning clogging steps. Some of the Hungarian children had already learned a bit of clogging in their dance classes, so they were thrilled to dance alongside real American cloggers. Although this show was not officially part of the Danube Festival, we loved the opportunity of meeting and forming friendships with other talented performers from around the world. This unique experience was definitely another highlight of our stay in Budapest.

Friday, June 17, 2011
Budapest, Hungary
Mike Romney and Ashlee

Once upon a time in Budapest ... the folk dancers from the University of Brigham Young slept in for the second time ... in many, many moons. The night before had been a late one and so it was great to

have the extra sleep time. After a wonderful morning of free time we made our way over to the Vágóhíd Street Sports Complex to rehearse with the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble! Not only did the dancers get to do awesome things during this rehearsal, but the band did too (because we also are awesome!). The musicians of the Hungarian ensemble rehearsed with our band and taught us Brahms' Hungarian Dance No. 5. It was an incredible experience for us to practice with and learn from such accomplished and talented musicians. We couldn't say it enough--they were AMAZING!!!

The dancers worked with Misi and his group on a Szatmari finale for the first act, and a fun finale from Moldva for the end of the show. It was incredible! It was so interesting to work with people who don't speak English and so amazing to get to dance with Hungarian professionals.

After the rehearsals, we ate dinner at the sports complex and then took the tram over to the stake center to get ready for our fireside. We arrived there just in time to run through a few numbers and then proceeded to start. Ed had prepared us all by letting us know that we needed to have a few thoughts ready just in case he chose us to speak. Joshua Park, Reed Carter, Michael Steele, Liahona Walus, Emily Bills, and Alina Geslison were the lucky members to be chosen. All of them shared wonderful thoughts and helped bring the Spirit to the meeting.

Our good friend, Nikki (a dancer in the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble), came to the fireside. The Spirit hit her very strong and by the end she was embraced in Vickie's arms with tears rolling down her cheeks. She has such a beautiful spirit! After the fireside she had lots of questions which Michael Steele answered for her. He offered her a copy of the Book of Mormon, but sadly she did not take it.

Before we all left to go back to the hotel, we gathered in a room so that Rita, one of the Hungarian Church members and an alumna of BYU, could tell us about what's happening with the Church in Hungary. Rita works in the Hungarian Parliament and was able to tell us that Hungary is in the process of passing a law to reduce the number of government-recognized/supported churches. There are over 300 now, and they reduced it to about 44. She told us that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was number one on the list of worldwide service and good works religions. It is a great honor to be recognized by the Hungarian Parliament as the number one religion that serves and does good around the world.

It was a great day. And then we all went home. The end!

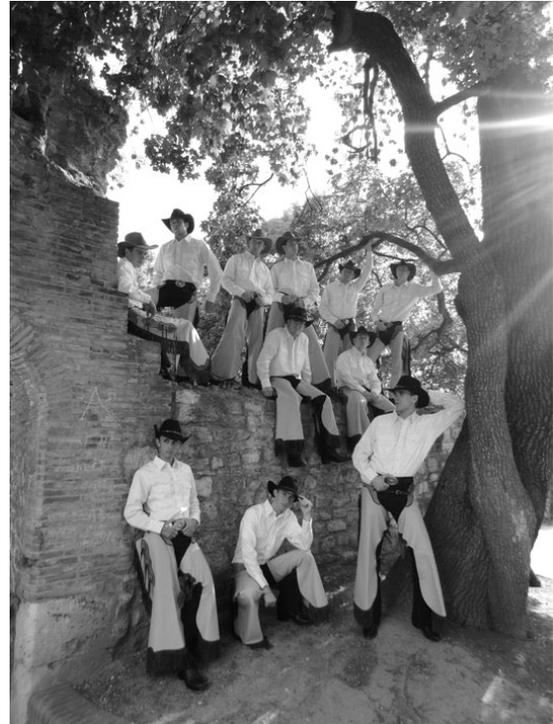
Saturday, June 18, 2011
Budapest, Hungary
Lynette, Greg, and Lyndsey

Today was a big day because we had our performance gala with the Hungarian State Folk Dance Ensemble! We woke up a little earlier than normal to travel to beautiful Margaret's Island, situated in the middle of the Danube River. St. Margaret is a patron saint of Hungary! First, we participated in a parade with our Chinese friends and some cute Hungarian kids. We were watched by... pretty much just the parents of the Hungarian children, but whatever. While singing *Back Up and Push*, and *Oh Susanna*, our square dance lift turned into a dangerously fun, up and down wave. We had fun switching hats and taking pictures with the kids.



The afternoon was spent blocking on the big stage of the amphi-theatre and rehearsing the finale with the State Ensemble and other invited groups. Most of the directions were in Hungarian. All the partnerships for the finale were mixed with members of Duna and the State Ensemble, which made it really fun. It gave us the chance to meet and talk with dancers from all the groups.

During some down time while the State Ensemble rehearsed, the guys all dressed up in their cowboy finest and took some fun pictures by some ruins near the amphitheater. Nikki jumped in on the fun too! We were all amazed at the State Ensemble because they would be out their dancing on the stage like maniacs and then come off-stage and smoke and then go back on and do it again... And then come off and smoke. How do they do that?! No idea. SO gross, and yet... impressive. Our band also jammed to entertain themselves and many of us sang really loudly, drawing more than a few stares. Maybe they were weirded out that we were having a raucous time and we weren't even drunk! Good times. A small group of us also found a small monastery to explore – pre-1700's.



The Performance: The performance went really well. We performed our *Appalachian Running Sets*, *Down Yonder*, and *Elkridge Clog*. Some of the foreign groups included China, Germany and Bulgaria. Also dancing were the Duna Ensemble and, of course, the State Ensemble. Our finale “*Szatmar*” went really well and we also did a little excerpt of clogging. It was really awesome to perform the dances of Szatmar with such amazing dancers from the Hungarian companies. The band also got to play Brahms’ *Hungarian Dance # 5* with musicians from the State Ensemble. It was certainly challenging – and really fun.

The Managed Mischief: Now for the top-secret “prank” we pulled on stage. We slipped Nikki into *Appalachian Running Sets* during the performance without asking Ed. SNEAKY. We secretly rehearsed with her before the performance (she took Lindsey’s spot). Just before our turn on stage, Ed for some reason insisted on hanging out with us off-stage – actually he plays the bones for the Running Set and was with us warming up. He was super excited and we all tried to distract him with conversation while attempting to shield Nikki from his gaze behind some tall boys for at least 10 minutes. A bunch of the girls kept asking Ed questions. We were all really excited, feeding off each other’s energy, and really hyper for the show.



Nikki ended up doing a fantastic job (not that we should be surprised... she is a professional dancer after all!). We all cheered when she made it into the right slot between two men during the crazy spinning circle towards the end of the dance. We all actually cheered on stage! The challenge for this prank was that Ed was with us on stage and is usually set nearest the tallest square – where Nikki was dancing.

And even though we figured he would be really “into playing the bones” and not notice – of course he noticed. Unfortunately, he was somewhat annoyed ... even a bit angry. Apparently, the performance was really high profile as we were being filmed both for Hungarian and German television. He was upset because: 1) he hadn’t been asked; and 2) the “high possibility of a train wreck” that could have occurred during the performance... and the fact that it could have reflected badly on the State Ensemble, etc. etc. Oh well! A good example of asking for forgiveness and not permission. It turned out fine, and Ed couldn’t really get mad at all of us anyway (he likes Nikki and all of us too much). Plus, she was AMAZING... and looked so cute in her costume!

After the show, dinner was provided for all of the performers and we were able to take pictures with all of our friends. What a great day!

Sunday, June 19, 2011
Budapest, Hungary
Brian and Lyndsey

Last night was a very short night in regards to sleep because the show and after party on Margaret’s Island didn’t get over until after midnight... and we had to get up and catch the metro at 8 am this morning to make it to the church by nine. Needless to say, the entire back row at church was full of soundly sleeping folk dancers. Following sacrament meeting, we promptly returned to the hotel and resumed napping. After the nap we went to the Bekasmegyer culture house and performed a 50 minute show outside on two and a half strips of marley flooring on a concrete patio. It was ghetto, but fun. The most entertaining part was probably the tall group dancing polka quadrille. It was thoroughly enjoyable.

From there we went quickly to the next venue at Üröm. We ate some pogača bread and pretended to be in school, since our dressing room was a classroom. We also learned, to Jonathon’s chagrin, how to ask for ice cream in Hungarian. Thanks, Andi! We had a fun outdoor show with a very good-sized audience. Nikki and a few other members of the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble came to watch, which was super cool! We spotted a guy wearing a red shirts, suspenders, and a hat. He got excited when we came on stage for *Down Yonder*. We saw other people point at him and the stage with excitement. Awesome.



Dinner followed with beef paprikash and noodles. After dinner, we said goodbye to all of our new friends, Andi, Andrea and her husband, and Atilla and Nikki. As we said our goodbyes, we threw them in the air and gave them some gifts. It was a wonderful time. Our new friends then complimented us for not only being wonderful dancers ... but for also being wonderful people. Andrea told us she couldn’t explain it, but there was an aura around us that she loved. She asked how to get her son to go to BYU so he can be like us. With tears in people’s eyes, we said our last farewells and got onto the bus to go to our hotel for one last sleep in Budapest. On the bus ride back, Andi sang us a Hungarian folk song and said thank you. She does massage and “healing with energy”. She told us she could feel lots of energy from us. This is the powerful effect of the Spirit and the importance of these tours for the people around the world... and for us to be a part of it all.

Monday, June 20, 2011
Budapest, Hungary to Prague, Czech Republic
Brittany and Reed

9:51 am – We’re finally loaded onto the tiny bus they sent (without the promised trailer). After the ultimate game of “Bus Tetris” was won, we all somehow had a seat and rolled out of Budapest. Just one last look at Budapest before moving on to Prague!

11:32 am – Lindsey is saved when we make a fifteen-minute stop for a bathroom. Everyone rushes off to spend their last forint.

11:50 am – Just as little Eddie did once upon a time, little Brittany forgets the meaning of *ferfi*. Luckily, Cody was there and alert. Way to save this poor girl from something she would never forget.

12:43 pm – Change of the bus. We stopped to pick up a trailer. Several guys jumped off to bucket-brigade the bags into the trailer. We have so much room now!

1:07 pm – We’re in Bratislava, Slovakia, for a half hour. We all choose either McDonalds or the Tesco store to grab a quick lunch. We wish we could spend a little more time in Slovakia than a half hour at McDonald’s, but alas... we cannot. Apparently, BYU was going to take us to Slovakia and the Area Presidency asked if we would visit Croatia and the Czech Republic instead. We guess the church needs a bigger boost in those areas.

3:17 pm – Just finished choir practice on the bus. Quote of the hour: “Love the tedious.”

5:13 pm – We arrive in Prague! We realize instantly why this city is known for its beauty. The cobblestones are laid out in geometric patterns, and the architecture is beautiful. We learned in culture class that Hitler never bombed Prague because he liked it so much. Many European cities were devastated in WWII, so it’s amazing that this gorgeous city was largely preserved. We made a quick stop at the hotel to unload, then ran quickly onto the metro to go for a YSA activity.

11:40 pm – We finally return to the IBIS Hotel. After a wonderful game night led by Scott, Jessica, and Shua. We did some recreational dances with the Young Single Adults from Prague, performed five-man clog, sang, and bore testimonies. It was (as always) so wonderful to get to know the local members. At least one non-member was there that the missionaries tracted into TODAY. Apparently he thought it was going to be boring, but he had a great time at the activity and is interested in learning more! Maybe there are reasons we are here and not in Slovakia? Although, we pose the question, why couldn’t we have done it all?! What’s another few days? Anyway, after the activity, we followed Jon on a walking tour of the city accompanied by some of the YSAs. Only Tyler got lost ... so we felt pretty successful. We got to see the castle, the Charles Bridge, the clock tower, and Wenceslas Square all lit up ... can’t wait for more adventures tomorrow in this gorgeous city!



Tuesday, June 21, 2011
Prague, Czech Republic
Alina and Greg

Our first full day in Prague and we had the whole morning free! It was sad and rainy, but we didn't mind! Many of us left in groups to explore the city. People visited the Old Town Square, the astronomical clock, the Church of our Lady of Tyn, the castle, the open-air market, and more! We were on our own for lunch so we all had different things. Some bought meat, grilled cheese, and fried bread from street vendors. Others, like Mike Romney, Jared, David, and Alina ate famous goulash in a bread bowl near the castle and paid \$7 for their water... YIKES! Hope it wasn't bubbly at least. FYI... the vodka was half the price... interesting.

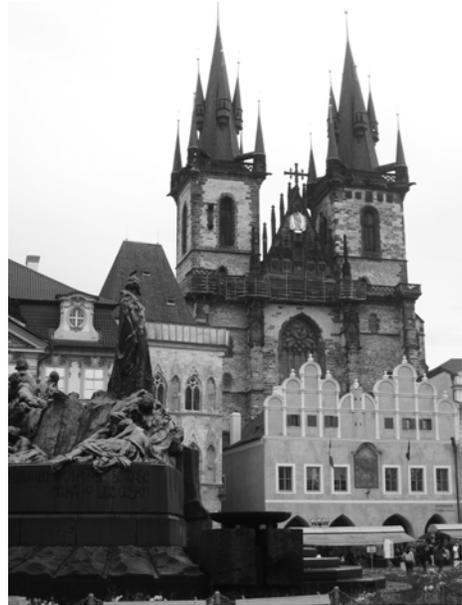
In the afternoon, we took our bus close to the theater. The bus had to get special permission to get near the theater because the streets are so crowded and small. A small group had to walk there so they could lead everyone through the streets. We were quite a sight dragging all of our luggage over the cobblestone sidewalks.

We performed tonight at the Municipal Library of Prague with another local international folk dance group called Dvorana. This group was originally formed by Frantisek Bonus and his son Jason. They also do American folk dance... including clogging! We rehearsed a few numbers, including the finale with Dvorana. Then we had a little more free time to eat dinner. Some people wandered through antique shops (well, mostly Greg and Scott did that) or the Old Town Square. Then it was quickly back to the venue for the show.

Before the show, while the band was setting up, Alina discovered that the little plastic clip that attaches her wireless microphone to her fiddle was missing. After freaking out and getting the silent angry stare from Mark Ohran, Jon Wood helped her to fashion a makeshift clip that will be used throughout the remainder of the trip.

Ron led us through a delightful warm-up on the big flight of stairs that exited upwards out of the venue and to the street. That was unique. Then the show began! It went well! Dvorana performed an Appalachian dance and a sort of "Tex Mex" Mexican polka. The band had to play squished in a corner. They accompanied Dvorana's Appalachian dance by playing "Ragtime Annie," which they rehearsed an hour before the show began. Jon stood in the wing giving them cues so they got the sequence of the song right.

Katrina had a great time during running sets. She could only find one of her trouser socks, so she decided to go for her black tights. It was a good idea, except that she had bloomers on, so the tights only made it to her knees. Marianne and Vickie watched from the side to see how she'd do. I hear she did pretty well. I wonder if anyone thought she had to go "potty."



At the end of the show, we all ran into the audience to greet them, but they just sat there and kept clapping for a long while. When they finally started leaving, we could finally talk to them ... or, at least, try to.



Brittany got two kisses on the cheek from an old man who “bee-lined” right to her. He spoke some words in Czech that seemed very flattering. Delightful! Alina received a bouquet of flowers from Milan, one of the Young Single Adults we met the day before. Some of the other YSAs were also there and stayed to talk to us afterwards. We took a picture with Dvorana and gave a few presents to their director, Jan Pumpr.

Soon, we were all demanding ice cream from Jon and Ed, who both owe us. Somehow they made us earn it again by packing fast. (I’m pretty sure we had already earned two.) We packed and drove to the gas station for the infamous Magnum bars!

On the bus ride home, Tyler and David told us an interesting story. Before our YSA activity yesterday, the missionaries met a young man named Kuba. Our interactive FHE was his very first church-related experience apart from talking to the missionaries. He felt something at our activity and afterwards asked the missionaries how he could become a part of it all. He was so excited to come to our show. After the show, Tyler and David spoke to both the missionaries and Kuba. They found out that the mission president had crossed paths with Kuba earlier today. Kuba was reading the Book of Mormon while riding the metro. The missionaries hadn’t planned on coming to the show but Kuba called to see if they would come with him. The missionaries said that tonight Kuba told them that he wants to be baptized. He looked very happy to be at the show and told us “Last Night” was his favorite dance. How amazing it is that we get to be a part of the Lord’s work in a small, but significant way.

Wednesday, June 22, 2011
Prague, Czech Republic
Greg, Lynette, and Lyndsey

This morning, we traveled an hour to Terezín to visit the Theresienstadt Concentration Camp. It was built after Germany invaded Czechoslovakia in 1940 in an old fortress that was built around 1790. It was used mostly as a holding place for prisoners. Around 144,000 Jews from Czechoslovakia, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg were sent here. About 88,000 were shipped off to Treblinka and Auschwitz extermination camps in occupied Poland, as well as some smaller camps. Thousands of others died of starvation and disease. A typhus epidemic broke at the end of the war. The camp was also used as propaganda. The Nazis permitted representatives from the Danish Red Cross





and the International Red Cross to visit to dispel rumors about the concentration camps. They prepared for weeks by cleaning up and deporting prisoners so it didn't seem over crowded. They even went so far as to build fake shops and cafés that lined the pre-designated path the guests took through the camp. They also put on a children's opera!

It was liberated by Soviet troops in 1945. After the war, a mass grave was discovered. A headstone for every person was later created in a cemetery at the front of the camp where we walked in. There were red roses planted between all the headstones and a large cross and Star of David towering over the headstones. During our tour, we saw the mass cells, infirmary, execution grounds, and more. It was a powerful experience to witness what horrific things people can do to each other. But, there is also a spirit of resilience, power, faith, and kindness. A bus ride back to Prague found many of us in a very reflective mood.

Some of the comments include:

"To be honest, there is not anything I can write that would do this justice."

"Justin and I ended up being together the whole time in a silent agreement of going very slow and not talking. It was perfect."

"... it made us grateful to live in America."

Once back in Prague, we broke up into groups and wandered around enjoying our last 3 hours in this beautiful city. Many visited old town, the castle, St. Vitus Cathedral, St. Charles Bridge, etc. Some of us found gelato – the chocolate and hazelnut was so good. Many frantically tried to find some souvenirs. Prague is fantastic, but it seems a lot more touristy than Budapest.



Emily Park, Greg and Ed were scheduled for a French-Canadian Workshop for Jan and some of the dancers in his group, Dvorana. Meanwhile, Greg and Tesha used every last minute of their 3 hours to see as much of Prague as they could and he only gave himself 10 minutes to get back to the hotel. Long story short, he got lost and ran around Prague for 25 minutes by himself. Eventually, he got directions at a hotel, but Ed and Emily were long gone. Oops.

The entire group then joined Emily and Ed for some delicious pizza before a clogging workshop for clogging teachers (approximately 40 people) from throughout Czech Republic and Slovakia. Tesha and Greg taught "*Fire Burning*," the clogdown from clogging camp. The band even joined in! They even got to use a "90's pop star" microphone! The dancers seemed to have a great time, especially when everyone messed up on the closedown SUPER fast. During the workshop there was an amazing thunderstorm that popped up. Then most of the team went back to the hotel except Mike S., Mike R.,

Emily B., Emily P., Greg, and David... lingered for another small workshop. Mike S. And Emily P. taught some harder steps like doubles, toes, and pull-backs. Even though there are a lot of cloggers here, the steps aren't very advanced. It was super fun and everyone seemed to have a great time. On the way back to the hotel, Ed bought ice cream to this small group as a thank you for staying.

After arriving back at our hotel, some of the main group went out one more time to experience Prague at night and one of the most beautiful sunsets ever.

Thursday, June 23, 2011
Prague, Czech Republic to Zagreb, Croatia
Tim and Jessica

J-Red, Justin, Ion, and Alina all woke up at 5:00 am to go to to the castle cathedral on the hill for the early morning service. It took place in a small side room in the church that held an ancient cross. There were about twenty people there. The priest chanted some interesting prayer-songs. They felt a little out of place but they really enjoyed the chance to see people worshipping in their own way. It was also a chance to see the cathedral function as an actual church instead of as a tourist attraction. Several of the people in the service were quite young.

Back at the hotel, we were grateful to start our journey with a trailer on our bus this time around! And Jonathon Wood has started to feel the pressure to find new joke material. His desperation really showed today as he read some lukewarm kids' jokes straight from a book.

We stopped in Brno (still in the Czech Republic) for an hour of lunch and rest. Most of the team bought food at Tesco, KFC, and Panda.

After leaving Brno, we were stopped by the police. Apparently, a toll machine had stopped working, but the bus driver was able to work it out and we went on our merry way. Jon tried to sing but was booed until Leslie stole the microphone from him. Ron uttered some wonderful impressions of Donald Duck and of John Wayne sneezing. We got our passports stamped at the Slovenian border. (We discovered that the passport pictures of Brian, Shua, Mike Steele, Cody, and Tim were exceptionally old and ugly resulting in them forming a support group called "The Passport Ugliers.")

We stopped at a restaurant called Auto Grill in Austria. All the prices were in Euros, which we weren't d used to yet. Things were kind of expensive, but really good. Brittney Leavitt ate her first full meal on tour! Most people got the German ginger ale-esque drink called Almdudler because it is Drew's favorite drink and offers a pleasant cultural experience. Afterwards, many had to use the restroom, but there was a somewhat large Austrian woman standing sentinel at the toilets – so we thought we had to pay. When we asked management, we were told they were free and that donations were optional. We then rushed the restrooms, but felt the major guilt trip as her eyes met ours.

At the Croatian border, the bus went silent for the first time all tour when the guard came on board to check passports. We were a little worried when he took Ion's passport, but he gave it back without any incident.

In the middle of nowhere, nestled between the borders of Slovenia and Croatia, Reed and Tanner saw some stone planters that looked ideal for backflips. Tanner gave Reed a last-minute warning, "Don't hurt yourself!" And Reed, of course, did indeed hurt himself. He smashed his forehead against the edge of the planter. Ron quickly bandaged him up and he's looked like a "triclops" ever since.

There was a general sense of urgency at the end of the day because the bus driver was supposed to be finished driving by 10:00pm. We didn't quite make it – but were close enough. We pulled right onto the curb of the Hotel Jadran and almost got hit by a tram! As soon as possible, everyone hit the hay after an exhausting but mostly enjoyable day of travel.

Friday, June 24, 2011

Zagreb, Croatia

Lynette, Greg, and Lyndsey

This was a free morning where we all wandered around Zagreb, a very old Eastern European town. Many of us enjoyed an outdoor market with clothing, crafts, produce, and souvenirs. Many of the vendors were under red umbrellas, which apparently is part of the national costume. There are also little red hearts everywhere... the symbol of Zagreb. Many bought fun souvenirs while others discovered the town square and free internet in McDonalds!

Delicious kebabs and bakery items were on people's reported menus for lunch. Food is inexpensive! The conversion rate is 5 to 1!

After lunch, Jon walked the group around the town on a walking tour. It was very quaint with sidewalk cafes and narrow streets. We visited two famous churches: The Cathedral of Zagreb and St. Mark's Church. In the cathedral, Lynette discovered a depiction of the Father and the Son as two VERY distinctive persons... interesting.



Dinner was at the church where the members had made us dinner including soup, watermelon, pasta salad, breaded chicken, and wafer cookies. We also got to meet local missionaries. The most exciting part came next...



Apparently, our more formal performance venue “fell through.” Something about the air conditioning(?) that they couldn't fix because it's a national holiday week... their Statehood Day is tomorrow! We ended up getting a permit from the police to perform in a town square for “religious purposes” due to the quick action of Kristijan, our local LDS host. Eight missionaries accompanied us on the bus. We set up the band in front of a statue in the square and started passing out postcards telling people who we were. Then we performed to a gathering crowd while the missionaries mingled and talked with the spectators. We performed six numbers in our *Running Set* costume and it all worked out great. We ended up doing a longer show than we expected because the people were enjoying it so much. We mingled with the crowd for quite awhile afterwards, which was super fun. Then we marched our bags back to our hotel... in costume, no less! We got a lot of stares... Back at the hotel, tonight turned into a serious movie night – three movies in three different rooms.

Interesting side note: Kristijan related an amazing story on the way to the show. Apparently, as a result of Cristian's interaction with the police as he made arrangements for our group to perform in Zagreb, he discovered they were anxious to receive some help in learning more English. As a result, he offered the services of the LDS missionaries to give them English classes. So, even though the police could not help us with arrangements for a grand performance venue, an amazing opportunity has resulted for the local Church and missionaries to serve the community.

Saturday, June 25, 2011
Zagreb, Croatia
Lynette, Greg, and Lyndsey

In the morning, some of us headed back into town to look for and buy souvenirs. There was a scheduled interactive fireside in the church building that turned mostly into a performance because there was hardly anyone there! Maybe it is the holiday, but we outnumbered the audience for sure and half of them were missionaries. A few weren't members and one took a train to see us, so we tried our hardest despite the small numbers. It was a little weird because we performed on tile in their chapel/cultural hall. Afterwards, one of the audience members, who had brought his guitar, jammed with the band. We then ate pizza and mingled.

We enjoyed some free time in the afternoon. Some of us relaxed at the hotel and others enjoyed a nearby park for journal writing. Afterwards, a big group walked quite a ways to a big city park. Some read and wrote in journals and others played a soccer game. This game was bursting with epic wipeouts due to patches of dirt and pot holes all over the place. Basically, we were all tripping, sliding, and stumbling constantly. One of the best was when Jon Wood literally hit the deck. Greg also stepped in a very muddy section trying to save a ball.



On our way back, some of us stopped at McDonald's to email home. That night was full of getting clean, playing cards, and hanging out.

Sunday, June 26, 2011
Zagreb, Croatia to Poreč, Croatia
Scott and Alina

Today, our last day in Zagreb, we went to church. The group sang *His River, His Peace*. Tyler spoke about faith and the gospel in his family. Lynette talked about Christ and the Atonement. Other talks included a missionary who spoke on The Apostasy, and a member who talked about the Restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood. Cristian was our translator and he was great!

We also got to stay for Sunday School while Sister Madsen (the wife of Truman Madsen) told us some of the story of Croatia's first member, Krešimir Čosić (BYU basketball star). The Madsens are good friends of his. He was instrumental in the formation and growth of the LDS Church throughout Croatia. He went to BYU and joined the church and then chose to come home rather than play in the NBA. Sister Madsen couldn't say anything but wonderful things about him and told us amazing stories regarding his

strength and faith as he performed sacrament meetings, sometimes only for himself and always in a suit. He became

Our bus driver loved us, and we were sad to leave him. He was a very helpful driver who helped us load the bus every time. Maybe it's because we supplied him with two German speakers to make him feel right at home (Drew and Mark). He said we were the cleanest group he's ever had and he only had to do half the work he usually does during the week he was with us. These comments seem to be the norm on this trip – we are kind of awesome.

We rushed to the hotel with our costume boxes, which we had left there overnight, and checked out in about 20 minutes with some amazing elevator and teamwork skills. The elevator, which appeared to be from the 1970s, took about 6 minutes to go from one floor to the next. One could say this about the hotel in general, however, their AC was amazing – so we forgive them wholeheartedly. Then we all split up for lunch and tons of people went to either McDonald's or a little bakery around the corner.

The new bus arrived and we met our festival guides, Alan and Jelena. The bus did some amazing maneuvering and got onto the reserved sidewalk space in record time. It had tons of room underneath, which was a nice change compared to all of our other European buses. ALSO, it had a table in the back of the bus... it was quite fancy. We proceeded to make the trip to Poreč, a beautiful little city on the Adriatic Sea. The beautiful scenery was straight out of a movie. The tunnels felt like passageways to Narnia because every time we came out of one we were in an even more beautiful landscape.

Once we arrived at our hotel, we didn't have much time to get dressed into *Polka Quadrille* and *Texas Fandango* costumes to go to the town square for a parade. We were placed between Serbia and Slovenia because they are quiet and we are not. There were about 10 other teams there with us (most of them were from the Mediterranean region) because apparently that's what the festival's theme is. And then there was us and the Vietnamese. We don't really know how that happened.

The parade route was long, but there were tons of people to watch us and clap along as we sang and danced. The last part of our parade route was on a legitimate Roman road. It was packed, and slippery. Oh yeah, everything here is slippery ... even the cement. So the lifts in *Oh Susanna* were... worrisome for some of the girls.

After the parade we stood around for a LONG time. Then we had a random opening ceremony in multiple languages (about 4) which took some time. Emily Park, Greg, Lynette, and David got to stand on stage and listen to people talk in Croatian and clap when it seemed like they might be done. After more waiting and watching other teams perform, we finally got to dance after Slovenia. We did *Running Sets* and *Elkridge Clog*. It was a slippery stage (common theme) with some serious board discrepancies. Occasionally, one would pop up to try to thwart your expert moves. Not cool. Also, the Macedonian group, two before us, were doing some real stomping and we believe some poles under the stage started to collapse. They fixed the stage before we went on. They asked Emily Park if our dancing was "wild". She said yes ... and so we were concerned.



Running Sets was fairly slippery and we actually laughed throughout it. *Elkridge Clog* was better than expected, probably because we were being so cautious. It was fun watching the other groups and we finished our long day back at the hotel around midnight ... finally.

Monday, June 27, 2011

Poreč, Croatia

Tesha and Ion

Whoever said festival tours are the greatest were right ... and I've heard it before from Thomas and Bethany Rawcliffe. After traveling all over Europe, having a week here and a few days there, our group was able to stay an entire week on the seaside in Poreč, Croatia ... at a festival, of course. Let's be honest though – before this trip, many of my fellow students didn't even know where Croatia was, and now it was easily becoming one of their favorite destinations.

Perhaps it was the beach. Perhaps it was the new associations and friendships they would make. Perhaps it was all the free time they were given each afternoon. Perhaps it was Tim's birthday (and the wine he was given by the hotel which he immediately dumped down the drain). No matter the reason, everyone was falling in love with Poreč.

Today we settled into our new routine. The team was supposed to meet in the lobby at 9:10 am. Some people, however, were following Ed's lead during breakfast. He seemed to be in no rush as 9:10 am came and passed. However, when Ed realized it was 9:17 am, he jumped up and exclaimed, "Oh my gosh! We're late!"

The group met down in the lobby all dressed in *Running Sets* and ready to go for our first "animation." I guess that's what they call a brief, informal performance in the town square. At one point during the performance, Ed called out for Hambone. The band started in one place and the dancers started in another. Needless to say, it was one of the most confusing hambones we have ever performed. To top it off, when *Down Yonder*, our five –man, clog began, only four men appeared and Ed began anxiously searching for Mike Steele who seemed nowhere to be found. Halfway through the dance Mike appeared out of the crowd and jumped in with as much character and vigor as he could. The dance ended with five men.

Most of the group was released for the afternoon. A small delegation was selected to represent our group as they met the mayor along with delegations from the other groups. *Down Yonder* men and a few others dressed in Southern attire headed off to the gathering. At the meeting there were gifts exchanged and new friendships made. We performed *Down Yonder* and we also got to see a Whirling Dervish from the Turkish delegation!!



After lunch it was off to the glorious beach! Our new home. There wasn't so much sand as rocks, but still. There were topless women all over, so we found a safe spot and stuck to it. Everyone put on their swimsuits and went out for a good time. Some of our group found a giant concrete pier that was great for jumping into the water. It was probably a good 10 feet down. They thought it would be fun to take a picture, but on their first try, Cody landed on Reed. Reed was fine, but Cody's foot was not.

During their time on the pier, they met a local man (Tin Modric) and were surprised to find out that he had emceed the show the night before. Tin talked with them awhile about the economy in Croatia and how it was hard to find jobs for the young people there. Tin speaks four different languages; Croatian, German, Italian, and English. He used all of these languages as he announced the groups during the performance.

Another group found a spot to swim where there was soft sand underfoot. They had lots of fun playing around and were more than happy to ambush Brian with handfuls of wet sand.

By 5 pm, our free time was over, and it was back to business as the group met in the lobby with costume boxes and all, ready to go to Umag (a nearby town) for a show. Jon got onto the mic when the bus was loaded and reminded the whole team that we needed to be like seaweed, “flexible and able to go with the flow.” He then said something along the lines of

“So ... we’re going to the venue and we’ll eat dinner “sometime” before the show. Then, “sometime” after dinner we’re going to do the show. “Whenever” the show is over we’ll load the bus “as soon as it gets there” to pick us up. Then, “we’ll leave when the bus leaves” and we’ll get to the hotel “when the bus gets there.”

In other words, he couldn’t be very clear and specific because he did not know any details... and we needed to just go with it. I guess that is how it is at some festivals.

The bus ride seemed very long and hot. The air conditioning barely worked, so people made due with fans. When we arrived in Umag, we were surprised to find the stage in a beautiful setting, surrounded by old, picturesque buildings. As we looked over the audience we had an overwhelming beautiful view of the Adriatic Sea. We had never dreamed of performing tonight in such a gorgeous place and we were so happy to perform for these people.

To everyone’s delight, dinner ended up being a smaller salad and delicious spaghetti. After dinner, we had about an hour to look around and get ready for the parade preceding the show. Brandon and Justin found a great deal on ice-cream. The deal even got better when the ice-cream man saw all of our beautiful girls coming his way. He ended up only asking 10 kuna for 3 scoops, something almost unheard of. Everyone loved that ice-cream man.

The parade kicked off, as it normally did, with our group singing “Back up and Push.” The Croatian team in front of us began to make tunnels for us to walk through – which we loved and so we made tunnels for our new friends as well. Another fun moment – a little girl dressed in red began to walk alongside us and pretty soon she grabbed hands with Katrina and began to dance with her. The dad walked along side, keeping his eye on his daughter with a huge grin for the rest of the parade. When the parade was over, it was time to get into *Running Set* costumes, so the group said ‘see ya later’ to their new friends and went to change.



The show went really well as we did a few select numbers. As there were other groups performing between our numbers, some of us had some time to purchase items from outside street vendors during the show! Ion finally found the soccer jersey of his favorite player from Liverpool!

After the show, the director of a Croatian group went up to Ed and said our group performed really well. He actually said, "This is the best folk dance group I have ever seen!" Ed responded with a laugh and graciously accepted the compliment.

The show ended and we all packed up our things. Just as Jon had predicted, we loaded the bus when it finally arrived, and got to the hotel when the bus did. And on the way home, we were delighted to hear a few new stories from Jon. He told about little Jonny, Eddie, Colleen and a belly dancer in Turkey.

Once at the hotel most of us went to bed – happy to have some time to sleep.

Tuesday, June 28, 2011

Poreč, Croatia

Lynette, Greg, and Lyndsey



This was our second full day in paradise. We are far too spoiled since our days here consist of a small group performance in the morning, tons of free time, and then a short performance in the evening. Who could complain?! Part of the group arose this morning for animation in the town square. We did *Texas Fandango* and *Buffalo Gals*. We are loving these little performances where we can include the people watching in some simple dances. Others of our group were able to sleep in and have a leisurely breakfast.

Katrina, McKenzie, Greg, and the Ohrans met a sweet couple from Great Britain – Barry and Joan Gardner. They are here in Poreč on holiday. They have been married for 50 years! Barry told us that Joan is 79 years old, to which she replied, "You're not supposed to tell a lady's age!!" Well, this 79 year old chased us in the parade yesterday so she could take pictures! Apparently, they are becoming big fans. They've seen us several times so far. They told us that our performance "would fill the finest theaters in London" and that we should come. Adorable.

In the afternoon, many of our group played sand volleyball on the beach. It was a beautiful setting and we had a blast. We did have to jump into the water occasionally to cool off. Life is rough. The Adriatic Sea is a new experience from what we were used to with its rocky beaches covered with topless women! When in the water, we have seen some fish and even a jellyfish or two! Other people enjoyed a refreshing salt-water pool that is part of the hotel this afternoon. Others went shopping in the town for souvenirs.

At night we performed on the main stage with the groups from Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, and Turkey. We performed *Buffalo Gals*, *Texas Fandango*, *The Gathering*, and *Elkridge Clog*. We had a great time backstage learning Black



Sea steps from the Turks and we taught them some hambone. Greg taught his new Serbian friend Maya, a girl from the Serbian group, a few clogging steps and let her try on his shoes! It was pretty awesome.

Wednesday, June 29, 2011

Poreč, Croatia

Emily Bills and Greg

Livin' the life in Poreč! We think we could all just retire here. How about right now? The morning began with yet another delightful animation in the town square. The *Texas Fandango* men and the middle square hit the cobblestones to the catchy tunes of the band. The audience seemed to dig the performance as usual.

As is typical in our dear little Croatian town, we had tons of free time!!! People enjoyed their various activities of choice including reading on the beach, soccer, swimming, Nertz, and beach volleyball (delightfully turning into a daily occurrence). We were supposed to play with some of the Serbians, but they didn't show up. Lame. They were probably just afraid we would beat them. We had fun anyway.



Tonight we did a thirty-five minute set in the show. It was nice to have a good chunk of time. We performed last with *Southern Suite*, *Down Yonder*, *Appalachian Patchwork*, and ... *COUNTRY SWING!* We were all so excited to see this dance get a chance on the festival stage! Dare I say... they did splendidly! It went so well, even though Emily Dance hit the overhanging microphones twice! The other numbers went well too. We were happy to see most of the audience stick around until the end when we performed. We're not sure if it's because we're so different than everyone else, from America, or just plain entertaining ... but we seem to capture the audience. We usually have big crowds during our numbers, which makes us feel good! For the few that know them... Barry and Joan were on the front row tonight! By now, quite a few of us have talked with them and enjoyed their enthusiasm for our show. They make us feel so special, we wish they would always be our groupies. They go home tomorrow, so they gave us their contact information to keep in touch! (See the Mail Room on page 58.)

After the show, the daily, "crazy dance-until-the-wee-hours-of-the-morning-party" was in full swing on the beach. A small group of us went to hang out with our friends from Serbia and Turkey. Greg taught his Serbian pal Maya how to clog, band members taught other musicians a few American tunes, and Tesha brought down the house teaching the entire group a line dance! It was super fun to watch all of them trying to pick it up!! Tesha also did great at jumping into the belly dancing demo! Shake it! We also got to jump into a few Serbian dances that were fun. What amazing experiences we get to have!!

Thursday, June 30, 2011

Poreč, Croatia

Tyler and Ashlee

Today was our group's free day so Ed, Jon, and Tin arranged for our team to take a boat ride to Rovinj. We met in the hotel lobby at about 8:30 am and discovered that it was raining. Luckily, the trip wasn't canceled, but a few people decided to stay behind – namely, Ed, Vickie, Jon, the Parks, and the Watsons. (Many would learn several weeks later that Brian and Lindsey Watson stayed behind because

Lindsey was pregnant! Getting on a boat was understandably the last thing she wanted to do). Tin escorted us to the port and explained the history behind what we would be seeing today.

When we arrived at the dock, the skipper welcomed us by asking us what we wanted to eat for lunch. We were offered chicken, fish, or a vegetarian meal. Once everyone had placed their lunch order, we were on our way! To our delight, there was a musician onboard to serenade us with his music



machine. As our boat left the harbor, the majority of us stood on the bow to watch the deckhands work their magic with the ropes and anchor. Fortunately, the rain cleared up so we were able to stay out on the bow without getting drenched. After about an hour and a half, we made it to our first stop: Rovinj, Croatia. Most of us explored the market and then visited the town's main church, which was located at the top of a small hill. The view from the church's tower was breathtaking. Before leaving Rovinj, several members of our group bought fruit and souvenirs at the outdoor market.

We got back on the boat and got ready for a fabulous meal. Many of us were brave enough to try the fish, which was served whole – head and tail included. It actually tasted really good! The crew were all surprised that we wouldn't drink the fine wine which was offered us and instead reached for the lemon water throughout our whole time at sea. On our way to see Lim fjord, we happened to pass by a popular nudist beach. The skipper apologized that not too many people were out because it was cloudy. What a shame. We did see a man windsurfing and another standing and watching us pass wearing nothing but sunglasses and boots. Haha. Anyway, the fjord was beautiful and those with the best view were sitting on the point of the bow with feet dangling off the edge.

Our next stop was a beautiful little coastal town called Vrsar. When we got off the boat, we were immediately bombarded by the "ice cream-throwing men." As part of a fun and creative marketing strategy, these men launched scoops of gelato at us from up to fifty feet away, challenging us to catch the scoops in our mouths. The lucky recipients were Reed, Tesha, Erin, Ashlee, Doug, and Tyler.



Afterwards, some of us opted to go swimming at the beach. There were all these big inflatable toys on the water, with very few people using them. We didn't bring our swim suits... otherwise, we might have. However, there was a lone man out there making a fool of himself for his wife and baby on the beach. He was falling off of EVERYTHING. Literally, the whole beach was watching him. Other small groups simply explored the town and found a quaint church at the top of a hill. When we left that town and boarded the boat to head back to Poreč, the crew expressed how thrilled they were to have had such a large American group onboard today.

We made it back to the hotel by about 5:30 pm, at which point we all ate dinner and then enjoyed a relaxing evening of movies, Nertz, and other activities. We were all grateful for a day to rest from performing, and even more grateful to Jon, Ed, and Tin for arranging the boat excursion for us. It was a great day!

Friday, July 1, 2011

Poreč, Croatia

Lynette, Greg, and Lyndsey



This morning consisted of another successful animation in the town square. We even had the Vietnamese musicians join in!

After lunch, some of us had another round of sand volleyball. This is the life and it doesn't get old! Many also spent their time relaxing and watching movies.

Lynette, Justin, Jay, Liahona and Drew went to the old mosaic church. Drew is so interested in history and these examples of 3rd and 6th century artifacts were like candy for this kid.

Tonight we performed *Down Yonder* and *Southern Reflections* to yet another great audience. It has been amazing to portray our American heritage to these appreciative audiences despite lightning fast costume changes in full view of... everyone right off stage.

Saturday, July 2, 2011

Poreč, Croatia

Cody and Jarelle

This morning the entire team walked to the town square of Poreč for our last "animation," where we performed *Polka Quadrille* in the shade and then relocated to a pier where we danced *Running Sets* out in the sun. On our way back to the hotel, the band and five man clog stopped to perform *Down Yonder* for the antique dealers in an outdoor market, because they didn't ever get to see us dance. Of course, Greg didn't have his shoes because he forgot they were going to dance, so he danced on the street in his socks and made the appropriate sounds with his mouth!



During a couple hours of free time, some team members visited the mosaic church in old Poreč, while others returned to the hotel. For lunch, we took a short bus ride to an outdoor restaurant and enjoyed a very typical lunch of fish and other seafoods. Some of us even tried SHARK! We were joined by members of all the other groups who participated in the festival. Many of the groups broke into song (and dance!), sharing their traditional folk music with the happy crowd.

Later this evening, we all suited up in our pioneer costumes for the closing parade of the festival. All the parade participants met in a park near the town square and we had one more chance to mingle with the other performers and exchange pins and postcards with them. The musicians were thrilled, as always,

to join forces for an impromptu “jam session” with musicians from other groups. The parade was a huge success, judging by the townspeople’s reaction to our singing and dancing. As we all walked through the streets under the hot evening sun, we noticed a few of our tour leaders enjoying a cold drink on the sidelines. Shortly thereafter, we saw the same group eating ice cream right in front of our faces. We were so grateful to Ron and Leslie Nuttall, who were the only leaders who walked with us throughout the entire parade. (Later, we were to find out that the directors had mischievously staged this last little prank!)

Before the show began, four of our dancers took the stage to represent us with representatives from the other countries for the closing ceremony of the festival and the presentation of the diplomas. We felt that everyone present, particularly Ante, director of the festival, was very grateful that we were able to come to Poreč and dance in the festival. As a side-note: Ed told us that Tin had been very impressed with our group this week and said we had “something special” about us and he asked what it was. Ed got to share a little about the church and bear his testimony. He left him a family proclamation and mormon.org to learn more. How cool! He is awesome and we hope he and his wife and two kids might find the gospel someday.



Tonight, we were the final performance of the evening, so we had to kill A LOT of time. For many, it was the last performance of their folk dance careers, so emotions brimmed over after a nice introduction of The Gathering by our master of ceremonies, Augustin (Tin). He explained to the audience the roots of our dance and told everyone it was an emotional last performance for some of our group. Cue the flood gates. A nice Italian guy gave Tesha a tissue. We performed the choreography that represents our Mormon pioneer heritage. We also performed Elkridge Mountain Clog one last time, and then many dancers began to get teary-eyed as we did an encore performance of Running

Sets. The audience absolutely loved us. The town square was packed to capacity, because everyone had waited all night to see us dance. They roared with applause as we finished the hambone in Running Sets and we were all overjoyed and very grateful to have had the opportunity to bring a little light to the lives of so many people. We then gathered informally in our changing tent where we sang God Be With You Til We Meet Again to many of our new friends and reflected on the wonderful tour ... and the wonderful year we have had together as a group.

Sunday, July 3, 2011
Poreč, Croatia to Vienna, Austria
Liahona

Today, even though not particularly eventful, was good for relaxing and preparing for our return home. We packed up and left our lovely hotel where we had spent a blissful week in Poreč! We piled into the bus and headed towards Vienna, the last stop before journeying home to America. Before leaving, we had the opportunity to say goodbye to some of the friends we have made here, including Ivana (one of the animation staff at the hotel... who led an epic water aerobics class!).

The bus ride went without incident and didn't seem very long (to me anyway). Being the Sabbath, we had a quiet night upon arriving at our hotel in Vienna. We had a lovely dinner in the hotel where Ed and Jon gave some closing tour remarks and sentiments. It was finally beginning to feel like tour was really ending, which was quite sad. Some people decided to venture out into the city while others piled

into Greg's room to sing patriotic hymns/songs and watch fireworks on Brandon's laptop to celebrate the Fourth of July from afar. Since tomorrow is our one day to see Vienna, we wanted to take a moment on Sunday to reflect on our wonderful nation and the freedoms we enjoy. It has been a privilege to represent America on this tour and we're excited to go back home!

Monday, July 4

Vienna, Austria

Lynette, Greg, and Lyndsey

Happy Fourth of July!

Today we broke up into MANY groups for sightseeing in a rainy and cool, Vienna! It was a whirlwind day to see as much of Vienna as we could. Many started off by taking the metro to visit the Schönbrunn Palace and Gardens. Some paid to go on a guided tour to see the palace. It was GORGEOUS... and a sunny yellow color! Best of all, as many of us were leaving, we discovered a little orchestra out front that played some Strauss. That was pretty fun! Throughout the day, many saw St. Stephen's Cathedral, Hofburg Palace, the Spanish Riding School (home of the famous Lipizzaner stallions) the Vienna State Opera, Karlskirche, the Jesuit Church (with cool perspective paintings), Vienna City Hall, the Austrian Parliament Building, and Stephansplatz (a square at the geographical centre of Vienna). Many of us tried to also eat our way through Vienna via chocolate and Vienna's largest wienerschnitzel (a café frequented by LDS missionaries). We enjoyed people watching, shopping for souvenirs, and watching the street musicians.



We all wished we had a little more time in this beautiful and historic city, but alas... one day will have to do. At least we got that much since we didn't even perform in Austria! We all slept well after a full day of sightseeing.

Tuesday, July 5, 2011

Vienna, Austria to Salt Lake City, Utah

Tesha and Doug

The morning began early and relatively quiet. As the group arose, baggage was collected in the lobby of our Vienna hotel and quick breakfasts were eaten. The weather was overcast, with a slight hint of rain every so often. Eventually the bus arrived at the hotel. Despite the valiant loading efforts of our notably burly men, the desired departure of 7:15 am was not quite met. However, in considering this tardiness attributable to the late bus arrival time, and finding no fault in the students themselves, Jonathon decided to grace our final bus ride with one more episode of "story time."

This particular chapter of the tales of Jonny and Eddie actually revolved around a new character, little Ronny. Ron Nuttal blushed as the story began, instantly aware of what Jon was about to describe. "Last night, as Jonny and Eddie were eating dinner with the other leaders at Schnitzelwirt, it came time to pay for the meal. A rather 'chesty and hippy' lady came to the table, who was not the waitress but merely the purse bearer. In order to collect the bill, she moved past little Ronny like this." (At this point, Jon began to rub his posterior along Ron's shoulder.) "The lady said to little Ronny, 'I have to get through

here,' to which, little Ronny replied, 'You can do anything you want.' The lady then looked directly at Ron, and pointing to Leslie, said, 'No I can't ... not with your wife here!'"

Eventually the students' roar of laughter subsided and was replaced with everyone dozing off. Soon, we found ourselves exiting the bus at the airport terminal. Upon entering the building, we discovered a row of kiosks labeled "quick check-in." Such words brought a level of relief to Jonathon's face, as we were already pushed for time. But the anticipated efficiency would never come. In fact, these kiosks would only prove to be the gateway to a difficult airport pilgrimage.

After receiving an incomplete boarding card, we were directed to another long line in front of the main counters. It was here that a fatal flaw was discovered - the airline had only expected one checked bag from each member of our group. We have a bit more luggage than that...

Once we had parted ways with the first of our two bags, a third line began to form at the farthest counter. We thought we would all be able to check our additional bags as a group and pay all at once. But as the first students stepped forward, we were informed that each second bag required a printed baggage tag before it could be paid for.

This led us to the fourth line of our baggage bonanza, as well as the fourth dimension of worry about missing our flight. As time passed in front of the overweight and odd size counter, many appropriate comments were made:

"It's a box, it's a box, I don't understand what is so difficult about a box!" (Emily Dance)

"This is the worst airport experience I've ever had." (Ron Nuttal)

"So is this the last time we fly Austrian Air?" (Brittney Leavitt)

But rest assured that we weren't the only confused people in the airport. One airline employee began asking Katrina if she was part of the group. Katrina was surprised, thinking that her outfit being identical to every other girl in the group would have given her away. But apparently the uniform dress only furthered the chaos for this airline's personnel.

Eventually, the boxes were taken, and final payment was made. Then, as the light at the end of the tunnel began to appear, we heard an announcement over the loud speakers, "Please be aware of extended waiting times at security check points."

As we grouped together preparing to unpack, de-liquify, open up, and disrobe as necessary, Drew led the group into the final challenge. Being first in line, he discovered that not only were we to present our boarding passes, but a complete travel itinerary. Luckily, he was able to recall his German abilities and persuaded security to allow us all through with only one itinerary paper being shown for the group. Meanwhile, the clock above the gate kept drawing closer and closer to our departure time. Our diligence and ability to endure to the end finally paid off. We walked down the jetway to a familiar place with bright red dresses, little leg room, and a red/yellow/green color scheme reminiscent of the 1970s. It was now time for a nine hour flight back to the USA.

The flight itself was quite comfortable. There was much rejoicing over the personal TVs in the back of each seat, complete with music, movies, and video games. Two in-flight meals were provided, and plenty of drinks. After nine hours in the air, we arrived at Dulles International Airport. Customs was (gratefully) a quick process, and everyone headed to our next gate (conveniently located right outside of the customs office). Whew!

Now there was plenty of time to kill for everyone. Well ... everyone except for Jonathon, who did not have a reserved seat on our flight back to Salt Lake City. But he eventually worked it out and was able to board with us. Many in the group were pleasantly surprised to find themselves sitting in Economy Plus seating, meaning extra leg room. Marianne said to Jonathon as he walked by, "this extra leg room is nice." "You enjoy that," he replied grudgingly as he headed to the back row of coach.

The second flight proceeded smoothly as well, and we soon touched down in Salt Lake City. Many faces brightened as they walked to the baggage claim. It seemed that all those with spouses waiting were exceptionally happy. The bags eventually came and several students left with independent transportation. The rest of us boarded a bus for the last time, and headed for Provo. The bus ride allowed Jay to confirm his position in the group as best joke teller, wowing his audience with stories of dancing cookies and Chuck Norris. Once the bus reached the Richards Building, we quickly exited and parted ways. The tour had ended.



A tour we will not soon forget.

**International Folk Dance Ensemble
2011 Summer Tour/Hungary, Czech Republic, Croatia
Tour Highlights/Director's Comments**

This year's IFDE tour into Hungary, Czech Republic, and Croatia was a huge success. This performance tour gave our students and our leadership a rich and meaningful experience that has left me with some deep impressions as to the importance of this program. During our time there, we performed 14 concerts, participated in 10 outreach activities, conducted 4 firesides, and held 5 workshops. We were filmed on three different occasions for national television. In addition, our students experienced this area of the world and its people in a very intimate and personal way. What a privilege and honor it is in serving our students and representing Brigham Young University. These programs have a very sacred aspect as our students not only represent our university, but are also ambassadors for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

HUNGARY

The International Folk Dance Ensemble had a wonderful experience in Budapest, Hungary that included performances, guided tours with our cultural advisor, Jon Wood, and enough free time to see and learn more about this beautiful city. Most evenings were spent in outlying communities where performances for our group had been scheduled in advanced. Often, we were able to see glimpses of other local groups performing just before our main performance. The week-long event we were participating in was called the Danube Carnival Festival, and for the week of the festival they provided us with housing and meals.



During this time we also had some meaningful activities with the local members of the Church. These included worshipping together on Sundays, providing a combined program of dancing and activities for the young adults, and opportunities for the sharing of testimonies. Rita Somfai, a former BYU student, is now over Public Affairs for the Church in this area. Not only did she arrange for these activities, but she also arranged for a National TV station to come and interview members of our group as well as young adults from the local ward who were participating in a seminary graduation on the day we were there. As a result, a TV special was later aired throughout Hungary which talked about the youth of our Church.

Some other highlights in Hungary included:

1. Miklos Teszary

We had the opportunity to have a workshop with Miklos Teszary, director of Bartok Ensemble. This was one of those opportunities not planned ahead of time, but because of my association with Miklos, he asked if we would be interested in a dance workshop for our students. He charged us absolutely nothing. We spent about two hours working on styling, steps, and technique associated with the town of Mekererek. This was very exciting for our students since one of our most popular dances for the men comes from this town. This workshop focused on partner dances and emphasized leading, following, and working as couples. Miklos was an excellent instructor and his knowledge of this specific area was impressive.

Vickie and I were also able to spend an evening with Miklos and his family in their home just outside of Budapest.

Later in the week, Miklos spoke to me of a proposal concerning the possibility of his coming to BYU with his family as a visiting professor to work in our department. The idea has merit and Miklos is well qualified in Hungarian Dance, but may have other qualifications also. We would need to receive his vita, and of course clear everything through the university. But this may be the perfect time to look at this opportunity where we have some 1 year positions still open in our department. A one-year, or one semester appointment could be a very exciting prospect for our students, and also for our faculty to work with Miklos.

2. Hungarian State Folk Ensemble

We were once again able to connect with the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble during our stay in Budapest. It was their director, Gabor Mihalyi (Misi) who helped arrange our invitation to be in Budapest where we were hosted with room and board for about ten days by the Danube Carnival Festival. Misi also invited us to a morning rehearsal of the State Ensemble for one of their concerts where the students were able to watch these professional dancers at work. I know that the technical expertise and discipline left a strong impression in their minds—in fact the experience “blew them away.” Tickets to the evening concert in the National Dance Theatre could not be obtained for the entire group, but Misi invited Vickie and I to attend, and was then able to get some additional tickets for some of our leaders who were also anxious to attend if possible. (Mark Ohran was especially interested in seeing the creative and technical aspects of this show.) The rest of our group was hosted on this same night to a concert presented by Duna, another professional Hungarian Folk Dance group. All of us had an incredible feast of staged Hungarian dance, and our relationship with Misi and his group continues to grow.

3. Studio Work

On another day, Misi and I met one afternoon in a recording studio with his musicians who I had pre-arranged to record a suite of music to be performed later this year in BYU’s Spectacular. Jeanette Geslison will be the lead choreographer of this piece. I suggested the original concept, and have then followed through with the creation of the music which culminated in this studio session in Budapest. The musicians were fantastic, and I am very excited for the final product which will also include BYU’s men’s chorus who will come on stage singing during the climax of the piece.

Our final major performance in Budapest was televised for public television and included BYU’s Folk Dance Ensemble, an invited group from China, the Hungarian State Folk Dance Ensemble, Duna, and other selected groups from up and down the Danube. Our BYU students not only witnessed the high quality of these groups, but also were invited to dance in a section of Szatmari dance at the end of the first half of the concert, and then again in a finale where all of the groups combined on the stage to create a climactic spectacle. Our musicians were also invited to perform in a special musical number which included some of the finest folk musicians of Hungary. To say the least, this performance could be considered a highlight of our stay in Budapest and gave the students a wide spectrum of experience on the stage with these fine Hungarian performers.



CZECH REPUBLIC

Our visit to the Czech Republic was limited to Prague on this occasion. While in Prague, the dance company, Dvorana, and most particularly their director, Jan Pumpr, helped us make arrangements to perform in a local theater, which is attached to the public library in the heart of Prague. We also invited Dvorana to perform as our guests as part of the concert. Here the time was much shorter than in Budapest and we were also on our own schedule. Our students had enough time to explore the city, and they also accomplished some significant activities.

Some of the highlights included:

1. An Activity for the Young Adults

Upon arriving in Prague, we quickly prepared ourselves for yet another young adult activity with the local members. After a wonderful meal prepared by the senior missionaries and serenaded by our American band, we spent the evening in smaller groups which rotated through fun activities that helped our students mix with the local members. Afterwards, we performed a couple of smaller pieces (without costumes) and then invited them to dance with us as we taught them some fun traditional American steps and movements. Following the dancing, we settled down once again and sang some of our fireside music with them as we prepared to share testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel. We had quite a few non-members present... one who committed to baptism shortly after our visit.

This event was held in the building which houses the local ward, as well as the residence of the mission president and his wife. We had a similar event in 2008, when we last visited Prague.

2. Clogging Workshop

Jan Pumpr also organized a clogging workshop where we had about 30 participants from throughout the Czech Republic and even reaching into the Republic of Slovakia. All of our students participated in a fun hour where I had Greg Rawlings and Tesha Jones, two of my students, teach a clog dance from our summer workshop. After the fun, two other students, Michael Steele and Emily Park taught some more advanced and rigorous clogging steps. Clogging has been in this part of the world for about 15 years now.

CROATIA

Our time in Croatia began first in Zagreb where we had a scheduled concert and an afternoon fireside with the local members. It concluded in the Adriatic coastal town of Poreč, where we participated in the Zlatna Sopela (Golden Flute) Festival, a CIOFF International Folk Dance Festival.

Students enjoyed their short stay in Zagreb where the Church is still very small. Due to circumstances beyond our control, the main-stage concert was cancelled, but due to the efforts of LDS church member Kristijan Lepesic, permission was given by the police to hold a free public concert in a small town square. We gathered a crowd and had missionaries on hand to visit with the audience. It was well received and very intimate. It is such a blessing that folk dancers can dance just about anywhere. In fact, as a result of petitioning the police for permission to perform, English classes with the



missionaries were also arranged for the entire police force in this particular district. One never knows where opportunities will come to share the gospel.

1. Zlatna Sopela Festival

This was a smaller, well-organized festival that allowed the students to see a variety of folk dance groups from this area of Europe. We had joint concerts with the other dance groups each evening at 9 pm. Every morning we also danced in the main town square for tourists and those people passing through. The afternoons could be spent sightseeing, enjoying the Adriatic Sea, and resting. Our group certainly presented the most unique repertoire for this festival, which was also an interesting contrast to the other groups representing countries like Turkey, Serbia, Slovenia, and Italy. The town certainly fell in love with our group. We were told how impressed the townspeople were with the high quality of our students ... “so respectful, neat, and friendly.” I would certainly recommend that we visit this festival again in the future. I believe we are the first group from the United States to participate in this festival and they had not had previous interaction with members of our church. Our students set a wonderful example and helped them learn more about who we are, and who we are not. They dispelled a lot of myths and opened a lot of doors.



A special “thank you” to our wonderful leaders who accompanied the students and helped bring this tour to fruition; Vickie Austin, Jon Wood, Mark and Marianne Ohran, Ron and Leslie Nuttall.

Once again, it is a distinct honor to be a part of this group.

Ed Austin, Artistic Director
International Folk Dance Ensemble

Mail Room

A letter from our dear friend and avid fan, Joan Gardner.

Dear Folk Dancers,

I'm writing to thank you for all the lovely memories you have given me of Poreč June 2011. My husband and I enjoyed your dances and friendship much. It made our holiday such a happy one. When we got home he was telling everyone how wonderful you were. Sadly, in September it was discovered he had small cell lung cancer. Sad to say, he passed away 6 March 2012. Thanking you once again for all the happiness you gave us. I'm sure you are giving lots of people much happiness and so may you continue.

Yours in Gratitude,
Joan Gardner



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Brigham Young University's
INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE
2010-2011



Art by Tesha Jones