

## ARTISTIC STAFF



### **BEN STEVENSON, O.B.E.**

Texas Ballet Theater Artistic Director

Ben Stevenson served as Artistic Director of Houston Ballet from 1976-2003, raising the company from a regional troupe of twenty-eight dancers to an internationally acclaimed ensemble of over fifty artists. For his contributions to international dance, Mr. Stevenson was named an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) by Queen Elizabeth II in the New Year's Honors List in December 1999. In April 2000, he was presented with the Dance Magazine Award. In July 2003, he was appointed Artistic Director Emeritus of Houston Ballet, and the company's affiliated school was renamed Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy. Mr. Stevenson, a native of Portsmouth, England, received his dance training at the Arts Educational School in London. He appeared with the Sadler's Wells

Royal Ballet and English National Ballet where, as a principal dancer, he performed leading roles in all the classics. In 1967, English National Ballet asked him to stage his first, and highly successful, production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, which starred Margot Fonteyn. In 1968, Rebekah Harkness invited him to New York to direct the newly formed Harkness Youth Dancers. After choreographing *Cinderella* in 1970 for the National Ballet in Washington, D.C., he joined the company in 1971 as co-director with Frederic Franklin. Mr. Stevenson has received numerous awards for his choreography, including three gold medals at the International Ballet Competitions of 1972, 1982, and 1986. In July 2003, Mr. Stevenson assumed the artistic directorship of Texas Ballet Theater in Fort Worth, Texas.

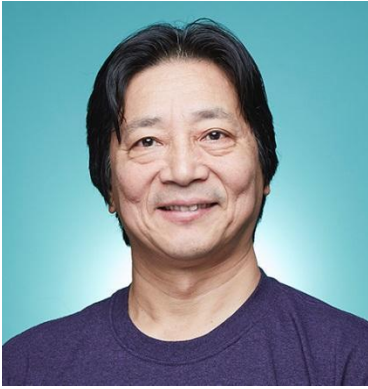


### **TIM O'KEEFE**

Texas Ballet Theater Associate Artistic Director

A native Houstonian, Mr. O'Keefe was awarded a scholarship to Houston Ballet Academy in 1981, joined the company one year later, was promoted to soloist in 1985, and was named a Principal Dancer in 1995. In March 1997, Houston Ballet Artistic Director Ben Stevenson created the title role in *Dracula* for Mr. O'Keefe. He has performed this role across the globe, winning praise from critics in Los Angeles, Hong Kong, and Toronto. In March 2000, Mr. O'Keefe danced "Caesar" and "Alcebiades" in the world premiere of Mr. Stevenson's *Cleopatra*. Mr. O'Keefe has also performed roles in works by Jiri Kylian, Christopher Bruce, Paul Taylor, James Kudelka, Trey McIntyre, Sean Kelly, and Lila York.

Mr. O'Keefe choreographed two works for Houston Ballet's Cullen Contemporary Series, *Fascinating Evening* and *Uncommon Valor*, as well as two works for Houston Ballet Academy, *Leaves* and *Shostakovich Suite*. Mr. O'Keefe choreographed *Love Thing* and *Ragtime Dance* for the Texas Ballet Theater. He has also created numerous works for Texas Ballet Theater trainees and school students including *Latino Caliente*. This is Mr. O'Keefe's seventeenth season with Texas Ballet Theater. He currently teaches classes for the TBT Professional Company, Texas Ballet Theater School Professional Division and Advanced students, and Texas Ballet Theater School Summer Intensive advanced levels. His masterful choreography is the highlight for both the Texas Ballet Theater Tutu Chic Fashion Show as well as the Caren Koslow Fashion Show. On occasion, he appears in character roles in Texas Ballet Theater performances.



## **LI ANLIN**

Texas Ballet Theater Assistant Artistic Director

Mr. Li was born in Nanjing, China. At the age of 13, he went to Beijing to study at Beijing Dance Academy where he first worked with Ben Stevenson. Mr. Li graduated in 1979 to the Young Dancers Company. In 1982, he joined Central Ballet of China (now the National Ballet of China) as a soloist and danced in China, Thailand and Hong Kong. In 1985, he was invited by Ivan Nagy to join Ballet de Santiago as a soloist and was soon promoted to Principal Dancer. In 1989, Mr. Stevenson invited Mr. Li to join Houston Ballet as a soloist. During his twenty-one-year career as a dancer, Mr. Li was featured in many of Mr. Stevenson's ballets including: *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Coppélia*, *Cinderella*, *The*

*Nutcracker*, *Dracula*, *Three Preludes*, *Four Last Songs*, *L*, *Swan Lake*, *Peer Gynt*, *Cleopatra*, and *Don Quixote*. He also danced in ballets by Sir Kenneth MacMillan, George Balanchine, Ronald Hynd, John Cranko, Vicente Nebrada, André Prokovsky, Jiri Kylian, and Christopher Bruce. In 2000, Mr. Li was named Ballet Master for Houston Ballet. He assisted Mr. Stevenson in the creation of *The Fountain of Tears* in Beijing and now stages and rehearses Mr. Stevenson's ballets on other ballet companies around the world. In 2003, Mr. Stevenson invited Mr. Li to Texas Ballet Theater as Ballet Master and Principal of the Texas Ballet Theater School. In 2005, Mr. Anlin was named Assistant to the Artistic Director.



## **ANNA DONOVAN**

Texas Ballet Theater Principal Ballet Master

A native of Ireland, Ms. Donovan joined the Texas Ballet Theater (TBT) artistic staff in 2000. At the age of ten, Ms. Donovan won a scholarship to train at the Royal Ballet School in England. From there, she went to Elmhurst Ballet School where she passed all the Royal Academy Examinations with Honors. She joined the Irish National Ballet in 1973 and was rapidly promoted to Principal Dancer. During her sixteen-year tenure with INB, she toured extensively in Ireland, Europe and the United States and was recognized for her dramatic abilities and technical prowess. Ms. Donovan has worked with many notable choreographers including Sir Anton Dolin, John Gilpin, Hans Brennaa, Peter Darrell, and Domy Reiter-Soffer. She also had works created for her, one called *The*

*Playboy of the Western World*, featuring music of Irish group The Chieftains. In 1989, she focused her energies toward teaching and was instrumental in establishing the Professional Dance Diploma Course in Dublin. She joined the staff of Ballet Dallas in 1991 serving as Principal Ballet Mistress/Repetiteur and instructor of the Dallas Conservatory of Ballet. While with Ballet Dallas, she collaborated with Lorraine Graves (Dance Theatre of Harlem), Fernando Bujones, James Clouser, Vivi Flint, and Peter Anastos. Ms. Donovan has been invited by many organizations nationwide as a guest instructor. She was nominated and included in "The Who's Who of Teachers in America" 2000, 2001, and 2005 by her students at Booker T. Washington School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Dallas. She currently teaches classes for the TBT Professional Company, Texas Ballet Theater School (TBTS) Professional Division, TBTS Summer Intensive advanced levels, and TBTS *Nutcracker* students in Dallas. On occasion, she appears in character roles in TBT performances.

# SCHOOL STAFF



## **KATHRYN WARAKOMSKY-LI**

Associate Director of Schools  
Director of Studio Training Company  
Director of Summer Intensive

Kathryn Warakomsky-Li, originally from Boston, MA, began her ballet studies at the relatively late age of 14 in Springfield, Virginia with Oleg Tupine. She graduated from the State University of New York at Purchase with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance. She was invited to join the Ballet de Santiago under the direction of Ivan Nagy where she rose to the status of principal dancer. In 1989 Ms. Warakomsky-Li joined Houston Ballet and became Principal dancer. She has over 20 years performing experience dancing lead roles in all the major classical ballets including *Swan Lake*, *Nutcracker*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Giselle*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Cinderella*, *Cleopatra*, *Etudes* and *Coppelia*. She also danced in numerous contemporary works by Ben Stevenson, George Balanchine, Jiri Kylian, Kenneth MacMillan, John Cranko, Ronald Hynd, James Kudelka and Christopher Bruce among others. Ms. Warakomsky-Li has toured extensively around the world dancing throughout North and South America, Asia and Europe. Upon retiring from the stage in 2001, Ms. Warakomsky-Li was invited to teach at Houston Ballet Ben Stevenson Academy where she staged and rehearsed many pieces for the upper school. Ms. Warakomsky-Li has been teaching for Texas Ballet Theater School in Fort Worth since 2003 where she has taught all levels of the school. She is an American Ballet Theatre (ABT) Certified Teacher who has successfully completed the ABT Teacher Training in Primary through Level 7 of the ABT National Training Curriculum®. She has also traveled to Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia to view the Bolshoi and the Vaganova Schools and to participate in their training programs. In 2007, Ms. Warakomsky-Li was appointed Principal of Texas Ballet Theater School of Fort Worth and also created the Summer Intensive, which she continues to direct each year. She now is the Director of the Studio Training Company, in addition to serving as Associate Director of Schools.



## **LETICIA OLIVEIRA**

Fort Worth School Principal

Born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Leticia Oliveira began her comprehensive training at the age of seven at the School of Teatro Municipal of Rio de Janeiro. Beginning her professional career at the young age of 16, she danced with Teatro Municipal of Rio de Janeiro, as well as the Joffrey Ballet and Houston Ballet, where she was a Principal Dancer. In 2007 she joined Texas Ballet Theater where she performed for 10 wonderful seasons. Ms. Oliveira has appeared in various international galas around the world, including Gala des Etoiles in Canada, Festival International de Danza in Cuba and the World Ballet Festival in Japan. She was also a "25 to Watch" in Dance Magazine in 2006. Her 23 years of performance experience include principal roles in ballets by Ben Stevenson, George Balanchine, Sir Frederick Ashton, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, John Cranko, Antony Tudor, Jiri Kylian, Robert Joffrey, Gerald Arpino, William Forsythe, Christopher Wheeldon, Fleming Flindt, James Kudelka, Val Caniparoli, among others. Ms. Oliveira has been a teacher with the Texas Ballet Theater School since 2009. In 2017, following her retirement from professional dance, she was appointed Principal of the Texas Ballet Theater Fort Worth School. She has acquired her Diploma of Dance Teaching Studies from the Royal Academy of Dance and is a R.A.D. registered teacher. Ms. Oliveira is also a Progressive Ballet Technique certified instructor.



## **LYNDETTE GALEN**

Dallas School Principal

Lyndette Galen received most of her dance training from her mother, Joyce Seaborne, in South Africa. After immigrating to the States in 1981, the two women established their own school in Dallas. In 2006, the school merged with Texas Ballet Theater, with Ms. Galen as principal.

Ms. Galen is a registered teacher of the Royal Academy of Dance and has entered students in both the grades and vocational examinations with successful results. She has coached students for the Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) regionals and finals in New York, and the Texas Ballet Theater School Ensemble has been in the Top 12 twice at the YAGP finals. Past students have received Broadway contracts or contracts with ballet or modern companies, dance scholarships to universities, and many have moved on to a career of teaching dance.



## **RHODES ELLIOTT**

Professional Training Division and Advanced Instructor

Rhodes Elliott is originally from Florence, South Carolina. Rhodes retired in 2018 as a Demi-Soloist with the Houston Ballet, after having been with the company for 11 years. He received his early dance training and pre-professional experience with UNCSA, as well as The School of Dance Arts and South Carolina Dance Theater under the tutelage of the esteemed Susan Rowe. He attended several summer programs throughout his training, including North Carolina Dance Theater, Houston Ballet, and the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. While dancing with the Houston Ballet, Rhodes enjoyed performing many works, including those by Stanton

Welch, Jiri Kylian, Christopher Bruce, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Sir Frederick Ashton, Ben Stevenson, Twyla Tharp, George Balanchine, and Christopher Wheeldon. After retiring from The Houston Ballet, Rhodes was the Assistant Ballet Director at Texas Academy of Dance Arts in The Woodlands, Texas. In 2021, Rhodes joined Texas Ballet Theater School (TBTS) as a Studio Training Company Instructor, as well as the Professional Training Division Instructor at TBTS Dallas. He is married to former Houston Ballet Soloist and TBTS Instructor and School Business Manager, Elise Elliott, and they have two children, a son and a daughter. Rhodes is honored to be a part of the Texas Ballet Theater family.



## **ELISE ELLIOTT**

School Business Manager and Professional Training Division Instructor

Originally from Sacramento, California, Elise Elliott danced with the Houston Ballet for ten seasons, retiring as a Soloist in 2017. She enjoyed being featured in works by many choreographers, including Stanton Welch, Antony Tudor, Ben Stevenson, Jiri Kylian, George Balanchine, William Forsythe, Christopher Bruce, Sir Kenneth Macmillan, Wayne MacGregor, and John Cranko. She was also fortunate enough to tour with the company to many countries, including Australia, China, Canada, Germany, and Spain. In 2017, Elise became Texas Academy of Dance Arts' Ballet Director in The Woodlands, TX, as well as the Artistic Director of TADA's Youth Ballet Company. In June of 2021, Elise joined Texas Ballet Theater (TBT) as the School Business Manager, as well as an instructor in the esteemed school for the Professional Training Division (PTD) and Advanced programs. Elise is married to former Houston Ballet Demi-Soloist, and Texas Ballet Theater School

PTD Instructor, Rhodes Elliott. They have two young children, a son and a daughter, and they are expecting a son in August 2022. Elise is honored to be a part of the Texas Ballet Theater family.

# GUEST INSTRUCTORS



KRISTINE RICHMOND

## **KRISSY RICHMOND**

Krissy Richmond is a former principal dancer with the Houston Ballet. Roles she created include: Carabosse in the Sleeping beauty, the mad woman from Peer Gynt, Mimi in the Miraculous Mandarin, Ghost Dances, the Sugar Plum Fairy, Serenade, In the Night, Bartok Concerto, and the original cast of Paul Taylor's Company B. Upon leaving the ballet, Broadway and regional credits include: Hunyak and Roxie Hart from the musical Chicago, the Queen in Matthew Bourne's Swan Lake, and Elizavetta Grushinskaya in the Grand Hotel, guest artist in Big Love for the University of Houston, Man from Nebraska at Stages Repertory Theater, Dorothy Shaw in Gentlemen Prefer Blondes and guest artist as Ginger Rogers in Houston Grand Opera's Die Fledermaus, Most recently, she performed the starring role of Anna in the New Girl in Town. Miss Richmond has choreographed for the Alley Theater, Stages Repertory Theater, the Humphrey's

School, and won the 2015 Tommy Tune Award for Best Choreography for A Chorus Line and 2016 Tommy Tune award for Hairspray with the Kinkaid School. In 2017 and 2018, Ms. Richmond won back to back awards for Best Choreography from the Houston Press. 2017 for the AD Players production of Godspell and 2018 for the Obsidian Theater's production of Cabaret. Most recently, Ms. Richmond choreographed and staged the 4<sup>th</sup> Wall production of Pride and Prejudice and in 2020 was responsible for the groundbreaking production of the Fantasticks at the opening of the new Stages Repertory Company. Ms. Richmond is also responsible for the ground-breaking program at the Houston Ballet "Dance for Parkinson's". Ms. Richmond is thrilled to be returning for the Summer Intensive with Texas Ballet Theater. Thank you to Ben Stevenson for everything!



## **JANIE PARKER**

Janie Parker began her ballet career in 1973 dancing with Le Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève in Geneva, Switzerland. While there, the late George Balanchine coached her in the role of Terpsichore in Apollo, the pas de deux in Concerto Barocco, and the pas de deux in Symphony in C among other roles.

In 1976, Ben Stevenson became the new Artistic Director of Houston Ballet. That year, Janie Parker signed with him as a soloist for the fledgling company. She was promoted to principal in her third year. The next twenty years dancing for Ben Stevenson provided Parker with the opportunity to dance the leading roles in all the major classical ballets, such as The Nutcracker, Swan Lake, The Sleeping Beauty, Giselle, Cinderella, Coppelia, Don Quixote, La Sylphide, etc. Some of the ballets that Mr. Stevenson created using Parker in leading roles include his Romeo

and Juliet, Alice and Wonderland, Peer Gynt, Esmeralda, Romance, and Image.

While dancing with Houston Ballet, Parker performed in cities all over the United States and in Canada, Mexico, Europe, Scandinavia, Indonesia, Chile, China, and Russia. She also danced in many galas including ones in Japan, Cuba, and the Anton Dolin Memorial Gala at Covent Garden with Princess Margaret in attendance. She has danced before many other dignitaries and royal family members, including Princess Michael of Kent, Princess Grace, King Olaf, Castro, and President George and Barbara Bush.

In 1982, Ms. Parker became the first American to win a gold medal in the Senior Women's Division at the International Ballet Competition. She also won a special jury award with her partner, William Pizzuto, for Best Partners.



## YVONNE RACZ KEY

Yvonne Racz Key is the artistic director of Ballet Lubbock, a pre-professional ballet school with a regional performing company and a developed Community Outreach Program. A nationally ranked ballet school, Ballet Lubbock includes an alum of graduates performing and teaching nationally and internationally. Yvonne's teaching curriculum sustains diversity, equity, and inclusive practices in conjunction with the discipline of ballet technique. She has presented her methods of teaching at several conferences and in teaching workshops. She is on the Lecturer of Dance Texas Tech School of Theater and Dance.

Yvonne is 2021-2022 School of American Ballet Visiting Fellow.

Ms. Racz began her dance training in Syracuse, New York, and continued her training with Lubbock Civic Ballet under founder Suzanne Aker and Leonid Lubarsky. After graduating from the University of Utah, Yvonne danced professionally with Maryland Ballet, Desrosiers Dance Theatre (Canada), Catanach Ballet Theatre, Ballet Hispanico of N.Y, Arena Stage, and Cirque Du Soleil. She has appeared in publications, VOGUE, TIME, and Dance Magazine. Performance touring includes Canada, South America, and South Korea. Her international guest teaching includes NOW Dance, Mexico, and Budapest Dance Theatre. She has choreographed musicals for Lubbock Moonlight Musicals and the Texas Tech School of Music. Performance collaborations include Lubbock Symphony, Texas Tech School of Music, and Composers Scott and Amy Faris. Ms. Racz has given a TEDx talk on the positive effects of ballet training on young people. Her awards include The Arts Alliance Dynamic Force ACE award, YWCA's Woman of Excellence in Culture, the Louise Hopkins Underwood Arts Center's "Performing Arts Award."

She appears in publications such as Vogue, TIME, and Southern Living for her artistic achievements.



## KEITH SAUNDERS

Keith Saunders, a native of Baltimore, MD, began dancing in 1971 while a student at Harvard University. He began his ballet training in 1973 at the National Center for Afro-American Artists in Boston, MA. Saunders joined Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH) in 1975 and continuing his development under the tutelage of Arthur Mitchell, Karel Shook and William Griffith. He became a principal dancer with DTH, performing a wide range of roles throughout the company's repertoire for more than 17 years. He also danced with Ballet du Nord in France, and BalletMet in Columbus, OH.

As a guest artist, Saunders appeared with Boston Repertory Ballet, Maryland Ballet, Eglevsky Ballet, Ballethnic Dance Company, the David Parsons Company, and others. He has been a faculty member of the Dance Theatre of Harlem School, the BalletMet Dance Academy, the New Ballet School (Ballet Tech), StepsNYC, and the 92nd Street Y. In 2003, he was Guest Artist-in-Residence in the Dance Department at the University of Wyoming, and he has taught and choreographed at the Snowy Range Dance Festival in Laramie numerous times. He was twice a guest choreographer at Manhattanville College in Purchase, NY. Throughout his career, Saunders has led workshops and master classes in countless studios, schools, colleges, and universities across America and internationally, working with dancers of all levels, beginner to professional.

Following Saunders' performing career, Arthur Mitchell appointed him DTH's ballet master, where he served from 1996-2004. From 2004-2012, Saunders directed Dancing Through Barriers®, DTH's national and international education and outreach initiative, and the Dance Theatre of Harlem Ensemble, DTH's second company. He led the Ensemble in the Dance for America Tour from 2009-2012. Upon the reestablishment of DTH in 2012, Saunders resumed his role as ballet master of the revived company, working closely with artistic director Virginia Johnson in forging the DTH of the 21st century.

In 2017, Saunders earned an MFA in Dance from Hollins University (Roanoke, VA), and he joined the faculty of Texas Christian University as an assistant professor in the School for Classical & Contemporary Dance in 2018.



## KELLYE SAUNDERS

Ms. Saunders began her dance training at the Jones-Haywood School of Ballet in Washington, DC. She continued her dance education at Le Centre de Danse International in Cannes, France under the tutelage of Rosella Hightower before joining the Dance Theatre of Harlem.

Kellye spent most of her career with the Dance Theatre of Harlem where she was a principal dancer. Some of her featured roles include Firebird, Giselle, A Song for Dead Warriors, Apollo, Serenade, Adrian (Angel on Earth), The Four Temperaments, Les Biches, Concerto Barocco, The Moor's Pavane, Allegro Brillante and Fancy Free. She has also appeared in the Broadway productions of The Red Shoes and Porgy and Bess and as a guest artist dancing the role of The Striptease Girl in Slaughter on Tenth Avenue in a collaborative project with The New York City Ballet. After leaving DTH, Kellye joined Ballet NY and Collage Dance Collective as a principal dancer. Some of her other guest appearances include performances with Washington Ballet, Maryland Ballet, Ballethnic Dance Company, Gala of International Ballet Stars, Configurations Dance Company, Snowy Range Dance Festival, The Flint Institute of Music, Complexions Contemporary Dance and The Metropolitan Opera.

Kellye graduated Summa Cum Laude with a BA in Dance in Performance from St. Mary's College of California. She has extensive experience teaching and coaching dancers at both academic and professional levels. From 2010- 2013, she served as the project coordinator for the Dance Theatre of Harlem's Harlem Dance Works 2.0 Series, a series of choreographic workshops whose purpose was to produce new repertoire for the Dance Theatre of Harlem Company. Kellye served as Ballet Master of the Dance Theatre of Harlem Company from 2013-2019. She joined the faculty of the School for Classical and Contemporary Dance at Texas Christian University in Fall 2019.



## SARAH NEWTON

Sarah Newton is an Instructor in Dance at Texas Christian University. She completed the Master of Fine Arts in Dance at Texas Woman's University and is a Summa Cum Laude graduate of Sam Houston State University, where she earned the BFA in Dance. She has danced with Out On a Limb Dance Company, wild goose chase, Kista Tucker Dance Company, and Contemporary Dance/Fort Worth. Sarah has enjoyed teaching master classes and creating new

choreographic works at numerous schools and festivals. Sarah is also deeply invested in the study of human anatomy as it relates to enhancing movement and has completed the Functional Awareness Move Educator certification. Contributing to her body of knowledge is her comprehensive mat and equipment Pilates certificate through Balanced Body University and her certification by the National Pilates Certification Program through Pilates Method Alliance.



## **PATRICIA BOCHNAK**

Patricia Manalo Bochnak received her M.A. in Dance Education from Columbia University in New York City and her B.A. from Boston College. She has performed with Audra Carabetta Company and Boston Liturgical Dance Ensemble. Patricia has taught dance throughout the Boston area for Boston College, Regis College, Boston Ballet, Topf Center for Dance Education, Gann Academy, North Shore Children's Theatre, and Let's Dance, Inc. She has most enjoyed working on dance education programs with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theatre, and Paul Taylor Company in New York City. Patricia has choreographed for the regional professional theatre company, Wheelock Family Theater, in Boston, earning her an IRNE nomination for Best Choreography of a Musical. Most recently, she served as a dance educator and instructor with Texas Ballet Theater studio program, summer intensives, and CityDance community programs. She currently teaches for Top Hat Dance Centre, Texas Ballet Theater, Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts, as well as master

classes throughout the Dallas and Fort Worth area. She is also a certified Progressing Ballet Technique (PBT) teacher and Yoga RYT-2