

ARTISTIC STAFF



TIM O'KEEFE

Texas Ballet Theater 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.



BEN STEVENSON, O.B.E.

Texas Ballet Theater Artistic Director Laureate

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.



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

**Principal Rehearsal Director
Advanced Instructor**

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



YVONNE LEFFEL

Administrative Director of Schools

Administrative Director of Schools Yvonne Leffel has a long history with Texas Ballet Theater leading up to her current role. As Administrative Director she oversees programs, operations, and activities for both Texas Ballet Theater School campuses. She joined TBT in 2012 as Texas Ballet Theater School's Dallas Campus administrator where she managed daily operations. Prior to becoming Administrative Director of Schools, Yvonne was an integral part of the TBTS transition team for the opening of TBT's new Dallas campus location. Her previous roles in restaurant management and as a small business owner provide unique insight to her current position. Both of Yvonne's daughters trained in classical ballet and are TBTS alumni.



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.



SARAH TRAN

School Business Manager
Summer Intensive Coordinator

Sarah Tran holds both Masters of Fine Arts in Dance (2022) and Bachelor of Arts in Dance Studies (2019) degrees from Texas Woman's University. Previously, she was an adjunct professor at University of North Texas and Texas Woman's University. Tran also is the founder and artistic director for a dance company called TranScend Motion based in Dallas, TX. TranScend Motion is a creative dance company that converges movement making across various art implements to produce original dance works.

The mission of TranScend Motion is to create, share, and communicate human conditions and narratives through movement. Tran's choreography revolves around honesty, imperfections, and resistance against the currents of certain constructed standards in society. Her teaching pedagogy supports the exchange of different bodies, identities, and cultures in shaping a community. Merging her experiences as a dance professor and entrepreneur, she is excited to contribute to Texas Ballet Theatre in the arts administration realm as the School Business Manager.



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

Richardson 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.



KYLE SEGUIN

Dallas School Principal

Kyle Seguin danced with the Alabama Ballet under the leadership of Wes Chapman and Roger VanFleteren, where performed many principal roles, including Count Albrecht in *Giselle*, Prince Siegfried in *Swan Lake*, Prince Desire in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Franz in *Coppelia*, El Capitan in George Balanchine's *Stars and Stripes*, the title roles in *Dracula* and *Romeo and Juliet*, and works by Robert Battle and Teri Weksler. Concurrently, he earned a B.S. in Psychology from the University of Alabama in Birmingham, where he graduated with honors after developing an assessment tool for eating disorder risk in professional ballet dancers.

Before founding West Suburban Ballet Conservatory (WSBC), an elite classical ballet training program in the Chicagoland suburbs, Seguin served as both Pre-Professional Division Liaison and Academy Ballet Master at the Joffrey Ballet, and was on faculty at Columbia College Chicago (Anatomy, Kinesiology) and the Chicago High School for the Arts (Men's Technique, Pas de Deux). His choreography has been featured at the Universal Ballet Competition (UBC) Finals Gala, Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) Finals, the Alabama Ballet, and the Arova Contemporary Ballet, among others. Seguin consistently coaches students to place at international ballet competitions and was a scholarship presenter for YAGP for four seasons. In 2022, he received both the Best Choreographer Award at UBC in Chicago, and the Outstanding Teacher Award at YAGP in Indianapolis. In 2024, Seguin and the WSBC Faculty received the Outstanding Teacher Award at YAGP in Chicago and the Outstanding Classical Coach Award at UBC in Chicago. During the 2023/2024 season, Seguin served as both Education Director of The Florida Ballet and Founding Director of WSBC. Seguin's former students are dancing in professional companies throughout the US and abroad.

Seguin is trained on all Stott Pilates apparatus and in 2009, founded One Hundred, a boutique-style Pilates and dance studio in Chicago's Lakeview East neighborhood. He developed and branded Pilates, dance, and fitness programs that allowed the studio to see thousands of clients of all ages. He oversaw all operations and developed a work-study scholarship program for high-school and college students, as well as a mentorship program for Pilates instructors in training.



MISHIC LIBERATORE

Professional Training Division Director
Advanced Instructor

Mishic Liberatore grew up traveling the world as a kid of a military family. Her training includes Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, Nuremberg Opera House in Germany and Royal Academy in London, England. She was a Senior Soloist with Cincinnati Ballet where she danced for nine seasons. She was featured in many roles, but favorite was, Balanchine's, *La Sonnambula* as the Sleepwalker, *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*, *Serenade* as the Dark Angel, Twyla Tharp's *Bakers Dozen*, and *Chaconne* which was performed with Suzanne Farrell Company at the Kennedy Center. She has worked with

many world-renowned choreographers but most favorite, Val Caniporolli as principle in *Lamberena* and *The Bridge*, Jormo Elo's *Plan to B* and Darrell Moultrie. She danced many full-length ballets including *Giselle*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Coppelia*, but was best known for her portrayal of Lilac Fairy in *Sleeping Beauty*, Marie in *The Nutcracker* and Fairy Godmother in *Cinderella*. In 2004 she worked with the late Sir Fredrick Franklin during the re-staging of Massine's *Seventh Symphony*, where she portrayed the Principal female in the three-movement ballet. In 2007 she was invited to re-stage Victoria Morgan's *Cinderella* in Hawaii as well as dance the role of Fairy Godmother.

For one season she enjoyed being the Rehearsal Director for Cincinnati Ballet, as well as teaching at the Otto M. Budig Academy of Cincinnati Ballet. She worked extensively with and accredits her career to Truman Finney, Maria Calegari and Bart Cook. Before joining Cincinnati Ballet, she danced with Fort Worth Dallas Ballet (now Texas Ballet Theater) for three years. In 2014 she enjoyed going to Kansas City Ballet to stage and rehearse Victoria Morgan's *Cinderella* and then returned in 2015 to help rehearse Devon Carneys *Giselle*.

Mishic was certified as a Pilates Instructor in 2012 and loves teaching Pilates mat, equipment, and private lessons.

From 2013-2023 her husband and she founded and operated the Wichita Falls Youth Ballet. She worked as the Artistic Director of the Wichita Falls Ballet Theatre in Wichita Falls, TX. She loves being a mom to her two daughters Gabriella and Adaline, who inspire her every day to be a better person.



CARL COOMER

Director of Studio Training Company

Originally from Liverpool, England, Carl Coomer began his training at the Wallasey School of Ballet when he was 13 years old. In 1998, after only three years of dancing, Mr. Coomer was offered a scholarship to attend the Royal Ballet School under the direction of Dame Merle Park and then later under Gailene Stock. As a student at the Royal Ballet Upper School he had the opportunity to perform with both the Royal Ballet and Birmingham Royal Ballet companies. In 2001 Mr. Coomer was invited by Ben Stevenson O.B.E. to join the Houston Ballet. In his six years there, he worked under the leadership of Ben Stevenson O.B.E. and later Stanton Welch A.M. He then

followed his mentor Ben Stevenson O.B.E. and joined Texas Ballet Theater in 2007 where he currently holds the position of Principal Dancer and Rehearsal assistant.

His repertoire includes a wide variety of roles, some highlights include principal roles in Ben Stevenson's *The Nutcracker*, *Giselle*, *Dracula*, *Four Last Songs*, *Three Preludes*, *Five Poems*, *Mozart Requiem*, *Coppélia*, *Swan Lake*, *Cleopatra*, *Peer Gynt*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella*; John Cranko's *Onegin*; George Balanchine's *Apollo*, *La Valse*, *The Four Temperaments*, *Theme and Variations*; Christopher Wheeldon's *Carnival of the Animals* and *DGV: Danse à Grande Vitesse*; Kenneth MacMillan's *Gloria and Manon*; Paul Taylor's *Company B*; Carlos Acosta's *Carmen*; Stanton Welch's *Indigo*, *Red Earth*, *Divergence* and *Tutu*; Christopher Bruce's *Sergeant Early's Dream*, *Ghost Dances*, *Rooster and*; Glen Tetley's *Voluntaries*; Val Caniparoli's *Lambarena*; Hans Van Manen's *Grosse Fuge* and Jiri Kylian's *Svadebka* and *Petite Mort*.

Mr. Coomer has originated many roles and worked closely with numerous choreographers. Some favorites include Ben Stevenson's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Laila and the Swan*, *From the Corner* and *West Side Story Suite*; Paul Taylor's *In The Beginning*; Christopher Bruce's *Hush*; Val Caniparoli's *Without Border's*; Stanton Welch's *Blindness*, *Clear* and *Nosotros*; Trey McIntyre's *Peter Pan* and *The Shadow*; Ma Cong's *The Firebird*; Julie Adam's *The Accidental* and *Ketubah*; Garret Smith's *Imbue*; and Johnathan Watkin's *Crash*.

Mr. Coomer has created nine world premieres for Texas Ballet Theater. His stage productions include *Evolving* in 2012, *Clann* in 2014, *The Cavern Club* in 2015 and the one-act ballet *Henry VIII* in 2018. In *Henry VII*, Mr. Coomer utilized projections and 3-D mapping while also collaborating with the University of Texas at Austin regarding the costume design for the ballet. Additionally, Mr. Coomer has directed, choreographed and produced all his digital works for Texas Ballet Theater, which include *Optimist* in 2017, *Can You Let Me In* in, *I Just Found out Today*, *You've Got the Tree's* in 2020 and *The Story of You* in 2021. The latest two works were collaborations with the Mineral Wells Botanical Gardens and the Perot Museum of Nature and Science respectively. Mr. Coomer has choreographed numerous works for the Texas Ballet Theater School and the Studio Training Company. His choreography has been featured in dance competitions around the world including YAGP and USAIBC.

GUEST INSTRUCTORS



CANDACE RATTLIFF

Candace Rattliff received her formal dance training from Margo Dean School of Ballet, Joe Berry, and Beverly Torres. Candace graduated magna cum laude from Texas Christian University with a BFA in Ballet and Modern Dance. She was awarded a TCU Fine Arts Guild Scholarship and also received a Dallas Dance Council Scholarship to study at Alvin Ailey Summer Dance Intensive in New York City. After graduation, Candace joined Jane Weiner's Hope Stone Dance Company (Houston TX) and enjoyed 10 wonderful seasons as a company member and rehearsal director. She was a company member (soloist) of Earthen Vessels: Sandra Organ Dance Company under the direction of former Houston

Ballet soloist Sandra Organ Solis. As a freelance dancer, Candace has had the pleasure of performing with VauLt (Amy Ell), NobleMotion Dance (Andy and Dione Noble), Leslie Skates, Paty Solorzano, Urban Souls Dance Company (Harrison Guy), Joe Palmore, Dance Source Houston, and Emotions Physical Theater. She has performed internationally in Puebla, Mexico, as well as the Irish Aerial Dance Fest (Letterkenny, Donegal, Ireland). Candace has served as a member of the dance faculty for Houston Ballet Academy and Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts (Houston TX). She was the director of dance at Marshall Middle School. Additionally, Candace enjoyed teaching and choreographing for ten years in the greater Houston area for dance studios, outreach programs, and drill teams. Candace is currently on faculty at Fort Worth Country Day, Texas Ballet Theater, and Margo Dean School of Ballet. She also works as a guest artist with Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts, Arlington Heights High School, and J Jaramillo Dance Group



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 4th 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!



MELISSA M. YOUNG

Melissa M. Young, a Honduran American from Santa Ana, California, has dedicated her life to dance for over thirty years. While training as a student in Santa Ana, Melissa attended two summer intensives at Canada's National Ballet School in Toronto, graduated from The Ailey School in New York City, studied abroad at Amsterdam University of the Arts in Holland, and found her artistic home at Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT).

Her 30-year journey at DBDT evolved from company dancer through various leadership positions before serving as Artistic Director from 2018 to 2024. As a performer, Melissa danced works by choreographers like Talley Beatty, Alonzo King, and Donald McKayle, gracing stages at The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, and City Center, and represented the United States at two Olympic Cultural Olympiads.

Melissa has been sought after by organizations, serving as assistant to choreographers Hope Clarke for The Dallas Opera's "Porgy and Bess" and Christopher L. Huggins for Dallas Theater Center's production of "The Wiz." She has restaged over 80+ ballets by choreographers such as Alvin Ailey, Elisa Monte, and Ben Stevenson, O.B.E. During her artistic directorship, she fostered creative relationships with over 30 commissioned choreographers and led DBDT to perform at venues including The Joyce Theater and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival.

Melissa has shared her passion for teaching ballet and the Lester Horton Technique as an adjunct instructor at Southern Methodist University, Texas Woman's University, and Abilene Christian University, as well as institutions around the globe, while holding leadership certifications from Michigan State University's Eli Broad College of Business.

Today, Melissa inspires as a dance leader, educator and consultant for arts, culture, and global entertainment initiatives, applying her experience in artistic and organizational leadership.



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.



MARTHA PARSHALL

Martha was born in Tokyo, Japan, but grew up in Fort Worth, Texas. She began her dance training in tap, ballet and jazz with Ed Holleman and Larry Howard who had both worked under Bob Fosse. Later, she studied with the Dallas Metropolitan Ballet, Eric Bruhn, Letitia Gray, Francelle Fuller, and also at the School of American Ballet, the official school of the New York City Ballet, for four summers under full scholarship. Martha began dancing with the Fort Worth Ballet at age 15 while still attending Western Hills High School. She has also performed extensively in musical theatre as a member

of Actor's Equity Association. Her professional credits include Connie Wong in "A Chorus Line", Eliza in "The King and I", Liat in "South Pacific" with Cathy Rigby, and Charity in "Anything Goes" with Van Johnson. Martha was the dance instructor at Columbus (IN) East High School and choreographed for the CEHS theater department musicals. She is certified in Pilates instruction through Body Arts and Science International and offers private instruction. She is currently working towards her 200 hour yoga certification with an emphasis on aerial yoga.



SARAH GRESIK

From Bolingbrook Illinois, Sarah Gresik is a ballet instructor for Texas Ballet Theater. Sarah studied at the Hinsdale Dance Academy under the direction of former Milwaukee Ballet dancer Jennifer Grapes; the Salt Creek Ballet School under Zhanna Dubrovskaya and Sergey Kozadayeze. She competed in the Youth America Grand Prix ballet competition, placing in the top twelve of the classical division. Sarah started her professional career with the Albany Berkshire Ballet's *Nutcracker* tour. She also danced with Minnesota Ballet for four seasons, where she performed classical works such as *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, *Coppelia*, and *The Nutcracker*. She also performed in Salvatore Aiello's *Clowns and Others*, and was featured in another of his works, *The Waiting Room*. Sarah also joined Ballet Frontier of Texas as a company member before receiving a contract with New York City's Ballet Nepantla. Most recently she performed "Valentina" as the role of Valentina with Ballet Nepantla. She has been teaching throughout her career since the age of 15 at Hinsdale Dance Academy, which in 2018

was awarded the Outstanding School Award by the Youth America Grand Prix. She has also taught at the School of the Minnesota Ballet, Dancentre of Edinburg, instructing ballet, pointe, and coaching variations for the Youth America Grand Prix.