

# Skidmore Steps

Newsletter of the Skidmore Dance Program-Summer 2003-Vol.IX

## DANCE at the TANG

### *Balls*

If dance is a verb, Debra Fernandez' multi-layered *Balls* is an unabridged thesaurus. For starters, try: slither, twine, roll, gyrate, bounce, and bend.

That's part of the action a full house saw from many vantage points at the Tang Museum. Fernandez split her dozen dancers into high-contrast groups, starting with her own solo, adding a lizard-like duet, and multiplying the swirling effect of the piece with two quintets, one group resembling a Busby Berkeley synchronized swim troupe and the other evoking a chorus of Egyptian priestesses.

Debra Fernandez made *Balls* in collaboration with Brooklyn painter, Paul Henry Ramirez. Also involved were the mesmerizing frame drummer Glen Velez, jazz pianist Carl Landa, costume designer Kim Vanyo, and photographer/film-maker Stacy Fox.

*Excerpt Mae Banner, Metroland, 11/02.*



*Balls, Debra Fernandez*



*Trisha Brown Dance Company*

### *Trisha Brown: Dance and Art in Dialogue*

Trisha Brown, the first woman choreographer to receive a MacArthur Foundation Genius Grant, was a charter member of the innovative Judson Church Dance Theater. Beginning in the early 1960's, Brown began uniting dancers with noted visual artists, musicians, writers, and filmmakers.

The Tang exhibit offered an overview of her collaborations with artists such as Robert Rauschenberg, Nancy Graves, Fujiko Nakaya, Donald Judd, and Terry Winters. Featured were not only drawings, paintings, photographs, costumes, and sets, but also video clips of Brown's dances over four decades.

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Dancer, Brandi Norton, of Trisha Brown's company, staged a section of Brown's *Mathematical Cycle: Group Primary Accumulation* for Skidmore dancers. They performed at the Tang during a lecture given by Trisha Brown, as well as in the Winter Dance Concert.

## Guest Residencies

**Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company** worked with Skidmore dancers in September, offering master classes and two performances. Featured soloist was Amy Carpinello '01, in her second season with the company. (There have been three other Skidmore dancers with the company: Erin Strong '00, Ann Olson '99, and Catherine Butler '97.)

**Taylor 2** combined master classes and lecture demonstrations, leading up to a performance of the **Paul Taylor Dance Company** at the Egg in Albany.

Sponsored by Asian Studies, Skidmore dancers performed at the Egg with **Chen and Dancers**, in Chen's *Bamboo Oracle*, a piece about the dilemmas of immigrants confronted with a new culture. Joining the company was an ensemble of 27 children and adults from throughout the Capital District.

**Sarah Pearson/Patrik Widrig & Company** taught in technique, improvisation, and choreography classes during their February residency. The company presented their full length work, *The Return of Lot's Wife*, a dance/theatre piece which combines movement, 14<sup>th</sup> century Persian poetry, contemporary monologue, and Morton's salt in a setting which flips from the ancient desert to an apartment in Brooklyn.

**Alexandre Proia**, former dancer with New York City Ballet and Martha Graham Dance Company, taught in technique, workshop, and choreography classes. He created a charming new piece for the Spring Concert, *Apples and Oranges For Now*, part of a larger work to be completed in the future. Alexandre Proia is building a new company in NYC, Vice Versa Dance Theater.

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*Amy Carpinello '01, Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company*

**Deborah Hay** challenged students to experiment with the nature of perception and attention in dance. She performed two solos, *Music* and *Oh Beautiful*.

## Dance Faculty 2002-2003

### Full-Time Faculty

Mary DiSanto-Rose, Director  
Isabel Brown      Debra Fernandez  
Denise Warner Limoli

### Director & Manager of DanceTheater

Lori Dawson

### Part-Time Faculty

Debra Draper      Julie Gedalecia  
Mary Harney      Patricia Henderer  
Lisa Hoffmaster      Adriana Markovska

### Artists-In-Residence

Yacub Addy      Deborah Hay  
Dariusz Hochman      Robert Battle

### Musicians

Carol Ann Elze      Patricia Hadfield  
Carl Landa

## From the Director of the Dance Program

I hope your year has been enriching and productive. Here is a glimpse of the many events and people who helped make this year in our Dance Theater, studios and classrooms such a success.

Our faculty and dancers produced five diverse concerts, in addition to the 16<sup>th</sup> lec/dem for the Liberal Studies I course. We also hosted our first **Dance Alumni Weekend** in February with the skillful guidance of **Lori LoTurco '99**. What a thrill to see so many dance lovers from classes of 1982-2002. It was an emotionally and physically moving experience for all of us. We must do it again soon, say 2005!

In the fall we hosted the **Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company** in two vibrant concerts. **Taylor 2 Dance Company** gave master classes and an inspiring lec/dem. In October, five current dancers joined **HT Chen & Dancers** at the Egg, in *Bamboo Oracle*. Our dancers were also a dynamic part of the multi-media event, *Balls*, at the Tang Museum.

In collaboration with the Emma Willard School, we hosted the **Sarah Pearson/Patrik Widrig Dance Company** for a one-week residency in February.

As part of the exhibit, **Trisha Brown: Dance and Art in Dialogue, 1961-2001** at the Tang, our dancers performed Ms. Brown's *Group Primary Accumulation*. I enjoyed the challenge of working as rehearsal director for this piece. Another well-known Post-Modern artist who is still pushing the boundaries of dance performance, **Deborah Hay**, offered master classes and a performance in March.

Sponsored by both the Dance Alliance and Skidmore, the **Dance+13 Festival** featured 41 different classes in ballet, modern, ethnic, jazz, tap, social dance, and yoga and body workshops for all ages and levels. The Festival instructors included guest artists, area teachers, and Skidmore Dance faculty. The Skidmore student assistants were invaluable.

**Dariusz Hochman**, ballet and character, **Robert Battle**, modern and choreography, and **Alexandre Proia**, ballet and choreography, all returned as guest teaching artists. **Susan Griss**, who specializes in using dance to help teach academic subjects, presented workshops for both dance and education majors. Two alumni, **Hana van der Kolk '00**, and **Sam Johnson '02**, returned to offer workshops in modern and improvisation. **Meg Chang** taught a workshop in dance therapy.

Our part-time faculty continue to add creative energy to our program. Joining us this year was **Julie Gedalecia '97**, who taught Ballet II/III.

We wish all our **Senior Dancers** and **Dance Theater Crew** much success and fulfillment. We will miss them, but they leave us with wonderful memories of their artistry and creative talents. May they, and all of you, continue to flourish in all endeavors!

Warmest wishes to you all!

*Mary DiSanto-Rose*

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*"I am now more of a Renaissance Man. I have widened my view of the world. I guess this is what a Liberal Arts education is all about."*

Taylor Brown '05, Ballet I student

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## Dance Alumni Weekend

This was a first; for three activity-packed days, more than 60 dance alumni danced and partied together, as they reminisced about their Skidmore days.

The brain-child of Lori LoTurco '99, reunion activities included a variety of dance classes, discussions, informal performances, showings of current students' work, and great food.

On Friday, February 21, those who could make it took a dance-of-all-sorts class team-taught by all of the faculty. By that evening, everyone had made it to campus for a wonderful dinner at the Faculty/Staff Club.

Saturday began with lunch, then came master classes taught by alumni for each other and current dancers. Tom Vacanti, UWW '02 taught Ballet; Randa Boughton '82, Nikki Verhoff '99, and Becca Rozell '98 taught Modern; Erin Strong '00 taught Luigi Technique; Hana van der Kolk '00 taught Improvisation; and Julio Arroyo '97 taught Hip Hop Fusion. Following classes was a Panel Discussion for alums and students to share questions and advice. That evening in the Dance Theatre, many alumni performed samples of their work for a very appreciative audience. Performers were: Alyssa Rutchik '91; Susanah Harris and Karen Lacy '92; Fran Kirmsner '93; Megumi Onishi '96; Julio Arroyo '97; Lauren Mirsky Benjamin and Becca Rozell '98; Lori LoTurco, Jamie Sporn, and Nikki Verhoff '99; Sara Juli, Megan Przygoda, and Hana van der Kolk '00.

Sunday started with brunch at the Surrey. Everyone then returned to the studios for showings of current students' works and the exchange of ideas.

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Alumni and faculty at the Surrey



Alumni in the Dance Theatre lobby

## Alumni News

**Phil LaBella '03**, is joining the cast of *Cats* in a national touring company. Congratulations, Phil!

**Jill Jefferson '03**, has been accepted into the Columbia University Theatre Management Graduate Program.

**Nina Saraceno '03**, will be dancing and teaching in Boston.

**Thomas Vacanti UWW '02**, is completing his MFA at Smith College.

**Corey Geremia '01**, is the School Administrator, Peridance Center, NYC.

**Melanie Rothenberg Pandit '01**, taught dance at a Troy charter school and now lives on 120 acres in Fort Plain, gardening and raising bees.

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**Erin Strong '00**, is in NYU's Dance Education Graduate program. She performs with the *NYU Kaleidoscope Company* and works for Special Programs Summer Dance at Skidmore.

**Hana van der Kolk '00**, performs and teaches improvisation and yoga in NYC. She conducted an improvisation jam at Skidmore in April.

**Lori LoTurco '99**, organized the very successful Dance Alumni Weekend. She is a Development Associate at Wellesley College and a Co-director of the company *Verhoff/LoTurco DanceWorks*, along with **Nikki Verhoff '99**.

**Jamie Sporn '99**, completed her MA in Dance Education at Teachers College. She dances with Claire Porter in NYC.

**Becca Rozell '98**, is in Boston, taking class and dancing with *Verhoff/LoTurco DanceWorks*.

**Cristina Ares '97**, is Company Manager for *American Ballet Theatre* in NYC.

**Shannon Hurlburt '97**, is a principal dancer, a teacher, and choreographer for *Smuin Ballet* in San Francisco. The company had a successful 1 week season at the Joyce in NYC.

**Julio Arroyo '97**, performs and choreographs in NYC.

**Charles Baekeland '97**, lives in Madrid where he is completing a Doctorate in child and adolescent psychotherapy and psychiatry.

**Lauren Canalori '97**, runs a Pilates studio in New Haven, Ct.

**Greta Feinberg '97**, is a nurse in Boston.

**Elizabeth Czerepak '97**, is dancing, teaching, and working in Boston.

**Julie Gedalecia '97**, lives and dances in Saratoga Springs. She teaches at Saratoga City Ballet, Union College, and Skidmore.

**Missy (Compeau) Bonaguide '97**, is an actress and choreographer in NYC. She and husband, Matt, have a daughter, Hannah.

**Rebekah Kennedy '95**, completed her MFA in Dance/Choreography at UNC Greensboro. She lives in NYC and has started *Urban Wash*, which will premier this fall season.

**Fran Kirmser '93**, lives and works in NYC. She is a producer for the Joyce Theater, Duke Theater, and Manhattan Theater Source. She produced and developed *Isadora...no apologies*, at the Duke on 42<sup>nd</sup> St.

**Andrea Bastiani '93**, teaches psychology at Sarah Lawrence, specializing in women with eating disorders. She and her husband live in Bronxville, NY and have two children.

**Amy DeLucia '92**, is an actress in NYC. She is getting certified in yoga.

**Karen Lacy '92**, lives in Astoria, NY. She dances and choreographs, and she teaches at Garden State Ballet, City Center, and ABT.

**Susannah Harris Dicker '92**, is the owner/director of *Wee Dance, Inc.*, a dance school for children in SOHO.

**Alyssa Rutchik '91**, is a physical therapist in the burn unit of Columbia Presbyterian Hospital and volunteers at the Harkness Center for Dance Medicine.

**Allison Bazin '89**, has her MA in Dance Education from Teachers College and dances for Claire Porter in NYC.

**Ann Donelan Goulart '86**, is a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and teaches and choreographs for *Ballet New England* in Cape Cod, Ma.

**Elisabeth Cowey Lacaue '85**, is the producer/creative director of Festivals in Concert in the NYC area.

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**Sue Horton '85**, is an accounting manager for a healthcare system in the Boston area. She teaches modern and ballet in Newton and Medfield, Ma.

**Kathleen Gallant '85**, is a dance instructor and museum guide.

**Diane Rollo '84**, is an education and training program developer in Boston. She performs with the *Boston Liturgical Dance Ensemble* and takes class at *Boston Ballet*.

**Randa Broughton '82**, lives in Brooklyn and enjoyed the Reunion :  
*"The range of events was such a pleasure. It was exciting to meet new faces and catching up with familiar ones."*

**ALUMNI—Let us know what you are doing, where you are living, how dance is still in your lives. E-mail is easy! [dlimoli@skidmore.edu](mailto:dlimoli@skidmore.edu)**

## **Terpsichore News**

**Terpsichore** strives to promote a community rich with a deep appreciation for the art of dance. We endeavor to advance the arts through programs at Skidmore as well as in the community at large. For over ten years, **Terpsichore** has proudly presented a spring performance, showcasing student choreography, dancing, and lighting design.

The Spring Dance Showcase featured works by eight student choreographers, performed by thirty five dancers.

*Anna Brown Massey '04, President*

## **Dance+14 Festival**

**Dance Alliance info. (518) 581-9274**  
Sat. & Sun. March 27 & 28, 10am-5:30pm., in Skidmore Dance Center. Classes in various styles, all levels.

## **Phil LaBella:**

### **Paulding Award Winner**



It is with joy and appreciation that we honor Phil LaBella's many outstanding accomplishments as a dancer, performer, choreographer, and leader with the **Margaret Paulding Award in Dance**.

A double major in Dance and Business, Phil was skilled in Jazz, Musical Theater, Ballet and Modern. He performed in our major dance concerts, *Cabaret Troupe*, *Rhythmos*, and as a guest for *Saratoga City Ballet*. Phil has been a valued member of the Dance Theater Production crew and former editor of *Skidmore Steps*.

During his four years with *Cabaret Troupe*, Phil served as a board member, Dance Captain, Director and Choreographer of several shows, including *A Chorus Line* and *Chicago*.

*"If I take one thing away from the Ballet experience, I want it to be the idea that the movements are just movements unless they are allowed to become a dance, and this can only happen when both the performer and the observer allow it to happen. There is a definite exchange of energy between the dancer and the audience, which can only occur if both parties are up to the task. Last night they were. Bravo!"*

Nathan Coleman '06, Ballet I, comments on the Winter Dance Concert

**Dance Performances**  
**Fall 2003-Spring 2004**

**Martha Graham Dance Company**  
Th., Sept. 11, 5:30PM Lec/Dem.

**IsadoraDuncan International Institute Dancers**, Jeanne Bresciani, Artistic Dir.  
Wed. & Th, Oct. 1 & 2, 8:00PM

**Family Weekend Dance Concert**  
Fri., Oct. 17, 7:30PM;  
Sat., Oct. 18, 1:00PM

**\*Admissions Dance Open House**  
Sat., Oct. 25, 1:30 PM, Ballet & Modern Classes; 3:30 PM, performance & overview of Dance Program.

**Winter Dance Concert**  
Fri., Dec. 5, 8:00PM;  
Sat., Dec. 6, 3:00 & 8:00PM

**African Drum & Dance**  
Mon., Dec. 8, 7:00PM

**Battleworks Dance Company**  
Fri., & Sat., Feb. 20 & 21, 8:00PM

**\*Terpsichore Dance Showcase**  
Fri., & Sat., March 5 & 6, 8:00PM

**Dance Program Capstone Concert**  
Fri., & Sat., April 2 & 3, 8:00PM

**Spring Dance Concert**  
Fri., & Sat., April 23 & 24, 8:00PM  
Fri., April 30, 8:00PM;  
Sat., May 1, 3:00PM

**\*Not benefit of Friends of Dance.**

**SKIDMORE DANCE THEATER**  
**Information (518) 580-5392**

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Diane Rollo

**We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to all of the *FRIENDS OF DANCE.***

