

The background of the poster is a deep red stage curtain. At the top, six spotlights are visible, casting beams of light down towards the center. The beams are a warm yellow-orange color. The overall atmosphere is theatrical and dramatic.

THE NORTH CAROLINA YOUTH TAP ENSEMBLE PRESENTS

# RHYTHMS REIMAGINED

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS ELIZABETH BURKE AND LUKE HICKEY

April 26th, 7:30PM / April 27th, 4:00pm



At the Carolina Theatre, Durham, NC



THE NORTH CAROLINA YOUTH TAP ENSEMBLE PRESENTS

# RHYTHMS REIMAGINED

SATURDAY APRIL 26<sup>TH</sup> 7:30PM    SUNDAY APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup> 4:00PM

## 2025 SENIOR DANCERS

IRIS BLANTON-PARKE    CASEY DWYER  
KAVI KURUP    DAPHNE LAYFIELD    MADISON WILLIS

## 2025 COMPANY

Annie Bermeo	Isabella Gorbatovski	Jack Sammartino
Krishna Beattie	Izzy Jackson	Kinley Sayed
Sarah Margaret Bradbury	Avik Kurup	Lila Kate Sarant
Cailin Bridges	Seth Magnuson	Mia Rose Sarant
Fiona Buff	Jameson Mahoney	Frannie VanderKamp
Sophie Chen	Connor Markham	Rowan Willard
Sophia Chow	Kallista Mela	Atticus Ware
Shelbie Clayton	Mia Milowsky	Rongchuan Zhang
Maya Downs	Hailey Ramirez-Kimrey	Talya Ziya
	Maddy Redd	

## LIVE BAND

John Hanks    Robbie Link    Jim Crew

## VOCALISTS:

NCYTE Alumna Julianne Vance and Lily Vance

### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Emily Shoemaker

### NCYTE FOUNDER

Gene Medler

### COMPANY MANAGER

Emily Acree

### ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

Caroline Vance

Zoe Foote

This performance in Fletcher Hall is made possible in part by a grant from the Durham Arts Council's Fletcher Performing Arts Fund of the Triangle Community Foundation, and the Orange County Arts Commission. NCYTE would also like to thank Denise Cerniglia Photography, The Ballet School of Chapel Hill, parent volunteers, and NCYTE donors who make performances like this possible.



## Volume I

### ***“Dance to Express, Not to Impress” - Gene Medler***

**Blue Skies.** . . . . . Matthew Shields, 2011

*Blue Skies* (Irving Berlin, arrangement by the band, Vocalist Julianne Vance)

**Sing Sing Sing** . . . . . Ayodele Casel, 2010

*Sing, Sing, Sing* (Louis Prima; Gene Krupa Big Band & Anita O’Day, arrangement by the band)

**Sound and Color** . . . . . Dani Borak, 2019

*Sound and Color* (Alabama Shakes)

**Never Never** . . . . . Star Dixon, 2016

*Never Never* (SBTRKT)

### ***Vaudevillian Vignette***

**The Stair Dance** . . . . . Steve Zee, 2002

*Cute* (Neil Hefti, arrangement by the band)

**War Dance** . . . . . Steve and Nick Condos, 1938

Reconstruction and Staging by Sam Weber, 2003

*War Dance for Wooden Indians* (Raymond Scott)

The Condos Brothers was a flash tap act that relied on virtuoso tapping rather than acrobatics. Famous for their wings – Nick Condos was the only person who could consistently produce five- sound wings – the brothers were among the most advanced tap dancers of their generation. The Condos Brothers’ Indian Routine, which we have renamed "War Dance", is legendary among tap dancers for its virtuosity, speed and difficulty, was featured in the 1938 movie “Happy Landing” starring Sonja Henie and Don Ameche. “Happy Landing” was the first film to feature a small jazz combo, The Raymond Scott Quintet, instead of a big band. Raymond Scott was inspired to write the music that accompanies the routine after hearing Steve Condos scat the rhythm of the first eight bars. The dance was reconstructed and staged by Sam Weber, who taught it to members of NCYTE.

**Step It Up and Go** . . . . . Ruth Pershing, John Dee Holeman, 1993

*Jitterbug Rag* (Blind Boy Fuller, arrangement by the band)

**The Bluegrass Suite** . . . . . Michelle Dorrance, 2005

*Hard To Love* (Old Crow Medicine Show)

*Bullfrog Shuffle* (Bela Fleck and Mark Schatz)

*Shadow Ridge* (Chris Thile)

- Sand Dance** . . . . . Gene Medler, 1997  
*When Lights Are Low* (Benny Carter, arrangement by the band)
- Yes, [S]and...** . . . . . Luke Hickey with Elizabeth Burke, 2025  
 With contributions by the work of the late Harriet "Quicksand" Browne  
*A capella*

## Volume II

### ***“If You Can Walk, You Can Dance” - Honi Coles***

- Coles Stroll** . . . . . Honi Coles, 1930's  
*Take The A-Train* (Duke Ellington, arrangement by the band)
- Corner Pocket.** . . . . Elizabeth Burke, 2007  
 Adapted for NCYTE, 2025  
*Corner Pocket* (Freddie Green, arrangement by the band)

### ***Medler Medley***

- The Soft Shoe** . . . . . Gene Medler, 1987  
*Tea For Two* (Vincent Youmans, arrangement by the band)
- Unsquare Dance.** . . . . Gene Medler, Zans McLachlan, 1989  
*Unsquare Dance* (Dave Brubeck, arrangement by the band)
- Rockabye Basie** . . . . . Gene Medler, 1991  
*Rockabye Basie* (Count Basie & His Orchestra)
- Route 66** . . . . . Gene Medler, 1990  
*Route 66* (Nat King Cole, arrangement by the band)

### **Special Guests: Elizabeth Burke and Luke Hickey**

- 10 minute Intermission -

## Volume III

### ***Ladies in Rhythm***

- Me and My Shadow** . . . . . Brenda Bufalino, 1999  
*Me and My Shadow* (Dave Dreyer, Al Jolson, and Billy Rose)
- Audrey** . . . . . Ayodele Casel, 2005  
*Audrey* (Dave Brubeck and Paul Desmond, arrangement by the band)
- Positively Dianne** . . . . . Dianne Walker, 2003  
*Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive* (Harold Arlen & Johnny Mercer, arrangement by the band)



**The Petite Suite** . . . . . Michelle Dorrance, 2010-2011  
*Extraordinary Machine* - Extraordinary Machine (Fiona Apple)  
*The Rag* - St. Louis Cemetery Blues (Squirrel Nut Zippers)  
*The Waltz* - La Valse a Sale Temps (Manu Chao)

**“Form Follows Function” - Gene Medler**

**Trash Talk** . . . . .Nicholas Van Young, 2013  
*A capella*

**Body Percussion** . . . . .Nicholas Van Young, 2016  
An excerpt from *ETM: Double Down* with improvisation by the dancers  
*A capella*

**Traditional Taiko Drumming**  
*Concept by Gene Medler, 2011*

Taiko, which means “drum” in Japanese, has a long and rich history. Japanese villagers used the drums to communicate, motivate troops, and call in fisherman from the sea. Much of the movement and form used in taiko comes from the martial arts, festival dances and movements of everyday life, such as hauling fishing nets, pushing a car, or planting rice. In this dance, the two drummers represent Japanese fishermen. Their movements symbolize the hauling of fishing nets out to sea as they take turns casting out their nets and catching fish. As the tap dancers emerge, the rhythms of other cultures and American tap dancing are woven together, much like the intricate weaving of Japanese fishing nets.

**Doom Doom Bop** . . . . .Michael Minery, 1999  
*A capella*

**The Shim Sham** . . . . .Leonard Reed, Willie Bryant  
*Take The A-Train (Duke Ellington, arrangement by the band)*

*The End*

## **SPECIAL GUEST: ELIZABETH BURKE**

**Elizabeth Burke** is a New York City based tap dancer, performer, choreographer, and teacher from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. A "deft and impassioned" (The New York Times) dancer, she has been performing and touring with MacArthur Fellow Michelle Dorrance's company, Dorrance Dance, full time since their inaugural 2011 season; she is a principal dancer and serves as the dance captain. Highlights of her work with Dorrance Dance include being an original cast member in "The Blues Project," choreographed by Michelle Dorrance, Dormeshia, and Derick Grant, with compositions and musical direction by Toshi Reagon, accompanied by her band BIGLovely; playing Billy Martin's "Stridulations for Dorrance" at the Brooklyn Academy of Music; being the featured soloist in "Basses Loaded," choreographed by Michelle Dorrance with music by Donovan Dorrance and Gregory Richardson with Kate Davis and Michelle Dorrance; and performing Brenda Bufalino's triumphant choreography, "Jump Monk," to Charles Mingus's composition of the same, played live by Donovan Dorrance, Gregory Richardson, Nicholas Van Young, and Aaron Marcellus at New York City Center.

She spent 11 years training under the direction of her mentor, JUBA Award winner Gene Medler, in the critically acclaimed North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble, performing and touring across the United States and abroad. At age 15, Elizabeth premiered choreography at the University of North Carolina's Memorial Hall, in collaboration with the North Carolina Jazz Repertory Orchestra, led by Jim Ketch. Elizabeth is also an alumna of the School at Jacob's Pillow at Marymount Manhattan College (BA Political Science + BA Communication Arts, magna cum laude).

For years, she has enjoyed collaborating and performing with one of Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch" Luke Hickey; most recently, they premiered their co-choreographed A Swing Suite at 92NY. They have also presented work at the American Dance Festival. Elizabeth also dances in Hickey's work, "A Little Old, A Little New," which has played Birdland Jazz Club, the American Dance Festival, and the Chelsea Factory.

Elizabeth is also a sought after teacher, frequently teaching across the US and internationally in dance festival settings. She can also be heard on composer and drummer Allison Miller's 2023 album, Rivers In Our Veins, as a tap dancer. Additionally, she appears on screen dancing in short films (Nostalgia, dir. Johnnie Hobbs) and music videos (Step Into the Light, Oak & Ash).

## **SPECIAL GUEST: LUKE HICKEY**

**Luke Hickey**, "never unmusical" (New York Times), is a NYC based tap dancer, choreographer, and actor hailing from Chapel Hill, NC, and was named by Dance Magazine among their "25 to Watch" in 2020. Hickey began studying at the age of seven with his lifelong mentor, Gene Medler (JUBA Award recipient). Under the tutelage of Mr. Medler, Hickey experienced 10 unbelievably special seasons studying and touring with the internationally acclaimed North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble (NCYTE). In addition to his study with Medler, he is also an alumnus of the School at Jacob's Pillow and Pace University NYC (BA Film & Screen Studies, BA Communications Studies, cum laude). Since 2018, Hickey has been a company member of MacArthur Fellow, Michelle Dorrance's acclaimed company, Dorrance Dance.

His choreographic career began with the debut of his evening-length work, "A Little Old, A Little New," which premiered at the world famous Birdland Jazz Club. The work later traveled to Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Battery Dance Festival, the Joyce Theater's season at Chelsea Factory and most recently, headlining the American Dance Festival's new fall series in 2022. In 2023, Hickey premiered a new percussion ensemble concert as well as a 20-minute work titled, "In This Time," at the Little Island Music & Dance Festival in 2022. Hickey's choreography can also be seen in Patrick Wang's feature film "A Bread Factory: Part II," which was listed on The New Yorker's "The Best Movies of 2018." Most recently, Hickey and longtime collaborator Elizabeth Burke premiered "A Swing Suite" at the 92NY's 150th Season Opening Night.

He has had the honor to perform with artists including Grammy winners Arturo O'Farrill and Keyon Harold, Michelle Dorrance, Ansel Elgort, Elizabeth Burke, Paul Arslanian, Marcus Gilmore, Ayodele Casel and Cartier Williams. Recently, Hickey has performed with acclaimed drummer Allison Miller in her multi-disciplinary show, "Rivers in Our Veins," at the Detroit Jazz Festival, The Strathmore, and on WNYC's radio show Soundcheck.

Hickey is very passionate about teaching and educating the next generation of tap dancers. He has been on faculty at Harlem School of the Arts, guest faculty at STEPS on Broadway, and tap dance festivals around the world including the North Carolina Rhythm Tap Festival, American Tap Festival, Stockholm Tap Festival, Tap City Tap Festival, SMASH (Mexico), Oslo Tap & Swing Explosion, RIFF Dallas, Chicago Human Rhythm Project, and the Monterrey Tap Festival.

# SAND DANCING AND HARRIET “QUICKSAND” BROWNE

From Harriet Quicksand Browne's Obituary.

*The New York Times, September 6, 1997*

Harriet Browne, a tap dancer, choreographer and teacher who performed with the Copasetics, died on Sept. 1 at Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx. She was 65 and lived in the Bronx.

Ms. Browne specialized in a form of tap dancing in shallow sand that both softened and enhanced the rhythmic sounds made by the feet. A performer who was both warm and glitteringly sophisticated on the stage, she appeared in the 1950's with musical artists who included Cab Calloway, Dinah Washington and Della Reese. She also danced with such master tap dancers as Bunny Briggs, Charles Cook and Buster Brown, many of whom has been her teachers. Her career continued into the 1990's, when she danced with the Silverbelles, a group of female tap dancers who has performed at many of the great nightclubs in New York City. She appeared with Sister Sledge and the Pointer Sisters, as well as tap groups that included Jane Goldberg's Changing Times Tap company.

Ms. Browne was also the artistic director of the Aristaccato Tap Company, a group of inner-city Bronx youths to whom she had taught tap and jazz technique, performing skills and history at the school she founded in the borough.

Born in Chicago, Ms. Browne came east in the early 1950's. After study with Mary Bruce in Harlem, she was soon performing as a solo, duet and chorus dancer at clubs in New York. During that time, her tap choreography helped her find work in variety and nightclub show and tours in Europe.

Ms. Browne was honored last year for her choreography in a National Tap Dance Day program at Alice Tully Hall. She was honored this year by St. Peter's Church, where the funeral service will take place, as one of three "Great Dancing Ladies of Harlem."

Additional information on Harriet "Quicksand" Browne can be found here:

*Tapped for Greatness* <https://www.poz.com/article/Tapped-for-Greatness-1569-5014>



# THE NORTH CAROLINA YOUTH TAP ENSEMBLE

## 2024-2025 COMPANY

**Annie Bermeo** is 13 years old and is in seventh grade at Eno River Academy. She has been tap dancing for 11 years. At school Annie does cross country and love to read in her spare time. Annie is proud to be in NCYTE and has had a great three years in the company. She thanks Emily and the seniors and anyone who has made this wonderful show possible.

**Krishna Beattie** is an eighth grader at McDougale Middle School. He has been in NCYTE for 5 years and has been tap dancing for 8 years. His hobbies outside of NCYTE include track and field, piano, scouts and being a summer swim coach. Krishna enjoys spending time at NCYTE learning new dances and making friends. He appreciates that you came to this show to see new talent and fun dances.

**Iris Blanton-Parke** is a senior in the engineering program at Riverside High School in Durham, NC. She's been tap dancing for 15 years and is now in her seventh season with the company. This fall, she'll be heading to Elon University to begin her journey toward a PhD in Astrophysics. When she's not dancing, Iris loves reading, stargazing, embroidery, exploring the outdoors, and spending time with her friends, family, and her parakeet, Gus, and dachshund, Mango. She's incredibly thankful to her mom, dad, and twin brother for their unwavering support! She also wants to give a heartfelt thank you to Gene Medler, Emily Shoemaker, Emily Jane Acree, Caroline Vance, and Zoe Foote for their guidance and for opening so many amazing doors for her through their teaching.

**Sarah Margaret Bradbury** is 11 years old and in 6th grade. This is her 2nd year with NCYTE and is very excited for this year's CT show! Outside of insight, Sarah Margaret dances ballet and loves being in musical theater performances. She would like to thank everyone at NCYTE for making this an amazing year. This year's performance is dedicated to her dad.

**Cailin Bridges** is a student at Enloe High School in Raleigh. She has been tapping for 4 years, and is in her second year in the company. Cailin is a part of her school's drumline and plays concert percussion as well as drum set. She also loves running and canoeing. Congratulations and thanks to all graduating seniors and NCYTE staff for making this year incredible! We love you!

**Fiona Buff** is 14 years old and is a Freshman at Millbrook High School. She has been dancing since she was 5. Learning from Ms Emily S ignited her love of tap. She is thrilled to be joining NCYTE this year as a First Year company member. Outside of tapping, Fiona dances with her high school dance team and trains in all genres at a local studio. She loves to travel and explore different cultures! Thank you to Gene, Emily and the entire company for welcoming Fiona this year!

**Sophie Chen** is 13 years old and a 7th grader at Durham Academy Middle School. This is Sophie's 3rd year in NCYTE and she is absolutely loving her experience in the company so far. She has been tap dancing for seven years. Other than tap, Sophie enjoys riding horses competitively, playing volleyball, drawing, hanging out with her friends, and playing piano.

**Sophia Chow** is 13 years old and in the eighth grade at Cary Academy. She started dancing at 3 and has been tapping for 8 years. Sophia dances at CC&Co. Dance Complex, where she is a member of Core Company. This is her first year in NCYTE and she could not love it more!

**Shelbie Clayton** is 16 years old and in the eleventh grade at Davidson Academy in Roxboro. She dances at Nina's School of Dance where she had been training for twelve years and a Company Member for nine years. Shelbie is a member of the National Homeschool Honor Society. She enjoys Bible study, reading, music, and spending time with family and friends in her free time. Shelbie is proud to be a part of NCYTE and is very excited to be in her third year with the company. Thanks to Emily, Caroline, Zoe, Emily Jane and the seniors for making this season such a memorable year and for putting together an amazing CT Show!

**Maya Downs** is a 11 year old in 5th grade in Chapel Hill. She has been tapping for 6 years, and this is her second year in NCYTE. In addition to tap dancing, Maya enjoys running, and various types of visual arts. She's been so happy to learn from Emily, Caroline, Zoe, and all the seniors.

**Casey Dwyer** is 18 years old, a senior at Riverside High School in Durham, and is dual enrolled at Durham Technical Community College. Next year, she plans to attend the Honors College at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to study Criminal Justice and Psychology, and hopes to continue dancing on the side. Casey has been in NCYTE for 5 years, has attended classes at the Ballet School of Chapel Hill for over 10 years, and has demonstrated for Gene Medler during summer classes before his retirement. When she's not tap dancing, you can find her listening to audiobooks, spending time with her friends and loved ones, and doing anything crafty. She would like to thank Gene Medler, Emily Shoemaker, Caroline Vance, and Zoe Foote for their continued support throughout the time she has been in the company.

**Isabella Gorbatovski** is 11 years old and in the 6th grade at Moore Square Magnet Middle School in Raleigh. This is her third year of tapping and her first year of being an NCYTE member. She loves anything related to the fine arts, especially involving music. Isabella performs ballet, jazz and modern dances, but tap has become her favorite this year because of NCYTE. Apart from dancing, you can catch her watching a Broadway play, a ballet, a symphony or jazz band, or playing a musical instrument. She has had an exciting first year in NCYTE and is grateful to be a part of it.

**Izzy Jackson** is 16 years old and a sophomore at Carrboro High School. She's spent most of her life dancing and is in her 6th year in NCYTE. Outside of dance, Izzy plays drums, does theater at her school, and sings. She would like to thank her family, Emily, and her friends in the company for their support.

**Avik Kurup** is a 12 year old dancer from Chapel Hill. He has been tapping for 8 years. He started by handing out programs for various NCYTE shows, and he is thrilled to be joining his older brother for his fourth year in the company. He loves listening to music, drumming, running, playing piano, football, basketball, and golfing. He is very grateful for Emily, Caroline, and Zoe for mentoring him through NCYTE.

**Kavi Kurup** is 17 years old, and is a senior from Chapel Hill, NC. He has been tap dancing with NCYTE for 7 years, and is incredibly grateful for his time in the company. Outside of dance, he plays piano and runs track and field for Chapel Hill High School. Kavi plans to attend Davidson College to study Economics in the fall, and he'd like to thank Gene, Emily, Caroline, and Zoe for an incredible 7 years in NCYTE.

**Daphne Layfield** is a 17-year-old homeschooler from Burlington who also takes dual-enrollment courses at Alamance Community College. She plans to attend UNC Wilmington in the fall. This is her seventh and final year as an NCYTE member, and she is extremely thankful for all the opportunities provided and friends made. She started dancing at the Centre of Performing Arts at the age of 3 and began taking classes at the Ballet School of Chapel Hill when she was 11. She has studied tap at the BSCH with Gene Medler, Nicholas Van Young, Helen Hickey, and Kathleen O'Melia. Daphne was in the Durham Children's Choir for seven years and now enjoys singing in her church choir. In her free time, she loves to create art for friends and family. She also has a volunteer job working with assistance dogs at Eyes Ears Nose and Paws. Daphne really appreciates all the dedication and support of NCYTE's leaders who always encourage her to do her best! Also, shout-out to her mom who braids her hair for every performance.

**Seth Magnuson** is a seventeen year old dancer from Carrboro, and has been tap dancing, along with other styles, for nearly ten years, and has been a part of NCYTE for three years. He loves to perform, sing, and, be on stage, and is honored to be a part of such a wonderful and influential company, that travels around, the country, helping to teach people about tap dance, and its history.

**Jameson Mahoney** is 17 years old and a junior at Enloe High School. This is her first year as an NCYTE member, but she has been tapping for six years. She'd like to thank her family (especially her mom) for always supporting her and her dance teachers for providing her with opportunities to become the dancer she is today.

**Connor Markham** is 13 years old in 7th grade at Durham School of the Arts, and lives in Durham. He's been dancing for 8 years, and this is his 3rd year in NCYTE. Outside of NCYTE, Connor dances at his other studio, Nina's School of Dance, plays piano, and is a member of the cross country team. Thank you to Emily, Zoe, Caroline, and all the seniors for making such a great company and show!

**Kallista Mela** is 16 years old and a junior at Chapel Hill High School. She has been dancing for 13 years and tapping for 9. This is her 6th year being apart of NCYTE. Outside of dance, Kallista enjoys playing the violin, spending time outside and with friends.

**Mia Milowsky** is 13 years old and in 7th grade. She has been tapping since she was a kindergartener. Mia is proud to be a part of NCYTE and is very excited to be in her 2nd year with the company. Thank you to Emily, Caroline, Emily, Zoe, Gene and the seniors for making this an amazing NCYTE season!

**Hailey Ramirez-Kimrey** is 13 years old and in the seventh grade. She began tapping as part of a Kinder Dance program when she was 3 years old and has never stopped! Hailey is very proud to be a part of NCYTE and excited to be in her second year with the company. Thanks to Emily S., Caroline, Zoe, Emily A., and the seniors for another great season with NCYTE this year.

**Jack Sammartino** is 14 years old and an 8th grader at Martin Middle School. Jack does all genres of dance but tap was the first style he tried and what led him to fall in love with dance. This is his first year with NCYTE and he is grateful to be part of such a wonderful company. A big thank you to Emily S., Caroline, Emily A. and all the members of the company for making it such a fun year full of learning and growth.

**Kinley Sayed** is 12 years old and in sixth grade at Orange Middle School in Hillsborough. This is Kinley's fourth year on NCYTE. She is very happy to be a part of NCYTE. At school, Kinley runs Cross Country and Track. She also plays percussion in band and is on the Battle Of The Books team. Thank you Gene, Ms. Emily, Ms. Caroline, Zoe, and all of the seniors for working so hard to make NCYTE amazing this year.

**LilaKate Sarant** is 15 years old and a tenth grader at Neuse Christian Academy, where she plays soccer and basketball for the NCA Lions. She's been tap dancing since she was 3 and dancing competitively for many years. She has performed several competitive solos choreographed by Emily Shoemaker, who has been an inspiring mentor to her for over 8 years. LilaKate is so thankful for a fun and successful first year with NCYTE, and for the incredible instructors and friends—both new and old—who've made it so special!

**Mia-Rose Sarant** is 12 years old and a seventh grader at Neuse Christian Academy, where she plays basketball and soccer for the NCA Lions. She has been tap dancing since the age of 3 and dancing competitively since she was 4. Emily Shoemaker has been a special part of her journey for over 8 years. Though she's also loved acting, life has been too full to fit it all in! Mia-Rose is so thankful for the teachers and friends—new and old—who have made her first year at NCYTE amazing!

**Frannie VanderKamp** is 13 and an 8th grader at Smith Middle School. She has been doing tap for 10 years and this is her first year in NCYTE, and she is very excited. In her free time Frannie runs track and enjoys baking.



**Rowan Willard** is 13 years old and in eighth grade. She has been tapping for nine years and this is her second year in the company. Rowan is very proud to be a part of NCYTE. Outside of tap, Rowan does jazz dance as well. Thank you to Emily Shoemaker, Caroline, Zoe, Emily Jane Acree, and the seniors for making this year of NCYTE possible and amazing.

**Madi Willis** is 18 and a senior at Millbrook High School. She has been tapping for 10 years at CC&CO and this is her first year in the company. Madi is very involved in music, she recently started playing piano and is also learning to play bass. After high school she plans to attend Wake Tech community college and hope to major in forensic science. Thank you to Emily, Caroline, Zoe, and all the other members who have made it such a wonderful experience.

**Atticus Ware** is 17 years old, he has been dancing for 14 years. This is his third year in NCYTE. In the past he has tap danced in multiple shows, most notably Flying Over Sunset at the Lincoln Center. He is very excited to perform in the CT show.

**Rongchuan Zhang** is a sophomore at East Chapel Hill high school and has been tap dancing for almost a decade. In his spare time, he enjoys reading and playing clarinet alongside other hobbies. This is his 6th year in the company. He thanks the directors and all the people who helped put this show together, and wishes all his fellow company members good luck during their performances.

**Talya Ziya** is an 8th grader from Smith Middle School in Chapel Hill and has been tap dancing for 7 years. This is her 6th year in NCYTE and she has enjoyed every minute of it. In her free time she plays the piano and tennis. Talya greatly appreciates all that Emily, Gene, Caroline, and Zoe do to provide all members with amazing experiences and opportunities. She is looking forward to performing in her 4th Carolina Theatre show, all thanks to this year's amazing seniors!

# NCYTE LEADERSHIP

## **Emily Shoemaker, Artistic Director**

Emily is a proud Alumna of NCYTE (2001), performing and traveling with the company for seven years. Highlights of her tenure with NCYTE include performing at tap festivals in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil; Vienna, Austria; Helsinki, Finland; Chicago, St. Louis, and New York, and being featured in the PBS documentary “Juba! Masters of Tap and Percussive Dance.” Emily has a passion for tap dance and has continued to study tap dance and music theory throughout her career. She has taught at many tap intensives and festivals, including the Little Rock and Syncopate Tap Festivals, and has served as a faculty member at the West Coast Dance Explosion and Streetz Dance Convention. Emily has been the Tap Director at CC & Co Dance Complex in Raleigh, NC, for 18 years. She has proudly watched her students go on to win Academy Awards and Tony awards, break boundaries in the world of dance, and, most importantly, become well-rounded and confident human beings

## **Caroline Vance, Assistant Director**

Originally from Durham, NC, Caroline began as a student of Gene Medler in 1999 at the Ballet School of Chapel Hill. In 2008, she joined NCYTE as a dancer and graduated from the company in 2012 before attending UNC Chapel Hill. After graduating, Caroline returned to NCYTE as assistant director, working alongside Gene before becoming a co-director in 2017, and the Operations Director in 2022. She now works as the assistant director under Emily Shoemaker's leadership. Since 2016, Caroline has taught students of all ages throughout North Carolina. She currently teaches tap, musical theatre, and preschool dance at Barriskill Dance Theatre School in Durham. She has traveled with NCYTE to various festivals and events across the country, and has had the privilege of teaching at the North Carolina Rhythm Tap Festival. Most recently, she was given the opportunity to work with Kim Jones at UNC Charlotte to create original choreography for the university's dance students. Caroline is extremely grateful for the opportunities NCYTE has provided, and is proud to work among such talented young dancers and the current leadership team. Perhaps the greatest gift, however, has been her friendship with the person who taught her to love tap dance, Gene Medler.

**Zoe Foote** is from Raleigh, NC and began tap dancing in 2005. She was fortunate to study with Gene Medler in Raleigh, later following him to the Ballet School of Chapel Hill. Zoe was a member of NCYTE from 2009 to her graduation in 2017. She attended George Washington University and graduated with a B.S. in Public Health. She returned to NCYTE as a volunteer in 2021, and is currently serving the company as Assistant Director.

## **NCYTE FOUNDER: GENE MEDLER**

**Gene Medler** founded the North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble in 1983. His previous teaching credits include Elon University, Duke University and Meredith College. He is on the faculty at The Ballet School of Chapel Hill and has taught master classes at the St. Louis Tap Festival, the American Dance Festival, the Chicago Human Rhythm Project, Tap City in New York City, the Saratov Music Conservatory (Russia), Tap Encontro (Rio de Janeiro), The Hot Shoe Show (Vienna), Feet Beet (Helsinki), the Internationales Steptanz- Festival (Berlin) and the Heidelberger Steptanz Festival (Heidelberg). Gene has also taught at the Broadway Dance Center in New York City. Selected performances include solos in Duke Ellington's "Nutcracker," Ellington's "David Danced," "Rising Stars of Tap" (Colorado Dance Festival), and "The Great Tap Reunion" (Boston) as well as an appearance with the Squirrel Nut Zippers. He has been seen nationwide in the PBS special, "Juba! Masters of Tap and Percussive Dance."

Gene has received grants from the Durham Arts Council, the North Carolina Arts Council, and the Orange County Arts Commission. He has been featured in such publications as Dance Teacher Now, Carolina Alumni Review, Southern Living, and Our State.

Gene has received many honors for his contributions to dance and his achievements as a dance artist. These include: "Tar Heel of the Week" from The News and Observe; an Indy Arts Award from The Independent; the North Carolina Dance Alliance Annual Award; and the JUBA Award from the Chicago Human Rhythm Project, the Academy Award of the tap dance world.

Gene started dancing at the age of 28 and was quickly bitten by the tap dance bug. He was entranced by the combination of movement, rhythm, and sound. He started the ensemble because he wanted to offer his students more opportunities to perform and wanted to expand his own teaching and choreography. After over 40 years, he still loves mentoring young dancers and is thrilled with the journey NCYTE has taken him on.

# RHYTHMS REIMAGINED CHOREOGRAPHERS

**Daniel “Dani” Borak** is a world-renowned, international tap and multi-genre performer, choreographer and teacher. Passionate about experimenting and collaborating with a broad spectrum of performing and visual artists, this extraordinarily talented artist has already expanded the concept of traditional tap dancing, creating his own unique blended vocabulary pointing toward the future of percussive dance and rhythmic expression.

A native of Switzerland (Winterthur), Dani has performed as a soloist around the world and has won 11 gold medals in many different categories (six in solo male) at the IDO tap dance world championships in Riesa, Germany. In 2013, he served as co-choreographer and dance captain for productions of Spamalot and Flashdance. In 2014, he collaborated on the creation of Funny Feet (by Lukas Weiss Productions) a show that fused tap dance, juggling, virtuosic foot percussion and humor. Other shows featuring his performances in 2014–15 included WINGS by Rigolo and, thanks to Regine Ochsner, Rhythm Refix by Cartier Williams. In 2015, he faced the greatest challenge of his career, performing in Kilian Deissler’s Kick The Square: tapping by using notes in an extremely complex way, with six other musicians, using a notation system specifically created for the project and a special stage consisting of different sound elements.

Companies and projects that he has performed and toured around the world with include Stylize, directed by Sandro Minasi, which combines different dance styles including break dance and tap; DaNaTI, a collaboration with Swiss dancer and choreographer Natalie Wagner that combines tap, jazz, contemporary dance and acting; Carpe Rhythum, a Swiss tap ensemble, directed by Daniel Leveillé; his longtime partnership with tap dancer Ursina Meyer; Tap Dan’s Company; projects with his mother Liba Borak and their dancers from Dance Studio Borak; and “Dog, Sheep & Shepherd” with the jazz duo Gabriela and Jan Pisklák. He also has taught workshops and been invited to tap festivals all over the globe.

His most ambitious project to date has been Tap Dan’s Festival in October 2016 in his hometown of Winterthur, Switzerland. Seven different performances showcased his work and new collaborations, including several of his full-evening works as well as material from his six years as a freelance artist. Almost all of his tap and musician colleagues from Switzerland, as well as guests from the U.S., England, France and Germany, including Barbara Duffy, Cartier Williams, Max Pollak, Victor Cuno, and Andreas Dänel, participated and collaborated with him, selling out six of the seven shows.

**Elizabeth Burke - see page 6.**

**Willie Bryant** is best known as Leonard Reed's partner in creating the Shim Sham Shimmy. Willie started dancing with the Whitman's Sisters Black Vaudeville in 1926 where he met Reed, teamed up and formed a partnership Reed & Bryant. He also worked in various vaudeville productions for the next several years, and in 1934 he appeared in the show Chocolate Revue with Bessie Smith.

In about 1928, Reed and Bryant devised a new finale for their eight-minute show, a step of simple heel-and-toe combinations danced to four eight-bar choruses. Reed and Bryant originally called it Goofus, but it became known as the Shim Sham after the Shim Sham Club of Harlem, a club where they regularly appeared. Its simplicity, and suitability as a line dance, especially with the newly popular swing music, meant that it was quickly picked up by club-goers. It has endured ever since.

**Brenda Bufalino** is a mixed genre artist: dancer, choreographer, author, and ceramicist. As a soloist, and choreographer/director of The American Tap Dance Orchestra, Ms Bufalino has performed and taught Internationally for over 30 years. Her collaborations with her partner and mentor the great Charles 'Honi' Coles, and her many performances with Gregory Hines, The Nicholas Brothers, and the many giants of tap dance has infused her with the essence of the form that she now shares with her stories, teaching, and dances. Her own experimental work, with taps, electronics and poetry has influenced the next two generations of tap artists, and she is still creating new experimental and traditional tap works and performances.

She has performed solo and with her company "The American Tap Dance Orchestra" at all the major venues; Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Joyce Theater, The Kennedy center and major theaters across America and Europe. For the State Department the ATDO toured Eastern Europe introducing the newly democratic theaters to the world of Tap Dance. With her company she appeared in the PBS special Tap Dance in America...with Gregory Hines.

Ms. Bufalino has been awarded several awards from the National Endowment for The Arts. The NEA deemed two of her choreographies for the ATDO, American Masterpieces. Her choreography has been performed by several noted companies, most recently her piece "Jump Monk," was performed by Dorrance Dance at City Center, NYC.

(Continued) As an author Ms Bufalino has written many articles and wrote the foreword and afterward for the book Jazz Dance by Marshall and Jean Stearns. Her memoir "Tapping the Source...Tap dance, stories, theory and practice" and a book of poems "Circular Migrations" have both been published by Codhill Press. and her recent novella "Song of the Split Elm", is published by Outskirts Press. She has been awarded: The Flobert Award, The Tapestry Award, The Tap City Hall of Fame Award, The Dance Magazine, and the prestigious Bessie Award, all for outstanding achievement and contributions to the field of tap dance.

**Ayodele Casel**, a Doris Duke Artist in the dance category, is an award-winning and critically acclaimed tap dancer and choreographer named one of the New York Times' "biggest breakout stars of 2019." Born in The Bronx and raised in Puerto Rico, her practice centers highly narrative works rooted in expressions of selfhood, culture and legacy.

Her projects include her concert and Bessie Award-winning film "Chasing Magic," her one-woman show "While I Have the Floor," and her theatrical and film series "Diary of a Tap Dancer." She serves as a tap choreographer for the Broadway revival of "Funny Girl," which garnered her a 2022 Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Choreography. A frequent New York City Center collaborator, she created an interactive show for their inaugural "On the Move" five-borough tour and is one of their 2023 featured "Artists at the Center." Her collaboration with Grammy award-winning Latin jazz composer and pianist Arturo O'Farrill is hailed by the New York Times as "next level" and "thrilling."

Casel was a 2019-2020 fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, an artist-in-residence at Harvard University and Little Island, and is the recipient of a United States Artist Fellowship and Hoofer and Flo-Bert award. In 2021, Casel was depicted on a U.S. Postal Service Forever Stamp celebrating tap dance.

Casel has performed at The White House, Carnegie Hall, Radio City Music Hall, Madison Square Garden, and Off-Broadway with Savion Glover as the only woman in his touring company N.Y.O.T.s. (Not Your Ordinary Tappers). Her works have been presented at The Joyce Theater, Lincoln Center, New York City Center, Symphony Space, Dance Theater Workshop, The Triad Theater and Joe's Pub at The Public Theater, among others. Continued page 21



(Continued) Casel is an alumna of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and The William Esper Studio. A dance educator for over 25 years, Casel is the co-director of Operation Tap, an online tap dance educational platform, DLNY Tap Dance Project, and serves on the board of the youth arts leadership organization A BroaderWay Foundation.

**Charles "Honi" Coles** developed his high-speed rhythm tapping on the streets of Philadelphia, his hometown. He first went to New York City as one of the Three Millers, who were known for their intricate and difficult dance steps executed on tiny platforms. He later returned to headline at the Apollo Theater. In 1940, while dancing with Cab Calloway's band, he met and teamed with Charles "Cholly" Atkins. As Coles & Atkins, their routine opened with a fast-paced song and tap number, followed by a precision swing dance, a soft shoe, and a tap challenge. Coles placed tap in the world of concert art when he performed in the Joffrey Ballet's production of Agnes de Mille's "Conversations about the Dance." Coles made his Broadway debut in "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" in 1949. He also appeared in "Bubbling Brown Sugar" and "My One and Only," for which he received both the Tony and Drama Desk Award. In 1991, Coles was awarded the National Medal of Arts. In 2003, he was posthumously inducted into the Tap Dance Hall of Fame.

**Condos Brothers**, comprising Steve and Nick Condos along with their older brother Frank, were popular in the 1930s and 1940s. Steve and Nick were acclaimed for lightning-speed and a phenomenal precision style tap dancing that perfectly suited the tempos and rhythms of swing and bebop. During the 1930s and 1940s, they spent most of their time in vaudeville, and then began to work with top swing bands. While Nick was expert at flash work (he is credited with inventing the five-tap wing), Steve concentrated on rhythm and surpassed nearly all his contemporaries with his phenomenal precision style of rhythm dance. The routines that the Condos Brothers danced together were set but they insisted on improvising their solos so that every show was different and every show was a challenge.

**Starinah "Star" Dixon** is an assistant director, choreographer, and original principal dancer of world renowned tap company, M.A.D.D. Rhythms. She has taught and performed at the most distinguished tap festivals in the country including The L.A. Tap Fest, DC Tap Fest, RIFF Dallas, Chicago Human Rhythm Project's Rhythm World, and MADD Rhythms own Chicago Tap Summit. She's performed internationally in Poland, Japan, and Brazil to name a few.

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(continued) Performance venues include Jacob's Pillow, Kennedy Center, and the Lincoln Center. Outside of M.A.D.D. Rhythms, she's performed as a guest with such companies as Michelle Dorrance's Dorrance Dance and Savion Glover's All Funk'd Up. Star is currently on staff at numerous dance studios in and around Chicago.

**Michelle Dorrance** is "one of the most imaginative tap choreographers working today" (The New Yorker) and has pushed tap dance choreography into dialogue with the international cultural landscape like no artist before. At once a composer and a choreographer, she is known for deeply musical, highly physical, and emotionally compelling work that lives at the intersection of innovation, tradition, and risk.

Raised in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Dorrance was mentored by groundbreaking youth tap educator, Gene Medler and studied under many of the last hoofers of the jazz era. A New York City-based artist for over 25 years, she performed with notable tap companies and productions including Savion Glover's *Ti Dii* and Off-Broadway sensation, *STOMP*.

In 2011, she founded Dorrance Dance with the mission to help audiences view tap dance in a new and dynamically compelling context while honoring the Black American legacy of the art form. The company's inaugural performance earned Dorrance a "Bessie" Award and the company has since performed over 20 of Dorrance's original works nationally and internationally to great critical acclaim.

A lover of collaboration and rebellion, Dorrance has created work with a unique range of artists including Dormeshia, Derick K. Grant, Nicholas Van Young, Bill Irwin, Lil Buck, Tiler Peck, Jillian Meyers, Ephrat Asherie, and Toshi Reagon. Michelle made her Broadway choreographic debut in James Lapine's *Flying Over Sunset* in 2021. Other commissions include Martha Graham Dance Company, The Joyce Theater, New York City Center, Vail Dance Festival, American Ballet Theatre, and *Works & Process* at the Guggenheim.

A 2018 Doris Duke Artist, 2017 Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellow, 2015 MacArthur Fellow, and 2012 Princess Grace Award winner, Dorrance has been acknowledged and supported by Jacob's Pillow, the Alpert Awards, United States Artists, The Field, and the American Tap Dance Foundation. Dorrance holds a B.A. from New York University and will receive an honorary doctorate from the University of North Carolina in May 2024.

**John Dee Holeman** was born April 24, 1929, in Orange County, North Carolina, and was raised on a small family farm. He first heard blues at house dances and country gatherings in the African American community. He began picking guitar when he was 14 years of age, quickly learning the Piedmont tunes he heard his uncle and cousin play.

As a young man, Holeman also listened to traveling bluesmen from other areas of the South, to recordings from Chicago and the Delta, and to black and white musicians on the radio. While still a teenager, he started playing music at house parties, Saturday night suppers, and community gatherings throughout his area of rural North Carolina. At country dances, Holeman also learned the tradition of "patting juba." Juba, the use of complex hand rhythms to provide timing for dancers, is a centuries-old tradition among Africans and African Americans. Where Holeman grew up, it was customary when party musicians took a break for males to engage in competitive solo dancing accompanied only by hand or "patting" rhythms. "Juba" refers to both the complex hand rhythms and the dance traditionally done to them. The dance done to the juba rhythm is also called "buckdance," "bust down," and "jigging." "Patting" is distinguished from clapping by virtue of the varied pitches the patting hand elicits from the arms, chest, thighs, and flanks.

As Holeman's dancing skills developed, he teamed up with Fris Holloway, an experienced "patter" and blues piano player. Together, and independent of each other, the two were able to produce rhythmic complexities — Holeman on the floor and Holloway on his own body. The pair performed at house parties before taking their work on the road throughout the South. Years later, they were invited by the U.S. State Department to participate as part of an ensemble performing in Southeast Asia. For most of his life, Holeman had a day job to support himself and his family. In Durham, he was a heavy equipment operator and construction worker. Over the years, he was able to supplement his income by playing blues and "patting juba," though he never chose to pursue music as a full-time profession. In addition to the touring he did for the State Department, he has played at festivals around the country and in concerts in Europe and Africa, where he also conducted workshops for students and other performers.

Holeman worked with his student **Ruth Pershing**, a member of the Cane Creek Cloggers and NCYTE family member, to choreograph "Step It Up and Go"

**Gene Medler - see page 17.**

**Zans McLachlan** started dancing with Gene Medler at 8 and became a founding member of NCYTE (then The Children's Tap Company) at 10. Over 40 years later, he is still dancing and proud to serve on the board of this incredible institution and even more so to have raised two phenomenal children.

**Mike Minery**, a New Jersey native, has established himself as one of the finest tap dancers and choreographers working today. Mike has been named the 1997 World Tap Champion and was a recipient of a Princess Grace Dance Fellowship Award. He toured the world as a soloist with the internationally acclaimed Manhattan Tap company, and has been featured at The Supper Club on Broadway, in the '40s revue This Joint is Jumping. He has created his own tap company, "Tapholics", which debuted at the famed Duke Theatre in New York City and has performed in countless theatres and on television as a feature guest on The Tony Danza Show. Mike has been seen in Footprints Tap Jam 2000 in Chicago, an Equity Cares Fight AIDS production of "Zoot Suit Strut", and was a soloist in the 2001 Tap Extravaganza at Town Hall Theater in Manhattan. He has choreographed pieces for Manhattan Tap, The New Jersey Tap Ensemble and The North Carolina Youth Ensemble, as well as numerous companies and studios around the world. Most recently, Mike choreographed "Tap: The Show", which is running at the Music Box Theatre in Hershey Park for the next three summers. He is also the Director and Choreographer of SLIDE, a tap workshop and Off-Broadway show!

**Leonard Reed** met Willie Bryant in 1926 while performing in the Whitman Sister's shows. The Whitman sisters were a troupe of four Black American sisters who were stars of Black Vaudeville. Their show was quite popular running from 1900 to 1943. One of the shows needed a finale so Leonard and Willie came up with a Tap routine for everyone to come onstage and perform together. In the 1930s, legend has it that one of the show dancers was fired, went to New York and started to perform the routine at a club called the Shim Sham. The dance was renamed the Shim Sham Shimmy. The routine spread all over Harlem and was danced onstage as an 'all in' finale to bring the performers together to close a show. The tap dancers would perform with the tap moves and everyone else would shuffle through.

**Matthew Shields** is a Canadian born tap dancer and artist residing in Austin, Texas. Recently returning from a six month tour of Canada and many countries in Europe, Shields returned to Austin this fall and joined Zach Theatre for the third time, appearing in the final three performances of the American classic Singing in the Rain; directed by Abe Reybold. Continued page 25

(continued) Shields has most recently been recognized for his work with Zach Theatre in the production of Mary Poppins; directed by Dave Steakley. As the lead tap dancer and a featured member of the ensemble that won a B. Iden Payne award for 'outstanding work as an ensemble'. Mr. Shields also appeared at Zach Theatre in the Duke Ellington musical review; Sophisticated Ladies starring Jennifer Holiday. Shields & partner Tony Merriwether received the Austin Critics Table Award for 'outstanding duet performance' and were also nominated for a B. Iden Payne musical theatre award for their role in this production.

Shields is the Artistic Director of Hyperfeet Productions and HYPE; Hyperfeet Youth Performance Ensemble which has produced youth ensembles in Austin and Dallas, Texas.

Mr. Shields has directed many productions including; Sound Crash Wave a tap dance expression for HYPE Dallas, TV Music Mixtape for HYPE Austin, Rhythm Lives for Montreal Tap Festival, In Good Time for Rhythm in Fusion Festival, A Chronological Life Story Of A Few Tap Dancers for Vancouver Tap Society. Shields appeared on television for the opening performance of the Jerry Lewis MDA Telethon. While also making several performance appearances on FOX News, KXAN, Good Morning Texas, KVUE and Time Warner Cable. Mr. Shields was an original cast member for the national and international tours of The Souls of our Feet -A Tribute to American Tap Dance.

**Nicholas Van Young** is a choreographer, dancer, musician and 2014 Bessie Award recipient. He began his professional career in Austin, TX at the age of 16 with Tapestry Dance Company under the direction of Acia Gray and Deirdre Strand. As principal dancer and resident choreographer he was awarded "Best Male Dancer" 2001, and "Best Choreography" 2003 by the Austin Critics Council. In 2003 he joined the NYC cast of STOMP and spent 2003-2013 with the production moving on to play the lead role and serve as rehearsal director for the American Tour. Most recently he acted as Associate Artistic Director of Dorrance Dance, and has been a choreographer and collaborator with Artistic Director Michelle Dorrance for nearly a decade. His choreographic and conceptual collaborations with DD have premiered at the Guggenheim, The Joyce, Jacob's Pillow, and internationally in London (Sadlers Wells), Spain (Fira Tarrega) and Hong Kong. As a musician he has performed and toured with Cyro Baptista's Brazilian Percussion Ensemble "Beat the Donkey", as drummer for Darwin Deez and Dorrance Dance and has created two electronic music scores for the documentaries "Tap or Die" and "Aces and Knaves" produced by Jackie Pare.

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(Continued) Nicholas Young is the Director and Founder of SoundMovement Dance Co. and Institute for the Rhythmic Arts, a multi-disciplinary training program for percussive dance and drums.

**Dianne “Lady Di” Walker**, a pioneer in tap dancing’s resurgence, has a 45-year career spanning Broadway, Television, Film and International Jazz Concerts and Tap Festivals. Savion Glover and his contemporaries affectionately call her, “Aunt Dianne,” acknowledging her unique role as mentor, teacher and confidante. Dianne performed in both the original Paris Production of Black and Blue as well as the Broadway Production, where she was a featured dancer, Dance Captain and Assistant to the Directors. Film credits include the movie Tap, the PBS special, Great Performances: Tap Dance in America, JUBA! (WTTW), and Songs Unwritten. Dianne has been dubbed the “Ella Fitzgerald” of Tap Dance.

For two years, Dianne directed the Tap Program at Jacob’s Pillow and is presently Artistic Advisor to the Program. Holding a Master’s degree in Education, Dianne has taught at numerous universities including Harvard, MIT, Wesleyan, Bates, UCLA, and Williams College. Dianne is a participant on many educational task forces, and sits on numerous boards throughout the dance community. In 1998, Dianne received the “Living Treasure in American Dance” Award from Oklahoma City University, The Flo-Bert Award (NYC), The Hoofers Award (NYC), The Gregory Hines Humanitarian Award (Los Angeles), and was the 2008 USA Rose Fellow. Most recently, Dianne received the prestigious Dance Magazine Award, presented to her at the Alvin Ailey School in New York, adding to a long line of awards and lifetime tributes recognizing her contribution to the art form and excellence in teaching. Grant awards include The National Endowment for the Arts, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Jacobs Pillow, The New England Foundation for the Arts, and American Masterpieces Program.

Dianne has been generously mentored by many musicians and Tap Dance legends throughout her career, notably Leon Collins and Jimmy Slyde. Dianne has worked with Savion Glover, Jimmy Slyde, Buster Brown, Gregory Hines, Honi Coles, Cholly Atkins, Tina Pratt, Bunny Briggs, Barry Harris, Max Roach, Alan Dawson, Major Holley, Paul Arslanian, Andy McGhee, John Lockwood, Ruth Brown, Nicholas Brothers, Peg Leg Bates, Arthur Duncan and many others. Leon Collins passed away in 1985, leaving Dianne to continue as one of the Directors of his school in Boston. It is with a great sense of pride that Dianne continues to share this rich legacy with her students.



**Sam Weber** is an award-winning, internationally acclaimed performing artist, master teacher and choreographer who regularly appears throughout the world. A protege of Stan Kahn in San Francisco, Sam Weber has appeared with such tap legends as Charles "Honi" Coles, Steve Condos, Jimmy Slyde, Gregory Hines and the Nicholas Brothers. Sam's versatility has led him to performances in musical theater and television, where he has worked with such stars as Burt Lancaster, Bob Hope, Andy Williams, Pat Boone and Sara Vaughn. Sam co-starred in the award-winning German short film "Zwei Im Frack," directed by Christian Stahl in September, 2000. Sam has also performed with the San Francisco Ballet, Sacramento Ballet, Peninsula Ballet Theatre and Smuin Ballets/SF. Sam Weber was frequently seen on PBS's "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" television show and is featured in the documentary "Juba! Masters of Percussive Dance" on Public Television.

Sam is one of the few tap dancers in the world currently performing Morton Gould's "Tap Dance Concerto" and was the first tap dancer to receive a "Bessie" award, presented in New York City in 1993 in recognition of outstanding creative achievement. In addition to his solo tap dancing career, Sam has toured internationally since 1986 as a principal dancer and choreographer with the Jazz Tap Ensemble.

Sam Weber has performed and taught at tap dance workshops and festivals worldwide. These have included the Chicago Human Rhythm Project as well as tap festivals in Boulder, CO, Portland, OR, St. Louis, New York, Seattle, Los Angeles, Vancouver, B.C., Atlanta, Houston, Austin, Boston, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Brussels, Prague, Kiev, Heidelberg, Freiburg, Wuerzburg, Cologne, Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Berlin, Duesseldorf, Zurich, Stockholm, Helsinki, Tokyo, Beijing, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Rio De Janeiro, San Antonio, TX, Gainesville, FL and the San Francisco Tap Festival.

Sam has taught in the dance departments of UCLA, Cal State University, L.A., Long Beach City College, Cal State Fullerton and San Francisco State University. Sam is the recipient of several awards, including the "Hooper Award," from the American Tap Dance Foundation, the "Legacy Award," from San Antonio's "Third Coast Rhythm Project," the "Giant Steps" award for his lifelong contribution to the development of tap dance in the San Francisco Bay Area, and he has also received the prestigious "Juba" award from the Chicago Human Rhythm Project in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the art of tap dance. Continued page 28.

(continued) In 2021, he received the Legacy Award from the Orange County Tap Festival and the Inspiration Award from Chicago Tap Theatre. In 2023 he received a lifetime achievement award from the Chicago National Association of Dance Masters. He is on NY Times critic Brian Seibert's list of the 25 most important tap dancers of the 20th century. Most recently, Sam was honored to receive the Legend Award at the San Francisco tap festival.

**Steve Zee** is a globe-trotting master tap dancer, teacher, musician and entertainer who has trained and performed with the Nicholas Brothers, Gregory Hines and countless other tap notables. He has taught and performed across the United States, Europe, South America and China and has been a member of the Jazz Tap Ensemble and Rhapsody In Taps.

As an historian, Steve teaches a tap dance history course in the Dance Department at CSU, Long Beach and has published four oral histories of significant tap dancers (Stan Kahn, Bob Scheerer, Fred Strickler, Sarah Petronio).

Steve is the man behind Tap Academy Online, a subscription-based tap training program and currently teaches lessons in two languages to subscribers in 25+ countries on six continents.

Steve has taught at countless tap festivals both international and domestic such as LA Tapfest, Big Apple Tap Festival, OC Tap Festival, Chicago Human Rhythm Project, Joinville Festival de Dança, Limoges Festival de Claquettes, China International Tap Dance Festival and many, many, many more. For almost 20 years, he was the lead tap teacher for The Gabriella Foundation that gives extremely low-cost dance lessons to under-served youth in Los Angeles.