



# En l'Air 2010

Winter-Spring

# 2010

News from Massachusetts Academy of Ballet Educational Training Association



Dancers from MABETA and MAB performed Nutcracker excerpts at Holyoke First Night Jr.

## What is MABETA?

Is it a new hip-hop or rap group? No, it is the Massachusetts Academy of Ballet Educational Training Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization affiliated with the Massachusetts Academy of Ballet. Students who attend MAB at least four times a week and who have the desire to become professional dancers are invited to become members of MABETA. Our mission is to educate the surrounding communities about the art of classical ballet through performance and lecture demonstrations, and to contribute to the revitalization of Holyoke by partnering with local cultural organizations like the Holyoke Children's Museum, Wistariahurst Museum, and PassportHolyoke.

It is our hope that belonging to MABETA teaches our dancers the importance of community engagement, the significance of inspiring young audiences to strive for excellence, and the excitement of sharing a love of dance with others.

During the past year, MABETA dancers performed for Westfield Arts on the Green, the Loomis Communities, Matre Dolorosa School in Holyoke, First Night Junior, Discover Holyoke, and joined with MAB students for a historic Holyoke Nutcracker at Wistariahurst Museum.

MABETA maintains a scholarship fund for local students who might otherwise not have the opportunity to study ballet.

Rose and Charles Flachs are passionate about offering high quality training to anyone who wishes to study ballet, and are committed to being a part of the surrounding community. MAB and MABETA are among the many studio artists and performing arts groups located in Holyoke. Why so many here? Historically, artists have played a large part in the revitalization of towns and cities. Holyoke is on the move!

And speaking of rap, check this out:

*MABETA, the dance association  
Can benefit from your generous donation.  
We dance for the community  
And share a sense of unity,  
Performing for the kids in town  
Dancing, jumping, up and down.  
You might be wondering what is ballet,  
And we're here to tell you, "Hey, that's okay."  
Little by little we'll show you the ropes,  
And after you see us, we have our hopes  
That one day you'll take class or go to the theatre  
And support this art that makes life a little sweeter.*

## Spring Performance

*Celebrating 5 years!*

**May 15th, 2:00 p.m.**

**Holyoke War Memorial Auditorium**

FEATURING:

Sleeping Beauty Pas de Trois  
Corsaire Pas de Deux  
Esmeralda  
Typewriter

When I Was a Lad

MAB Student Études and  
Short Vignettes by Pre-Ballet,  
Creative Movement and  
Toddlers on Toes Students  
Excerpt from All that Jazz

Special guest choreographers:  
Kinsun Chan and Debra Vega

Adults \$10.00,

Children 10 and younger FREE.

Call 536-6200 to reserve tickets.

Silent Auction to benefit MABETA at  
1:00. Reception immediately following  
the performance.

## Thank you, donors!

Elizabeth & Frank Odell Family Fund of  
the Community Foundation of Collier  
County

Deborah K. Haas and Matthew R. Haas  
Marsha and Bruce Lieberman  
Ralph and Susan Chamberlain  
Amanda Scheyer

Estey Ticknor  
Denette and Ciara Shea  
Anna Felicitas Thurmayr and  
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*Dance with the professionals*

# The Massachusetts Academy of Ballet

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## A Dancer's Summer

by Abby Lieberman, MABETA dancer



Abby (right) in 2008 with Melinda White, Margarita de Sàa, Rose Flachs, Anna Lise Wilkins, Connie Flachs

**N**arberth, a quaint and homey town on Philadelphia's main line, is a place for lovers of the arts: food, knitting, and ballet. I spent the past two summers dancing in Narberth at the Pennsylvania Academy of Ballet, under the direction of John White and his wife Margarita de Sàa, former principals with the Ballet Nacional de Cuba.

Unlike many summer programs which incorporate a mish-mash of technical strategies and syllabi, PAB—under

Mr. and Mrs. White and their daughter Melinda—strictly follows the Vaganova syllabus, just as Rose and Charles do. I found that this consistency between MAB and PAB enabled me to improve by leaps and bounds. I received a strict discipline similar to the one I was used to at home, yet had no obligations except to dance all day!

A typical day at PAB for me included, on average, three technique classes and two pointe classes, along with either variations, pas de deux, jazz, Pilates or character classes depending on the day. We also enjoyed a movie night every Thursday, viewing various ballet tapes or documentaries. Each class challenges and inspires the students to develop technical as well as artistic strength. Every teacher pushes and encourages every student to her or his maximum potential, through individual and group corrections. The teachers are willing to work hard with each student, regardless of body type or previous training.

In between classes there is time to eat lunch at the studio, or go out to enjoy the summer afternoon and eat some of the delicious local food with friends. There's time to restock on those all-important knitting supplies and groceries too. On the weekends you can take a train to the surrounding towns or Philadelphia (just 17 minutes away), or hang out in Narberth; there is usually some kind of fun event going on in town!

During my two summers at PAB, I stayed with a host family. I found that this was a good way to try my hand at living away from home, yet with a family there in case I needed anything.

Narberth is an extremely safe town, so I felt comfortable coming and going from the studio at all hours.

There are many, many things that I have enjoyed about my time at PAB, but more than anything I think it has helped me become more intelligent and understanding as a student. I have been inspired to dance by great teachers and talented classmates. I would recommend the PAB summer program to any student seriously interested in having a career in dance, or to any student who simply enjoys dancing and wants to have a fun and inspiring summer.

**I received a strict discipline similar to the one I was used to at home, yet had no obligations except to dance all day!**

## Congratulations to Connie Flachs!



Photo by Daniel Pincus

**C**onnie Flachs spent her summer preparing an application to the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. She submitted the specified classroom combinations and a classical variation. Connie rehearsed all summer and videoed the classroom combinations and the Third Variation from Les Odalisques Pas de Trois from Le Corsaire. In December Connie was informed that she was awarded an Honorable Mention Award in Ballet for Young Arts.

As a YoungArts 2010 Honorable Mention Award Winner she placed in the top 5% of the 2010 YoungArts participant group. This is an exceptional achievement! As part of her recognition she received an award certificate and an award check in the amount of \$250. She is now a part of the YoungArts family, which has many benefits. YoungArts partnerships with many prestigious cultural institutions listed on [www.youngarts.org](http://www.youngarts.org).



Level 2 students at the barre

# Nutcracker & Sweets 2009



## So, We Think You Can Dance!!!

**WHERE:** Wistariahurst Museum

**WHEN:** May 23, 2010 2:30-4:00

No experience necessary! Come dance with the Massachusetts Academy of Ballet faculty and students as they teach an interactive workshop for children ages 4-12. Games, musical interpretation and imagery followed by a performance with MAB dancers and workshop participants. During the workshop adults may enjoy a guided tour of the beautiful Wistariahurst Museum and then attend the dance performance. To register, call Wistariahurst 322-5660. More info at MAB 536-6200



*Top row: Russian dancers, Ribbon Candy dancers, a mouse at rest*

*Middle row: Mice and soldiers take a break, Harlequin doll*

*Bottom row: Mice sneak around, soldiers salute, Nutcracker Prince and Sugar Plum Fairy pas de deux*

Photos: Linda Keith, Loran Saito, Rose Flachs



## Kinsun Chan Speaks with MAB Students



**O**n January 21, guest speaker Kinsun Chan from Zurich, Switzerland, shared his exciting and inspiring career with students of the Massachusetts Academy of Ballet. Tales of his unique journey, intense mental attitude, and strong work ethic embody what MAB students work towards.

Kinsun says "I remember as a student playing a game with myself: once I received a correction from a teacher, I tried to make sure I never had to be told that correction again. This made me accelerate and I was able to quickly improve." Kinsun showed his recent powerful choreography on twenty boys from ages 8 to 18 of the Tanz Academy Zurich. Riveting! MAB students are enthused and ready to go to work in class with the hopes of dancing professionally...perhaps in Europe!!

### **Kinsun Chan, Choreographer: Bio**

Born in Vancouver, Canada, Kinsun works in a range of artistic disciplines, which he calls Multium Design. His interests are in choreography, film and design, as its singular form or through their combinations. He studied Art, Graphic Design and Dance, attending Virginia Intermont College, Georgia State University, University of Louisville, Atlanta School of Ballet and Pennsylvania Academy of Ballet. He began a professional ballet career in America dancing with the Louisville Ballet and Cincinnati Ballet. He was a

finalist at the Varna International Ballet Competition.

Kinsun later danced in Europe with the Zurich Ballet and Basel Ballet. He has danced a diverse repertoire from renown choreographers such as Kylian, Forsythe, Duato, Spoerli, Van Manen, Wherlock and Balanchine. He made his first choreography "Above Ground" at the Zurich Ballet. He was then chosen to attend the Swiss International Workshop in Choreography (SIWIC) and was also invited by Reid Anderson to choreograph for the "Noverre" at the Stuttgart Ballet.

After joining the Basel Ballet, Kinsun had the opportunity to further choreograph new works, which received critical acclaim. He has been invited to create new ballets this season for the Tiroler Landestheater in Austria and Luzerner Theater in Switzerland, and will be in residence at Mount Holyoke College during January term, creating a new work on the MHC dancers.

### **MABETA Board**

Charles Flachs  
Rose Marie Flachs  
Deborah Haas  
Judy Hubeny  
Cathy Johnson  
Marsha Lieberman  
Loran Saito  
Rosanna Wilkins

*Train at MAB  
this Summer!*



**M**AB offers exciting summer programs for students ages 4 to adult. Register by May 1 and get a 10% discount!

### **Intro to Ballet Workshop: Ages 4-5**

July 19 - 23 9:00-12:00 AM

July 26 - 30 9:00-12:00 AM

Young ballet enthusiasts will explore the art of classical ballet by learning elementary ballet, improvisation, simple dances with props, and watching and reading stories from classical ballets. Children should bring a healthy snack and drink for break. See bios of our summer faculty on the back page.

### **Apprentice Ballet Workshop: Ages 6-7**

August 2 - August 6 9:00-12:00 AM

August 9- August 19 9:00-12:00 AM

Students will learn about the art of classical ballet, starting with a 75 minute beginning ballet class and ending with a rehearsal of ballet repertory. The curriculum will vary each week. Children should bring a healthy snack and drink for break.

### **Four Week Intensive for levels 2, 3, 4 & 5**

July 19 to August 13

Level 2 M-Th 12:00-3:00

Level 3 M-F 12:00-3:00

Level 4 M-Th 12:00-5:30 and F 12:00 - 3:00

Level 5 M-TH 9:30-5:30 and F 9:30-3:00

Intensive students will study ballet, variations, pointe for levels 3-5, Pilates, modern, yoga, jazz and seminars.

Students ages 13 and older may take the Adult Classes in addition to the above schedule. Additional classes are included in the intensive tuition.

### **Adult Open Classes**

1 eight week session: June 21-August 13

Adult Intermediate: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:30-11:00 a.m.

Adult Beginning/Intermediate:  
Tuesday, Thursday 6:00-7:30 p.m.

*For more information, including tuition, pick up our summer brochure or visit [www.massacademyofballet.com](http://www.massacademyofballet.com)*



(above) Ribbon Candy dresses hang at a Wistariahurst fireplace, Nutcracker Grand Finale, Party Children watch the entertainment

# Wistariahurst Museum

December 11 & 12

## Faculty Profiles

**Rose and Charles Flachs**, the directors of the Academy, have danced professionally with the Nashville Ballet, Ballet West, and the Cincinnati Ballet. They are associate professors of dance at Mount Holyoke College and guest teachers with the Pennsylvania Academy of Ballet. They have studied the Vaganova method of training with John White, author of *Teaching Classical Ballet* and Margarita de Saà, and at the National Ballet School in Havana, Cuba.

They have been guest artists and teachers at Jacob's Pillow, Pennsylvania Academy of Ballet, Columbia College, University of Georgia, University of Wisconsin, and the University of Cincinnati, College Conservatory of Music. They have also taught for the Southeast Regional Ballet Festival, the American College Dance Festival, and have choreographed and staged over 50 ballets for university dance departments and regional ballet companies.

Charles has produced and released three musical CDs for the classical ballet lesson, and Rose has written articles for *Dance Teacher* and *Dance Spirit* magazines. The Flachs are founding members of the Council of Organized Researchers of the Pedagogical Studies of Ballet, CORPS de Ballet International, Inc. They are the recipients of two Outstanding Service Awards from the CORPS de Ballet, a Choreographic Fellowship from the Ohio Arts Council, and an Individual Artist Award from the state of Tennessee. They are the proud parents of Connie and Nathaniel Flachs.

**Cathy Johnson**, a 2006 Mount Holyoke College Frances Perkins Scholar, graduated Phi Beta Kappa/magna cum laude as a biology major and dance minor. She received her early dance training with Ana Roje in Boston and Yugoslavia, later studied with Melissa Hayden at Skidmore College, and most recently studied the Vaganova method with Rose and Charles Flachs at Mount Holyoke College. Cathy has taught ballet in Western Massachusetts since 1994, joining the Academy faculty in 2006. She has a special interest in promoting dance education in the public schools.

**Deborah Vega** has danced on Broadway in such shows as *A Christmas Carol The Musical*, *Anything Goes*, and *Funny Girl*, and danced for 4 seasons as a "Radio City Rockette" in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular. She has traveled the United States and Europe in national and European Tours such as *Fame!*, *Crazy For You*, and *Steel Pier*. Debra is a proud member of Actor's Equity Association (AEA) and American Guild of Variety Artists (AGVA). She choreographs professional AEA Musical Theatre productions around the United States and locally. Currently, Debra is working with the Theatre Department of Williston Northampton School, choreographing the musical *PIPPIN*, which debuts mid-April of 2010. She is currently Interim Director of Dance at Williston Northampton School. Debra has practiced yoga for more than ten years and has taught yoga since 2007. She and her husband, Aaron, operate Vega Yoga & Movement Arts [www.vegayoga.com](http://www.vegayoga.com), and with a special outreach grant from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, offer free classes to a variety of Holyoke organizations working with underprivileged teens. She is the assistant to the campaign to help renovate and expand the Holyoke Public Library, is a founding member of the grassroots organization C.R.U.S.H. (Citizens for the Revitalization and Urban Success of Holyoke), and recently helped her husband manage a successful campaign for Holyoke City Councilor at Large.

Faculty profiles continued on reverse

## Summer Faculty

**Paul Dennis** holds a B.F.A. from The Juilliard School and an M.F.A. & Certificate in Arts Management from Purchase College, State University of New York. A former member of José Limón Dance Company, Paul has restaged seminal masterpieces of Limón and Doris Humphrey on students at various colleges. Paul has danced and worked with Laura Glenn Dance and Jacob's Pillow Men Dancers: The Ted Shawn Legacy, performing works by Limón, Humphrey, Stephen Petronio, Ann Carlson, Daniel Nagrin, Garth Fagan, Ralph Lemon, Phyllis Lamhut and Donald McKayle. He has been in-residence abroad with Dance International Burgos, Spain and an adjudicator for Certamen Internacional de Choreografía, Burgos-New York. Guest artist/faculty at Ridgefield Dance Conservatory, Trinity College; Guest Director for The White Mountains Summer Dance Festival.

**Kara Johnson** began her training at Dance Arts in Westfield, MA and at the Massachusetts Academy of Ballet. She studied at the Walnut Hill School, Boston Conservatory, Boston Ballet, and Jacob's Pillow. She received her B.A. in English literature and dance at Mount Holyoke College. Kara is entering her third season with Prometheus Dance Company in Cambridge, named "One of the Year's Ten Best

in Dance" by the *Boston Phoenix*, *The Boston Herald*, and *The Boston Globe*. She performed in the May 2009 world premiere of WARP, sponsored by CRASHArts, at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art. Kara teaches in Boston Ballet's Children and Adult divisions and is a teaching assistant for Boston Ballet's outreach program Citydance, a ballet instructor at the "Hill House" after-school program at Beacon Hill, and an after school teaching artist with the Cambridge Performance Project.

### Alexis

**Zaccarello-Grimes** began dancing in Dallas, TX and graduated high school from Interlochen Arts Academy as a dance major. She continued her training at The Boston Conservatory and Mount Holyoke College. She has a special interest in choreography, including both stage and film works and the worlds in between. Alexis is also a fully certified Stott Pilates instructor and enjoys helping dancers find ways to strengthen their dance technique through pilates.



"I have been amazed how far Amaliah has come as a dancer, but also in her love of ballet and the discipline it requires from her. At MAB, she knows she is given exceptional training and a lot is expected of her; this has translated to a strong sense of pride and confidence in herself as a young person. I'm so grateful to MAB!"

—Becky Schacter, parent

*Amaliah Leader performs the snowflake dance at the Wistariahurst Nutcracker, December 2009*

*Dance with the professionals*



The Massachusetts Academy of Ballet

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