

Summer 2019 Guest Faculty

Kathleen Black (Ballet, Repertoire, Scottish)

Born in Raleigh, NC, Ms. Black trained at The Raleigh School of Ballet, was a member of the Professional Division and affiliate performance training company, Raleigh Dance Theatre. During the summers Ms. Black trained at American Ballet Theatre, The Harid Conservatory, Boston Ballet (scholarship) and the School of American Ballet (scholarship). In spring of 2012 Ms. Black was invited to become a trainee with Carolina Ballet and perform in Robert Weiss' world premiere of Beethoven: Symphony No. 9. She was promoted to apprentice in 2014 and full company member in 2015. Ms. Black was a competitive Scottish Highland dancer for eight years, having won both the National and North American Championships.

We are pleased to announce Ms. Black is joining the RSB faculty this fall.

Tracey Durbin (Jazz)

Ms. Durbin moved to Durham, North Carolina from Portland, Oregon where she was an integral part of the Portland dance scene for 25 years. She began her training with Julie Alder and at Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan. At age 12 Ms. Durbin trained under Eugene Louis Faccuito "Luigi" one of the most famous international jazz teachers of this generation. The Luigi technique became the foundation for her teaching career. Ms. Durbin has choreographed and taught for Northwest Dance Project, Body Vox Dance, Oregon Ballet Theatre and Reed College. Most recently, she was one of four choreographers chosen for the Northwest Dance Project 'Chopin Project' with acclaimed pianist Yekwon Sunwoo. She is also a featured artist in the book 'Beauty in Experience: Dancing 50 and Beyond'. RSB is pleased to welcome Ms. Durbin back to teach for a second summer. Ms. Durbin currently serves on the faculty of ADF.

Jessica Higgins (Modern)

Ms. Higgins is a native of North Carolina, Jessica received her dance training at RSB/RDT from 1992-2000. She has attended Boston Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, NC Dance Theatre and Paul Taylor's summer dance programs. In 2004, she graduated from Wright State University with a BFA in Dance and while performing with Dayton Ballet. Since graduation, Ms. Higgins has danced with Dayton Contemporary Dance Company II, Verb Ballets, and trained with Philadanco's first company. Jessica currently living in NYC and has been dancing with Buglisi Dance Theatre, Battleworks, Covenant Ballet Theatre, Albano Ballet, Forces of Nature, Ballet Noir, Neville Dance Theatre, and the Berlin Wall Project. She is also a certified Pilates instructor.

Ruth Leney-Midkiff (Ballet, Pointe, Repertoire)

Ms. Leney-Midkiff moved to North Carolina 15 years ago from Michigan. She trained at Point Park College, the training school for Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Pennsylvania Ballet School and North Carolina School of the Arts. At 16, she became a soloist with American Dance Ensemble. Ruth later danced with the Pittsburgh International Folk Theatre, The Physical Theatre Project and The Pittsburgh Opera. She received her MFA in Modern Dance from the University of Michigan where she became an Adjunct Professor. While in Michigan, Ruth worked and studied with Peter Sparling and Bill DeYoung, teaching and choreographing for schools in the area including the Flint School of Performing Arts, Flint Youth Ballet, and the Dance Gallery. Upon moving to North Carolina, she started working at Destiny Dance Institute where she built the Pre-Professional ballet Program and created the Destiny Dance Institute Ballet Company which became the Wake Forest Civic Ballet. She has taught master classes throughout the United States and abroad in ballet, modern and her own contemporary ballet technique, and has created over 70 original pieces of choreography, ranging in style from full-length classics to modern dance works. Her ballets have been honored in Regional Dance, where they repeatedly received "gala" recognition.

We are pleased to welcome Ms. Leney-Midkiff to the RSB summer faculty.

Jessie Parmelee (Musical Theatre)

Jessie Parmelee is currently the Ballet Mistress for City Ballet of Raleigh. Born and raised in Phoenix, she trained with Ballet Etudes in Mesa, Arizona. She has a diverse performing background dancing with companies including Inland Pacific Ballet, American National Ballet, and Louisville Ballet. She later expanded her repertoire to include musical theater and even did a brief stint for Disney Cruise Line. As a certified Pilates instructor with a specialization in dance, Jessie is passionate about shaping the performers of tomorrow.

Pablo Perez (Ballet, Pointe)

Mr. Perez was born in Uruguay, and graduated with the highest honors from the National School of Dance. In 1994 he won a silver medal at an international dance competition in Brazil. Mr. Perez has also danced with The Teatro de Colón de Buenos Aires. Mr. Perez joined Carolina Ballet in its first season. His roles include Mercutio in *Romeo & Juliet*, Puck and Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hilarion in *Giselle*, Renfield in *Dracula*, and principal roles in *Tarantella*, *Square Dance*, *Four Temperaments*, *Fancy Free*, *Steadfast Tin Soldier*, *Rubies*, *Valse Fantaisie*. He has had several principal roles choreographed on him, including Weiss' *Adagio*, *Joker in Masque of the Red Death*, *Peter in Peter & the Wolf*. In 2001, he was invited by the First Lady of Uruguay to participate in a national tour of Uruguay.

Mr. Perez has served as an RSB faculty member and has choreographed two works for RSB's affiliate performance training company, Raleigh Dance Theatre. Mr. Perez retired from his dance career in the spring of 2017 and now serves as ballet master for Carolina Ballet.

Lindsay Purrington (Ballet and Pointe)

Ms. Purrington began her dance training with Ann Vorus at age ten at The Raleigh School of Ballet, and went on to study with Richard Rein and Elizabeth Connell at St. Paul's School in Concord, NH, as well as at The Juilliard School in New York City. She joined Carolina Ballet as a founding member in 1998, rising to Soloist ranking in 2003. Ms. Purrington joined Fugate/Bahiri Ballet NY in the fall of 2004 and became a member of Pennsylvania Ballet in 2006. She returned to Carolina Ballet in 2010 retiring from her performing career in 2018. Ms. Purrington has served on the faculty of The Raleigh School of Ballet and The School of Carolina Ballet.

Jamie Shakur (Modern and African)

Ms. Shakur received a BFA in Dance from Temple University and her Masters in Dance Education from New York University. She has performed with Chuck Davis' African American Dance Ensemble, Kariamou & Company: Traditions, Urban Bush Women, Seventh Principal Performance Company and Dance Theatre of Harlem. Ms. Shakur is a recipient of many grants and awards including, Tony Bennett's Exploring the Arts Grant, Arts Achieve Grant and Capezio Ballet Makers Grant.

Ms. Shakur is currently a dance director with the Wake County School System. She has been a dance educator with the New York City Department of Education grades 9 – 12 and a teaching artist with the Teaching Artist for Alvin Ailey Arts in Education Program.

We are pleased to welcome Ms. Shakur to the RSB summer faculty.

Jules Szabo (The Dancer's Workout®)

Ms. Szabo is a classical ballet graduate of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts who designed the *The Dancer's Workout®*. The class provides an exhilarating one-hour total body workout. Ms. Szabo has a knack for teaching intricate choreography in a manner which is easy-to-learn, and fun. The class is taught at various locations in North Carolina.

We are pleased to welcome Ms. Szabo to the RSB summer faculty.

Lisl Valliant (Ballet and Pointe)

A native New Yorker, Ms. Valliant attended the prestigious School of American Ballet and began dancing professionally at age 19 under the direction of Robert Weiss at Pennsylvania Ballet where she quickly rose to soloist status. Following her 9 years of performing with PA Ballet, Ms. Valliant joined the Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle where she was featured in the Maurice Sendak movie *The Nutcracker*. Rounding out her performing career, Ms. Valliant toured nationally for eight years on the renowned EQUITY tour of *The Phantom of the Opera*, performing in the corps de ballet and the understudying principal role of Meg Giry. Upon retiring from performing, Ms. Valliant gained extensive experience in teaching and mentoring adolescents and young adults with varied learning styles and needs as founding director of Austin-based studio Ballet Southwest Academy. She currently teaches in schools throughout the Triangle.

We are pleased to welcome Ms. Valliant to the RSB summer faculty.