



to the *Pointe* Midland Festival Ballet Newsletter

Volume XVI, No. 3
Spring 2010

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The 'Barre'

"BRINGING THE BEAUTY OF BALLET TO THE BASIN"

Spring Gala to Close 2009-10 Season



Joseph Goodman

Spring Gala will be held on Saturday, May 1, at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, May 2, at 2:30 p.m. in the Wagner and Brown Auditorium of the Allison Fine Arts Center on the Midland College campus.

The first half of the program will consist of a mixed bill, including "Tarantella" and "Vivaldi" by Joseph Goodman, "Heavy Sleepers" and "More than Almost" by Lauren Curry, "Argyle Socks" by Rob Davidson, and "Lux Aeterna" by Jean-Paul Comelin. The second half will consist of the wedding scene of Act III from *Coppelia* composed by Leo Delibe. Joseph Goodman from Paradise Ballet and former Joffrey dancer Michael Levine will be performing as featured guest artists.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for children, seniors, and students. Contact MFB's Administrative Office at 432.686.0071 or visit PayPal on the MFB website at www.midlandfestivalballet.org to purchase tickets.



Michael Levine

Dancing in San Antonio

A record-breaking 22 MFB company dancers attended this year's RDA/SW festival in San Antonio from April 8-10. MFB performed "Heavy Sleepers" by Lauren Curry on Emerging Choreography Night and "Lux Aeterna" by Jean-Paul Comelin on Performing Night.

Thank you to Shelley Wright for coordinating the trip plans and to all the parents who chaperoned and drove.

Summer Classes Planned

Six weeks of summer classes will be held at the School of Midland Festival Ballet this year from Monday, June 7, through Friday, July 16.

The programs will include Princess Camp, Intermediate and Advanced ballet intensives, and workshops on other forms of technique.

Specific information with class days, times, and fees will be available at the studio in late April and May. For more information, please call the studio at 432.682.2653.



Louisa Chapman

Senior Dancer Bidding Farewell

Midland Festival Ballet will honor company member Louisa Chapman, this year's graduating senior, with a dinner in May.

Chapman has been dancing with MFB since she was five, performing in such productions as *The Nutcracker*, *Fairytale Festival*, and other lead roles in ballets presented for *Spring Gala* and Regional Dance America/Southwest Festivals. In the summers, she has been invited to attend Joffrey Midwest, Joffrey New York, Milwaukee Ballet, and Kaatsbaan. This summer Chapman will perform with the RDA/SW Company at the International Ballet Competition in Mississippi. Chapman's other loves are acting, singing, and academic excellence. She is currently auditioning for an apprenticeship with a professional ballet company and will graduate from Midland Classical Academy this May.

Performance Reviews

Costumes, Lighting Highlight 'Nutcracker'

With a record number of ticket sales, the 16th annual performance of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* was a huge success. The performances were held on December 12-13 at Lee High School Auditorium with accompaniment by the Midland-Odessa Symphony conducted by Douglas Droste. Guest artists included Amy Fote and Nicholas Leschke, principal dancers with Houston Ballet, performing as Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier. Joseph Goodman performed as Soldier Doll and Candy Cane Soloist, and Drew Wright danced as Snow Prince and Arabian. Unfortunately, due to an injury, Johnny Simmons could not perform his role as Herr Drosselmeyer and David Yeakle from Austin replaced him.

The new mice costumes were thanks to the work of Jane Swartz and her helpers: Katy Morrow, Linda Barker, Paula Gutierrez, Loretta Lancaster, Monica Lancaster, and Bonnie Metcalf. Additionally, the new lighting design by Lauren Curry helped to transform the stage into a magical place.

Midland Festival Ballet would like to thank all the parents and volunteers who helped make the performances possible, and all the studios whose students performed in this year's production. The show would not be possible without you. Thank you!



Photo Courtesy Jane Swartz

Dancers portraying mice included Landess Walker, Emma Shupp, Rebecca Morrow, Mia Pressler, Ashley Ramirez, Lexi Subia and Anna Snell.



Reception Honors Guest Performers

An evening reception to honor the guest performers was held for a second year at the home of Terry and Jenny Rhoads on Saturday, December 12, following the performance of *The Nutcracker*. The reception offers an opportunity for board and company members to meet the guest artists and to thank them for performing with MFB. Classic Designs and Acrylic Images, Too donated this year's gifts for

the guest artists: An engraved stationary holder for the men and an engraved jewelry box for the ladies.

Nutcracker DVD's

Extra copies of *The Nutcracker* DVD filmed by TWiN Productions are available for purchase at the School of Midland Festival Ballet for \$30 each or \$60 for both performances. To reserve your copy, please call the studio at 432.682.2653.



Bill Dingus prepares for his role as one of the stepsisters in "Cinderella."

Cinderella: Magic in the Air

Cinderella and the Prince danced the night away for this year's *Fairytale Festival* as Midland Festival Ballet performed Strauss's *Cinderella*. The public performance was held on Friday, February 19, at 7:30 p.m. at Midland High School Auditorium. Immediately following the performance, a reception held in the Bulldog Room allowed children to take pictures with their chosen character. Thank you to David Kleinbeck and Phyllis Peek for their help in putting it together.

In addition to performing for the Midland/Odessa area, Midland Festival Ballet performed for more than 2,000 Midland Independent School District third graders at 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Friday, February 19. On Monday, February 22, at 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., Midland Festival Ballet performed as part of Permian Basin Child's Play for another 2,000 second-grade students in the Ector County Independent School District. The occasion gave students the opportunity to experience the arts and to see how music is an essential part of ballet.

Midland Festival Ballet was pleased to be a part of this educational development program.

2010 Fairytale Festival Cinderella Cast

MICE

Shannon Hickey
Mikayla Padilla
Priyanka Reddy
Zoe Segura
Rebekah Snell
Morgan Swartz
Grace Vaughn
Grace Weatherl

WHITE CAT

Pearl Pierce

STEPMOTHER

Karen Scarcelli

STEPSISTERS

John Chapman
Bill Dingus

CINDERELLA

Louisa Chapman

PRINCE

Ryan Lutu

PRINCE'S MESSENGER

Dakota Ballard

MAIDENS

Autumn Adair
Ba'Leigh Burns
Emily Gulick
Lauren Laughlin
Olivia Lerwick
Kyle McDuffey
Meghana Reddy

MESSENGERS

Grace Ann Brown
Rachel Hickman
Hanna Pierce

FAIRY GODMOTHER

Jennifer Runnfeldt

FAIRIES

Annie Gilmore
Victoria Gilmore

JESTER

Joseph Goodman

GIFT FAIRIES

Ba'Leigh Burns
BreAnna LaFoy
MeKelee LaFoy

Lauren Laughlin
Olivia Lerwick
Victoria Orta

SOLDIERS

Carly Barker
Alex Covert
Hannah Gutierrez
Clara Hart
Elizabeth Howell
Skyler Jones
Jordan Shoultz

BALL DANCERS

Emily Abalos
Chloe Gomez
Ruthanne Kerr
Pearl Pierce
Tyler Rhoads



Photos by Debbie Chapman

THANKS! To Production Volunteers

DRESSING ROOMS

Beth Hickey
Angie Snell
Debra Weatherl
Shelley Wright

COSTUMES

Debbie Chapman
Judy Lerwick
Jane Swartz

MERCHANDISE

Linda Barker
Paula Gutierrez
Aparna Reddy

FOOD

Jennifer Hart
Tammy Shoultz
Rhonda Vaughn

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Kelly Cunningham
Glen Minor

PRODUCTION

Anna Adair
Jack Hickman
Harris Kerr

Paul Lerwick
Mike LaFoy

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Linda McLaughlin
Steve McLaughlin
Daniel McLaughlin
Garth Binam
Bobby Adair
Jonathan Adair
Jacob Adair
Michael Hutch
David Kleinbeck
Phyllis Peek
Mike Peek



John Chapman laughs at his portrayal of the other stepsister.



MISSION STATEMENT: *The mission of Midland Festival Ballet is to develop the skills and expand the artistic potential of young dancers, to provide quality performance opportunities for them, and to further public understanding and appreciation of the art of classical ballet as a vibrant part of the cultural mix of the community.*

Company and School of MFB News

Children Channel Their Energy Into Dance

Casa de Amigos is a place humming with the boundless energy of children just released from school. It is a place in which that energy is channeled into many diverse activities. From arts and crafts to cheerleading, Boy Scouts, and creative writing, children who spend their afternoons at Casa de Amigos have many options.

Beginning in the winter of 2009, Midland Festival Ballet's contemporary instructor, **Lauren Curry**, presented the option of dance to the Casa kids. The opportunity is funded by a sub grant received by Arts Assembly of Midland through Texas Commission on the Arts for after-school arts enrichment with children served by the agency.

"The children are very eager to move," says Curry. "It is very rewarding to facilitate a kinesthetic outlet for these



"The children are very eager to move."

*- Lauren Curry:
Ballet instructor,
choreographer and
lighting designer.*

kids. I try to strike a balance between having enough structure that everyone can follow along, but enough freedom that the students have license to show me moves that they have learned from friends or TV, ask questions, and encourage each other."

Every Monday afternoon when Curry enters the building, she is greeted with expectant faces and the question, "Is dance class today?" Then, between five and 10 students squeeze themselves into the makeshift dance studio that also

serves as the crafts, sewing, and study hall room. As the class progresses, there is laughter, sometimes frustration, and always encouragement both from the instructor and between students. Some faces are familiar; others change from week to week. However, one thing never changes; **children love to dance.** The partnership between Casa de Amigos and Midland Festival Ballet exists to develop that love in children who might not otherwise have the resources to explore it.

Funded in part by



COMING ATTRACTIONS



Midland Rockhounds Baseball Game - Friday, April 23

Come out, support your team, and watch the ballet perform in the pre-game. Discounted tickets for \$5 will be available for friends and family. To purchase tickets in advance, please contact the studio at 432.682.2653.

Bi-annual Spring Concert - Saturday, May 16

All classes from Pre-Ballet and up will perform to music from the Bourneville Ballets composed by E. Helsted and H.S. Paulli. There is no charge for parents and family members to attend the performance which will be held at 5:30 p.m. at Midland High School Auditorium.

Nutcracker Dates

Saturday, December 11, at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 12, at 2:30 p.m. at Lee High School Auditorium. Mark your calendars now and make plans to attend.

Fall Classes Begin

Monday, August 23 (This is the same day classes start for MISD).

Ballet To Participate In Celebration of Arts

Midland Festival Ballet will perform at the 26th annual Celebration of the Arts on Sunday, May 16.

This Celebration weekend is filled with fun, food, performances, and activities sponsored by Arts Assembly of Midland. Thousands of visitors come from area towns to watch the various performers and to purchase unusual items from artists.

This event encourages everyone to get involved in the arts. Watch for the schedule of performances in the *Midland Reporter-Telegram* insert and come watch the MFB dancers on stage. Furthermore, plan to stop by the MFB table in the foyer of Midland Center to say hello and sign up for a drawing to win two tickets to the 2010 performance of *The Nutcracker*.

Business of Ballet

Guild Committed to MFB

The Midland Festival Ballet Guild, formally established in 2009, plans to provide essential financial and volunteer support for the organization. Thus, the Guild has launched a year-round commitment to help provide funding and services, such as showcasing internationally recognized dancers and choreographers, and providing opportunities for our own dancers to perform in major cities.

BAUBLES AND BEADS:

Check your hatboxes, broom closets, and sewing kits for ribbon, shiny remnants, or anything the Guild can use for decorating various items. Tanza Brumfield and Beth Qualia are selling old pointe shoes and other items to benefit MFB, and are taking custom orders! In three months, MFB earned \$1,300 from these artworks, made from scraps and throw-away items.



Tanza Brumfield, above, and Beth Qualia, right.

The craft parties are only beginning! The Guild plans more teas and gatherings on Fridays at Midland Country Club and in volunteers' homes. To host a party, contact Beth Qualia, MFB Guild President, at 432.683.7488.



WANTED: People Willing to Serve

Midland Festival Ballet is currently seeking nominations of individuals willing to serve on the Board of Directors. The Board oversees productions, community awareness, and fundraising for Midland Festival Ballet, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit arts organization. Its members consist of business and community leaders, parents, dancers, and art supporters. Meetings are held monthly from July to June each season. To submit a name for consideration, please contact Jan St. Hilaire, Executive Director, at 432.686.0071. A nominating committee will then make recommendations to the Board for approval at the May meeting.

Raising the 'Barre' for Funds

A fundraising event, "Members of the Barre," was held on Tuesday, March 23, at the MFB studio. Its main purpose was to gain financial support during low-income periods, which will eventually turn into a fund the company can draw from during times of need and then replace the money once comes in. The evening consisted of food prepared by Harris and Vicki Kerr, wine donated by Paul Lerwick, and entertainment by the Midland Festival Ballet Company Members who performed excerpts from "Argyle Socks," "Mirlitons" from *The Nutcracker*, excerpts from "Heavy Sleepers," "Talk is Cheap," and excerpts from ballets composed by Ludwig Minkus. The evening was successful and helped raise \$40,600 in part to the generous contributions of:

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EOG Resources, Inc.

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Paul & Judy Lerwick

Board meetings for the 2009-10 season start at 8 p.m. the fourth Monday (except December) in the Community Board Room at Junior League of Midland, Inc. headquarters, 902 W. Dengar Ave. MFB Executive Committee meetings are scheduled for 12 noon on the second Thursday of each month in the MFB office, 401 N. Big Spring St., Suite 510.

Phone number for the MFB office is 432.686.0071. Send e-mail to: mfballet@sbcglobal.net.



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