

2008 INDY CONVERGENCE

Participant Biographies

ASHLEY BENNINGHOFF

Training: Fort Wayne Ballet, Southern Methodist University (BFA), Dance Space

Ashley began her dance training at the Fort Wayne Ballet under the direction of Michael Tevlin continuing through Karen Gibbons-Brown. There she danced lead roles in *Les Sylphides*, *Paquita*, Sean Curran's *A Soldier's Tale*, and *The Nutcracker*; as well as works choreographed by Radmila Teodorovic Novosel and Karen Gibbons-Brown. Ashley attended a number of summer workshops including: Joffrey Midwest, Boston Ballet, and Dance Space in New York City where she performed in a piece by Alexandra Beller. She then went to school at Southern Methodist University where she graduated with a Bachelor's in Dance Performance in 2005. While there she discovered and fell in love with modern dance and performed in works by Martha Graham, Robert Battle, Max Stone, and Sabrina Madison-Cannon. She also choreographed a number of pieces for the bi-annual student choreographed Brown Bag production. Ashley choreographed, organized, and danced in a full dance program entitled *Sides*, which was met with rave reviews. One of the solos from the show was later performed in the Fort Wayne Ballet's 50th Anniversary Gala Performance in September of 2006. She currently resides in New York City where she is pursuing her dance and choreography, studying with Max Stone, Jana Hicks, Oliver Steele, and Kenny Larson. She most recently choreographed a piece for The Fields choreographic workshop in New York City.

CHRISTOPHER FAESI

Training: University of Hartford, Butler University(BFA)

Christopher Faesi was born in Santa Fe, NM and grew up in Indianapolis, IN. He started learning music at the age of 5 with the violin and piano, and went on to study cello, trombone, saxophone, oboe, percussion, and guitar at various times, becoming involved with local pop music bands as well as ensembles such as the Butler University Wind Ensemble and the Indiana Wind Symphony. He also began dancing at the age of 15 and went on to attend the University of Hartford, CT, and then graduated Cum Laude from Butler with a degree in Dance Pedagogy. His professional dance career included five seasons with the Richmond Ballet in VA and two seasons with Dance Kaleidoscope in Indianapolis, as well as several guest performance appearances around the country. He is now in the process of returning to school with the goal of obtaining a Physics degree as well as teaching dance at several local studios. When not involved in the arts or science, he can usually be found playing a board, card, or computer game.

TONY FORKUSH

Training: Moorpark College, California Institute of the Arts

Tony Forkush (Oedipus) is an actor/playwright living in Los Angeles. A graduate of California Institute of the Arts in Theater, Mr. Forkush has performed on stage, TV and professionally for 25 years. Roles include: Frank in Jacqueline Wright's award winning "Eat Me" at Theatre of Note, Gremio in Zoo District's "Taming of the Shrew" at the Orpheum Theater, Dr. Melmud in "Couples Counseling" at the Redcat, Ron in Howard Korder's "Search and Destroy" at South Coast Rep and Yale Rep, Enid/Nicodemus in the late Charles Ludlum's "Mystery of Irma Vep" at New Mexico Repertory and Laguna Playhouse. His writing credits include his One-Act play "The Bubo", his full length comedy "Lewyus Gonzalish", and numerous five minute plays, among which "When the Peacock Sings" and "Tender" had their premier at Al's National Theater five minute play festival. Mr. Forkush would like to thank Dara Weinberg for her courage and vision and is very honored to be performing in Indiana for the first time.

JILLIAN GODWIN

Training: Dance Magic, Broad Ripple High School, ABT, Chataqua Institution

Jillian Godwin has been surrounded by the arts since childhood. Dancing leapt into her life at age 11. Currently a company member of Dance Kaleidoscope, Jillian also teaches at dance studios around the Indianapolis area. Dance is not the only art form that she excels in. Singing was actually the first art she was exposed to and rigorously trained in for 6 years. She performed in numerous musical theatre productions ranging from Cabaret to Carousel. Jill recently began training in the blistering beauty of acoustic guitar and bass, which adds to her knowledge of cello and piano. The arts are in full circle in her life. "I'm always willing to create and learn."

TANNER HRONEK

Training: Boston Ballet, Houston Ballet, Butler University (BA)

Tanner Hronek began his dance training at the age of 12 in Ames, IA, under the instruction of Robert Thomas and Miyoko Kato. During this time he performed jazz and ballet in many areas of the Midwest and also attended summer programs at Boston Ballet and Houston Ballet. After high school he became a student at Butler University and later graduated with high honors. For the last two years he was been a member of Charleston Ballet Theater where he has performed leading roles in classical and contemporary choreography. He has also worked on stage with the Lexington Ballet, The National Ballet of Panama, Ballet Internationale, and Alexandra Ballet. This is his third season with Dance Kaleidoscope.

DAVID KOSSACK

Training: Park School of Communications (Ithaca College, BS)

David graduated in 2004 from Ithaca College's Park School of Communications with a degree in Cinema Production. While at IC he wrote, directed and produced a number of short films including Robot Dreams and Good Housekeeping. The latter film was one of a half dozen student works selected from hundreds to be included in the Park School's 2004 PreVues program. He has worked on several projects since then, including local filmmaker Chris Julian's independent feature, Invisible Ink, and his most recent short, Hide and Seek. David has also directed area school plays, The Canterbury Tales at Boynton Middle School, Shakespeare's Tempest, and Moliere's Tartuffe both at Lansing High School. Since joining the Actor's Workshop of Ithaca in 2005 he has also acted as an assistant instructor and co-teacher for the summer youth program.

AMINA OMARI

Training: Cornell University (BA)

Amina Omari is an actor and writer who currently makes her home in Ithaca, New York.

MORAN HILLE REFAKIS

Training: Rutgers University, Fort Wayne Ballet, Dance Space (NYC)

Morgan Hille Refakis is from Fort Wayne, IN where she grew up dancing at The Academy of the Fort Wayne Ballet studying ballet, modern, jazz and tap. Before graduating high school she studied at summer intensives in Fort Wayne, Pittsburgh and New York City. In May 2008 Morgan will graduate from Rutgers University-Rutgers College with a dual degree in Dance and Journalism. While at Rutgers she was featured in works by David Dorfman and numerous student choreographers. Morgan is a recipient of a Jerome and Lorraine Aresty Undergraduate Research Scholarship given through the Henry Rutgers Scholars program. Morgan is choreographing an undergraduate thesis exploring choreography as a research tool and will perform the work in April 2008.

MELANIE SCHREIBER

Training: Walnut Hill School, SUNY Purchase (BFA), Merce Cunningham Dance Studio

Melanie Schreiber received her early training in her hometown of Marietta, Ohio, and continued at Walnut Hill Performing Arts High School. In 2004, she graduated from SUNY Purchase, receiving honorable mention and her BFA in Dance Performance. She has also studied in NYC under scholarship at the Merce Cunningham Dance Studio. She has worked with Jacquelyn Buglisi, Larry Clark, Rich-

ard Cook, Kazuko Hirabayashi, Rosanna Seravalli, Robert Swinston, Stephanie Tooman, Megan Williams, and Kevin Wynn. This is her fourth season with Dance Kaleidoscope.