

From Your Director

Every year the job description for “Director” at Amherst Ballet expands a little, broadening in scope. While this makes things challenging, it is also something to be proud of because it is the result of responding to a school and company which are experiencing success and growth. I find I am teaching more, learning to book and organize tours and performances for hire, and administering new programs for our students. Here are a few of the things that are new this year at Amherst Ballet:

Advanced Ballet classes have been meeting since September three times per week in the early afternoon (from 1:30 – 3:00pm) with an additional day of rehearsal. These classes are taught by me and senior instructor Sueann Townsend in partnership with the Amherst Regional High School. Working like a dance conservatory, we (with much help from our students’ parents!) have been successful in negotiating with the school administration to allow some of our most talented, pre-professional dancers to leave school early to attend advanced ballet at our studios. Some of these dancers are receiving high school credit for the classes; others are missing a study hall in order to attend. This program works beautifully for the students who want to train at an intensive level and are able to structure their days to allow for more time dancing. We hope to continue these classes next year, although many of our current participants will have either graduated or left to study at intensive residential ballet programs around the world!

Pilates Classes: In the fall I attended teacher training for Intensive Mat Plus Pilates through the Stott Pilates organization. I am currently studying (and practicing!) for my certification examinations which I will take next year after I attend more training for advanced mat work. The training involves memorization and execution of exercises, knowledge of anatomy and how the exercises use specific muscles including sequencing and type of muscle contraction, how to conduct postural analysis on students/clients, identifying various conditions (kyphosis, lordosis, etc.) and how to choose the best and most appropriate work-out for each individual. Whew! I am glad to have

some time to practice what I learned in the training before taking the exam. Currently, I am teaching Pilates classes to Amherst Ballet dancers as well as a group of adults (all Amherst Ballet moms) and truly enjoying the opportunity. I believe that this work is essential to my development as a teacher and hope that all of my students will benefit. I am thankful to Amherst Ballet for providing me with the opportunity to study Pilates.

Youth American Grand Prix Competition:

This year seven Amherst Ballet students aged 10 to 16 participated in the Youth American Grand Prix (YAGP) competition classes and coaching program. This is a huge commitment for these students and included additional weekly classes and coaching sessions beginning in the fall. Faculty members Sueann Townsend, Jana Fugate and I taught and coached students in selected classical variations; Sueann and faculty member Shannon Gauthier choreographed and coached contemporary variations for some of the students. Like Advanced Ballet, this program provides students with professional aspirations the chance to study more intensively in a smaller class setting at an advanced level. Look on page 6 for more information about the competition itself, which took place in Providence, RI in February.

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Performances for Hire: Amherst Ballet is continuing to expand our work as a “professional” company. By professional, I mean that we are being approached to perform as a company that is paid for its work. This is wonderful for our budget’s bottom line and is an indication of the quality of our performances and the ability and training of our students. In December, we collaborated with the **Pioneer Valley Symphony** as guest performers in their *Holiday Magic!* concert. Eighteen dancers performed the ballet *Chopiniana* set to music of Frederic Chopin and staged by Sueann Townsend, while another 17 dancers performed excerpts from *The Nutcracker* which I choreographed. The result was an overwhelming success with an enthusiastic standing ovation from the audience. Conductor Paul Phillips has indicated that the symphony is eager to work with Amherst Ballet again next season; we are excited about this possibility and hope for many more successful collaborations in the future!

Amherst Ballet will be traveling to New York to perform in May. Twenty-two dancers (along with faculty, chaperones, sets, costumes and props) will bring excerpts from our original ballet *Emily of Amherst* to the **New York Botanical Garden** on May 15th and 16th as part of their *Emily Dickinson’s Garden: The Poetry of Flowers* exhibition. We will be accompanied by Jane Wald, executive director of the Emily Dickinson Museum, and together we will present performances combining lecture and dance to educate audiences about the life and work of poet Emily Dickinson. In addition to performing, our dancers will serve as “living history” guides in the Garden throughout the day, addressing the crowds in costume as their characters from the ballet as well as assisting me in leading creative dances for young visitors to the Garden. I am working on the contract with the Garden now and have many details to iron out in order to make this tour happen. It is a wonderful opportunity for our dancers to perform in an unusual venue, for *Emily of Amherst* and Amherst Ballet to receive publicity, and for us to bolster our income. Now we have to hope the weather will cooperate to insure good attendance that weekend!

If these new activities weren’t enough, we also have our annual spring performance to look forward to. **Classical and More...** will be performed on May 7, 8 and 9 at Bowker Auditorium on the campus of the University of Massachusetts. The name for this concert describes Amherst Ballet perfectly! We are bringing excerpts from last spring’s *Emily of Amherst* back to the stage including *Emily at the West Cemetery*, *In the Woods and Fields of Amherst*. Featuring narration from Emily Dickinson’s letters and poems, an original score composed by Ted Trobaugh, beautiful period costumes and original sets, choreography by Samantha Kenney, Sueann Townsend and me, this performance will be sure to have an impact. Here are what some audience members had to say about *Emily of Amherst* after last year’s premiere performances:

"Emily of Amherst" was an incredible accomplishment. The dancing, choreography, music, sets and costumes all told important pieces of an unforgettable story. The talent that blazed on the stage made us feel like we were at Lincoln Center, but how appropriate that after the final curtain we stepped outside into the town that inspired this magical production.

Jill Shulman, Amherst

My wife invited my father to the show and he was happy to join us. He mentioned before the show began that he probably would leave during one of the intermissions. He's a fan of the arts, but he's also a fan of brevity and sitting for more than a couple hours is not something that he's usually very keen about doing. Much to my surprise, not only did he stay for all acts, but he seemed to be genuinely moved by what he saw. Now, we're planning a visit to the Emily Dickinson Homestead Museum, as my father is now quite interested in learning more about Emily Dickinson!

Mike Olkin, GIS Administrator, Town of Amherst

Emily of Amherst excerpts will be followed by *Trio*, an original work both intense and comical, I am choreographing to the music of J.S. Bach. This piece, set on the dancers of the Advanced Ballet class, explores the synthesis of classical ballet with contemporary dance and combines traditional movements and concepts bending them into unconventional forms and shapes. *Breaking Through Life*, choreographed by Shannon Gauthier, explores memories and experiences and how they are interpreted through movement set to music by Snow Patrol. *Krater, Ewer, Amphora*, choreographed by Sueann Townsend, features classical Middle Eastern music with eclectic choreography combining Middle Eastern folk styles with contemporary modern dance. *Rhapsody of Youth*, an original piece by student choreographer **Isa Braun**, will also be featured as a part of this special performance. *Chopiniana* (based on the ballet *Les Sylphides* to the music of Frederic Chopin) will close the program with its brilliant classical lines and resplendent corps of dancers dressed in white, romantic tutus.

In addition to the repertoire mentioned above, audiences who enjoy seeing our younger dancers will have the opportunity to watch dances from the Lower School open the Saturday and Sunday matinees performed to a selection of music played by our accompanists. They will finish their portion of the program with the traditional All School Bow which showcases dance skill development over the years and never fails to bring tears to the eyes of our parents.

I truly hope each of you will mark your calendars and make time to attend one of Amherst Ballet's spring performances of ***Classical and More...***; the ticket order form is included in this newsletter. These special concerts mean so much to our dancers, are a wonderful opportunity for our community to see the hard work and talent that characterizes our school and performing company and provide ticket sales revenues that are an essential and significant part of our budget. The current economic climate is making itself felt in all arts and non-profit organizations. We count on audiences to attend our performances, make contributions, and by doing so assure the viability of Amherst Ballet well into the future!

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The 5th Annual Harvest Fete and

By Andrea Leibson

It just wouldn't be October without an Amherst Ballet Harvest Fete! The fifth annual event took place on October 3rd this year. We are again indebted to Gillian and Jim (former board president and Harvest Fete initiator) Duda for the generous use of their "perfect for a party" barn. Portabella Catering of Amherst prepared our dinner with the addition of more than 10 pounds of spicy boil-and-eat shrimp made in the Duda kitchen by office manager, and amateur cook, me. Music for the evening was performed by the ever-popular Johnny B and the Hornets and photos of the proceedings were taken by parent Chris Eliot. A small army of board members, dancers and their parents work hard to gather and display auction items, set up the decorations, arrange the food and return the barn to order

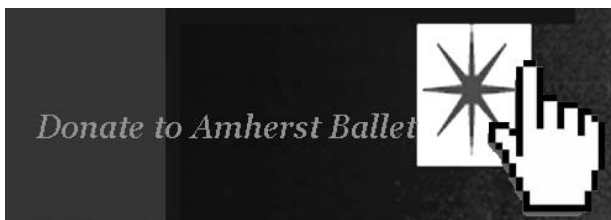
AB board president Carl Ho, director Catherine Fair and senior instructor Sueann Townsend all spoke to those in attendance. Sueann's modern class performed an excerpt from a piece they will perform in May; it was amazing to see what they could do after less than four weeks of class and rehearsal. Thanks to dancers **Lula Beresford-Banker, Isa Braun, Aliya Cycon, Gabrielle Engel, Marissa Hashizume, Camille**

Kemache, Katherine Merrill, Sara Moss-Horwitz, Rachel Musante, Robin Palmer, Ethan Scheitzer-Gaslin, Elora Simkins, Pilar Solomon-Jefferson, Maddison Stemple-Piatt and Marianne Wald for entertaining us and reminding us what Amherst Ballet means to so many dancers and their families. Please come see them in performance the weekend of May 7; more on this in the From Your Director article.

After the entertainment it was time for the not-so-silent part of the Silent Auction. State Representative Stan Rosenberg, a wonderful supporter of the arts in general and Amherst Ballet in particular, served as auctioneer. He cajoled, teased and worked the crowd into quite a bidding frenzy. Through his efforts and those of volunteers, we raised over \$6400 on interesting auction items. The vacation home owners, artisans, institutions, restaurants and businesses who donated to the Silent Auction are listed on the following page. Please patronize them, and when you do, thank them for their support of Amherst Ballet.

continues on next page

New ways to give to Amherst Ballet



We are happy to announce two new and easy ways of making contributions to Amherst Ballet. The home page of our website, www.amherstballet.org, now has a **Donate Button**. Click on it to make a donation to AB on-line using your credit card OR PayPal account. Just choose your payment option and follow the prompts. The donation goes directly into our account and we are sent an email reporting the name

of the donor and donation amount – so we can thank you for your generosity! We've already received an on-line donation within the first month of adding the button. Many thanks to web mistress Anne Beresford for adding this valuable feature to our website.

We are also a new member of the UMassFive College Federal Credit Union. Did you know that you can transfer Co-op Points among fellow members? One former board member transferred some of his Co-op Points to AB which allowed us to receive a more favorable interest rate on our certificate of deposit. Every penny helps! If you'd like to transfer Co-op Points to Amherst Ballet, please call to speak with office manager Andrea who will give you the information you'll need to transfer points. It can be done with a very quick call to the credit union.

Silent Auction

The Fetes have been the most successful fundraisers in AB's history and the 2009 Fete continued that trend netting AB over \$7500 – a very good amount considering the state of the economy. Each year these events have grown in popularity and fundraising revenue to help AB meet its mission of dance education, performance and community enrichment. Such success must be repeated! If you would like to donate an item for next year's Fete and Silent Auction, please contact Andrea at AB and it will be included.



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photos by Chris Eliot

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2010 Youth American Grand Prix Competition

by Catherine Fair



Maria Engel

This year six Amherst Ballet dancers, ranging in age from 10 to 16, participated in the Youth American Grand Prix (YAGP) semi-final competitions, one of several held in the U.S. and around the world. Our dancers traveled to Providence, RI to compete with dancers from schools as small as Amherst Ballet and as big as The Boston Ballet School. Our students prepared intensively by taking extra “YAGP” ballet classes and being coached in one or more classical or contemporary variations from September through February. Senior Instructor Sueann Townsend, faculty member Jana Fugate and I coached students **Aliya Cycon, Heather Eliot, Gabrielle Engel, Camille Kemache, Anna Lally, Ethan Schweitzer-Gaslin** and **Ira Teveleva**. The dancers enjoyed the opportunity to learn variations by well-known choreographers Marius Petipa, August Bournonville and Coralli in variations from the ballets *La Bayadere*, *Le Corsaire*, *Paquita*, *Flower Festival at Genzano*, *Walpurgisnacht*, *Giselle*, *Satanella (Le Diable Amoureux)* and *La Sylphide*. In addition to classical works, three dancers also competed in the contemporary category: Sueann choreographed contemporary works for Ethan and Camille and faculty member Shannon Gauthier choreographed for Aliya. On Thursday February 18 all of the competition students had the opportunity to perform for family and friends at Amherst Ballet before traveling to Providence the next morning to perform on a big stage in the Veteran’s Memorial Auditorium.

The students who participated were united in their goal to become better dancers, learn more, work harder, and achieve improvement in strength and technique. We stress to both parents and students that our primary focus is to allow the students to experience the many benefits of preparing to compete and focus on the process, not on winning. We know from experience that the competition is FIERCE! There are so many fabulous dancers who compete even in the semi-finals that it can feel overwhelming to watch them all, but for the aspiring professional dancer, it is important to see and experience the greater world of ballet beyond Amherst Ballet and get a real sense of the competitive nature of professional ballet!

Another benefit for competing students is the opportunity to take classes with the competition judges, all world class teachers from internationally recognized companies.

This year, the dancers took class with teachers Rinat Imaev (company teacher at American Ballet Theatre Company), Erica Cornejo (principal dancer at Boston Ballet and a former dancer with American Ballet Theatre Company) and Carlos dos Santos Jr. (choreographer for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater), among others. Last year, dancers took classes with Franco DeVita (director of the American Ballet Theatre JKO School in New York City), Ethan Brown (company teacher at American Ballet Theatre Company) and Anna Marie Holmes (director of the Ballet Program at Jacob’s Pillow). It is rare for students to attend classes with such high caliber teachers who usually work only with professional dancers from the best companies in the world or are themselves principal dancers or choreographers. The dancers from Amherst Ballet are unanimous in reporting their enjoyment and enthusiasm of the experience!

While all of our dancers scored in an impressive range, Ethan distinguished himself by scoring 2nd in the Men’s Contemporary Category and 3rd in the Classical Dance Category for Men. We are extremely proud of Ethan and his coach and choreographer, Sueann Townsend. Ethan traveled to New York City in late March to compete with semi-finalists from all over the world as well as to take classes and workshops with internationally renowned teachers. While there he had the chance to audition for admission and scholarships to numerous ballet schools. We are excited for him to have this opportunity for a second year in a row! Pre-competitive dancer

Fun Times in April

Anna Lally was also invited to attend the intensive weeklong workshop where she took classes with dancers and teachers from around the world. Anna traveled with her family to take advantage of the offering, delve even more deeply into her training, and pursue the art form she is so passionate about.

We are proud of all of our dancers and are very much aware that this process has benefited them in their pursuit of ballet. Each of them has also been very successful with the summer intensive audition process and will be attending the following programs:

Aliya Cycon

Kirov Academy of Ballet, Washington, DC

Heather Eliot

Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Natick, MA

Camille Kemache

l'Académie Américaine de Danse de Paris, France

Anna Lally

Boston Ballet School, Boston, MA

Ethan Schweitzer-Gaslin

*Kaatsbaan International Dance Center, NY;
Miami City Ballet, Miami FL*

Ira Teveleva

Bolshoi Ballet Academy Summer Intensive, NY

Congratulations to our "YAGP" dancers. We are proud of you and recognize your hard work and commitment to the art of dance!

In addition to the students mentioned above, we are very proud of dancers who auditioned and will be attending the following summer intensive programs:

Marissa Ho

School of the Richmond Ballet, Intensive Summer Session

Sara Moss-Horwitz

Interlochen Arts Academy Summer Arts Camp for Dance

Robin Palmer

The Ailey School Summer Intensive Program

Krater, Ewer, Amphora Wine Tasting Friday, April 9 at 7:30pm

This fun, adult fundraiser (\$25) will be a wine tasting with a twist. Since krater, ewer and amphora were ancient Mediterranean vessels created to hold liquids, we'll be tasting a variety of them: wine, water and olive oil. Participants will be asked to bring a bottle of wine from a country that borders the Mediterranean Sea to share and a bottle of tap water from their home. The board of directors will provide olive oil, baguettes and glasses. Join us at the home of board member Ted Trobaugh for this unique way to celebrate and support the upcoming May performances. Thanks to Amherst Wines for their support with this event. Pre-register by April 8 by calling Andrea at 549-1555 or emailing info@amherstballet.org to let us know if you're coming. Invite friends!

Pizza and a Movie Friday, April 23 at 6:30pm

This modest fundraiser in support of scholarships (\$10 @) will combine several of AB's strengths: our convivial community, our love of ballet history and the wealth of ballet knowledge possessed by our loquacious senior instructor Sueann Townsend. We'll meet at 6:30 in AB's lobby for pizza and camaraderie. At 7:30 Sueann will introduce *Ballet Russe* (2006), a delightful movie about dancers who performed with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo from the 1930s till its demise in the 1960s. We'll watch it projected on a large screen in our upper studio – please bring cushions and pillows for lounging. Pre-register by 4:00 on April 23rd by calling Andrea at 549-1555 or emailing info@amherstballet.org to let us know if you're coming and how many pieces of pizza you can eat! Invite your friends!



What's Up with That Dumpster?

By Steve Braun, board member

As any home owner knows, keeping a building ship-shape requires constant maintenance and repair. The AB building is no exception, and this year some important work was done to ensure that our building continues to be both safe and materially sound.

In August a whole gaggle of dancers and their parents worked to make improvements in the building. They scraped and cleaned and painted the walls in the upper studio making the studio warm and welcoming for September classes. A few of them couldn't stop themselves and went on to paint the lobby hallway making it fresh and bright. A new laminate floor was laid in the Upper School dressing room and upstairs landing covering up the old, splintery wooden floor.

In October the roof of the small section connecting the old house with the newer studio addition was replaced to fix some sagging sections. The roof was also re-shingled and an "ice shield"



Karen Schweitzer



Heidi Stemple

barrier was installed under the shingles of the lower parts of the new roof to prevent ice damage during the winters. The chimney of the house part of our building was re-pointed, and the interior of the upper part of the chimney was lined with new concrete. Both of these steps will stabilize the chimney and prevent loose bricks from falling down. Also completed this fall was the staining of the exterior staircase; now the wood has been protected and the aesthetics of the building have been much improved. Screening was installed at the eaves to prevent persistent critters from taking up residence in our attic. In January, all the smoke detectors were replaced in the building.

Further maintenance and repair projects will include re-staining the studio section of the building, repairing or replacing some windows and/or window frames, and re-painting the front portion of the building.

Where are they now? News of former AB students & faculty

Here are tidbits about more of the dancer alums who joined the 80s alum Facebook page but couldn't attend the August 2009 reunion: **Jan Passion** (né Dan Burgess) signed on from California, where he works for non-violent Peaceforce as a program officer...**Karen Wyse** connected from Alaska where she is a nurse practitioner for the Alaska Center for Pediatrics... **Jenny Adams** reported from Philadelphia that she is a massage therapist...**Mina Smith** is a renowned cellist and couldn't attend the reunion because it coincided with the Salt Bay Chamberfest in Maine she directs each August bringing in top-rate musicians to perform. Mina subs for the New York Philharmonic and lives in New York City with her conductor husband and two young children...After Amherst Ballet, **Dan Kobin** went to the Joffrey Ballet and North Carolina School of the Arts and then danced professionally with Alberta Ballet.

Returning to NYC, he became a chef and owned restaurants until 2007. He now does catering and events. He reports he has been married for 18 years and cooks dinner every night for his wife...**Ethan Seidman** has a private practice in Cambridge doing psychodynamic psychotherapy with adults. He also manages a psychology training program at the Cambridge Health Alliance, part of Harvard Medical School...**Michele Kreisler Rubenstein** graduated from Princeton University and works for Morgan Stanley. She lives in Pennsylvania with her husband and three children...**Alison Brown** is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Manhattan having completed her training at Columbia University this past June. She is the mother of two and has signed up her two-year-old daughter for pre-ballet at Steps Studio where Alison worked after college...While attending the reunion **Ana Caban** and **Deb Lardner** reported that

they were meeting in New York City to see **Kira Lamb Morris ('87)** perform in her Off-Broadway show called FUERZA BRUTA. Ana reported back that Kira was amazing. Ana, by the way, was on the Martha Stewart show talking about Pilates last summer.

Peggy Cheng ('89) contacted us last fall looking for a babysitter while she attended her Amherst High School reunion. Peggy lives in Brooklyn, has two kids and is still dancing when she can. Her day job is doing development/fundraising for Danspace Project, a non-profit dance presenter of contemporary dance in New York City. She says see their website (danspaceproject.org) to view some "downtown" contemporary work.

As always, we'd love to hear from you. Email your news to info@amherstballet.org and be sure to stop in to the studios whenever you're in Amherst!

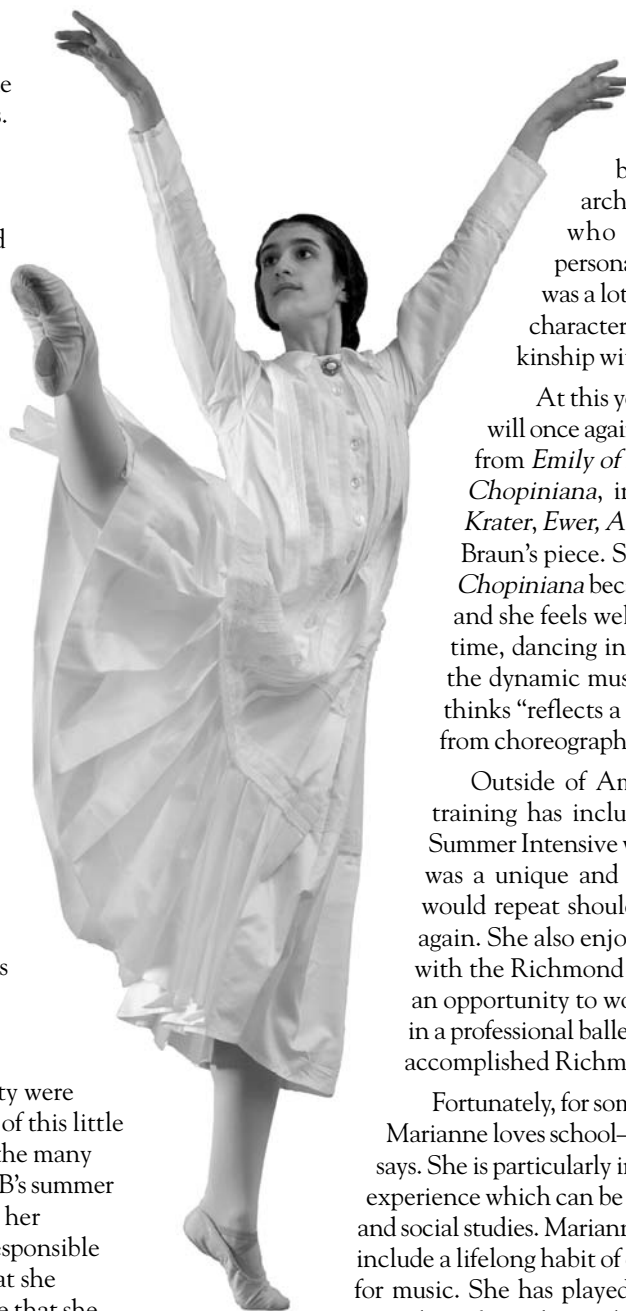
Spotlight on Senior Marianne Wald

by Jane Wald

Marianne Wald began dancing before she could talk - or walk, according to her parents. Her father had an old videotape of a concert given by the Soviet Army Chorus and Band, and every time he popped the tape into the VCR, Marianne would get up on her feet and rock back and forth to the music. It was her first character dance performance. The tape wore out from repeated use long before she began dance classes, first at New England Dance Quarters at age four, then at Amherst Ballet two years later. Marianne says that an important reason she became and has remained involved in dance was the support of her parents. "They'd never been involved in dance and didn't know anything about it, but they thought I'd enjoy it."

One of Marianne's fondest memories of her first classes at AB is how the instructors used playful exercises to provide basic instruction and encourage muscle memory in balletic movements. For example, dancers put stickers on the inside heels of their ballet slippers to learn turn-out. "We'd sit on the floor and try to turn out so that a spy looking down from the ceiling would be able to read a secret message on that sticker." Catherine Fair remembers how struck she was by Marianne after her first class at Amherst Ballet as a six year old Primary student. "I ran upstairs after class to tell Mrs. Donohue about Marianne. Her musicality, imagination and obvious innate dance quality were striking. I knew great things would come out of this little girl over the years!" Marianne believes that the many teachers she's had at Amherst Ballet and in AB's summer camps have each had a significant impact on her development as a dancer. Catherine Fair is responsible for the solid foundation in classical ballet that she gained in her early years at AB, and made sure that she could steadily build upon this foundation throughout her 12 years at the school. Sam Kenney combined technical proficiency with an emphasis on stage presence and dancing from the heart—"with something not unlike abandon," to borrow a phrase from *Emily of Amherst*. Joanna Duncan brought precision to her technique; Sueann Townsend has made Marianne more aware of how to improve and combine all the different aspects of her training and experience and translate them to the stage as a well-rounded dancer.

Marianne's performance roles have included a Neapolitan princess and maiden in *Swan Lake*, an Eel and Coral in *Shim Chung*, a Caribou in *The Arctic*, Aurora in *Sleeping Beauty*, and as a soloist in *Hungarian Dances*. One of her favorite roles was a solo in *Don Quixote* because, she says, "it was sassy, and was in a different style and flavor from other classical ballet we'd done at AB." She also enjoyed dancing the role of Emily Dickinson in *Emily of Amherst*



last year. "I liked portraying this very specific historical character. In most classical ballet, the story revolves around archetypal characters or vague figures who don't have very detailed personalities. In *Emily of Amherst* there was a lot of historical fact and depth to the character. I like Emily Dickinson and feel a kinship with her spirit."

At this year's May performance, Marianne will once again dance the role of Emily in scenes from *Emily of Amherst*, will be in the corps for *Chopiniana*, in the Ewer portion of Sueann's *Krater, Ewer, Amphora*, and in fellow student Isa Braun's piece. She notes that she enjoys dancing *Chopiniana* because romantic ballet is new to her and she feels well suited to the style. At the same time, dancing in Isa's piece is exciting because of the dynamic music and choreography which, she thinks "reflects a different kind of thought process from choreography often set on AB dancers."

Outside of Amherst Ballet, Marianne's dance training has included a week at the Joffrey NYC Summer Intensive with friends from AB. Aerial work was a unique and exciting experience, which she would repeat should the opportunity come her way again. She also enjoyed a five-week summer program with the Richmond Ballet in Virginia. This gave her an opportunity to work with apprentices and trainees in a professional ballet company and to get to know the accomplished Richmond faculty as dancers.

Fortunately, for someone headed to college next year, Marianne loves school—"nearly everything about it," she says. She is particularly intrigued by the patterns of human experience which can be traced through history, literature, and social studies. Marianne's artistic interests beyond dance include a lifelong habit of creative writing and appreciation for music. She has played violin since she was eight, and recently performed as a soloist in the Amherst Regional High School's February concert. She also plunged into the Hurricanes, a young women's chorus at the high school, and has exercised a new-found talent in the fine arts of drawing and ceramics. Long used to the ballet stage, Marianne has also recently taken to the theater stage at Amherst High and is experimenting as a playwright.

In her college search, Marianne has focused on small liberal arts schools with challenging academic programs and strong dance programs. She plans to continue her study of Latin and classics, now in its sixth year, learn new languages, expand her knowledge of world literature and history, and keep dancing. Marianne says that she's not quite sure what path she'll take with dance in college—she might be highly involved in ballet, or she might aim for breadth with modern, contra (which she's taken up this last year), salsa, or other dance forms in addition to ballet. No matter what, she says, dance will always be woven into the fabric of her life.

photo by Janine Norton

Summer at Amherst Ballet

In recent years, summer at Amherst Ballet has become almost as busy as our school-year season and this year will be no exception. Our goal is to offer interesting programming that allows our students a chance to study intensively and also exposes them to something a little different than they might experience attending Amherst Ballet during the school year.

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS

Week One: June 28 – July 2: *The Gods and Heroes of the Vikings*. Join us as we explore the lives of mischievous Loki, powerful Thor and the beautiful Freya and the maidens she teaches.

Week Two: July 5 – 9: *Tales of Russian Folklore*. We will work with Russian pianist Lada Isupova to explore Russian music, dance and story and we will learn character dance steps found in many well-known ballets.

Our children's workshops follow the winning formula for which Amherst Ballet has been known over many years. Conceived by founder Therese Donohue, these workshops are truly unique and allow students to experience the arts on many levels. We begin with a story that can be adapted and staged in the form of a narrated story ballet, find music to fit each scene, and plan art projects that allow students to create props, costumes and set pieces that help tell the story. When all of our planning is done we add the most important ingredient, the students! Children between the ages of five and ten (and occasionally older when they aren't quite ready to leave these wonderful camps behind) come on the first day eager to learn choreography and create art. The camps commence with reading the story then assignment of dancers to one or more roles. Dancers are divided into two groups according to their age and alternate participation in art and dance classes. At first it is hard for the students to see the big picture and conceive of how the pieces interrelate, but usually by Wednesday the whole story has been put together and everything is taking shape. Thursday we run a dress rehearsal in our "theater" and finish art projects needed for the performance and Friday we prepare for the big show. Most of the time, the weather cooperates and we spend lunch time across the street at the pond located on the grounds of Wildwood Cemetery. The best part is feeding the family of snapping turtles that make their home in the pond. Over the years, the dancers have named the turtles and can identify them by their respective, unique features! On Friday at 3:00pm

our audience arrives and we literally fill our lower studio "theater" with about 50 enthusiastic observers. The show is ALWAYS a resounding success and the children are well prepared and happy. As director, I never fail to feel proud of the accomplishments achieved by all involved: students, dance and art teachers and our student teacher. Frankly, I can't think of a better way to spend a week during summer vacation!

AMHERST BALLET SUMMER TEEN INTENSIVES

Week One: July 26 – 30: *Generation YouTube, Stage Two*

Week Two: August 2 — 6: *Swan Lake and Costuming*

Our ballet summer intensives live up to their name and allow students to study dance intensively during either or both one-week sessions. This year *Generation YouTube, Stage Two* follows in the footsteps of the original *Generation YouTube* workshop offered in 2008. Conceived by faculty member Jenny Bennett-Mansur, this camp uses modern media in facilitating student creation of choreography for video. This year, Jenny will be joined by me and Sueann Townsend as together we explore contemporary and traditional dance themes with the students. We'll take their ideas out into the community to identify non-traditional performance spaces where we will capture our work on video. Morning classes will be offered in ballet and pointe, and modern dance at the intermediate and advanced levels.

During week two, we will stage character dances and other repertory from the famous classical ballet, *Swan Lake*. Morning classes will be offered in classical ballet and pointe and in the afternoons we will explore aspects of costume design for ballet. Each student will research a particular period and style of costume. We'll create costume patterns and learn how to present our work to choreographers and directors by drawing dancers clothed in stunning visual depictions of our costumes with watercolor and ink. Each dancer will take home a matted costume design of their own creation at the end of the week.

TECHNIQUE CLASSES

We will offer technique classes in intermediate and advanced ballet and modern dance throughout the summer. Students may buy a multiple class card or pay a drop-in rate, choosing classes that fit their busy summer schedules. All classes will be held in our air-conditioned studio on our state of the art dance floor. We hope you'll join us!

CLASSICAL AND MORE...

AMHERST BALLET'S Spring Repertoire Performance
at UMASS BOWKER AUDITORIUM MAY 7, 8 & 9, 2010
TICKET ORDER FORM

Your information

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Choose your tickets

*Preferred seating available with a \$50 tax deductible gift; entitles donor up to 6 preferred seating tickets to any performance. **Orders requesting preferred seating must be received by April 24.***

	# Adults@ \$20	# Seniors (65+) & Students (12-18) @ \$16	# Children (3-11) @\$10	# AB Students @\$0 after performing in Sat./Sun. matinee
Friday May 7, 7pm				XXXXX
Saturday May 8, 2pm				
Saturday May 8, 7pm				XXXXX
Sunday May 9, 2pm				

Total your order

Ticket Subtotal _____

Tax Deductible Gift _____

Grand Total _____

Please make check payable to Amherst Ballet. We cannot accept credit or debit cards at this time. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you would like tickets mailed.

Tickets will be held at Amherst Ballet until May 6 and thereafter at the Bowker Box Office.

No Exchanges / No Refunds

Amherst Ballet 29 Strong Street Amherst, MA 01002 549-1555



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Upcoming Events

FRI, APRIL 2 CLASSES DO MEET though Amherst Schools closed

FRI, APRIL 9 *Krater, Ewer, Amphora: a wine tasting with a twist.* 7:30pm at home of Ted Trobaugh

SAT, APRIL 17 Morning and afternoon classes held

APRIL 19 – 24 School Vacation. Note mandatory rehearsal 4/25

FRI, APRIL 23 *Pizza & a Movie* (*Ballet Russe* introduced by Sueann Townsend) 6:00pm at AB

SUN, APRIL 25 MANDATORY REHEARSAL for all dancers cast in Upper School repertoire

MON, APRIL 26 Classes resume

SAT, MAY 1 No Level A. MANDATORY REPERTOIRE REHEARSALS. Upper School warm-up 1:00pm

SUN, MAY 2 MANDATORY REPERTOIRE REHEARSALS, Full Dress run through at AB 1:00 – 6:00pm

WED, MAY 5 No Levels 5, A or B/C. TECH REHEARSAL at BOWKER AUDITORIUM, 3:30 – 9:00pm

THUR, MAY 6 NO CLASSES except JAZZ 2. FULL DRESS REHEARSAL, both casts, at BOWKER AUDITORIUM

FRI, MAY 7 NO CLASSES
7:00pm performance Upper School Repertoire at Bowker Auditorium

SAT, MAY 8 ALL LOWER SCHOOL CLASSES REHEARSALS at Bowker Auditorium; 9:00am – 12:45
2:00pm performance: Selected Lower School Class Dances followed by Upper School Repertoire.
7:00pm performance: Upper School Repertoire only

SUN, MAY 9 2:00pm performance: Selected Lower School Class Dances followed by Upper School Repertoire

MON, MAY 10 NO UPPER SCHOOL CLASSES

SAT, MAY 29 *Wine and Roses* fundraiser. Details to be announced

MON, MAY 31 MEMORIAL DAY, NO CLASSES