



The Ultimate Convention

BUFFALO, NY FACULTY

Amanda Castro

Currently Associate Choreographer of Gypsy on Broadway and featured in Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch" in 2023, Amanda Castro is a Bessie award-winning Puerto Rican-American multidisciplinary artist. Her recent performances include Jelly's Last Jam (New York City Center), American Dance Platform (Soles of Duende), Chasing Magic (Ayodele Casel), Rhythm is Life (Dormeshia) at the Joyce, and Anita in West Side Story at Lyric Opera of Chicago. Amanda was a principal dancer of the renowned company Urban Bush Women, and a graduate of California Institute of the Arts. Her latest choreographic commission "El Camino" at New York City Center (collaboration with Ayodele Casel.) Amanda has been fortunate to work with innovative artists in the field and is constantly on the search to be a part of stories that help elevate our collective humanity.

www.acastrodance.com.



Christina Kotsopoulos

Christina Kotsopoulos is originally from Toronto, Ontario. Christina's film and television credits include programs such as Pop IT! (TVO Kids), Lego Girls (Family Channel), The Next Star (YTV), Backstage (Disney), The Boys (Amazon Prime). Christina was titled America's Senior Dancer of the Year in 2014. She then moved to New York City to study at SUNY Purchase College Conservatory for Dance and graduated with her Bachelor of Fine Arts with Honors in May 2018. She performed a solo excerpt from Kidd Pivot's repertoire choreographed by Crystal Pite, set by Cindy Salgado. Christina was chosen to study abroad in Amsterdam, Netherlands for a semester at Academie Voor Theater en Dans in the Modern Theater Dance department. Her performance credits include BC/EF Broadway Backwards starring Ariana DeBose, NORMA choreographed by Al Blackstone, Capezio Dance Awards, Tempus choreographed by Derek Piquette, Galderma Cetaphil's Brand Campaign choreographed by BeAy Weinberger, NYC's fashion week event for XXX, and The Pool Party choreographed by Creative Streak Entertainment to name a few. Her music video credits include "Strangers and Thieves" by Jesse Malin, directed and filmed by the Kuperman Brothers. Christina has also worked on many commercials including the Genesis Car Reveal, directed by Andrew Winghart and XtendBarre Fitness on the Open Fit App by Andrea Rogers. More recently she performed at the opening of Jean- Georges Michelin star restaurant, The Tin Building, directed by Creative Streak Entertainment and she performed at a Boot Barn exclusive event choreographed by Karla Garcia. She has worked on many skeleton crews such as Disney's Zombies 3, Dance Lab NYC, RWS's Step One Dance Company, Al Blackstone's "American in Paris" and the Kuperman Brother's "Verona." In addition to performing Christina teaches and adjudicates dance all over North America!



Julie LaMancuso

Julie LaMancuso is the National Tour Director of American Dance Awards and the Director of ADA in Class. After growing up competing on the ADA stage, Julie transitioned into a regular adjudicator, teacher and choreographer for the company, both at the Regional and National level. Julie is also a sought-after choreographer and teacher based out of Buffalo, NY. Known for her high energy classes and award-winning choreography, Julie has been on faculty and taught as a guest artist at many of Western New York's premier dance studios. She is an alumni of the David DeMarie Dance Studio, was a founding member of the Buffalo based pre-professional contemporary company Infinity Dance Project, and trained at the American Academy of Ballet.

Julie obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree in Dance from the University at Buffalo in 2012. Julie's work has represented UB's Department of Theatre & Dance at the American College Dance Festival at Penn State University. She served as the Assistant to the Director for both of the university's resident dance companies, Zodiaque Dance Ensemble and Zodiaque Dance Company, which gave her invaluable experience in arts management and theatrical production. Julie is a past recipient of the Amanda Occhino Endowment Scholarship of the Arts, given annually to the dance major who shows the most dedication to the program of Theatre & Dance.

In the summer of 2011, Julie was named America's Young Choreographer of the Year at the American Dance Awards Nationals in Boston, MA. In the Spring of 2012, she joined the American Dance Awards team as a judge and faculty member...and the rest is history! In addition to her work with ADA and ADA in Class, she currently guest teaches and choreographs across the US and Canada. Julie's favorite part of her work is that it gives her the opportunity to help students come to realize their full potential as dancers, artists, and people.

Participating in American Dance Awards since 1998 as a competitor, teacher, judge, faculty member and now a Director has given her a great appreciation for and first-hand experience of the pillars on which this company is built: integrity, education & inspiration. Julie is honored to help lead ADA into its next 45 seasons of family friendly, education based dance competitions and events. Let's dance!



Michaela Marfori

Michaela Marfori most recently made her National Broadway Tour debut in the ensemble cast of FROZEN the Musical! Her other credits include her Broadway debut in West Side Story, Eurydice at the Metropolitan Opera, and the Emmy Award winning opening number of the 76th Annual TONY Awards. She has had the privilege of working with many prestigious choreographers like Sonya Tayeh, Karla Puno Garcia, Ariana Debose, Anne Terese de Keersmaecker, and Denis Jones.

In addition to performing, Michaela has grown to love both teaching and choreographing, sharing her passion and experience with the community she grew up in. As a past, two-time Dancer of the Year national winner, Michaela feels closely connected to her family at American Dance Awards. She hopes to be able to inspire young artists to be their best selves and strive for greatness. Michaela is a proud alumna of In Motion Dance Project in Orlando, Florida and is now based in New York City.



Hannah Zin

Hannah Zin is a NYC based performer, teacher, and adjudicator. She received her early training at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School as well as many summer programs across the country including American Ballet Theatre, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, and Arts Umbrella. She received a full scholarship to attend the Alvin Ailey/Fordham University BFA program, from which she graduated summa cum laude with a double major in Dance and Art History.

Amongst many professional credits, her favorite include her work in opera, dancing with the Metropolitan Opera at Lincoln Center (Guillaume Tell, Rusalka, Parsifal, Don Giovanni, Macbeth), the Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center (La Traviata, Samson et Delilah, Carmen, Elektra, Turandot), and The Lyric Opera of Chicago (Florencia en el Amazonas). Recently she had the pleasure of traveling to Italy to perform in Francesca Zambello's West Side Story at Teatro Lirico di Cagliari and to Austria to dance in the 2023 Linzer Klangwolke festival.

Hannah teaches Ballet as well as Pilates for Dancers across the US and Canada. She loves to bring aspects of her Pilates and functional anatomy training into the dance studio and into her POV as an adjudicator. Hannah has worked for American Dance Awards since 2018 and in that time has had the pleasure of working as a Judge, Special Awards, Convention Teacher, Tabulator, and as the National Title Coordinator. She is so proud to be a member of the ADA team and cannot wait for a day of dancing and growth with these talented, hard-working dancers!

