



Karen Ritchie Radio City Rockette

Karen was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan. She fell in love with dance from a young age, and by high school, was spending all of her free time at the dance studio. During her childhood training, Karen completed many different dance exam syllabi, including all of her CDTA tap and jazz examinations.

Karen's career has taken her all over the world - from working throughout the Caribbean on cruise ships to performing in Japan at Tokyo Disney theme parks. The true highlight of her career came when she landed the dream job of being a Radio City Rockette.

For the past 14 seasons, she has been thrilled to perform across the United States and Canada in the Christmas Spectacular starring the Rockettes. She has also performed in the Rockettes' Spring Spectacular, the Summer Spectacular, and has appeared on the Tony Awards, the MTV VMA's, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, the Today Show, the Tonight Show starring Jimmy Fallon, America's Got Talent, the NBA All-Star Game and the Life Ball in Vienna, Austria. Through these performances, Karen has had the opportunity to perform alongside Derek Hough, Pitbull, Flo-Rida and Christina Aguilera.

Karen currently lives in New York City and performs on the Great Stage at Radio City Music Hall. She is thrilled to be a part of the CDTA 70th Anniversary Convention and looks forward to sharing what she has learned in her more than 18 years as a working dancer.



Robyn Segel Shifren

A.R.A.D.

**Director of Progressing Ballet Technique
Canada, Mexico and South Africa.**

**Director of Inspired Movement Dance Ballet
Conservatory.**

Robyn Segel Shifren trained in Cecchetti, and R.A.D. methods, achieving her Solo Seal.

Robyn attended The Royal Ballet School in

London. Asked to join the Sadlers Wells Royal Ballet (Birmingham Royal Ballet), Robyn spent several years travelling with the company. On returning to her native South Africa, Robyn danced with P.A.C.T. Ballet and N.A.P.A.C as principle dancer.

Working with renowned teachers and choreographers, Robyn performed many leading roles, including Giselle, Coppelia, Romeo and Juliet, Don Quixote and Swan Lake. As the lead dancer in several Balanchine ballets, Robyn danced- The Four Temperaments, Apollo, Sonatine, Allegro Brillante and Tchaikovsky Pas De Deux. Ballets choreographed for her include: Killar's 'Miraculous Mandarin' and 'Baccus and Ariadne', and Nierewicz's 'Shostakovich Pas De Deux'. A ballet 'Segel-Suite' was written and performed in Germany as a dedication to her work.

Robyn's professional career ended abruptly following severe injuries sustained in a car accident. Robyn teaches and coaches ballet and Progressing Ballet Technique. As a master teacher she has taught throughout the USA, including the Vienna International Ballet Competition, The American Academy of Ballet, Chapman University, California Dance Classics and Icon Dance.

Robyn stumbled across the original Progressing Ballet Technique videos online in 2013 and travelled to Australia where she met with Marie Walton-Mahon. Passionate about the PBT program, Robyn became a Director of PBT in South Africa, Canada, Mexico and Israel.

Director of IDM Ballet Conservatory in San Diego, Robyn teaches ballet and PBT full time- travelling to present Workshops, Coach and Judge.

"Perfect technique and training are an integral part of any dancer's success. An ability to tap into the 'soul' and bring out each person's unique gifts, are skills that I am impassioned to share."



Leslie Drewitz

Leslie is a dancer, singer, actor, teacher, and Mom to two amazing kids! She trained in Winnipeg, Manitoba under the direction of Barbara Daurie. Leslie also competed in the Moose Jaw Dance Festival where she, unknowingly, met her husband, Scott! Leslie trained extensively in Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Musical Theatre, Hip Hop, Voice, Modern and Contemporary. Once leaving Winnipeg, she went on to further train in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Toronto and has continued her professional development to date. Leslie began working at age 15, 1987, at Rainbow Stage in Winnipeg in *'My Fair Lady'* and went on to perform in 16 more shows, earning her Canadian Actors' Equity card at age 18. In maturing as a performer, Leslie played 'Roxie Hart' in *'Chicago'*, 'Patsy' in *'Crazy For You'* and 'Peggy Sawyer' in *42nd Street*. Leslie also appeared as the Apache Dancer in *'Joseph and the Amazing Dreamcoat'* with Donny Osmond in Chicago on the National Tour. She then toured with *'Showboat'* for LivEnt and returned from touring to open a dance studio, Drewitz Dance Productions, now in its 23rd year. Her choreography has won numerous awards for outstanding achievement over the years, but more importantly, she finds greater achievement in passing on her passion for dance and performing to her students. Several students continue to work in the industry for Disney, Theatre (in Canada, U.S., and UK), Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and National Ballet of Canada.



Scott Drewitz

Scott began his professional career at the age of 18 in the Canadian Premiere of '*42nd Street*' in Toronto. As a member of Canadian Actors Equity Association for over 30 years, he has either performed, choreographed, directed or produced over 50 productions across Canada and the US including the Tony Award winning Broadway musical, '*Crazy For You*'. He is well known for his fast-paced, energetic, and entertaining choreography, which has won numerous awards over the years. Recently, he received rave reviews in the Calgary Herald/National Post for his direction & choreography of '*Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*' for Storybook Theatre, Calgary. Scott is a member of the Rainbow Stage Wall of Fame, inducted for his outstanding contributions as a Performer and Creative - Director/Choreographer. As co-owner/director of Drewitz Dance Productions for the past 23 years, Scott and his wife, Leslie train students for a professional career in the performing arts.



Linda
Garneau

Choreographer, educator, and PhD candidate in Dance Studies at York U. Linda is the artistic director of the Helix Dance Project, whose works include *The Waiting Room*, *Rain*, *Unearth*, and *Integration*. Theatre credits include five seasons with The Shaw Festival, as well as productions for Canadian Stage, Musical Stage Company, Charlottetown Festival, Citadel Theatre, National Theatre Centre, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, and Sheridan Theatre. Other credits include co-choreographing the Opening Ceremony for the Pan Am Games (Guadalajara), as well as choreography for Stars on Ice, skating exhibition programs, and music videos. Linda continues to enjoy freelance choreography, teaching both at home and abroad, and discovering new facets of this wonderfully moving craft.



Barbara Dearborn

Ms. Dearborn is a graduate of the Canadian College of Dance, Montreal and Ryerson University, Theatre Department with a Major in Dance. She is a Registered member and Certified teacher with the Royal Academy of Dance. She has been National Ballet Consultant for the Canadian Dance Teachers' Association and an Examiner in Ballet and Stage. Ms. Dearborn has been choreographer for the Montreal Children's Theatre, performed in musicals, ballet, contemporary dance performance, film and television, and has been co-artistic director and choreographer of the Step of Two mime and dance company. She is now past Dean of Dance (emeritus) at the Maritime Conservatory School of Dance, where she directed both the professional Program and the post-secondary Teacher Training Collage Program.

Course:

We will explore how accessing the fundamental movement neurological pathways in students can enhance Ballet training.



Sheri

Drewitz-Kanten

Originally from Saskatchewan, Sheri Drewitz-Kanten is an award winning dance teacher and choreographer who has been teaching all major dance disciplines for over 30 years throughout Western Canada. Known as an inspirational teacher, Sheri has helped create some of the most well-rounded and best technically trained dancers as recognized in several international competitions. Her talents and eye for detail make her a sought after adjudicator, choreographer, and faculty member for workshops and summer schools.

Sheri is a Registered Teacher with the Royal Academy of Dance and certified in Progressing Ballet Technique (PBT), ADAPT, CDTA and is an Apprentice for TKM Release Therapeutic Ball and Myofascial Strength Techniques. She has successfully put thousands of students through Graded and Vocational RAD Ballet exams and the Solo Seal Award, is a Mentor for the RAD (CBTS), and was thrilled to be part of the RAD pilot project, Discovering Repertoire. In addition, she has prepared and entered students for tap and jazz exams with CDTA and ADAPT. Sheri received the Best Teacher Award at the World Ballet Art Competition Grand Prix, Toronto 2016 and then was honoured to be appointed the Western Representative for the inaugural WBAC Grand Prix, Calgary 2016.

Sheri now enjoys freelancing throughout Canada: teaching, choreographing and providing customized dance workshops called Beyond Ballet. For the last 9 years, she has been directing her own summer dance intensive called To The Pointe. Sheri works very hard to prepare students to pursue professional dance careers and is very proud of her former students who have continued their passion for dance through many avenues including: the National Ballet School of Canada, Royal Winnipeg School of Ballet, Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, AMDA, NYU, Savannah Ballet, Broadway productions, film, television, various cruise lines and as Registered Dance Teachers in all disciplines, to name a few. With the busy life she lives, Sheri happily resides in the Calgary area with her husband Ron and their three children.



Mark Samuels

Mark Samuels started dancing professionally in 1995 with a group called Do Dat. He danced for countless Canadian artists such as Shawn Desman, Jully Black, Victoria Duffield and Nelly Furtado to name a few. He has also danced in Canada's most notable shows such as The Juno Awards, MMVA's & So You Think You Can Dance Canada.

After spending years as a dancer in Canada, Mark moved to U.S. He worked with the industries biggest choreographers there which led him to dance for multi-platinum recording artists such as Mariah Carey, Mary J Blige, Missy Elliott, Mario, Kelis and many more.

With over 20 years of experience in the dance industry, Mark has shifted his passion into choreography. He's worked closely with choreographer Paul Becker on numerous TV & Film projects. These include, Disney's - The Descendants, The Magicians on SYFY Network, A Series Of Unfortunate Events on Netflix, starring Neil Patrick Harris, Overboard, Dr Cabbie and Good Boys starring Seth Rogan. He also co-choreographed Ricky Martin's Latin boy band, CNCO. And recently choreographed a commercial for BMO.

As Mark continues to climb the ladder to success, he wants to be an influential voice in the dance industry that will allow him to provide opportunities to the next generation of dancers.



Dianna Fraser

Dianne developed an early interest in dance and spent much of her first three decades studying and working professionally in the dance world. She spent several years in the Professional Programs of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and Toronto Dance Theatre, before becoming a member of Sundance Repertoire Company, based in Winnipeg. Following her return to Saskatchewan, she worked as an independent dance artist, dividing her energies between studies, choreography, performance and teaching. Highlights include performing the work of choreographers Robin Poitras and Marie Chouinard. In 1986 Dianne co-founded New Dance Horizons and was co-artistic director until 1991. For twelve years she taught a variety of ages and dance styles at facilities such as Regina Dance Works, Youth Ballet & Contemporary Dance of Sask, Class Act, and New Dance Horizons, in addition to teaching in Winnipeg and Toronto. Her approach to working with the body in motion has been shaped from the anatomical knowledge and hands on experience she's gained by working as a Registered Massage Therapist for the past 30 years.