

The Newsletter of
THE CUYAHOGA VALLEY
youth ballet
 ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MIA KLINGER WELCH

Akron's Original Youth Ballet • Member of the Akron Area Arts Alliance
 P.O. Box 3131 • Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44223 • 330-996-1100 • www.cvyb.org

Near right photo:

Choreographer James Sewell (2nd from left) works with dancer Alexandra Petrus (center) while Jessica Welch (far right) looks on.



Far right photo:

Choreographer Karen Gabay (center), shown with dancers Alison Koroly (left) and Carly Pouttu (far right), visited the CVYB for five days in August, 2005 to cast *The Wand of Youth*, a new ballet premiering in March, 2006. See article, page 4.



Miss Spider's Tea Party Returns!

The acclaimed choreographer, James Sewell, returned to the CVYB to reprise *Miss Spider's Tea Party*, his wonderful ballet premiered in 1997. Based on David Kirk's popular children's book of the same name*, it is a charming story about Miss Spider™, who overcomes her insect neighbors' arachnophobia and convinces them she has no ulterior motive when she invites them to tea.

The story was brought to life through imaginative choreography and original music created by James Sewell. Sewell, artistic director of James Sewell Ballet (Minneapolis) is acclaimed internationally for his innovation, and ability to combine classical, modern and improvisational ballet.

Sewell, when interviewed about his August 2005 visit, stated, "Casting has to

serve both the dancers and the piece." His objective, he said, was to make both look their best. He spent three days pursuing this goal because; "Different dancers let a choreographer see a role in a slightly different light." He worked closely with CVYB dancers to utilize their talents in the best possible way. He stated that often when he works with children too much time is spent on behavior issues, but "with the CVYB, I can treat these dancers like professionals because they behave like them. They already know proper dancer etiquette." This focus and discipline allowed Mr. Sewell to spend all of his time on choreography and casting, something he appreciated!

Choreographer Tom Evert also joined the company in August to recast *I ♥ Shapes*. A proven audience favorite, *I ♥*

Continue on page 4

CVYB 30th Season Presents:

The Wand of Youth

I ♥ Shapes

Miss Spider's Tea Party

Akron Civic Theatre
 Saturday, March 11, 2006

2:30 p.m.

7:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 12, 2006

2:30 p.m.

CVYB to Revive Their Version of *The Nutcracker*

Some activities never go out of style, and one of those traditions is a holiday production of *The Nutcracker*! It has been 20 years since the CVYB graced the stage with their version of *The Nutcracker, Act Two: Clara's Dream*, so the excitement over the upcoming two performances to be held on Dec. 17, 2005 at Cuyahoga Falls High School is high.

To celebrate this new annual event, the CVYB dancers will be wearing beautiful costumes specially made for this production, and the Mayor of the City of Cuyahoga Falls, Don Robart, has graciously agreed to participate by reading the *First Act of the Nutcracker* to the audience prior to the performance.

If that wasn't enough excitement for one performance, the CVYB has remained true to its tradition of educating young children and taken the event one step further. A Theater Workshop will follow the performance!

Children will be separated into small groups after the CVYB performance using colored nametags issued upon arrival. Participants will then move through five interactive and hands-on stations exploring some of the fundamentals of theater.

Children will get a chance to try on costumes, see different types of dance shoes and learn to put on and tie Pointe shoes (while seated), watch a stage makeup demonstration while enjoying a snack, participate in a short drama & dance class and take a backstage tour. Special groups comprised of teenagers and male dancers will follow their own special schedule and explore topics appropriate for their level and interests.

Parents can enjoy last minute holiday shopping at our boutique while the children are engrossed in the workshops. Our *Nutcracker Wonderland Boutique* will have gifts for family and friends of all ages, priced for family purchasing. All proceeds benefit the CVYB, so your shopping will serve the community as well as get those last items off your holiday shopping list! The return of *The Nutcracker* is an exciting event for the CVYB! Come enjoy the memories and pass on the joy of theater to the next generation of children. Two shows will be available (10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.), and tickets are \$10 for adults and \$7 for children 12 and under. The event will last approximately two hours, and the ticket price includes the CVYB *Nutcracker* performance, Theatre Workshop, instructional handouts and a snack.



CVYB Performs At Ohio Dance Showcase

Members of the Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet performed at the Ohio Dance Showcase during the Ohio Dance Festival held at the University of Akron on May 21, 2005. This program featured a wide variety of dance ensembles from all over Ohio, professional and pre-professional. CVYB dancers performed three classical dance pieces, set to music by Strauss, from Michael Vernon's *School Daze* (2004). The performance was well-received by the audience of dance lovers who appreciated the classical ballet and the sense of humor in the pieces.

CVYB Makes Its New York City Debut

April showered good fortune upon the CVYB as the company made its New York City debut with two high-spirited performances of Frances Patrelle's *Madeline at the Circus*®. The audiences responded enthusiastically with standing ovations and children seeking autographs from the dancers after the shows. Francis Patrelle and his company, *Dances Patrelle*, welcomed the CVYB to the Symphony Space Theatre and proved to be a most generous host. This home away from home became the dancers' venue for rehearsals, camaraderie and most importantly, the performances. *Dances Patrelle* also treated the CVYB to a delightful performance of their own following the last showing of *Madeline at the Circus*®.

The 33 dancers and 15 support staff members shared a whirlwind adventure in The Big Apple planned and directed by Ande Kok. In addition to the excitement at the theatre, the Ohioans enjoyed the Broadway show *Hairspray*, took in several big city sights and entertained some native New Yorkers with their awe in experiencing an official New York City subway ride.

The CVYB is especially grateful to the following New York City Tour Sponsors: Fred and Francia Albrecht, Mrs. Landon Knight, and David and Gayle Noble.

Based on *Madeline and the Gypsies* by Ludwig Bemelmans. Copyright© Ludwig Bemelmans 1958, 1959 Copyright© renewed Madeleine Bemelmans and Barbara Bemelmans 1986, 1987. Adapted and performed by permission of Madeleine Bemelmans and Barbara Bemelmans.





CVYB Presents the American Girl® Fashion Show—for American Girls and Their Dolls

The Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet invites girls and their mothers, grandmothers, and other relatives and friends to celebrate the spirit of American girlhood at the **American Girl® Fashion Show & Tea Party** on November 12 and 13 at Todaro's Party Center in Akron. Four shows will be presented; Saturday at 12 and 3p.m. and Sunday at 12 and 3p.m.

The fun, engaging program showcases the styles of girls yesterday and today—with historical and contemporary fashions from American Girl®, as well as adorable Bitty Baby®.

Attendees will also get to meet the newest American Girl doll, Marisol, as she plans to attend the *Nutcracker*.

The event program includes a full tea party with individual plates of tasty treats, hot tea or fruit punch, the fashion show and a performance by the CVYB at intermission. Party favors and door prizes, along with special souvenirs and chances to win American Girl® dolls and products will round out the event. The event will also feature the long-anticipated drawing of the lucky winner of the free Disney trip with \$2,000 in airline vouchers from AirTran! If you haven't purchased your raffle tickets yet, please see www.cvyb.org or call (330) 996-1100.

The American Girl® Fashion Show & Tea Party—a wonderful event to share with a little girl you love...We look forward to seeing you there!

Six Dancers Find "Small World" In Switzerland.

Elizabeth Capps, Kelsey Greissing, Taylor Perry, Sarah Spaulding, Heather Sargent, and Dustin True traveled to Vevey, Switzerland on the shore of Lake Geneva to perform in the International Youth Festival with children from Russia, South Africa, Switzerland, and other countries. The festival, organized by Kim (Klinger) White, featured a performance of the James Sewell ballet, *Carnival of the Animals*. The CVYB dancers were accompanied by Mia Klinger-Welch, Barbara Perry, and Steve True.



It was truly a cultural exchange as the group bonded with troupes from Moscow, Capetown and Vevey. A week of rehearsals, performances, and sight-seeing, saw the participants overcome language and cultural differences to develop friendships and lasting memories. Building upon their common interest in ballet, the children became quite friendly—dancing together, eating together, and sharing the third floor of a youth hostel.

After returning home, all six students went back out on the road, continuing their ballet education with summer programs. Capps, Greissing, and Perry trained with Ballet Met in Columbus. Sargent attended Central Pennsylvania's summer program. Spaulding and True auditioned, were accepted and studied at the Chautauqua Institution in New York, with True receiving a full scholarship.

Announcing Partnership with Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital of University Hospitals

The Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet is pleased to announce our partnership with one of America's best children's hospitals, Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital of University Hospitals of Cleveland! Rainbow's sponsorship of our 2005-2006 season is greatly appreciated, and the educational seminars to be provided to our dancers in the areas of nutrition, injury prevention and general sports medicine will significantly benefit our company. We look forward to our work together and will enjoy teaming our efforts to improve the well being of children in our community.

CVYB Welcomes Seven 2005-2006 Apprentices

The Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet Board members and dancers welcomed seven new members on June 9th at Portage Country Club. The apprentices and their parents enjoyed a swim party and conversation designed to prepare them for what promises to be an exciting first year in the company. Board members were present to answer questions as were veteran dancers. Artistic Director Mia Klinger Welch and CVYB President Ernie Pouttu presented the new members with a certificate of achievement and the "official" CVYB duffel bag. These talented young dancers were chosen by a panel of independent dance professionals at an open audition held last May.

The Apprentice Dancers for the 2005-2006 season include: **Scott Jones** (12), and **Megan Klamert** (10) of Akron; **Kirsten Linnen** (10), **Hannah Coley** (11) and **Mollie McCarthy** (11) of Cuyahoga Falls; **Abby Kulwicki** (8) of Hudson; and **Rebecca Vasko** (8) of Solon. Congratulations to this year's apprentices and families.

Cont...Miss Spider's Tea Party Returns!

Shapes is a colorful and dynamic modern ballet that celebrates the elementary forms of lines, circles, triangles and squares. This energetic piece featuring an original musical score by Sebastian Birch, premiered in 1989 and was beautifully reprised in 2004. These two ballets with their mix of imagination and contemporary dance will make the CVYB's 30th season one of their best yet!

The Wand of Youth Premieres

Karen Gabay, principal dancer with Ballet San Jose and Artistic Director/Resident Choreographer for Pointe of Departure (a Cleveland-based ballet company) has choreographed a new ballet for the CVYB. Gabay describes the ballet, *The Wand of Youth*, as "classical with the subtle flavor of a folk dance." She set it to music, *The Wand of Youth*, by Edward Edgar, chosen for its melody rich in variations.

From August 15-19, Gabay worked daily with the CVYB dancers whom "she got moving really quickly." "They were able to pick up the steps easily, despite the fact that this ballet is technically challenging," Gabay recounted. When asked if she had any advice for young dancers, Ms. Gabay said, "It is important to appreciate the opportunity to perform since most young dancers rarely have that. It is also important to do what you love." Karen Gabay does what she loves with amazing results—including *The Wand of Youth* premiering in March 2006!

CVYB Alumni News

Three CVYB alumni are presently dancing in the same company right here in Northeast Ohio! **Brian Murphy**, **Katherine Keith**, and **Eric Carvill**, are currently dancing in Ohio Ballet, a professional company from University of Akron and Playhouse Square Center in Cleveland.

Brian Murphy has already been dancing thirteen years professionally. He has been with Ohio Ballet since 1999. Nan Klinger gave Brian his very first dance lesson. He says he "feels very, very fortunate to have had Nan as a ballet teacher." Of his many fond memories of the Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet, working with Tom Evert, Michael Byers, Michael Vernon and James Sewell are among the best. Brian describes these choreographers as patient and hard-working teachers even though at the time he was just a pre-professional dancer. Other favorite memories of Brian's are the trip to Taiwan and partnering all of the pretty girls in the company.

Since dance has become technically more difficult, some think that performance is less important but Brian is grateful that Nan Klinger would always say, "Don't put a wall between you and the audience." Brian feels that this advice from Nan to always perform for the audience has been extremely valuable to him. Brian is also interested in Pilates and joins his wife, Suzy, in teaching Pilates in the Akron-Cleveland area. He attributes cross-training with Pilates to injury prevention in dance.

Katherine (Katie) Keith joined Ohio Ballet in 2004 after dancing with the Texas Ballet Theatre for three years. Her husband, Grant Dettling, also a ballet dancer, joined Ohio Ballet with her. Katie has many good memories of her years with CVYB. She is grateful for the strong work ethic that Nan Klinger instilled in her and recalls how Nan would not accept less than her best effort. Katie knew since she was ten years old that she wanted to become a dancer

but her mother was not sure that Katie had enough talent. Katie's mother still quotes Nan Klinger saying, "Don't decide for your child what she can and cannot do, let the dance world decide ..." Katie is enjoying her time with Ohio Ballet and likes being near her family. She has talked with both Eric and Brian about their common origins in CVYB.

Eric Carvill has been with Ohio Ballet since 2001. He has also been a guest artist with Grand Rapids Ballet and Chautauqua Ballet. Eric feels that his years of ballet training with the CVYB were an excellent opportunity for him. Working with professional choreographers on original ballets as a ballet student is unique and helps make the Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet "a very strong pre-professional program." Eric and Katie have often shared stories about old friends in the CVYB.

Dominic Antonucci (as Cavalier) and Katie Keith (as Snow Queen) are both performing as guest dancers in *The Nutcracker* for Ballet Romande in Vevey, Switzerland.

Aubrey Klinger, granddaughter of CVYB Founding Artistic Director Nan Klinger, will attend Point Park University Conservatory of Performing Arts in Pittsburgh, PA where she was accepted into the top level of dance students. She received a Performing Arts Dance Scholarship, an Academic Scholarship, and a Community Service & Leadership Scholarship Award. Klinger also plans to get a degree in education.

While a CVYB dancer, Klinger performed in Taiwan, New York City, with the New York City Ballet at Saratoga Springs, at Cleveland's Playhouse Square, & annually at the Akron Civic Theatre. Klinger, a graduate of Walsh Jesuit High School, is the daughter of Rick & Carol Klinger of Cuyahoga Falls.

Lauren Stenroos, a graduate of Revere High School, will attend Mercyhurst College in Erie, PA as a dance major

with a minor in music composition. She received a Dance Scholarship and an Egan Academic Scholarship, while being accepted into the Honors Preparation Year for the Honors College at Mercyhurst.

While a dancer in the CVYB, Lauren performed in Switzerland, New York City, Cleveland's Playhouse Square, and annually at the Akron Civic Theatre. Stenroos was selected as a student in the 2005 Chautauqua School of Dance Festival Dancers. She attended the prestigious summer ballet program under scholarship, one of only 27 dancers from across the country. She is the daughter of Jeff & Jennifer Stenroos of Bath.

Kate Lieberth is currently dancing with Company C Contemporary Ballet based in the San Francisco Bay Area and directed by a former member of New York City Ballet (Charlie Anderson). They are the only west coast company to perform ballets by Twyla Tharp, and are also doing works by Patrick Corbin of Paul Taylor. Kate is finishing up her first season with the company and is really excited to be working there.

Gary Lenington has danced professionally for 13 years. He was with the Richmond Ballet for five years and with Ballet Florida for the past eight years. Presently, he is participating in Ballet Florida's annual workshop called Step Ahead. Gary is engaged to Jennifer Cole (also a dancer with Ballet Florida) and hopes to be married next summer. He promises to call Miss Mia when Ballet Florida stops at Kent State (possibly this year or next)!

Jennifer Lauck graduated with Honors from Grand Valley State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in ballet, modern dance and choreography. She received the Most Outstanding Senior Award. She is back home in Ohio for now and plans to audition for dance companies.

Dear Friends of the Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet,

“Perfection is impossible. However, excellence is not. And one achieves excellence by striving for perfection” (Author Unknown).

Many of us know this all too well. Whether we took classes from Miss Nan, worked with her as a CVYB volunteer, or saw a performance, excellence was the standard she set. This was instilled in my family and proudly taught to the dancers in our program, past and present.

Reflecting back to last season, we made a strong impression in the dance community throughout the world. The dancers not only delighted audiences in Northeast Ohio and Switzerland, but impressed attendees in New York City with their technical skill and performing abilities. The many professionals at the NYC performance included: Tom Gold, Michael Byers, Allegra Kent, Oleg and Marielle Briansky, Julia Dubno, and Cheryl Yeager, to name only a few. The New York audiences were surprised to see that such an excellent dance program existed in Ohio.

I am looking forward to our 30th anniversary season with two magnificent reprisals. *Nutcracker Act II* which was first performed in 1978 will return in December and *Miss Spider's Tea Party* by James Sewell (which premiered in 1997) will follow in the spring. In addition, we will return an audience favorite, *I ♥ Shapes* by Tom Evert, and introduce *The Wand of Youth*, a brand new classical piece by Karen Gabay, principal dancer with San Jose Ballet. This should be an especially entertaining and diverse season of ballet!

Please be generous with your support for our upcoming 30th anniversary year. Your tax-deductible donation will help preserve the excellence this strong company continues to uphold. I would especially appreciate your continued support of the “Nan Klinger Fund” which goes directly to creating new works. Being unique and creative is what separates the CVYB from the rest.

Thank you for your support and we hope you join us in celebrating this exciting year at one of our many performances and events.

Sincerely,



Mia Klinger Welch
Artistic Director

The 2005 – 2006 Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet Board

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CVYB ARTISTIC STAFF

Founding Artistic Director	<i>Nan Klinger</i>
Artistic Director	<i>Mia Klinger Welch</i>
Artistic Administrator	<i>Ande Kok</i>
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Reach Out and Dance® Reaches Record Number of School Children Throughout the Area

The 2005-2006 school year promises to be an exciting year for more than 750 students in the Akron, Cuyahoga Falls, and Wooster public schools as the CVYBs' Reach Out and Dance® program continues to be the most extensive dance outreach program in Northeast Ohio.

Established by Artistic Director Lori Klinger in 1998, the Reach Out and Dance®, program was designed to bring dance education into the public schools to teach that teamwork, concentration, and effort can equal success. Its mission is to inspire excellence, motivate learning, uplift the human spirit, and instill a lifelong appreciation of the arts. Artistic Associate Kara Stewart continues to lead the ROAD® classes, while an assistant instructor and a classically trained pianist enhance the daily classroom experience. In addition to providing dance instruction, the mission of the instructors is to help the children develop discipline, a standard of excellence, and a belief in themselves. The school year culminates in a curriculum-based performance at a local theater where the children can experience the wonder of performing for family and friends.

The CVYB is proud to report that Reach Out and Dance® will realize two goals this school year. First, the ROAD® program will find a home in all six Cuyahoga Falls elementary schools, making it the first National Dance Institute program in the country to fully permeate a school system. How exciting to think that every child who graduates from a Cuyahoga Falls elementary school will have had a year of dance education! Also this year, in an effort to provide a more comprehensive exposure to dance, all ROAD® participants (and a parent) will be offered free tickets to the CVYB's March Performance at the Akron Civic Theater.

For more information about ROAD®, please contact Kara Stewart, Artistic Associate and Administrator at (330) 524-6697.

Award-winning Choreographer Teaches Master Class for CVYB

Award-winning choreographer and master teacher **David Shimotakahara**, recognized by *Dance Magazine* as one of "25 to Watch", taught a master class for the Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet on May 14, 2005. After 16 years as a dancer with Ohio Ballet, Shimotakahara started *GroundWorks Dancetheater* in 1998 in Cleveland. The CVYB members and new apprentices thoroughly enjoyed learning from this talented, creative choreographer.

Alison Koroly has a Dream

Alison Koroly has a dream. Her dream is to dance as a member of New York City Ballet. She has worked hard towards that dream in the Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet where she is starting her 8th year. For the past two years she has auditioned and been one of 200 students chosen from over 2000 to attend the summer program offered by the School of American Ballet. She has been awarded full merit scholarships both years.

Alison would like to return to SAB again next summer. The more experience she attains, the better her chances of fulfilling her dream. Each year, it gets just a little closer to reality.

Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet Dancers

Seniors:

Morgan Stinnett – 9 years
Jessica Welch – 9 years

Juniors:

Elizabeth Capps – 2 years
Brooke Eliadis – 5 years
Brianna Habel – 5 years
Ashley Klinger – 9 years
Sarah McCarthy – 4 years

Sophomores:

Maria Bedell – 2 years
Chyana DeJournett – 4 years
Alison Koroly – 8 years
Katie Spagnoletti – 5 years

Freshman:

Ingrid McGuckin – 2 years
Sara McGuire – 3 years
Meghan Murphy – 3 years
Taylor Perry – 4 years

Grade 8:

Quinn Cutchin – 5 years
Brooke DeJournett – 3 years
Rebecca Fletcher – 2 years
Brian Gillick – 4 years
Kelsey Greissing – 4 years
Ellyn McCarthy – 2 years

Grade 7:

Sarah Bouplon – 2 years
Nancy Cantine – 2 years
Katherine Cialella – 3 years
Scottt Jones – Apprentice
Anna Kulwicki – 2 years
Mollie McCarthy – Apprentice
Alexandra Petrus – 3 years
Carly Pouttu – 5 years
Heather Sargent – 4 years
Nathaniel Shaffer – 4 years
Sarah Spaulding – 4 years
Sarah Sutherland – 3 years
Dustin True – 3 years

Grade 6:

Hannah Coley – Apprentice
Brittany Gajarsky-Kottler – 2 years
Keila Hamed-Ramos – 2 years
Hannah Shaffer – 2 years

Grade 5:

Megan Klamert – Apprentice
Kirsten Linnen – Apprentice

Grade 4:

Abby Kulwicki – Apprentice
Rebecca Vasko – Apprentice