

Caston Chamber
Ballet

Preserving our Past Enriching Our Future

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Mission

The Caston Chamber Ballet, established in 2004 is a pre-professional ballet company located in Webster Groves, Missouri.

The Company was co-founded by Torris and Shannon Caston to provide performance opportunities for aspiring classical and contemporary dancers. The technical strength of the Company has allowed for such ambitious works as *Coppelia*, *The Nutcracker*, *Pas De Quatre*, *La Boutique Fantastique*, selections from *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Le Corsaire*, *Paquita*, and others. The artistic creativity of Torris Caston has presented new works such as *Beauty and The Beast*, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, *Snow White*, *Where the Wild Things are*, Schubert's *Serenade*, Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, and *Mos Que Nada*. *In the philosophy of George Balanchine and Vladimir Vassiliev, ...we can't talk about the development of dancers as separate from the development of choreography.* Although our primary performance focus lies in the staging of the classics, and the choreography of Mr. Caston; the Company also provides a Vehicle to nurture and showcase aspiring choreographers.

Philosophy

Caston's Ballet Academie School
Founded in 2001

*O body swayed to music, O brightening
glance, How can we know the dancer
from the dance?*

- Yates -

Through passion and love for dance and music, mind and body become one. Along with developing an outstanding dance technique, we inspire and motivate our students. We encourage positivity, self-confidence and group cooperation. We dance for enjoyment and Arts sake. We do not encourage competition against others, but nurture the desire to always strive for one's own personal best.

Why Caston Ballet?

- Chamber Company
- Classics
- Contemporary
- Cecchetti and Vagonova
- Nutcracker for Children
- Story Book Ballets
- Caston Choreography
- Emerging Choreographers
- Outreach
- Enriching Audiences
- Diversity
- City and County



Biographies

TORRIS CASTON

Artistic Director

A native of St. Louis, Mr. Caston was trained in ballet by Richard Martin, Doris Dieu, Ron Hansford, Stanley Herbert, Nathalie Levine and Mrs. Michael Simms. While completing his Masters Degree from New York's Long Island University in Anatomy & Physiology, he studied at the Joffrey Ballet School. Returning home he subsequently received his certification as a dance instructor from the Missouri Department of Education and the Cecchetti Council of America. Torris has taught ballet for 20 years at institutions including St. Louis Community College, Maryville University, and McKinley Classical Junior Academy - St. Louis Magnet School for Gifted and Talented Children, as well as private schools in Missouri and Illinois. Mr. Caston has performed both corps and solo roles with Metropolitan Ballet of Saint Louis and St. Louis Ballet Theatre, and has toured Europe and Russia. Through Dance St. Louis and Muny he has performed with international ballet companies such as American Ballet Theater, Stuttgart Ballet, and LaScala Ballet. His professional experience also includes tae kwon do, gymnastics and flamenco.

SHANNON CASTON

School Director

Mrs. Caston completed her B.S. and B.A. from the University of Missouri at Columbia in Biology and Art; and received her teaching certification from the Missouri Department of Education and the Cecchetti Council of America. She has studied ballet under Michael Simms at Stephen's College, and Columbia Performing Arts through a ballet scholarship. Mrs. Caston employs this strong background in education, art, anatomy and physiology as a crucial building block for her classes with the utmost concern for developing young bodies. Her 14 years of teaching include various forms of dance at numerous institutions in Columbia and St. Louis, including Ballet Midwest, Girls Incorporated, and Saint Louis Community School. She has taught biology, and anatomy & physiology at Lindbergh High School and Yeatman Liddell Middle School. Mrs. Caston served as dance instructor, choreographer, artistic consultant and rehearsal director for Parkway School District in 2008. Shannon has experience in pas de deux, technique, pointe, lyrical, jazz, modern dance, tap, ballroom, hip-hop and dance squad. Mrs. Caston has performed for local dance companies, as well as Dance St. Louis presentations of American Ballet Theater and Stuttgart Ballet.

GUEST FACULTY HAS INCLUDED:

KIM COWEN

Prima Ballerina with Kansas City Ballet

JEANNE ENGEL

Rehearsal Assistant

Jeanne Engel received her early training in St. Louis with Nathalie LeVine and Michael Simms, then attended Indiana University where she studied with Marina Svetlova, John Kriza, Anton Dolin and Nicholas Beriozoff. During that time, she performed in numerous ballets and operas, including *Giselle*, *Graduation Ball*, *The Firebird*, *Pas de Quatre*, and the role of Juliet in the premiere of Beriozoff's *Romeo and Juliet*.

After receiving a B.S. in Ballet from the School of Music in 1975, Ms. Engel joined Indianapolis Ballet Theatre (later Ballet Internationale) under the direction of George Verdak and Dace Dindonis. Upon returning to St. Louis, Ms. Engel served as Co-Artistic Director of Metropolitan Ballet of St. Louis from 1980 to 1988, staging numerous original and classical ballets such as *Nutcracker*, Act II of *Swan Lake* and Act III of *Sleeping Beauty*. She has served as faculty and board member of Alexandra Ballet and taught pre-professional classes throughout the Midwest. Her costume designs were featured in Ballet Eclectica's *The Little Dancer* in 2006 at the St. Louis Art Museum and in 2007 at COCA, including those for Michael Uthoff's Chihuly-inspired ballet and Christine O'Neal's Tango. Diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in 1988, Ms. Engel has remained active in both personal and professional endeavors. She studies Tai Chi, designs quilts, and participates in a therapeutic creative writing group through St. Louis University Medical School.



YULIA VLADMIROVNA MILLER

Repetiteur

Ballet & Character Instructor

Ms. Yulia, Russian ballerina, was trained and received her certificate from Novosibirsk State Ballet School Vagonova System. She received her Bachelor's Degree in advertising, public relations and psychology from Moscow State Social University (Russian Federation). As a Professional Ballet Dancer with Novosibirsk State Theater of Opera and Ballet she danced in Portugal, Spain, Egypt and China Classical Performances such as Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, Nutcracker and Giselle. She also performed as a professional ballet dancer with the Russian Academy of Dramatic Arts and Moscow Ballet tours in China and Spain. She also has toured the USA and St. Louis with the Moscow Ballet's "Great Russian Nutcracker". She teaches Advanced/Intermediate, Intermediate Ballet Classes, Performance Enhancement, Variations, and Character Classes at Caston's Ballet Academie.



*Karlie Kloss Royal Art Photography 2007
Waltz of the Flowers from The Nutcracker for Children*

LYNETTE KHOO SUMMERS, MSPT

Physical Therapist

Jazz Instructor

Classical through
Contemporary

Lynette is an instructor/ clinician at Washington University Program in Physical Therapy. She received her undergraduate degree from Colorado State University in Public Relations and Dance. She danced professionally for 2 years with Joseph Holmes in Chicago before embarking on her career in physical therapy. Lynette received her Masters of Science in Physical Therapy from Washington University School of Medicine. Her expertise is in the prevention and rehabilitation of all musculoskeletal conditions especially injured artists as well as performance day coverage. She is currently working on her doctorate in physical therapy at Washington University.

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VINCENT GOLOMSKI

Accompanist

Mr. Golomski graduated from SIUE with a Degree in Music Education, Piano Performance, and Vocal Music K-12. He has served as Musical Director for at DeSmet High School, as well as and two musicals CBC High School. Vincent has been a music teacher and high school musical director over 30 years. As the director of the band Fanfare, he has played concerts at the Missouri Botanical Gardens, Fair St. Louis, the UMB Bank Pavilion, and Taste of Clayton, to name a few. Vincent has appeared on KMOX radio, KSDK television, and has been featured in the St. Louis Post Dispatch Arts and Education Section. Vincent plays classic and contemporary keyboard for Caston's Ballet Academie classes.



*Pas De Quatre National Dance Week Union Station 2008
Mary Ortiz Photogrrapher
Reina Ortiz, Sarah Mayfield, Sarah Ahn, Shannon Caston*



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CASTON CHAMBER BALLET

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Enriching our Future*

Were'e on the web
Castonballet.com

Artists of the Company

- **Haley Day** is sophomore at University of Missouri Kansas City on full scholarship as a dance major. She went to Webster High school. Performances include the Sugar Plum Fairy from *The Nutcracker for Children*, Belle from *Beauty and the Beast*, Carlotta Grisi from *Pas De Quatre*, the June 2007 National PTA Convention, St. Louis Dance Festival Showcase. Accepted into the Joffrey Summer Workshop Program in New York 2008. and full scholarship 2010
- **Mia Eppler** is a highschool sophomore at Core Jesu High school. Performances include Tarentella Doll from *La Boutique Fantastique*, June 2007 National PTA Convention, Edgewood Children's Charity, *The Nutcracker for Children*.
- **Grace Cuddihee** works for Bethesda while studying towards her Masters at Washington University. Performances include Tarentella Doll *La Boutique Fantastique*, Enchantress from *Beauty and the Beast*, Marie Taglioni from *Pas De Quatre*, St. Louis Dance Festival Showcase, National Dance Week, and *The Nutcracker for Children*.
- **Stephanie Surgant** is a graduate of Lindenwood University. Works for Steifel-Nichlaus. Performances include St. Louis Dance Festival Showcase, National Dance Week and *The Nutcracker and Caston Spring Concert*.
- **SOME CASTON BALLET SCHOOL ALUMNI**
- **Courtney Collins** Dance Minor at Notre Dame University.
- **Marjorie Failoni** graduate, of Michigan University; current Dance Chair Captain of Disney's Highschool Musical Broadway Tour.
- **Annie Frisse** Started her ballet studies with Caston's Ballet Academie in 2004, she is currently a sophomore at Barnard University in New York as a Science Major and Dance Minor.
- **Karlle Kloss** Six years of ballet training at Caston Ballet and in the Company for 1 year before leaving for her modeling career. She is now a Super Model for Vogue, Christian Dior, Oscar De La Renta, Calvin Klein to name a few.
- **Rachel Livengood**, received her Bachelors Degree in Math Education at Webster University, was a company member for St. Louis Ballet currently working on her Masters in Colorado.
- **Megan Reckamp** Dayton Ballet II, Graduate of Wright State University Ohio Dance Major.
- **Casey Weston** Currently a Senior Majoring Dance, Diving, and Architectual Engineering at Stanford University. Masters from New York now in Africa for Peace Corps. Performed as the Cavalier in our *First The Caston's Nutcracker* in 2004 and again in 2007.

Repertoire

The Nutcracker for Children (2004-Present)
Where the Wild Things Are 2010
Snow White 2009
The Sorceror's Apprentice 2009
Beauty and the Beast 2008
Coppelia 2004
Pas De Quatre 2008
Dying Swan 2004
La Boutique Fantastique 2007
Spectre 2005

Caston Choreography

Classics

Opera *Kirkwood Chamber Chorale 2010*
 Schubert *Serenade 2005*
 Satie, Mozart, Favre- *Romance Suite 2004*
 Gershwin *Rhapsody in Blue 2006*
 Pachabel *Cannon in D – Tillie's Smile 2008*
 Bach *Double Violin Concerto- Leslianna 2007*
 Debussy- *Afternoon of a Faun- Dragonfly 2005*

Contemporary

Tony Bennet - *Medley 2007*
 Natalie Cole- *Medly 2005*
 Michael Jackson Trio – *2010*
 Michael Buble- *Moon Dance 2005*
 Dan Folgelberg – *Longer 2008*
 Black Eyed Peas *Mos Que Nada 2006*
 Santana *Supernatural 2008*



Waltz of the Flowers *The Nutcracker d2007*

EXCERPTS

Swan Lake 2005
 Sleeping Beauty 2004
 Paquita 2004
 Firebird 2006
 Le Corsaire 2005
 La Bayadere 2007
 Don Quixote 2005
 Giselle 2004

MODERN

Alvin Ailey-
Night Creatures (2007)
Revelations (2005)
 Bob Fosse- *All That Jazz,(2004)*
 Michael Bennett *One A Chorus Line (2006)*