

Miller-Marley

School of **D**ance and Voice

newsletter

May 2007

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Junior, A.J. Pflumm

Photo courtesy of Kevin Smith

Dance Showcase 2007

Kansas City's Music Hall has New Look

On the evening of May 26 and May 27, the star-studded cast of Miller-Marley's "Dancing with Our Stars" will grace the stage of the Kansas City Music Hall. The renowned venue has recently undergone numerous renovations that have included widening the aisles and repositioning the seats in the audience to allow for better viewing of the stage.

Miller-Marley's Showcase 2007 will be among the first productions to take place at the newly remodeled theatre. Though the new look will pose some logistical challenges for the performers and staff, all in all, our performance should benefit greatly from the changes that have been implemented at the Music Hall.

Showcase 2007 - Better Than Ever

Every other year, when Showcase time draws near, we claim that the show promises to be "better than ever." Our instructors concur that raising the bar is second nature to a faculty that refuses to rely upon complacency. Many choreographers experience an ongoing internal competition; not with other people, but with themselves, to create new work that exceeds all that they have done before. Freshness and originality is definitely a plus.

However, we mustn't discount the fact that many of our students live to learn and perform certain signature dances that have been repeated over and over in past Showcases. Even if they've seen it a hundred times, audience members sit on the edge of their seats whenever one of Shirley Marley's greatest hits, such as "Trickle Trickle," is performed.

So, being better than ever doesn't necessarily entail reinventing the wheel. It means that Miller-Marley has done a better than ever job of blending the new dances with the old favorites to create, yet again, another memorable Showcase that is (did we say?) better than ever.

Heartfelt Thanks

The Miller-Marley staff remains eternally grateful to our wonderful families. Your love and support are and will continue to be the source of our inspiration and success. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for the privilege of working with your beautiful and talented children. It is our hope that Showcase 2007 will bring out the best in our students because they definitely bring out the best in us.

IMPORTANT DATES

Class Schedule

Wednesday, May 23

Last Day Spring Session Classes

Thursday, May 24 - Sunday, June 3

Beginning of Summer Break

No Classes will be held.

Monday, June 4

Summer Session Begins

Tuition Due

Wednesday, July 4

Fourth of July - No Classes will be held.

Saturday, August 11

Last Day Summer Session Classes

Saturday, September 8

Fall Session Begins

Tuition Due

There is no Parent Watch
for the Spring Session.

Showcase 2007 Schedule

Saturday, May 26

Dress Rehearsal

Music Hall

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Performance - 6 p.m.

Doors open at 5 p.m.

Call Time Both Nights

5 p.m. older students

5:30 p.m. Combo Classes

Sunday, May 27

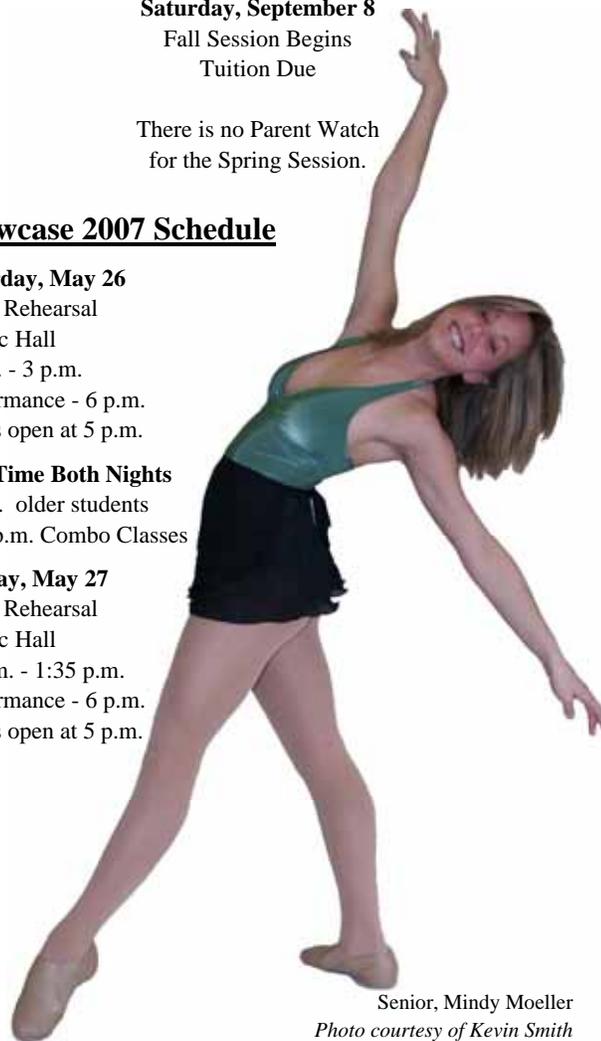
Dress Rehearsal

Music Hall

11 a.m. - 1:35 p.m.

Performance - 6 p.m.

Doors open at 5 p.m.



Senior, Mindy Moeller

Photo courtesy of Kevin Smith

The Showcase Must Go On

Seldom is there a show that goes on without a hitch. Entertainers abound with stories regaling on stage mishaps that occurred during their careers. But, even in the face of disaster, they all affirmed that “the show must go on.” These veterans of past Miller-Marley recitals shared their recollections.

Brian McGinness, Studio Director and Instructor

Brian was eight years old. Despite the fact that he had only been in the tap class for a few months, his teacher prodded him to be in the tap number. So, against his better judgment he agreed to perform “Sentimental Journey” with the rest of his class in the recital. To be perfectly acquitted for the journey, it stood to reason that suitcases should be incorporated into the choreography. First crack out of the box, when striking a pose where one foot was poised on the suitcase, Brian accidentally kicked over his suitcase, stumbled, and for a big finale, Brian stated, “I leaned over backwards, my hat fell off and I shuffle ball stomped right onto it.”

Ann McCroskey, Director of the Miller-Marley Entertainers and Instructor

By the time she hit high school, Ann McCroskey had performed in more Miller-Marley recitals than she could count. One recital, in particular, stood out from the rest. “Here I was in high school and Shirley made me dress up in a rabbit suit to lead the Preschool class in the ‘Hopping Bunnies’ number,” Ann said. At the end of the dance, all the little bunnies were instructed to follow the big bunny off stage, but unbeknownst to Ann, one lone bunny remained on stage. After being admonished by Shirley to, “Go get her!” Ann had to hop back out to retrieve the oblivious bunny. When she did, all the bunnies that had just exited the stage, followed the big bunny back on stage and mayhem ensued as Ann frantically tried to corral over a dozen bunnies who were happily hopping all over the stage.

Jill Hochman, Instructor

Jill’s class was doing a Latin dance and the black bolero hats they wore were trimmed with red ball fringe. Backstage, she turned her head and the ball fringe on her hat became entwined with that of the boy standing next to her. Jill said, “Witnessing our panic, a mother nearby rushed to our rescue. In attempting to unwind the ball fringe, she accidentally knocked our heads together and that did the trick. Miraculously we were freed and entered right on cue.”



Brian McGinness at age ten. We see the hat, but where’s the suitcase?

Photo courtesy of Brian McGinness

1992 World’s Fair Opener to Open Showcase 2007

In 1992, Miller-Marley had the distinction of being invited to represent the United States at the World’s Fair in Seville, Spain. Choreographer, Ann McCroskey, prevailed upon her husband, Richard, to write the musical score for the opening number. Richard McCroskey, an accomplished musician and composer, wrote, arranged and recorded the original composition in his Overland Park studio. Ann McCroskey

said, “The beauty of this piece is that it features tap, jazz and ballet. Miller-Marley is a studio that is known for teaching well-rounded dancers, so this was a perfect opener for the show.”

Based on the overwhelming success of its debut at the 1992 World’s Fair, the studio has chosen to do a revival of the piece, titled, “Variations,” as the opening number for this year’s Showcase.

“Variations” will feature the Miller-Marley Junior and Senior Ensemble and was choreographed by: Ann McCroskey, Shirley Marley, Matthew Donnell and April Hamner.



Photos courtesy of Ann McCroskey

Miller-Marley performing their opening number in “Expo ‘92” at the American Pavilion of the World’s Fair, where temperatures topped 120 degrees in Seville. Out of the 40-member cast, six people went on to perform on Broadway or in National Tours.



A Musical Theatre Camp for Kids

This summer, Miller-Marley will produce and direct its first full-scale musical. *Annie, Jr.* will be directed and choreographed by Brian McGinness with additional choreography by Jill Hochman. The production rights and materials have been secured from Music Theatre International (MTI), an industry leader in the adaptation of Broadway musicals for young performers. All Miller-Marley students ages 8 to 18 are eligible to participate in the production that calls for a cast of around 60 young people. The studio is seeking teenagers to fill the key adult roles in the cast. There are 30 speaking parts and 30 additional roles for the singing and dancing chorus.

Auditions will be held at the studio from 6 to 8 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday, June 11 and 12. Auditions will be divided into the following age categories: 6 to 7 p.m., 8 to 11 years; 7 to 8 p.m., 12 to 18 years. Auditioners will be asked to dance and will sing selections from the musical. No prepared material will be necessary for the audition.

Rehearsals will be at the studio on Monday through Thursday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m. and will run from Monday, June 18 through Thursday, July 26. A dress rehearsal at the theater is scheduled for Friday, July 27. And then, the sun will come out at 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, July 28 and 29, when *Annie, Jr.* will be presented at Blue Valley North High School.

This is a wonderful opportunity for your son or daughter to experience the joy of putting on a show in a camp-like atmosphere where trust, acceptance and camaraderie are emphasized. Children at all levels of dance instruction are encouraged to attend. So, come fully dressed with your smile. We don't need anything but YOU!



Don't wait until
TOMORROW.

Here are 3 Good Reasons
to sign-up for
Annie, Jr. Camp
TODAY!!!!

Everyone who signs-up is
guaranteed a part in the show.

You won't find a high-quality
program at this affordable price
anywhere in Johnson County.

Evening rehearsals are ideal
For working parents.

All participants are required to pay a
\$100 costume/performance fee and
must be enrolled in Miller-Marley
as of June 4, 2007.

On Stage

The Boxcar Children Theatre Young America Apr. 24-May 5
Jessica Ims (Jessie), **Grace Collins** (Amy).

Children's Letters to God Chestnut Fine Arts Theatre July 5-29
C.J. Bradley, **Noelle Bradley**, **Amanda Burns**, **Katie Hunter**, **Jessica Ims**, **Jeremy Ims**, **Daria LeGrand**, **Alex Peterson**.

The Wizard of Oz The Jewish Community Center July 15-22
Choreographed by, **Ann McCroskey**
Ashtyn Hutchings (Dorothy, Understudy). Ensemble: **Dana Arnott**,
Molly Bartlett, **Franklin Carter**, **Kassie Clair**, **Kayla Clair**, **Kyra Clair**,
Ashley Coffin, **Brett Hildebrand**, **Ashtyn Hutchings**, **Haley Knudsen**,
Stephanie LeBlanc, **Chandler Leonard**, **Michelle Maddock**, **Rosemarie Maddock**,
Mitchell McCroskey, **Sarah McMullen**, **Meg Muckey**, **Annie Paglusch**,
Nathan Rommel, **Jessica Siplon**, **Krista Valdez**, **Morgan Weiler**, **Jenna Wetzell**.

The Wizard of Oz Starlight Theatre July 23-29
Caroline Adams, **Olivia Austin**, **Lauren Barbour**, **Elizabeth Brooks**,
Elizabeth Cox, **Gillian Cutter**, **Caroline Hogue**, **Sydney Poteet**, **Becky Reilly**,
Brittany Rouse, **Kali Slater**, **Eliana Stein**, **Katherine Viviano**.
Katherine Viviano,

Miller-Marley Fairs Well at Theatre in the Park

Congratulations to the 70 Miller-Marley students who will appear at The Theatre in the Park this summer. Kudos to Ann McCroskey, choreographer for "Fiddler on the Roof," and April Hamner, choreographer for "The Music Man." Look for all the Miller-Marley performance troupes in "The Community Dance Showcase" at the theatre on Saturday, May 19, from 2 to 3 p.m.

Entertainers and Minitainers Join Forces

The Entertainers and Minitainers will delight audiences at the Italian Festival, at Zona Rosa Shopping Center the weekend of June 8th and will also appear together at several shows in downtown Overland Park this summer.

Benefactors Aid in Miller-Marley Scholarship Fund

Miller-Marley gratefully acknowledges the contributions made to the school by the following individuals. Their generosity will aid in the establishment of the Miller-Marley Scholarship Fund.

J.J. and Constance Carrell (Constance Ramos) - \$1,000
Jeff and Debbie Huffman (parents of Eric Huffman) - \$500

Alumni News

Worsing Shows Crystal How it's Done

Photo courtesy of Linda Worsing



Ryan Worsing (right) with comedian, **Billy Crystal** (left), onstage at the NYU Tisch School of the Arts annual Gala Benefit held at the St. James Theatre in NYC.

In December, **Ryan Worsing** had the privilege of working with legendary comedian, Billy Crystal. Worsing, a drama student at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, was invited to perform in the school's annual Gala Benefit, a prestigious event that pays tribute to Broadway and the performing arts. Hosted by Tisch School alumnus, Billy Crystal, the Gala featured a cast of well-known alumni along with a talented cast of drama students who sang and danced in a live stage show. In addition to being a part of the ensemble, Worsing was lucky enough to score a few onstage lines with Crystal. Rumor has it that during a particular interchange, Billy Crystal forgot one of his lines. When this happened, the quick-witted Worsing turned to the speechless Billy and adlibbed, "Hey, Mr. Crystal, we're on a schedule here!"

Brian Sears - The One that They Want

This fall, Miller-Marley alum, **Brian Sears**, will be joining the cast in the Broadway revival of *Grease*. In addition to his part in the ensemble, Brian was signed to understudy the role of Doody in the production. The show will premiere in June.

Order Your Showcase 2007 DVD's

Cost per DVD - \$25.00

(Price includes shipping and handling)

Order either the Saturday or Sunday performance.

SPECIAL OFFER

Order two or more performances and get \$10 off the first DVD

Make checks payable to Jack Hochman.

Order forms are available in the studio office.

Hairspray Movie to Open this Summer



In a shot from the movie, *Hairspray*, **Hayley Podschun**, as Tammy, stands just to the right of actress, **Brittany Snow** (front), who plays the part of Amber in the film.

Hairspray, the movie, is set for release in theaters across the country on July 20. Back in Kansas, friends and relatives of **Hayley Podschun** are awaiting the big-screen debut of their hometown girl, who will be playing the role of Tammy in the film. Following the film, which was shot last summer, Hayley was cast in the Broadway company where she currently plays Tammy and understudies the roles of Amber and Penny. In February, Brian McGinness and Shirley Marley were in the audience to see former students, **Shannon Durig** and **Hayley Podschun** performing together on the *Hairspray* stage.



Photo courtesy of Hayley Podschun

Best friends on and off the *Hairspray* stage, **Shannon Durig** (left) and **Hayley Podschun** (right) pose together before show time.