



Newsletter

MILLER-MARLEY

School of Dance & Voice

July/August 2000

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Important Dates

Sunday, August 9

Last Day of Summer Session Classes

Monday, August 10 -

Sunday September 7

End of Summer Break - No Classes

Monday, September 8

First Day of Fall Session - Tuition is Due

Watch Week Schedule

Watch Week #1

Monday, July 21 - Saturday, July 29

April Hamner, Ann McCroskey,
Beth Johnston, Joan Walsh

Watch Week #2

Monday, July 28 - Saturday, August 2

Hilary Brown, Matthew Donnell,
Sharon Ingebritson,
Laura Skidmore-Branson

Watch Week #3

Monday, August 4 - Saturday, August 9

Jill Hochman, Shirley Marley,
Brian McGinness

Fall Schedules

Miller-Marley is currently enrolling for fall. Schedules are available and will be distributed by individual instructors. Class placements for fall have been noted on each child's schedule. Schedules for each student are on file in the studio office for those students who have not yet received theirs.

Please take the time to read the enrollment information that accompanies the fall schedule, for updates regarding the studio's policies and procedures.

Please consult the Miller-Marley website to view the fall schedule, Schedule at a Glance and class descriptions.

www.millermarley.com

Miller-Marley to Partner with Coterie Theatre

Miller-Marley is proud to announce that the Coterie Theatre has chosen the studio as a satellite school for its acting classes. The Coterie, located at Crown Center, has been bringing quality children's theater to Kansas City audiences since 1979. The theater's stellar reputation led *Time* magazine to rank it as "one of the top five theaters serving families and young audiences in the United States." In addition to producing six mainstage productions a year, the Coterie's educational division offers a wide variety of acting classes for children from first grade through high school.

Nancy Marcy, Education Director for the Coterie, stated that the fall program at Miller-Marley will be open to the public and will include: Theatre Exploration (Grades 1-3) and Acting One and Acting Two (Grades 4-6 and Grades 7-12). New classes and continuing classes will be added for the winter session. Each Coterie class is taught in a six-week session. At the end of each session the student is advanced to the next level of study. The cumulative structure of the program allows students to move quickly through the basic acting courses to more advanced levels that focus on specific aspects of the craft.

Artistic Director, Jeff Church, and Nancy Marcy have assembled a top-notch faculty of professional actors, designers and directors. Their combined expertise as both artists and educators creates multi-faceted possibilities for learning and many hours of fun and enrichment.

Nancy Marcy stated that though participation in a Coterie class does not guarantee that a student will get "a part" in one of the theater's productions, students are often referred to the Coterie's yearly open-call auditions and recommended for consideration by their instructors. Coterie students are guaranteed to receive quality preparation and training for the audition process, which will serve them well wherever they go.

Jeff Church, Artistic Director for the Coterie stated, "The Coterie teaches classes at several sites in Kansas City, but we've never been able to serve theatre students in Overland Park and south. Thanks to Brian's idea for a partnership, we think we can forge a real alliance here. Students can reap the benefit of having professional dance, voice and theatre training all under one roof. A further benefit is that we get to know more kids who can potentially be cast in professional productions - especially in the coterie's Lab for New Family Musicals where we've worked with Stephen Schwartz and Harry Connick Jr. on new pieces."

Enrollment and payment of fees will be handled through the Coterie. Registration forms will be available at the studio in August and those wishing to enroll online may do so on the Coterie's website at www.coterietheatre.org. Please read the following information pertaining to the schedule of upcoming Coterie classes. Class descriptions will be listed on the Miller-Marley website at www.millermarley.com.

Theatre Exploration (1st-3rd Grade)	Saturday, Sept. 13 - Saturday Oct. 18	12:30-2:00pm
Acting One (4th-6th Grade)	Monday, Sept. 8 - Monday, Oct. 13	4:00-5:30pm
Acting One (7th-12th Grade)	Monday, Sept. 8 - Monday, Oct. 13	5:00-6:30pm
Acting Two (4th-6th Grade)	Saturday, Sept. 13 - Saturday Oct. 18	11:00am-12:30pm
Acting Two (7th-12th Grade)	Saturday, Sept. 13 - Saturday Oct. 18	12:30-2:00pm

Note: Acting One or permission from the instructor is a prerequisite for Acting Two.

Shirley Marley Receives National Recognition in Dance Teacher Magazine

It has been said that there are only six degrees of separation between Shirley Marley and lots of people in the universe. If you're in show business and you don't know Shirley Marley, it's almost a cinch that you know somebody who does. Rightfully so, considering the thousands of lives Shirley has touched in her forty-six year career as the owner of the dancing school that bears her name. Shirley's indisputable reputation precedes her wherever she goes. It is not unusual to see Shirley Marley referred to in a Broadway Playbill cast member's bio as "the person who most contributed to my success."

One such success story involves alumnus, Hayley Podschun, who was the cover girl for the 2007 July/August issue of *Dance Spirit Magazine* and was cited by the publication as "the number one Broadway talent to look out for." Hayley played the role of Tammy in Broadway's *Hairspray* and went on to reprise the role in the movie version of the show.

During her interview with the writer from *Dance Spirit*, Hayley continually credited Shirley Marley for her success. Impressed by Hayley's statement that over fifty Shirley Marley students have appeared on Broadway, the writer contacted an affiliate, *Dance Teacher Magazine* and suggested that they do a feature story on Shirley.

Last October, Steve Sucato, staff writer for *Dance Teacher*, conducted a lengthy interview



Shirley Marley (circa the mid 1960's) posing in her signature hat and high-heels.

with Shirley. He also contacted several alumni who have achieved success on Broadway and in the entertainment industry. Among them was Constance Ramos, an original member of the design team on ABC's *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, who was recently quoted in a local publication, "Shirley Marley is one of the best tap choreographers in the world! Everything I needed to know about becoming an architect and a designer, I learned at Miller-Marley."

The *Dance Teacher* article was supposed to have been published in November of last year, but due to spatial considerations was postponed. Last month, Steve Sucato called with the news that Shirley's article would appear in the August 2008 issue of the magazine.

The photo of Shirley (at left) is one that was submitted to the magazine. Though Shirley couldn't remember exactly when it was taken, judging by the bell bottoms and platform shoes, we're guessing it was probably around the mid 1960's. Also apparent in the photo is Shirley's undying penchant for high-heels and hats.

Jill Hochman, Miller-Marley instructor and former student of Shirley's said, "Though Shirley had plenty of chances to go into show business, this is a woman who had a true calling to be a teacher and what an incredible teacher she was...and still is." Recent Miller-Marley graduate, Nathan Helming, said, "Shirley can still out tap anybody in the whole school."

Photo Shirley Marley Courtesy of Miller-Marley. Photo Restoration by Kevin Smith

Staff Notes

Miller-Marley instructor, **April Hammer**, will be leaving the studio in July to pursue her dancing career. Recently, April was a contestant on the Fox series *So You Think You Can Dance*. In February, April flew to Salt Lake City, Utah for the first round and was selected to go on to the second round in Las Vegas. The bad news is...she was eliminated. But the good news is... when the show was broadcast in May, she actually got on TV during the group choreography segment of the Utah competition. Word has it that at the end of the summer, April will be moving to Atlanta or Chicago and currently is leaning toward Atlanta.

Thanks to April for her great work as both a choreographer and a teacher. The staff and families at the studio wish her the best of luck and want her to know that we just don't "think" she can dance. We "know" she can dance!

On June 28th, **Laura Skidmore**, ballet instructor and Artistic Director of the Miller-Marley Youth Ballet Company, became Mrs. Kyle Branson in a beautiful ceremony that took place at the Parkville Presbyterian Church in Parkville, Missouri. The reception was held at the National Golf Club of Kansas City, also located in Parkville. Many members of the Miller-Marley staff were in attendance and all agreed that Laura looked like a princess when she and her new hubby danced the first dance to *So Close* from *Disney's Enchanted*.



Alyssa Barbour

Alyssa Barbour Introduces High School Musical Bear

It's been quite a while since 13 year-old Alyssa Barbour has played with toys. But she jumped at the chance when approached by a casting agent to be in a national *Build-A-Bear* commercial where she introduces a new bear in the *Disney High School Musical* series. We're guessing that the bear's debut in the *Build-A-Bear* stores will coincide with the release of *Disney's High School Musical 3*, set for release this October. The bear is named Corbin, after Corbin Bleu, who plays Chad in the popular movie series.

Alyssa said that the commercial was shot at a local high school. In it, she and two other girls brag about their new boyfriend, who is so cute. Of course, the boyfriend turns out to be the fuzzy stuffed animal who, according to Alyssa, "bears" very little resemblance to his on-screen counterpart shown at right.



Corbin Bleu

Photo of Alyssa Barbour Courtesy of Brenda Barbour

Photo Corbin Bleu hollywoodgossip.com

Students On Stage

Our Town Kansas City Civic Opera June 27 & 29
Lucas Pherigo

All Shook Up The New Theatre June 26 - Aug. 31
Ashley Burns, Matthew Donnell (Miller-Marley Instructor)

Annie Get Your Gun Leawood Stage Co.
 July 17-20 & July 24-26

Rachel Arends, Anna Arends, Katie Hagen, Sarah Beth Herron, Curt Knupp, Ron McKeown, Austin Stang

Oliver Jewish Community Center July 20-27
 Choreographed by Miller-Marley Instructor, **Ann McCroskey**

Dana Arnott, Corrine Baker, Emily Burns, Kassie Clair, Kayla Clair, Kyra Clair, Dakota Hoar, Chandler Leonard, Emily Levinson, Megan McConnell, Nyssa Newcomer, Nicole McCroskey, Alex Peterson, Nathan Rommel, Cooper Scott, Jessica Siplon, Krista Spindler, Krista Valdez, Katherine Viviano

Music Man Starlight Theatre July 28-Aug. 3
Elizabeth Brooks, Elizabeth Cox, Emma Ferrin, Caroline Hogue, Lauryn Hurley, Cianan Lesley, Olivia Lesley, Erin Lowe, Sarah McMullen, Sydney Poteet, Kalli Slater, Brooke Snyder

Student News... **Molli McCulley** received Starlight Theatre's Blue Star Award for Outstanding Ensemble Member for her role as a Disciple in the Blue Valley Northwest production of *Godspell*, at the Blue Star Awards event held at Starlight Theatre in May. **Lexie Hofer** was a finalist for best Overall Female Actor at the AMTC talent competition held in Orlando, Florida over the July 4th weekend.



Photo Courtesy of Ann McCroskey

Dakota Hoar (center) as Oliver in the Jewish Community Center production of *Oliver*. Dakota is flanked by fellow Miller-Marley student, **Alex Peterson**, (right) as The Artful Dodger, and **Cary Mock**, (left) as Fagin.



Jessica Ims displays her Buddy Award
 Photo Courtesy of Terri Hopper

Jessica Ims was voted Best Leading Actress by the Olathe Community Theatre Association for her portrayal of Anne Frank in the production, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, at the Olathe Community Theatre. The Buddy Award ceremony, named for legendary actor and Olathe native, Buddy Rogers, is an annual event at OCTA to honor outstanding achievements by directors, actors and designers. Jessica, who competed against adult nominees for the Buddy Award, was thrilled to have been selected as the winner. Quite an accomplishment for a 16 year-old.



Miller-Marley Students Featured in Starlight Theatre's Music Man

This summer, when the Wells Fargo Wagon rolls into River City, a whole crew of Miller-Marley students and two alumni will be waiting on the Starlight Theatre stage to herald its arrival. Twelve girls from Miller-Marley will perform as members of the Children's Community Chorus in Starlight Theatre's upcoming production of *Music Man*.

They will be joined by Miller-Marley alums, Ryan Worsing and Kyle Mullins, who are traveling with the National Tour of *Music Man*, opening at Starlight on July 28th.

Ryan Worsing, a recent graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Performing Arts will play the role of River City bad boy, Tommy Djilas. Kyle Mullins, a graduate of the University of Arizona, with a degree in dance performance, is an ensemble member.



Ryan Worsing (center) with castmates at the opening night party for *Kiss Me Kate* at New Jersey's famed Paper Mill Playhouse, in April. Worsing was a member of the ensemble in the production.

Photo Broadwayworld.com

While in KC, Mullins will present a Master Class at Miller-Marley on August 4th. (see page 4) Worsing has been invited to the studio as a guest choreographer for the Miller-Marley Entertainers. Both young men are featured online in the alumni section of the Miller-Marley website www.millermarley.com.

Miller-Marley students who will appear in *Music Man* are listed in the "Students on Stage" article above.

Music Man will be presented at Starlight Theatre July 28th through August 3rd. Information about ticket prices and show times can be found online at www.kcstarlight.com.

Alumni News

Photo Playbill.com



Janine Divita

Janine Divita Makes Broadway Debut

Those who remember Overland Park native and Miller-Marley alum, Janine Divita, in Theatre in the Park's 2004 production of *The Sound Of Music*, agree that the lovely Mezzo soprano was meant to play Maria. Well, hold onto your nun's habits folks, because Janine just made her Broadway debut in the revival of *Grease* and she's playing the role of bad-girl, Betty Rizzo.

Now the halls of Rydell High will be filled with the sound of Divita belting out

songs that make you want to put the top down and go to the drive-in.

Divita, a graduate of the University of Michigan, appeared most recently in the world premier of the musical, *A Tale of Two Cities*, slated to open on Broadway later this summer. Regionally, she has performed at Kansas City's Starlight Theatre and the MUNY Opera in St. Louis.

Another Miller-Marley alum, Brian Sears, is an ensemble member in *Grease* and understudies the part of Doody.

Madge Fenton Memorial Scholarship Fund

Miller-Marley extends its thanks to the following families and individuals for their donations*

- Lynn Artebur
- Pam Arnott
- The Barbour Family
- Elaine Biggs
- LeRoy Canser
- Marilyn Gold
- Patrick Harrigan
- Dan Hill
- Sarah Hiss
- Francie Huber
- Mickey Levey
- Sheryl McAvoy
- The McMullen Family
- Lori Morrison
- The Poccia Family
- Sarah Peterson
- Denise Podschun
- Evelyn Rigty
- The Rumsey Family
- Stephan Snitz
- Linda Spivak
- Kathy Surber
- Karen Vespestad
- Marilyn Walz
- Joanne Wedbush

*Donations posted since May '08.

Miller-Marley Presents....

HAIRSPRAY Master Class

with Hayley Podschun

Tammy, from the Broadway cast of *Hairspray*

Friday, August 1

4:00 to 5:30pm

Jazz Levels 4 & Up

Cost: \$20.00



Photo Dance Spirit Magazine

Join Hayley, "one of the nicest kids in town" & learn steps from *Hairspray's* greatest hits!



Master Class

Contemporary Jazz

with Kyle Mullins

Saturday, August 2

Noon to 1:30pm

Jazz Levels 4 & Up

Cost: \$20.00

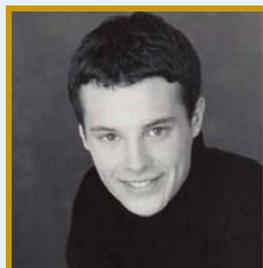


Photo Courtesy of Kyle Mullins

Auditions for Clara's Dream



This year, Miller-Marley's annual production of *Clara's Dream* will be presented by The Miller-Marley Youth Ballet Company on Saturday and Sunday, December 13 and 14. The studio will be holding auditions on Saturday, September 20, for additional cast members. An alternate audition date on Saturday, September 13, has been scheduled for those who cannot attend the main audition on September 20. Previous ballet training is helpful, but not necessary for these parts. Auditioners will be divided according to age and will be asked to do a simple dance combination.

Audition times are:

Main Audition - Sat., Sept. 20

- 12:30-1:30 pm (ages 7-11) Angels and Party Scene Children
- 1:30-2:00 pm (ages 12 & Up) Party Scene and Gingerbread Children
- 2:30-3:00 pm (adults) Party Scene Adult Guests

Alternate Audition - Sat., Sept. 13

- 1:30-2:30 pm (all ages)

Let's Go Green...

In an effort to go green, Miller-Marley would like to help those who are interested in forming car pools. In August, a sheet will be posted in the lobby on which parents can list their contact information and the school that their child attends. This will enable parents who need transportation to hook-up with others who live in the same vicinity. Often, there are as many as 80 to 100 children an hour at the studio. Please take advantage of this opportunity to save on gas and save our environment.