

DIRECTORS



Casandra Hillman- Artistic Director, Dance Coordinator

Casandra Hillman is a professor and the dance program Coordinator at Santa Rosa Junior College. Casandra holds a BFA in Dance from the School of Music and Dance at SFSU and an MFA in Choreography and Performance from Mills College. She has been a guest instructor for the ACDA (American College Dance Association) annual conference since 2011, and is a member of the Bill Evans Teaching Institute (BETI) and the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO).

Casandra has been performing, teaching and choreographing in the San Francisco Bay Area since 2003 and a faculty member of the SRJC Dance Program since 2016. Prior to her tenure at SRJC, Casandra was an Adjunct Professor of Dance at Cabrillo College from 2010-2016, and during that time served the community as a Santa Cruz Arts Council Associate and SPECTRA Artist. Casandra has performed the choreographic works of Molissa Fenley, Kathleen McClintock, Dr. Alberta Rose, Susan Whipp and the late Alicia Pierce. She also performed in the re-staging of Martha Graham's Primitive Mysteries and re-staged the choreography of Agnes DeMille's Carousel. Casandra's teaching methodologies and pedagogy are informed by her study of Ballet, Laban Movement Analysis, Bartineff, Jazz and Hip Hop, as well as the Cunningham, Limón and Graham modern dance techniques

Casandra is the Artistic Director for the fall Touring Dance Company (TDC) and the Co-Director of the annual Spring Dance Concert at SRJC. She is passionate about community outreach, and is dedicated to cultivating a culturally diverse dance program serving all communities in Sonoma County and beyond.



Tanya Tolmasoff-Knippelmeir- Co-Director, Instructor, Choreographer

Tanya Tolmasoff-Knippelmeir has been an instructor at Santa Rosa JC Dance Department since 2015. Her dance classes have a strong emphasis on artistic collaboration, contemporary ballet & release technique, Modern improvisation, choreography and performance quality. She holds her MA in Arts Administration & Cultural Policy from *Goldsmith University London*, and a BA in Theatre, Dance, and Costume Design from Cal Poly, SLO. She is the Artistic Director and Co-Founder of UPSide Dance Company in California since 2012, bringing innovative dance to unconventional spaces. Tanya Tolmasoff is also the newest dance instructor at ArtQuest at Santa Rosa High School. Tanya has performed Internationally with *Variable*

Velocity Performance Group (California), *Deyo Dances* (California and St. Petersburg, Russia), *Interweave Dance Theatre* (Colorado), *AMP: Dance* (NYC), *RE:DS Dance Company* (London, UK), and a Viennese Circus Act. As a designer she created Theater costumes for off-Broadway productions in NYC and directed a Californian Fashion Company called *Melanie Renee Design*.

GUEST ARTIST/CHOREOGRAPHER



Jordan Hayes

Jordan Hayes is a multidisciplinary artist living and working in Sonoma County. Her primary focus from an early age was drawing and painting, and she received a BA in studio art from Sonoma State University. Jordan took her first dance class as an adult, and was instantly hooked, looking for every opportunity to pursue an education in dance. She took classes all over Sonoma County, Marin and the Bay Area, jumped at opportunities to work with local choreographers, participated in performance workshops in San Francisco, gained teaching experience at local studios, and eventually began performing professionally, and choreographing. Jordan is an Upside Dance Company

member and collaborator, a painter, photographer, film editor, dance educator, and forever student of visual and performing arts. She believes in the importance of having a clear point of view and voice when making art, and credits all the experiences she's had thus far to her own.

STUDENT CHOREOGRAPHERS



Ben Donner

Ben Donner, aka "Nebula", is a local street dancer who has been actively participating in street dance battles for the past 7 years, winning tournaments online and in person, in state and out of state. His dance has been focused on learning foundations of street styles such as Popping, Waving, Tutting, Animation, and basics of Hip Hop dance and its many genres. As a dance battler and local dance teacher, Ben has been pushing to create a new way of approaching hip hop dance in his studio, O'Brien Center of the Arts, by teaching the youth techniques, musicality, freestyle (improv), and foundations in funk styles to help give a new perspective on what Hip Hop is and its

important historical impact on dance. Ben also actively participates in his community by hosting freestyle sessions and workshops to help share his experience and love for dance with others.



Deanna Dubinin

Deanna Dubinin is a soon to be graduate from SRJC working towards her Dance, Business Administration, and Economics degrees as well as a certificate in performance and choreography. After having messed around with a few dance classes as a child, it was not until she was 14 that Deanna began to start taking dance classes consistently and building technique and artistry. Since then, She has had the opportunity to perform and create work for multiple SRJC dance shows as well as get her dream job as a dance teacher at Rhythms Performing Arts Center.



Bri Holmes

Bri Holmes is a 20 year-old Business Administration major, completing her third year with SRJC and hopes to graduate with her Associates Degree in 2023. She is working towards transferring to a University where she can obtain her BFA in Dance and become director of a dance program or theatre. She is also working towards becoming an NFL/MBA Cheerleader/Dancer and will be auditioning for the 49er's Goldrush Cheerleaders and the San Francisco Warriors. Her favorite dance styles are Hip Hop and Jazz but she is learning to love contemporary and is working towards becoming more knowledgeable in this style. She is grateful to be a part of the SRJC

Dance Program and is looking forward to all future opportunities.



Sam Browne-Iversen

At the age of ten, Sam began taking swing dance lessons with an after school program, which started his love of dance. In 2010, during his naval career, Sam began working for a recreational therapy department in San Diego, which became the non-profit *Soldiers who Salsa*. He kept learning and teaching Latin ballroom until he was discharged in 2015. In 2016, while taking classes towards a pre-med program at SRJC, he was asked by Casandra Hillman to assist her with choreographing *In the Heights*. After receiving an award for outstanding choreography for the production, he changed his major to dance and didn't look back. Sam attended the Boulder Jazz Dance Intensive in 2018, and assisted in choreographing *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their*

Accent for SRJC in 2019. He graduated with his Associates, and after a year at San Jose State University, returned home due to the pandemic. He will be attending Sonoma State University to complete his Bachelors in Fine Arts in fall of 2023. While at SRJC, Sam has performed in over ten dance productions, at regional ACDA conferences, and with SRJC's Touring Dance Company.



Christa Page

Christa Danielle Page has been dancing all her life, performing with cousins and friends putting on shows for audiences filled with family and loved ones. In 2011 she began taking lessons at Rhythms Performing Arts in Novato California where she was exposed to a variety of dance styles including Tap, Ballet, Contemporary, Jazz, and Hip Hop. She studied

dance at San Marin High and it was there that she was first introduced to Modern dance. She began dancing at Santa Rosa Junior College in 2016 which led to her understanding of choreography and development of her own personal style. In 2022 Christa has expanded her genre interests to include Heels classes with Ashley Worley and Karah Peters. It is Christa's final semester at SRJC and she is applying to conservatories around the States to continue her training and strengthen her voice as a choreographer and as an African American woman in society today.



Sabrina Lopez

Sabrina Lopez has been dancing since she was 4 years old. Her training primarily focused on Ballet, Jazz and Modern techniques. She was a member of the ArtQuest Dance company at Santa Rosa High. She has been performing for the Santa Rosa Junior College since 2018. Her most recent performance with the Santa Rosa Junior College was at the 2022 ACDA Northwest Conference in Oregon. She is currently working towards a B.F.A in Dance after she transfers.



Gabrial Rizo

Gabrial Rizo is a 24 year old Kinesiology and Dance major, starting dancing at the age of 12. Studied cheer dance team, ballroom, modern, jazz and lyrical. Has choreographed for local Elsie Allen and Montgomery high schools. Choreographed for the SRJC Theater Arts department. This will be Gabrial's third time setting a piece for the SRJC Dance department show's. This semester he will be setting "CULTure" for our 2022 Dance show. He'll also be performing a solo titled "Payaso Malo" choreographed by himself. Gabrial feels at home with the SRJC Dance department.

GUEST ARTISTS

Alqana Dance Ensemble

AlQamar Dance Ensemble brings cabaret Bellydance to Sonoma County! Janessa and Pauline dance all around the Bay and Sacramento areas, but are passionate about bringing this art form to their home town of Santa Rosa. Bellydance takes many incarnations in our modern world, and AlQamar Dance Ensemble is dedicated to staying true to the spirit of the dance, and offers you a small glimpse into the active dance scene in places like Cairo and Istanbul! You can find them on instagram under @alqamardanceensemble

O'Brien Center for the Arts

In 2012, Martha O'Brien opened the O'Brien Center of the Arts to share her knowledge and love of ballet with the children of Sonoma County. She believes that every child can benefit from taking ballet because of the confidence and discipline it instills.

Martha applies elements from Russian, French, and English techniques to create well rounded and versatile dancers. She encourages her students to achieve their full potential and to work towards their dreams. Her advanced dancers audition for and attend summer intensive programs at well-known ballet schools and the younger students can attend the summer intensives at the studio that consist of extra conditioning, master classes with guest teachers, and opportunities to try new forms of dance.

During the school year, students learn and refine their technique while developing their artistry. They perform twice a year at Spreckles Performing Arts Center in the Holiday Gift and another show in spring with new choreography.