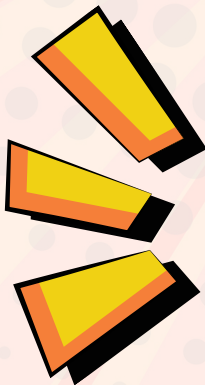


RHYTHM FEST

FACULTY



Gina Barrera is a St. Louis native who has been tap dancing her whole life and considers it her first love. She has danced professionally in St. Louis, Chicago, Kansas City and Los Angeles. Gina taught dance for over 15 years at reputable studios throughout St. Louis and Chicago including Lou Conte Chicago and COCA. She is a proud graduate of Columbia College Chicago. She produced her first live dance concert, Chicago Dance Movement, at the age of 22 in Chicago and went on to further produce live dance projects such as the long running Duets for My Valentine in Chicago and St. Louis under her former non-profit organization Luminous Arts Productions. As a producer, she has worked with dancers from many reputable dance companies such as The Joffrey Ballet, Chicago Tap Theatre, MADD Rhythms, Lehrer Dance, Luna Negra Dance Theatre, Chicago Dance Crash, MADCO, St. Louis Ballet, The Slaughter Project, Thodos Dance Chicago, Giordano Dance Chicago and more! Gina opened Studio Ivanhoe Pilates in south city St. Louis in the Summer of 2021 where she teaches Pilates Equipment, Mat and Barre classes. She is humbled and grateful to be tap dancing professionally again with STL Rhythm Collaborative and spends her free time with her husband and two young daughters.





Gina Bon-Perez is a passionate and dedicated dance educator who's mentored and trained dancers for over thirty years. She holds a B.A in Performing Arts from Lindenwood University. She resided in New York City for ten years performing professionally in stock and regional theatre as well as Broadway National and European productions. Career highlights include touring the country in productions of State Fair, My Fair Lady, Evita, The King and I and the European tour of Grease. She also performed in regional productions of Chicago, Nunsense II, The Mystery of Edwin Drood, A Chorus Line and the world premiere of Prince and the Pauper. As a dance educator she's been a faculty member and choreographer for prestigious performing arts centers in the East Coast and St. Louis region including Youth Theatre Interactions, St. Louis Dancing Classrooms, Springboard to Learning and COCA. Additionally, she's led workshops and adjudicated for national dance conventions Dance Masters of America and Kids Artistic Revue. Currently she is a coach for College Bound Audition Prep, Dance Connection Performing Arts and has been on faculty at Center of Creative Arts since 2008 where she has served in the dance department, summer camp programs, COCAedu and COCAbiz. She is the proud recipient of Springboard's 2024 Exemplary Teaching Artist award and was honored in January with the 2025 Lee Nolting Students First Award at COCA's annual Flame event.



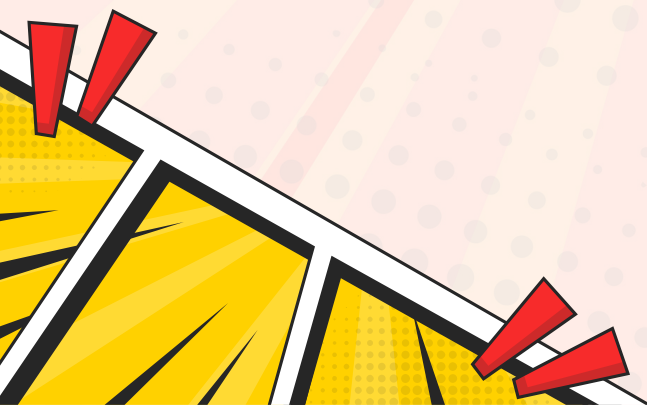
Amy Gammon holds a BA in Dance and a Master of Arts in Teaching with an emphasis in Dance from Lindenwood University. She is now the co-owner of Performing Arts Centre, where she has been a teacher and director for the past 14 years. She is currently an adjunct professor at Lindenwood University, where she has set numerous pieces in the dance concerts, traveled with the students to American College Dance Association teaching tap, hip hop, and yoga, along with the opportunity to choreograph *Urinetown*, *Cinderella*, and *Carrie*. Amy just recently won the Lindenwood Adjunct Teaching Award for the 24-25 school year. She was a former director with Beyond The Stars Dance Competition for the past seven years with the continued opportunity to choreograph their opening numbers for Nationals and apart of their faculty on their dance convention circuit. She is incredibly honored to have won the 2024 Best Jazz Performance at the Industry Dance Awards in California. Amy Gammon is a co-founder of MoSTLY TAP, a St. Louis based tap dance company. She has had the opportunity to choreograph three seasons for Fright Fest with Six Flags St. Louis. She is a member of Dance Masters of America, a graduate at DMA's Teachers Training School earning the Bachna Scholarship, a yoga teacher through YogaSix, and the Artistic Director for The DANCE CO. of St. Charles. Amy holds a strong passion for teaching, inspiring and motivating students to achieve their goals.



Kelly Ging is a teacher, arts administrator and performer in St. Louis. She began her dance training in Washington, MO studying tap, jazz, ballet, and pointe with Jo Nolting Phinney. To further develop her tap training, she commuted into St. Louis for weekly classes and attended the annual St. Louis Tap Festival, LA Tap Festival, and Tradition in Tap (NY). Kelly received a double major in Arts Management and Dance at Lindenwood University in 2011 where she received the Lindy Award from the Dance Department and graduated magna cum laude. With over 15 years experience as a teaching artist, Kelly has that knack of creating a high-energy, fun environment that challenges every level of student. Her passion for teaching and developing artists keeps her busy at COCA - Center of Creative Arts, Gateway Center of Performing Arts, STL Rhythm Collaborative as well as guest teaching for workshops, intensives and setting choreography throughout Missouri and Illinois. Formerly, the Pre-Professional Division and Dance Program Manager at COCA, Kelly led the accreditation efforts of the organization, developed curriculum, and helped students carve their path in their arts education. Now, Kelly works administratively for the Performing Arts Department at Washington University in St. Louis. Kelly is honored to be a part of moSTLY TAP and be a small part of the growth of the tap community here in St. Louis.



Scotti Iman grew up in the small Missouri town of Salisbury. After reconnecting with his love of drumming in high school, Scotti enrolled at Central Methodist University as a Music Education major. After spending time in the education field & studying with Loyd Warden, he left CMU for the McNally Smith College of Music where he graduated with a degree in Percussion Performance. While at McNally Smith, Scotti studied with Dave Stanoch & Marv Dahlgren. Seeking the exact opposite of Minnesota winters, Scotti then moved to Austin, Texas. There he toured all over the state & country with Gary P. Nunn, Horse Opera, Leo Rondeau, The Jon Napier Band, Gumbo Ce Soir, Loves It! & The Rollfast Ramblers. In 2015, Scotti decided to move back to Missouri & settled in St. Louis. Continuing in the belief that musicians are constantly progressing as students, he still continues his education by studying with Daniel Glass. When he's not teaching at his own studio, Scotti serves as STLRC's Music Director and can be seen touring in the U.S. & abroad with the following acts: Jack Grelle, Cara Louise, Cree Rider Family Band, moSTLY JAZZ, and SideCar.

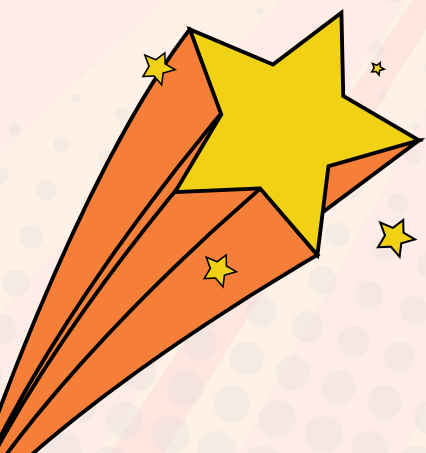




Maria Majors is a producer, director, choreographer, and performer based in St. Louis Missouri. Maria began her professional dance career in New York with the touring performance ensemble, Manhattan Tap, under the direction of world renowned tap dancer and musician, Heather Cornell. During that time, she had the extreme honor of touring with late tap dance great, Dr. Buster Brown, and was an original cast member in Manhattan Tap's "Excursion Fare," featuring the musicians of Keith Terry and Crosspulse and premiered at the Joyce Theater in New York.

Since returning to St. Louis in 1999, Maria has been on faculty and served as a consultant with many area dance education programs throughout the region. She worked alongside the late Professor Robert L Reed for the production of the historic St. Louis Tap Festival, which she attended annually for 20 years and served on the Board of Directors. Maria now produces the annual STL Rhythm Fest, honoring Professor Reed's legacy, now celebrating its 5th anniversary.

Maria founded moSTLY TAP in 2017, following her passion to create professional performances that would boost enthusiasm for tap dance and encourage audiences to enjoy rhythm in new ways. In 2018, under the leadership of Phillip Russo, moSTLY JAZZ was formed. In response to a growing need for accessible performing arts education opportunities in both music and dance, Maria developed non profit, STL Rhythm Collaborative in 2019. She is also an adjunct professor of dance at Missouri Baptist University and Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville.





Erin Morris has been teaching, performing, and competing in jazz and swing dancing for over 20 years. She has enjoyed international artist residencies in Vienna, Berlin, and Krakow but above all loves contributing regularly to her local communities and students. Erin received her MFA in Dance in 2023 from Washington University in St. Louis and is now adjunct faculty. Her art-making focus has been on blending her background in Black social jazz dance with personal explorations in postmodernism, and she finds that all paths return her to the importance of improvisation and collaboration with musicians. Whether in the studio, the classroom, or the jazz club, Erin is committed to laying bare cultural roots and discovering a present that is individual, informed, aesthetic, and connective.



Based around Guitar-Playing, Singing, and Tap-Dancing front man, **Anthony J. Russo, RUSSO & CO** blends Upright Bass, Banjo/Dobro, Guitar, Vocal Harmonies, Percussion and Tap Dance to create a truly authentic Country/Americana sound. While equipped with an arsenal of original music, this band also offers a wide range of popular cover songs, ranging from classic to modern and everything your step-dad made you listen to in his 1992 Chevy Silverado. Originally from St Charles, MO, Anthony J. Russo left high school at 17 to “join the circus”. From 2001 until 2019 he toured internationally for a variety of companies (Tap Dogs, Cirque Du Soleil, Tap Stars, 5-star cruise lines, +) and has had the privilege of playing rooms such as The Kennedy Center in DC, Radio City Music Hall and Carnegie Hall in NYC, and hundreds of venues around the world. With over 20 years of entertainment experience, RUSSO & CO can rock everything from a house party to a sold out venue. The band is currently based in St Charles, MO where they can be found opening for touring acts and headlining their own local and regional touring shows.





Chris Rutledge started his dance training at 19 in Alabama, by the renowned Lisa Lyndon. He has training in Tap, Jazz, and Ballet, but his professional career and passion lies in Tap Dance and Body Percussion. Chris has co-choreographed and performed in tap shows for both Universal Studios Hollywood and Disneyland. He also helped co-write, co-produce, and co-choreograph performances and full length stage shows for the leading step/body percussion group MOLODI(mo.lah.dee), out of Las Vegas. Chris choreographed and was featured in a body percussion number called 'Per Dono' for Italian pop star Tiziano Ferro, which was featured in his world tour. 'Hines/Pollock' is an award winning performance art act he created in 2010 as 'the TapArtist', where paintings are made by tap dancing in paint on a canvas. Chris also wrote a full stage show for his company 'theFYVgroup' called 'FootPrints of a TapDancer.' which appeared in the Hollywood Fringe Festival. Chris is a premier performer in the popular Holiday Show based out of Minneapolis, MN called "Who Brought The Humbug!?" In the summer of 2019, Chris spent 4 months overseas in Turkey with All Stars Entertainment for a 5-Star Resort touring show as a performer. He has been a judge/instructor for over 10 years with companies such as DEA, Dance Olympus, Canadian Dance Teachers Association, Starquest, Dance Talent Challenge, and currently with Spotlight! For 20 years, Chris has been sought-after internationally as an instructor and choreographer for competition, concert, and film purposes.





KJ Sheldon is a native of Colorado and grew up dancing under the direction of her late mentor, Prof. Robert L. Reed. At 18, she moved to Chicago to pursue a BFA in musical theater with an emphasis in dance, where she earned her degree in May 2019. Throughout her years of studies, KJ started dancing with MADD Rhythms Tap Company, and through them she was able to continue her tap training and performance. Since being in Chicago, she's been able to perform at the Dusable Museum, Jay Pritzker Pavilion, Harris Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, and countless others across the world- including the 2023 Steps of Wenzhou, Rhythm of the World show in China. She has also performed in the reunion shows of the all-female tap company, Rhythm ISS..., under the direction of Idella Reed Davis, Sharon Rushing, and Sarah Savelli. Today, she continues to perform and teach as a professional tap dancer and educator in the Chicagoland area! She's been able to take her choreography to studios across the Midwest, and is passionate about teaching the next generation.





Tommy Wasiuta, described as a "breath of dance freedom" (New York Times), is a tap dance artist from St. Louis, Missouri. His career began as a co-founder and performer with the St. Louis Rhythm Collaborative, named in Dance Magazine's "Top 25 to Watch" in 2023. Currently based in New York City, Tommy has performed at The Joyce Theater, 92NY, Little Island, Dizzy's Club at Jazz at Lincoln Center, and American Dance Festival, performing under the direction of artists like Michela Marino Lerman, Max Pollak, Luke Hickey, Christina Carminucci, and Ulysses Owens Jr. He has also performed as a tap dance soloist with the Saint Joseph Symphony Orchestra. In 2024, he released "Drum Shoes", his first solo tap album that explores the tap shoes as a stand-alone instrument. As an educator, Tommy is on faculty at Steps on Broadway, New York University, the Joffrey Ballet School, and OneBeat Dance Brands. He has been a guest instructor for Operation: Tap, Sarah Reich's Tap Music Project, The Institute for American Musical Theatre, Dance Masters of America, Tap the Map, and dance schools across the United States. Tommy was selected as a choreographer for the 2025 Tap Dance Project with Dance Lab New York. Tommy is an alumnus of the University of Missouri - St. Louis and the Tap Program at the School at Jacob's Pillow.

