



# MARECK CENTER FOR DANCE

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## Performance Packet

**TRANSFORMING  
LIVES THROUGH  
DANCE**

# About Mareck Dance

Mareck Dance (previously Missouri Contemporary Ballet) launched in 2006 with a bold vision to bring a professional contemporary ballet dance company to the progressive, vibrant arts scene in mid-Missouri. Founder Karen Mareck Grundy, the company's Artistic and Executive Director, grew Mareck Dance from a handful of dancers presenting local performances into a fully-fledged dance company. Mareck Dance recruits professional dancers from throughout the US and abroad, operates a non profit dance school, and implements numerous outreach programs that engage the broader community, and children, senior citizens, and the differently abled in particular.



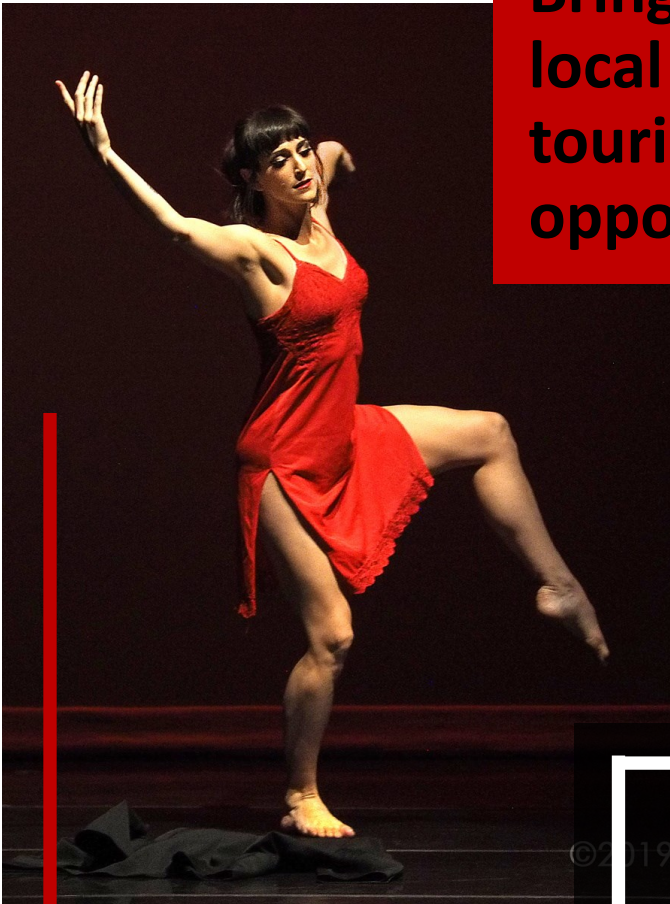
A community endeavor from the start, local arts patrons volunteered their time and financial resources to help Karen build the company from the ground up. Today a working board of local residents continues to play an integral role in guiding the organization. Specifically, they help Mareck Dance organize and produce "Dancing with Missouri Stars," an annual fundraiser that pairs local celebrities with company dancers. This evening of dance competition has become a must-attend event in Columbia, Missouri and with over 1,000 attendees, raising on average \$150,000. As a nonprofit dance company, Mareck Dance generates additional support through generous corporate sponsorships, individual gifts, and public and private grants. With an annual budget of \$380,000, Mareck Dance is distinguished as the only professional dance company in mid-Missouri and is considered a pillar of the local and regional arts communities.

We create and present high quality contemporary ballet productions, generating additional community support through performance revenues. In addition to local and regional performances, Mareck Dance has performed on tour nationally and internationally. Initially, the company performed and practiced in donated spaces throughout the Columbia area. Today, Mareck Dance is headquartered in a dedicated space in the Balsamo Warehouse on Orr Street in downtown Columbia. There we have multiple studios for company rehearsals and classes for the community, as well as a black box performance studio.

Throughout the season Mareck Dance performs three main stage performances at the historic Missouri Theatre. Full-length productions include Karen Mareck Grundy's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" and "Carmina Burana". In addition, Mareck Dance presents repertoire performances featuring live music with local collaborators including the Missouri Symphony Society and Columbia Chorale. In 2015, as the company entered its 10th anniversary season, we became a partner of the prestigious University of Missouri Concert Series.



# Bring Mareck Dance into your local community through touring & collaboration opportunities



As an established company, Mareck Dance is seeking opportunities to tour nationally and to collaborate with schools and arts partners throughout the country. We are eager to partner with your community through performances, classes, or interactive demonstrations. We can also work with you to design programming unique to your school, organization, group, or business.

**“Mareck Dance brings my music to life.**

**Working with them is a symbiotic romance! Their level of artistry brings credibility to Columbia as an arts center.”**

- Tom Andes  
(Local Musician & Composer)



Mareck Dance has toured extensively through Missouri and Oklahoma as well as in Rhode Island as the resident company of Island Moving Company's Great Friends Dance Festival. Mareck Dance presented multiple world premiere works at the Association of Performing Arts in New York, including being a part of Jodi Kaplan & Associates "Boutique Roster". In 2013, Mareck Dance completed its first international tour, performing at the International Garden Exposition in Suncheon Bay, South Korea.

## A word about our repertoire....

Mareck Dance is proud to support and develop emerging contemporary choreographers from across the United States. Each of our performances challenges choreographers to develop works that allow dancers to express themselves in new and innovative ways through movement and emotion. Mareck Dance's success in combining engaging choreography with collaborations in the arts community, while supporting emerging artists, has set us apart as a pioneer in a new age of contemporary ballet.



## Company Repertoire Choreographers

**L.J. Ballard**  
**Eric Bean, Jr.**  
**Lisa Belrose**  
**Christopher 'Topher' Benjamin**  
**Shawn Boyle**  
**Sean Aaron Carmen**  
**Joshua Blake Carter**  
**Bryn Cohn**  
**Thang Dao**  
**Kristopher Estes-Brown**  
**Autumn Eckman**  
**Sean France**  
**Karen Mareck Grundy**  
**Alex J. Gordon**  
**Joel Hathaway**  
**Nick Kepley**

**Kiesha Lalama**  
**David Marchant**  
**Tiger Martina**  
**Stephanie Martinez**  
**Lidsey Matheis**  
**Jennifer Medina**  
**Lisa Morovitz-Geger**  
**John-Mark Owen**  
**Megan Pulfer**  
**Fernando Rodriguez**  
**Kameron Saunders**  
**Laurie Sefton**  
**Iquail Shaheed**  
**Michael Uthoff**  
**Shannon Lee West**



# Community Collaboration

## Enchant the young and old alike through *“Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland”*

Mareck Dance’s touring production of *“Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland”* invites local dancers of all ages to be a part of a professional dance production. Dancers will audition for this extravagant showcase of characters and have the chance to dance alongside the professional company members of Mareck Dance.

Our production engages dancers with the use of gestures, movement, and body language to portray a character in this full ballet to the accompaniment of original music. Aspiring dancers will work with our Artistic Director and company dancers in a variety of dance genres including classical ballet, jazz, modern, and contemporary ballet.

Young dancers will get to experience what it’s like to perform in a professional production in front of a live audience. They will learn all aspects of how a professional dance company operates, performs on stage, and executes technical movement for precision and accuracy.

**“Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland was captivating from start to finish. These dancers are so talented and incredible!”**

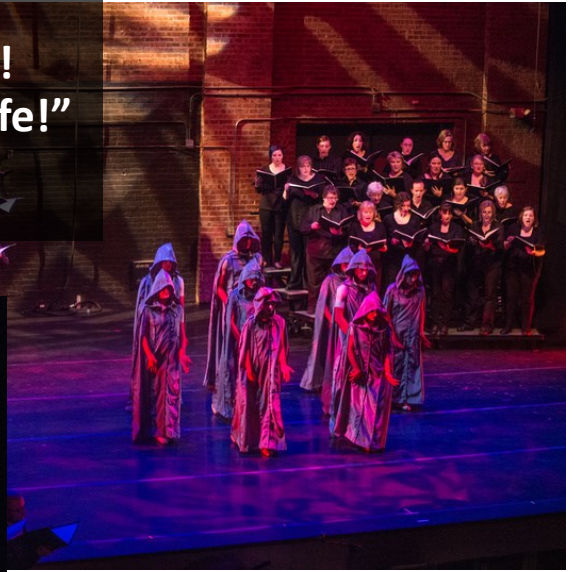
- Barby Wulff (Veterans United)





**"What an inspirational collaboration!  
This truly brought Carl Orff's vision to life!"**

- Carmina Burana Audience Member



## **Combine live music and dance through the extraordinary "Carmina Burana"**

**"Carmina Burana"** is a collaborative production that includes dance, chorus, and instrumental music that gives community chorus organizations the opportunity to rehearse and perform with Mareck Dance. This famous work composed by 20th century German composer, Carl Orff, engages all aspects of the full theatrical production.

**"Carmina Burana"** is guaranteed to bring to life this composer's original conception of the 'total theater'; combining music, words, and movement to create an astounding production that will leave a thrilling effect on audiences in every city. Mareck Dance's production of **"Carmina Burana"** features original choreography by Artistic Director Karen Mareck Grundy.

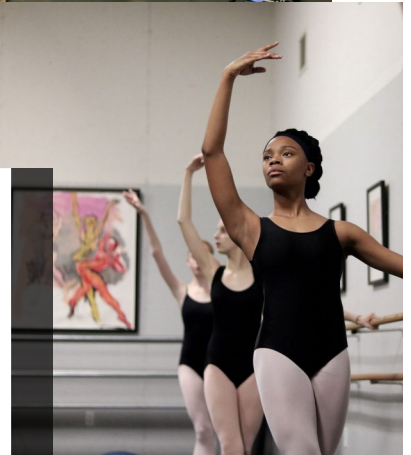
## Master Classes & Workshops

Mareck Dance offers dance classes and intensive workshops for schools, colleges, and other organizations. We design classes for multiple levels of skill and ability. Classes present an opportunity to learn Mareck Dance technique, style, and repertoire from current company members and directors.



**"I had no idea ballet could be so exciting! I wish I would have learned this was available in our area years ago."**

**- First Time Audience Member**



## Interactive Demonstrations

These short performances introduce the audience to dance and take them through the daily life of the company. In addition to performing a piece from the company's repertoire and demonstrating classical and contemporary movement, the dancers provide an interactive experience by inviting audience members to 'the stage' to try the dances for themselves. The demonstration is followed by a question and answer period. Interactive demonstrations are appropriate for all audiences and occasions, and make a wonderful experience for children or adults of any age or level of ability. We've conducted demonstrations at elementary and middle schools, retirement homes, and community events to name just a few locations.



# Company Leadership



***Karen Mareck Grundy, Artistic & Executive Director***



**Karen Mareck Grundy's** goal is, "to give dancers a positive yet disciplined space to discover their center core and expand their hearts and minds, while also allowing them to explore diverse styles of dance." Karen's unique experience is reflected in her fresh and innovative style, which combines her classical ballet and modern dance training with a twist from the productions of Las Vegas.

Born and raised in Vegas, Karen discovered her love for contemporary ballet while working side-by-side with L. J. Ballard as a dancer and as an assistant choreographer. Karen has been a member and featured dancer in various dance companies including Opus Dance Ensemble, New Works Project, and Ballard's Cafe Dance Co. She performed in Las Vegas for 11 years as a featured and lead dancer, and also worked in television. During this time, while working with various choreographers, she was also fortunate to work under the direction of Ron Lewis, director and choreographer for Liza Minnelli. Grundy has taught master classes throughout the country and as an assistant for choreographer Tiger Martina.

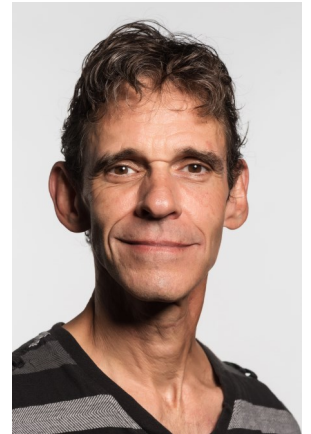
In 2000, Karen was recruited to Columbia, Missouri to teach at Columbia Performing Arts Centre, where she taught for 9 years. She has trained dancers who have gone on to The Juilliard School, The Lines School, Dance Kaleidoscope, Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, and Broadway! She was the Artistic Director for Cedar Lake II beginning in 2003, but her dream was always to have her own company. Karen's dream came true in 2006 when Missouri Contemporary Ballet opened, bringing to life her bold vision for a vibrant arts community rooted in collaborations between artists of all genres. Mareck Dance has inspired the support of dance enthusiasts in Columbia, across the state of Missouri, and throughout the country.



## Company Leadership (Continued)

### *Ken Braso, Rehearsal Director*

**Ken Braso** came to Columbia with over 30 years of professional dance experience. He was a featured dancer with Walt Disney Productions, Southern Ballet Theatre, Pittsburgh Ballet, Ballet Austin, Cincinnati Opera Co, Children's Theatre of Cincinnati, and the Louisville Ballet. Ken has worked with many notable choreographers including featured roles in ballets by Choo San Goh, William Soleau, Stephen Mills, Septime Weber, David Parsons, Patrick Frantz and Alun Jones. After retiring from the Louisville Ballet in 2002 as a principal dancer, Ken founded and taught for Step One Dance at All About Kids Sports Center in Louisville and then later joined the Louisville Ballet School, as a faculty member. Ken moved to Columbia, Missouri with his wife in 2008, where he has been working as a freelance dance and gymnastics instructor for DanceArts, Mareck Dance, and Flipz Gymnastics.



### *Kristopher Estes-Brown, Resident Choreographer*



With a strong desire to create in multiple idioms, **Kristopher Estes-Brown** has choreographed more than 80 pieces ranging from full-length story ballets to modern and contemporary repertory pieces. In addition to Missouri Contemporary Ballet, he has worked with dancers from companies such as Milwaukee Ballet, Colorado Ballet, BalletMet, Kansas City Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Sacramento Ballet, and Oakland Ballet.

In 2014, Kristopher Estes-Brown founded Concept Zero, a contemporary dance theater project. Concept Zero focuses on the creation of full-length dance theater pieces and social commentary. Inside this creative vessel, Kristopher honed his stagecraft and music

composition skills in order to produce highly designed works.

Estes-Brown performed professionally with Milwaukee Ballet, Eugene Ballet/Ballet Idaho, and Sacramento Ballet. He is also currently the co-Artistic Director of the American Youth Ballet and the co-founder of the choreography creation project known as Solstice Dance Project in his hometown of Kansas City.

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