



March 2, 2015

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EDITORS: Download images from the Bates Dance Festival's Youth Arts Program:

http://www.bates.edu/news/files/2015/02/YouthArtsProgram_JessieField.jpg

[A class in the Bates Dance Festival's Youth Arts Program. PLEASE CREDIT: Jessie Field.]

http://www.bates.edu/news/files/2015/02/YouthArtsProgram_DrumClass_ArthurFink.jpg

[Learning percussion is part of the fun in the Bates Dance Festival's Youth Arts Program. PLEASE CREDIT: Arthur Fink.]

Bates Dance Festival announces early-bird registration discount for 2015 Youth Arts Program, a summer arts camp for kids

LEWISTON, Maine -- With an early-bird registration discount available through mid-April, the Bates Dance Festival offers its three-week Youth Arts Program from July 20 through Aug. 8 on the campus of Bates College.

YAP provides high-quality arts experiences by bringing kids together with master artists in residence at the Bates Dance Festival. The only requirement for admission is an enthusiasm for the arts and a willingness to try new things. Students at all levels of experience are invited to participate.

YAP takes place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and will enroll 60 students in grades 2-10. Students are divided into three age groups: grades 2-3, 4-6 and 7-10. Each group takes daily classes in dance, music, theater, visual arts and storytelling. A healthy lunch and snacks are provided.

The early-bird fee, available through April 15, is \$615. After April 15 the program costs \$665. A limited number of scholarships are available for qualified students on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information, call the Bates Dance Festival office at 207-786-6381 or visit the Web site: batesdancefestival.org/education/youth-arts-program/.

Now in its 22nd year, YAP has changed the lives of many local young people, enhancing their self-confidence and opening new avenues of expression. Offering opportunities to experience music,

dance, theater, storytelling and visual arts classes, the program enriches children's lives through learning and access to the arts.

Research shows that training in the arts improves academic learning and test scores, increases self-discipline and promotes understanding of diverse cultures. And on top of all that, it's fun!

Participants learn a dynamic range of modern, ballet, hip hop and social dance styles. They experience musical genres from around the world. They learn theater games. And they experiment with writing poetry and with visual art techniques. Students develop basic skills to enhance self-confidence and self-expression, and gain an understanding of the performing and visual arts.

The program includes special master classes taught by internationally renowned artists in residence at the Bates Dance Festival. In addition, scholarship students receive complimentary tickets to selected festival performances.

Culminating the program, YAP students will create and stage a special production based on the theme of "Better Together" to be performed Saturday, Aug. 8, in Alumni Gymnasium, Bates College, as part of the BDF's Festival Finale concert.

Returning as co-directors of the program are Priscilla Rivas and Terrence Karn, who will teach classes along with Rob Flax, Patrick Ferreri, Yvonne Hernandez, Annalyn Lehnig and Rosemary Leach.

Rivas is a dance and visual arts instructor. She grew up in Cali, Colombia, where she was inspired by the music and dance of that vibrant culture. She holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from the University of Houston. She has been a classroom teacher for eight years and is now an assistant principal at an inner-city elementary school in Houston.

Karn is a musician, teacher and performer who draws on a wide range of cultural traditions and instruments. He has taught music and dance to students of all ages for more than 28 years in locations across the globe. This summer will be his 16th at the Bates Dance Festival. Currently he is the accompanist for the dance minor program at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and the co-director of Gypsy Dance Theatre.

Flax is a recent graduate of New England Conservatory, where he received a master's degree in contemporary improvisation. He is a multi-instrumentalist and educator based in Boston. Classically trained on violin since age 8, he first achieved national recognition in 2009 at the American String Teachers Association conference. Rob has performed internationally.

Ferreri holds a bachelor's degree in dance from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. A former dancer with David Dorfman Dance, he joined the YAP faculty in 2008 and is currently performing in the joint Emursive and Punchdrunk Off-Broadway production of "Sleep No More."

Hernandez earned her bachelor's degree in dance from Point Park University. She is a member of Jennifer Archibald's Arch Dance Company and Raja Feather Kelly's The Feath3r Theory. She has taught literacy through dance in afterschool and in school elementary programs and is a certified inclusion aide, assisting students with disabilities to participate in dance.

Leach received her bachelor's degree in dance and culture from Hampshire College in 1995 and has taught dance for more than 20 years in settings including universities, public schools and private studios. She is proud to say that she was there when YAP was born, and the Bates Dance Festival and YAP have been an important part of her life. She owns and operates Essential Physical Therapy & Pilates and teaches at Contemporary Dance & Fitness Studio in Montpelier, Vermont.

Lehnig received her bachelor's degree in theater from Cornish College. She lives in New Orleans where she is a theater artist and teacher working with at-risk youth. This will be her third summer with YAP.

This program is supported in part by the Lewiston-Auburn Children's Home, Center Street Dental, Leonard C. & Mildred F. Ferguson Foundation, Mechanics Savings Bank and the Sequoia Foundation.

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