

Natasha Brooksher

Natasha grew up in Woodbury, CT and received her Vaganova based ballet training at Nutmeg Ballet under the tutelage of Sharon E. Dante and Eleanor D'Antuono. She graduated Valedictorian of her class, both in ballet and academically from Nonnewaug High School. Mrs. Brooksher received honors in competition on the local, national and international levels at *ARTS Recognition and Talent Search, IV New York International Ballet Competition, IV Paris International Ballet Competition*, and the *20ieme Prix de Lausanne*, Switzerland. Preparing for these competitions was just as valuable as the experience of the competition itself; the work and preparation, both physically and mentally, were a major part of her growth as a young and developing artist. Mrs. Brooksher also attended summer workshops at Boston Ballet, School of American Ballet, and the International Ballet Competition in Jackson, MI. She served as demonstrator for many Vaganova Pedagogy Teachers' Workshops at Nutmeg Ballet, giving her the experience of in-depth study of the technique. These programs proved invaluable, not only in her exposure to different teachers, but also in making connections with other serious young dancers, many of whom became her colleagues in the professional arena.

Natasha spent her professional career dancing with Boston Ballet, Texas Ballet Theatre, and Ballet Arizona where she enjoyed working with choreographers such as Paul Taylor, Twyla Tharp, Elisa Monte, Elliot Feld, Lyla York, Trey McIntyre, and Graham Lustig performing leading roles in American Classics such as *Rodeo*, *Billy the Kid* and *Company B* and Tinkerbell in *Peter Pan* as well as premiering Merce Cunningham's *Breakers* at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. Natasha's extensive classical repertoire includes *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Giselle*, *Le Corsaire*, *The Nutcracker*, *Paquita* and *Raymonda Glazunov Classique*. Mrs. Brooksher also danced many Balanchine roles in some of the choreographer's masterpieces: *Serenade*, *Symphony in C*, *Mozartiana*, *Who Cares?*, *Theme and Variation*, and *Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2*, among others.

The coaching she has received from some of the world's great teachers, Natalia Dudinskaya, Sergei Berejnoi, Eleanor D'Antuono, Cynthia Gregory, Tatiana Legat, Suki Schorer, Vladimir Kolesnikov, Vadim Desnitsky, Caroline Llorca, Suzanne Farrell, Cynthia Gregory, Terry Orr, Tatiana Terekhova, Vicki Simon, Elise Borne, Ben Stevenson, and Francia Russell among others, made a huge impact on her stylistic sensibilities, especially in the classical repertoire. The instruction she received from these masters added to the strong base of training she received at Nutmeg Ballet served to provide many opportunities of performing featured roles in all different styles of dance.

Mrs. Brooksher has extensive teaching experience, having taught for Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts as guest teacher and coach, Residential Assistant and coach for the 1996 New York International Ballet Competition. Most recently, Mrs. Brooksher is a founder of, and serves as Artistic Director for, Southwest Classical Dance Institute, involving all aspects of running a successful professional level ballet training program. Responsibilities have included teaching & coaching all levels of classes in the 8-year Vaganova-based program, choreography, curriculum and syllabus structure development, marketing, financial operations, and the daily operations of the school. SCDI students have gone on to attend The Nutmeg Conservatory on scholarship, Alvin Ailey summer dance program, Kirov Academy summer dance program, as well as university positions at Arizona State University and Oklahoma University.

Mrs. Brooksher is currently Resident Guest Faculty at The Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts, and serves as the AZ State Representative of the Classical Dance Alliance, an organization created to promote the highest of standards for classical ballet in the United States through teacher training programs and educational awareness of the importance of pedagogical training. Most recently, she has been named Ballet Mistress for NovaBallet in Phoenix, AZ. She shares her passion for her career and her life with her husband Joshua and two year old son Ian Flynn.