

Press Release - Kingsport Ballet – For Immediate Release

Contact: Bertina Dew

Kingsport Ballet – 201 Cherokee Street – Kingsport – TN - 37660

Ph: 423-863-1280

email: dewbertina@gmail.com

www.kingsportballet.org

**KINGSPORT BALLET ARTISTIC DIRECTOR RECEIVES OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD
FROM TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF DANCE**

Kingsport, TN – Kingsport Ballet artistic director and ballet mistress, Valeria Sinyavskaya, was awarded Tennessee Association of Dance's (TAD) "Outstanding Dance Educator Award" during their recent dance festival held at Middle Tennessee State University.

The Outstanding Dance Educator Award recognizes and honors excellence in the field of dance education. This peer award honors the fine professionals working in Tennessee and also earns public recognition for the importance of dance education. The honoree is awarded a plaque and receives free annual membership and conference registration the following year.

TAD holds their festival each Fall, convening dancers from throughout Tennessee as well as nearby states, such as Georgia and Kentucky. Guest teachers from around the country teach workshops and master classes in a wide-range of dance styles. Other awards presented at the festival include scholarships for summer study, presented after competitive auditions. Kingsport Ballet students have been scholarship winners on several occasions, most recently in 2015 and 2016.

Ms Sinyavskaya has been at the artistic helm at Kingsport Ballet for 15 years. She was recruited from Tokyo, Japan, where she was artistic director of the International Ballet Academy. She is a former Prima Ballerina with the Novosibirsk Ballet Theater and Opera.

Ms. Sinyavskaya spent twenty years as a professional ballerina, most of it as a principal dancer and guest soloist with the major Russian ballet companies including Bolshoi Ballet, performing leading roles in Russian and European ballets and touring throughout Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, South America and the United States.

She has thirty six years' professional teaching experience including twenty five years in the United States as Artistic Director, Ballet Mistress, Ballet Teacher and Choreographer at universities, ballet conservatories and private dance schools. Fifteen of those years she has spent as artistic director and ballet mistress of Kingsport Ballet.

"Valeria is a dancer-maker. Once the students have had her for a year or two you can see her mark - everyone has the arms, everyone closes in perfect fifth position... this is why I love to work with Kingsport Ballet students."

Andre Valadao – Principal Dancer and Assistant Artistic Director Dance Alive National Ballet

Ms. Sinyavskaya also has thirty years' experience producing major classical ballets, frequently featuring international ballet stars. She teaches the Vaganova Method of classical ballet, pas de deux, variations, pointe, character dance, and specializes in the staging of full-length classical

repertory.

She is an inspiration to so many, her passion, her beautiful expression through dance, her skill, knowledge & patience! KB Is so lucky to have her!! Jan Mather, Community Volunteer



*My time at KB **inspired**, nurtured, and cemented in me a love and **passion** for dance: from classical ballet to modern, contemporary, character, and even ballroom dance. Through college and even when I take adult classes now, instructors and other students comment on my technique. Ms. Valeria's lessons -- not just about **Vaganova technique**, but also artistry, musicality, and "**dancing from your soul**" -- are still etched in my body, ten years past graduation. Beyond this, I learned the value of **self-discipline** and **punctuality**, and I learned how to **graciously accept critique** and use it to make myself a better performer, better student, better dancer. **STEPHANIE VELASCO - KB student for 12 years** – Stephanie works for a non-profit organization that advocates for affordable housing policies in and around Seattle and is in graduate school for Urban Planning at the University of Washington.*



*I look back to my years at Kingsport Ballet (often, with tears) and realize that I wouldn't change anything. Ballet was such a huge part of my life, and I think after stepping out of the endless classes, rehearsals, and performances, **I have gotten to see how privileged I was to have not just simply taken ballet classes, but to have actually studied the art of ballet.** I stepped away with an appreciation so deep for classical music, discipline, stage management, stage design, costume and makeup design. Not to mention, my everlasting respect and gratitude for the experience and insight into **genuine, professional, high-quality teaching.** I walked away from Kingsport Ballet with **deep reverence** for my ballet instructor (Ms Valeria.) The woman that at times I struggled to comply with, ended up being the woman that gave me more appreciation for so many of things that I love. **This is not something that is found just anywhere, and there's nothing but value in that.** **HANNAH GRACE FRIANT - KB student for 12 years** - Hannah graduated from the University of Tennessee in 2014 with a major in Hispanic Studies and a minor in Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management. She is Manager of Reclaimed Inspired Goods in Johnson City.*



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