

Elizabeth DiStasio-Waddell

Elizabeth became the director and owner of the Royal Academy of Ballet in 1997 and brings professional experience to her students. Elizabeth began her ballet training under the tutelage of Ginger Burke, founder of the Royal Academy of Ballet. She continued her training at Mercyhurst College, the Boston Ballet, the Hartford Ballet, and the University at Buffalo.

Elizabeth performed with the Hartford Ballet, the Eglevsky Ballet of Long Island; the Cygnus Contemporary Dance Company of New Jersey; and the Mercyhurst College Dance Ensemble. Locally, Elizabeth has performed with the Pick of the Crop, the Chautauqua Regional Ballet, the Thomas Dance Collection, the Buffalo City Ballet, the University at Buffalo's Zodiaque Dance Company and the Greater Buffalo Opera Company and the Greater Buffalo Youth Ballet. Elizabeth's credits include principal roles in *Coppélia*, *Cinderella*, *The Nutcracker*, Balanchine's *Serenade* and *Swan Lake*. Elizabeth was also the Ballet Mistress for the children performing in the Moscow Ballet's, Ballet Met and the Pittsburgh Ballet's *Nutcracker*. Since 1998, Elizabeth has choreographed original pieces for the BPO's Children's Series. In 1989, Elizabeth was one of the youngest women to be crowned Miss Buffalo under the Miss Buffalo Scholarship Program.

Elizabeth is the founding Artistic Director of the Greater Buffalo Youth Ballet, a not for profit youth ballet company, where she has set and choreographed many original classical and contemporary ballets. Among these are *Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, *Firebird*, *Coppélia*, *Danse Macabre*, *Reflections of Motion*, *At the Savoy*, *Rush*, *Peter and the Wolf*, *Toy Shop Fantasy*, *Three Wishes* and excerpts from *La Bayadère*, *Don Quixote*, *Raymonda* and the *Nutcracker*.

Elizabeth has also taught ballet at the University at Buffalo's Theatre and Dance Department for 18 years and is a core ballet instructor for Dance Masters of America Teacher Training School.

