

Puerto Rico Semi-Finals Judges



Kathy Warakomsky
Associate Director of Texas Ballet Theater

Originally from Boston, Massachusetts, Kathryn Warakomsky-Li began studying ballet at the age of 14 in Springfield, Virginia with Oleg Tupine. She graduated from the State University of New York at Purchase with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance. She was invited to join the Ballet de Santiago under the direction of Ivan Nagy where she rose to the status of principal dancer. In 1989 Ms. Warakomsky-Li joined Houston Ballet and became the Principal dancer. With over 20 years of performance experience, Warakomsky-Li has held lead roles in nearly all the major classical ballets including Swan Lake, Nutcracker, Sleeping Beauty, Giselle, Romeo and Juliet, Cinderella, Cleopatra, Etudes and Coppelia.

She also danced in numerous works by famed contemporary choreographers like Ben Stevenson, George Balanchine, Jiří Kylián, Kenneth MacMillan, John Cranko, Ronald Hynd, James Kudelka and Christopher Bruce among others. Ms. Warakomsky-Li has toured extensively around the world dancing throughout North and South America, Asia and Europe. Upon retiring from the stage in 2001, Ms. Warakomsky-Li was invited to teach at the Houston Ballet Ben Stevenson Academy where she staged and rehearsed many pieces for the upper school.

Ms. Warakomsky-Li has been teaching for Texas Ballet Theater School in Fort Worth since 2003 where she has taught all levels of the school. She is an American Ballet Theatre (ABT) Certified Teacher who has successfully completed the ABT Teacher Training in Primary through Level 7 of the ABT National Training Curriculum®. She has also traveled to Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia to view the Bolshoi and the Vaganova Schools and to participate in their training programs. Ms. Warakomsky-Li was named Principal of Texas Ballet Theater School – Fort Worth in January 2007 and in 2016 was promoted to Associate Director. She also heads the Studio Training Company and has managed the Summer Intensive since its inception in 2007.

Victor Alexander
Director
Ruth Page School of Dance
Ruth Page Professional Dance Training Program



Victor Alexander joined the artistic and administrative team of the Ruth Page Center for the Arts in the summer of 2013. As both the Director of the Ruth Page School of Dance and of the Ruth Page Civic Ballet, he continues a nearly 50-year tradition of exceptional training and mentoring of the next generation of the nation's best young dancers. Through the development of international partnerships and networks, Alexander has also expanded the School's reach with important collaborations and exchanges with other leading dance institutions through the development of the Ruth Page School of Dance's International Sister Schools program. Significant among these is the historic relationship with Cuba's National School of Ballet (Escuela Nacional de Ballet) begun in 2015, and the placement of a Ruth Page School of Dance student, Catherine Conley, in the prestigious Cuban training program – the first American student to be invited since the normalization of relations between the two countries. She consequently was invited to dance with the National Ballet School of Cuba, another first for an American ballerina.

Our International Sister School partners include: Escuela Nacional de Ballet de Cuba (Havana, Cuba since 2015); Profesion Dance & Mandala Dance Company (Rome, Italy since 2015); Conservatorio Profesional de Danza A Coruña (Coruña, Spain since 2016); Ironi Aleph High School of Arts (Tel Aviv, Israel since 2016); Escuela Superior de Música y Danza de Monterrey (Monterrey, Mexico since 2018); Instituto Colombiano de Ballet Clásico (IncolBallet) (Cali, Colombia since 2018).

Alexander's keen insight, experience and a dedication to the craft come from an international dancing, choreographic and teaching career. A native of Pinar del Rio, Cuba, he was trained at the prestigious Escuela Nacional de Arte (ENA) in Havana, graduating in 1992 with a degree in Modern and Cuban folkloric dance. As a student, his exceptional talents were recognized in 1992 when he won first place for dance in the 4th National Union of Writers and Artists in Havana. He went on to be a principal dancer for the prominent Danza Contemporánea de Cuba from 1992 to 2002, where both his technical talent and expressive dance style gained national prominence. Alexander has studied with distinguished teachers such as Donald McKayle, Chuck Davis, and Jeffrey

Bullock and has performed throughout Europe, Asia, the Caribbean and the United States. Since relocating from Cuba to Chicago in 2002, Alexander has performed with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Hedwig Dances, CDI/Concert Dance Inc, and Luna Negra Dance Theater. While with CDI, Alexander was a featured artist in the 2008 Emmy Award-nominated production of the re-envisioned Ruth Page's Billy Sunday on PBS. While with Hedwig, Alexander was a dance artist in the 2016 Emmy-nominated film Arch of Repose.

His teaching experience is extensive, encompassing local, national and international dance institutions. Of particular importance to Alexander is teaching in outreach programs that bring dance to youth. Recent outreach programs include Dance Art (2007–2010) and the Elementary Dance Scholarship Program (2010–2011) within the Chicago Public Schools. Included in Dance Magazine's prestigious "25 to Watch in 2013" list, Alexander is known for his riveting stage presence as he mixes formidable technique he gained in the rigorous training ground of Cuban dance schools with facility at theatrical interpretation. In 2012, he was one of four choreographers selected for the Lab Artists Program, a one-year program of the Chicago Dancemakers Forum that focuses on the development of new choreography. In addition to the Chicago Dancemakers Forum grant, he has also received a fellowship from the Illinois Arts Council for his work, Line of Sighs and was selected as one of the 2013 Novel Affair Artists selected by The Ragdale Curatorial Board. In December of 2013, Line of Sighs was highlighted in the Chicago Tribune's "Top 10 Best Dance Performances of 2013."

Alexander was one of the choreographers chosen to participate in Chicago's Afro-Latino Festival 2014 with his work Among us. Additionally in 2014, he was selected to participate in Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's choreographic initiative, The International Commissioning Project, which provides residencies to choreographers, offering them the opportunity to create original works for HS2's dancers and to conduct master classes. In 2022 Alexander received a Dance Leadership Hedwig Dance Award . In 2023, he was nominated Co-Chair of Dance for Life, a one-of-a-kind annual benefit event that has showcased more than 50 Chicago-based dance companies for the past 32 years. Honored this year with the Ruth Page Legacy Award.



Ivonne Lemus

Next Generation Ballet's Principal Rehearsal Director

Ivonne Lemus, current Principal Ballet Mistress of Next Generation Ballet, a former dancer with The Royal Winnipeg Ballet and former soloist with Ballet National of Cuba. Ms. Lemus graduated from the National Ballet School of Cuba in 1986 and while with the company, she had the privilege of being trained by Alicia Alonso, Josefina Mendez, Loipa Araujo, and Laura Alonso.

Through Ballet National of Cuba, Ms. Lemus participated in numerous International Ballet Festivals and has performed in more than 30 countries including

those in Europe, South America, Australia, Asia, and the United States of America. Throughout Ms. Lemus's teaching career, she has coached numerous award-winning students at various competitions, namely, 2006 Gold Medalist winner, Misa Kuranaga at the International Ballet Competition, Jackson, MS., 2012 Grand Prix Winner, Hannah Bettes at Youth America Grand Prix Finals, and Audience Favorite at Prix de Lausanne, 2009 Gold Medalist Winner, Jeffrey Cirio at the Helsinki International Ballet Competition, and 2019 Gold Medalist, Hector Jain at ADC|IBC. Ms. Lemus's students have also competed at Beijing International Ballet & Choreography Competition, Dance Open America, and World Ballet Competition.

Ms. Lemus has several former students dancing professionally in top companies around the world, including Stuttgart Ballet, Zurich Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, Royal Swedish Ballet, Royal Ballet, American Ballet Theater, Ballet West, Houston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, and Miami City Ballet. As a teacher with Next Generation Ballet, Ms. Lemus has staged many classical works such as Swan Lake, Cinderella, Coppelia, Giselle, Don Quixote, and Le Corsaire. Ms. Lemus was awarded Teacher of the Year 2021.



Osmay Molina

Former Principal Dancer National Ballet of Cuba.

Born in Havana, Cuba, Osmay Molina began his ballet studies at the prestigious Alejo Carpentier Ballet School and later graduated from the National School of Art (ENA), where he quickly stood out for his exceptional technique, artistry, and stage charisma.

During his student years, he won two important international competitions in Italy — the Positano Competition and the Vignale Danza International Competition — achievements that positioned him early on as one of the most promising young Cuban dancers of his generation.

In 1993, Molina joined the National Ballet of Cuba (Ballet Nacional de Cuba, BNC) under the artistic direction of Alicia Alonso, where he rose rapidly through the ranks to become a Principal Dancer. His elegance, noble bearing, and refined classical style earned him the affectionate title of *"The Prince of Cuban Ballet"* among critics and audiences alike.

Throughout his distinguished career with the BNC, he performed leading roles in the great classics of the ballet repertoire, including Giselle, Swan Lake, The Sleeping Beauty, Coppelia, Cinderella, Don Quixote, Les Sylphides, and La Fille Mal Gardée, among many others. He was also featured in iconic pas de deux such as Le Corsaire and Grand Pas Classique, and in numerous neoclassical and contemporary works by guest choreographers. Notably, he was selected by the National Ballet of Cuba to perform the principal role in La Sylphide during its premiere by the company — a landmark production in Cuban ballet history.

In 2003, Molina relocated to Puerto Rico, where he joined Ballet Concierto de Puerto Rico as a Principal Dancer, and later, in 2004, became part of the Balletteatro Nacional de Puerto Rico. Expanding his artistic range, he also performed with the contemporary dance company Andanza from 2006 to 2009, taking part in numerous tours and new creations that blended classical and modern expression.

His final performance as a dancer took place in October 2012, at the XXIII International Ballet Festival of Havana, where he had the honor of sharing the stage once again with Alicia Alonso. Since retiring from the stage, Osmay Molina has devoted himself to dance education and artistic development, becoming a highly respected ballet teacher and mentor. He has taught at leading Puerto Rican institutions such as Ballets de San Juan, CoDa 21, Mauro Ballet, Escuela de Balletteatro Nacional de Puerto Rico, the School of the Performing Arts, and Academia Cristiana Dánzale. He is also the founder and faculty member of Centro Danza, where he continues to nurture the next generation of dancers with the same passion, discipline, and artistry that defined his own illustrious career.