

Dances by Isadora

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Exploring, preserving, sharing and invigorating the repertoire and technique of Isadora Duncan.



Directed by Catherine Gallant
Non-profit 501c3 dance company

Est. 1989

Photo: Nadia Lesy | Dancers: Catherine Gallant, Natalia Brillante, Francesca Todesco

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Mission/background:

Dances by Isadora explores the legacy of dance pioneer Isadora Duncan and shares the technique and repertoire through teaching and performance. The company reconstructs works for various populations in both traditional and alternative venues. We provide a contemporary lens on Duncan's work creating a link to current dance-making approaches and exploring ways to bring dance history to new audiences.

We believe that dance is for everyone. The history of dance is important to its continued development and shows the trajectory of dance in the US as one of individual artistic, social, political and cultural expression. We are always aware of the assumed hierarchies within work which has been created in the past. In our presentations and teaching we address questions of authority, ownership, appropriation, power and inclusion. Our aim is to open opportunities for learning and participation for ourselves and for everyone with whom we work.

We also recognize that the dancing body comes in many shapes and sizes that may not conform to existing norms in the classically focused dance world. Our priorities emphasize the unique and powerful movement qualities of each performer as they relate to the technique and repertoire of Isadora Duncan. Our practice is led by ongoing inquiry, consistent and probing feedback and an openness to new ideas and approaches that will engage our expanding audience.



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Photo: Melanie Futorian | Dancer: Jessie King

Press quotes:



Andrew Henderson/The New York Times

“...it was a thrill to see the power that these women could bring to the slow, full weight lowering of arms or to the full length reclinings on the floor...Both Duncan’s large-spirited imagination and her musical nerve were apparent.”

-Alastair Macaulay, The New York Times

“With the light, ethereal and even sometimes butterfly-like Gallant, the dances seemed particularly harmonious, performed with an ingenuous lyricism - from the carefree mischievousness in Schubert's " Moment Musical" to the sublimely stern piece " Mother" to music by Scriabin. The solidly put together, dynamic and strong-willed Adams brought music into the dances....In duets, next to the lightness of Gallant, she revealed a unique combination of earth, body and air which was what had distinguished the dance of Duncan herself.”

-Maya Korneva Nezavisimaya Gazeta (Moscow)

"After an evening of Dances by Isadora, the feeling of serenity is overshadowed only by the puzzlement over the controversy that surrounded Isadora Duncan...Dances by Isadora bring to life the ideals so important in Duncan's art: free, spirited movement and exquisite musical accompaniment..."

-Janine Parker Kolberg, The Boston Phoenix

“...keepers of the flame.”

-Christine Temin, The Boston Globe

Dances by Isadora

Director – Catherine Gallant



Dancer, choreographer and educator, **Catherine Gallant**, was introduced to Isadora Duncan's work when she saw Annabelle Gamson perform on PBS in the late 1970's. She began her study of the technique of Isadora Duncan with Julia Levien, (a student of Anna and Irma Duncan) in 1982. Ms. Gallant is the founder (along with Patricia Adams) of [Dances by Isadora](#) which has brought the work of Isadora Duncan (1877-1927) to vibrant life for audiences in the US and abroad since 1989. Along with Catherine Gallant/DANCE, the NYC based group is dedicated to the growth of new work and reconstructions which comment on the past while looking to the future. Dances by Isadora and [Catherine Gallant/DANCE](#) recently performed at the 92Y Harkness Dance Center and at Jacob's Pillow on the Inside/Out Series. Catherine currently performs in [Jerome Bel's new work](#) *Isadora Duncan*. Ms. Gallant is a

full-time dance educator at PS 89 in NYC. She and her students are featured in the Emmy-nominated PBS documentary, [PS DANCE!](#) Catherine is on the faculty of the Dance Education Laboratory (DEL). She holds a BFA in Dance from Boston Conservatory and an MFA in Dance from Temple University. Ms. Gallant is a founding member of the [Isadora Duncan Archive](#).

Photo (top): Emon Hassan for The New York Times

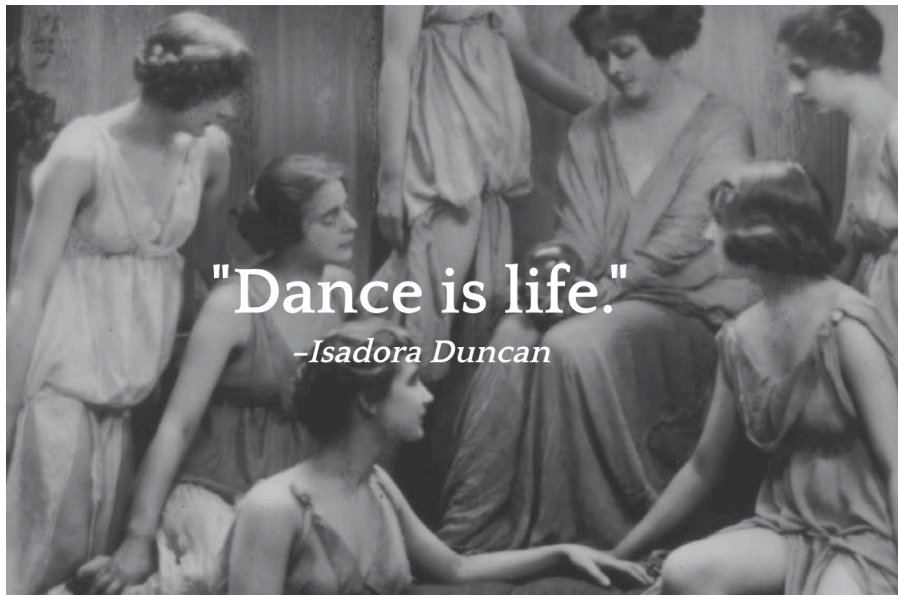
Photo (right): Philip Gardner



Dances by Isadora

Catherine Gallant and members of Dances by Isadora have lead masterclasses and workshops bringing this dance of breath and spirit to students across the globe.

The dance of Isadora Duncan is highly adaptable for different populations, levels of experience, and ages. It may be looked at purely through the lens of dance history focusing on foundations of modern dance in the 20th century or, for professional track dancers, the technique and repertoire provide a new perspective to students of ballet and contemporary dance. The underlying creative movement aspect of the work brings experimentation and body awareness to children, non-dancers and those who may benefit from dance as a therapeutic experience. [Contact us](#) to find out more about our educational programs and residencies.



Isadora Duncan (1877-1927), often called the “mother of modern dance” was born in San Francisco and went on to liberate dance from the confines of the ballet of her time, shedding slippers and corset to combine the use of simple, natural movement with a vibrant musicality. She sought a movement vocabulary that would illuminate the human spirit and its connection to nature and she was the first to choreograph to music not originally written for dance, including the works of Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms, and Scriabin. Duncan's career was marked by controversy as American audiences took exception to her bare limbs and bold movement. She was determined to succeed and left with her boundless spirit to Europe and Russia where she met and inspired the some of the great artists of her time. Her work inspired the development of dance as an art form igniting the imagination of choreographers such as Jose Limon, Katherine Dunham and Martha Graham.