

STEPPING INTO A NEW ROLE

JAMAL STORY '99 MOVED THROUGH THE LINES OF DANCE STUDENTS, correcting a step here, extending an arm there. “Dance is all in the details,” he declared.

When Story spoke to the students, they listened intently – he has the career they’re still imagining. He has danced in the company of influential choreographer Donald Byrd and in a Broadway hit, and he toured the world with Madonna. Now he shares a Vegas stage with Cher. Impressive accomplishments for someone who says that, as a first-year student at SMU, “I wasn’t convinced I could be a professional dancer.”

In January the dancer-choreographer spent several days at Meadows School of the Arts, teaching contemporary dance and ballet classes, as well as offering advice during résumé-building and Q-and-A sessions with students.

Another Meadows graduate, Dana Ingraham '02, joined him one day to help teach and answer questions. Their schedules overlapped when she was touring in “The Color Purple,” which played in Dallas and Fort Worth during its national run. Story, an ensemble dancer and assistant dance captain during the musical’s two-and-one-half-year run on Broadway, had just finished teaching a workshop at The Hockaday School. The two contacted Myra Woodruff, chair of SMU’s Division of Dance, who encouraged them to teach and spend time with students.

“In our mission statement for the Division of Dance our goal is to ‘develop the disciplined, versatile dance artist through a balanced study of ballet, modern dance and jazz techniques, complemented and reinforced by a broad range of theoretical studies and performance opportunities,” Woodruff says. “Jamal’s accomplishments in the field of dance reflect the essence of our intent. He is a disciplined, versatile dance artist.”

Story, who grew up in Los Angeles and lives in New York City, was an accomplished gymnast who started dancing as part of his training. He didn’t begin serious dance instruction until he was in his mid-teens. After high school, he wasn’t sure what his day job would be, so he looked for “a university with a strong communications program and strong dance program,” he recalled. “That’s why I chose SMU.”

Having earned Bachelor’s degrees in dance and communications from SMU, he stretches his creative muscles in both disciplines. Story is also a writer. He plans to self-publish a collection of short stories and is working on a novel about the dance world.

Teaching, however, is a relatively new direction. “I’ve been bashful about teaching; furnishing students with good, useful information is a great responsibility,” he said.

He concedes that it felt a little strange “to be on the faculty side of the equation, where I was once a student,” but ultimately relished the chance to work with students. “They were very receptive and seemed to take my advice to heart.”

Bo Pressly, a sophomore dance major and a student in the contemporary class led by Story, valued the opportunity to work with a master. “I really appreciate the exposure to his style and technique. He has the successful dance career we all dream about.”

– Patricia Ward



Jamal Story works with SMU students in a contemporary dance class.

96

Shelley Richmond Arthur and her husband, Coors, announce the birth of their third son, Wright Michael, Nov. 6, 2009. The Arthurs live in Memphis. **Aaron Howes** is a 12-year veteran of the commercial real estate industry. A Houston broker, he works for Studley, a leading tenant representation firm. **Tim S. Pfeiffer** joined Oxford Commercial in Austin in 2007 and was recently promoted to chief operating officer. He enjoys running, biking and golfing.

97

Jennifer Emilia Eells and her husband, Brent Loewen, welcomed daughter Gabriela Nohelia Loewen-Eells July 30, 2009. **Ramsey Alan Fahel** was one of 100 recipients of the Friendship Award from the People’s Republic of China at the Great Hall of the People Sept. 29, 2009. He is president of Anadarko Petroleum Corporation’s China subsidiary, involved in a joint venture to develop heavy crude oil and natural gas from beneath China’s offshore seas. He and his family have lived in Beijing since 2007. **Stacy Stack-Rudolph** and Blake Rudolph announce the birth of Tanner Reed Aug. 11, 2009. **Meghan Milne Woltz** and her husband, David, announce the arrival of Elizabeth Helen Nov. 16, 2009. They live in Appleton, WI.

98

Geralda Miller received a Master of Arts degree in history from the University of Nevada, Reno. **Sharon K. Snowton** is a bilingual teacher in the Dallas Independent School District and a part-time teacher trainer through Alliance/AFT Education Center.

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REUNION: OCTOBER 23, 2010

Chairs: Ryan McMonagle, Sarah Monning

Taylor Lothliam married Brett Ritter May 17, 2009, in Hanalei, Kauai. They work for Deloitte and live in Atlanta, GA. **Laura Willmann Mason** is a shareholder in the corporate and securities practice group of Oppenheimer,