
News Release

LIVING LEGENDS

October 2014

Brigham Young University

Artistic Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Although the performers make it look easy, Brigham Young University's Living Legends' colorful, authentic presentation of Latin American, Polynesian, and Native American music and dance would not be possible without the dedication, talent, and expertise of artistic director Janielle Christensen.

Christensen became active in professional theater and music early in her life, co-hosting a daily television show at age 12 and playing with the Musicians' Union at age 14. She proceeded to gain extensive experience producing and directing summer theatres, performing groups, and trade shows, as well as directing a television series and a large outdoor pageant featuring members of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

As an artistic director of Living Legends and a producer for Young Ambassadors, both performing groups at BYU, she has traveled around the world, bringing uplifting family entertainment to millions through live and televised productions. Under Christensen's direction, Living Legends has toured and performed throughout Europe, China, the Pacific Islands, Australia, Canada, Central and South America, South Africa, and the United States. Christensen hopes that through their travels, members of Living Legends will inspire people of all cultures to take pride in their own unique heritage.

"It is a moving experience to work with these performers because I see the sincere respect they each hold for one another's ancestry as well as their own," Christensen said.

Christensen's past responsibilities at BYU have also include acting as a producer for the School of Music

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and directing the annual “Homecoming Spectacular,” a production that celebrates BYU’s rich history and school spirit. She has been awarded the College of Fine Arts and Communications’ highest administrative award for excellence.

In 2013, Christensen led the ensemble to Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, where Living Legends performed for over 13,000 people. From April 30- May 17, the group showcased their unique cultural flair for the people of their heritage, guided and directed by Christensen on and offstage. For sold-out crowds in coveted performance halls all over Central America, she led this colorful and exotic group from Provo, Utah to tiny villages of these Latin countries as they showcased the beautiful dances and movements of foreign peoples.

“With fresh pine boughs covering the entire floor in our honor, the sights, smells and events of that cultural exchange will stay forever in the hearts and minds of those of us fortunate enough to experience it,” Christensen said of the tour. “We left humbled, moved and grateful for [this] opportunity.”

As part of the Winter Olympics in 2002, Christensen served as associate director and media spokesperson for the theatrical presentation *Light of the World*, delivered in the 21,000-seat LDS Conference Center with 10 performances.

In April and May of 2011, Christensen led Living Legends as it made its performing debut in Russia. This trip marked the first visit from a BYU Performing group to Russia in 10 years.

Living Legends originates in the Department of Dance, College of Fine Arts and Communications, at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. BYU is one of the nation’s largest private universities with an enrollment of 30,000 students from throughout the United States and 110 foreign countries.

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