
News Release

FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE

2015 – 2016 Season

Brigham Young University

Artistic Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Working behind the scenes of the International Folk Dance Ensemble's (IFDE) dazzling showcase of music and dance from around the world is artistic director Jeanette Geslison. Geslison hails from Odense, Denmark where she trained and performed in classical ballet, jazz, and theatre. She attended Brigham Young University and performed with the IFDE from 1987-1991 and again from 1993-94 and subsequently graduated with her BA and MA in dance in 1995, with her emphasis in cultural dance research and pedagogy. Her thesis developed from field work in Hungary and resulted in her written thesis "A Comparison of Village and Staged Versions of Selected Hungarian Dance Styles." Cultural representation—its preservation, adaptation, and modification—continues to lie at the heart of her academic research and choreographic interest. She is currently an MFA candidate in dance at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Geslison has strong ties with the BYU Folk Dance program; beginning as a rehearsal specialist in 1995 to currently coordinating and directing in the folk dance program.

This year the company is in its third year of the new show *Journey* which will give the audience the experience of being a wanderer through the heartbeat of the world's cultures. "The essence of what we want to convey to the audience is that cultural dance and music representation are an integral part of human expression and a means of building bridges of understanding and appreciation. In the past you literally had to 'journey' to visit other cultures," explains Geslison. "We now live right next door, in our increasingly small world, as we learn from one another and esteem each of our cultural similarities and differences. We literally take the audience on a 90-minute journey around the world, through dance and music."

The group is comprised of 28 carefully selected student dancers, seven student musicians, and additional technicians. Geslison is also supported by a production team of seasoned professionals: Mark Ohran, technical director; Mark Geslison, director of the Mountain Strings folk music ensemble; and Troy Streeter, Artist Manager.

Performing Arts
Management

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This year's show will also include a number of new choreographic works by carefully selected cultural dance specialists from around the world. Geslison refines her dancers youthful enthusiasm and talent as they portray cultural dance and music. "We play an important role in shaping and defining the future of traditional dance by giving voice to the past and present," Geslison said. "The students are devoted to this ensemble as they work hard to refine their talents. They give their all in making it the best experience possible."

The International Folk Dance Ensemble originates in the Department of Dance in the 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 more than 30,000 students from throughout the United States and 100 foreign countries.

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