

Joanne H. Borts

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Qualifications

Although I have enjoyed a long and satisfying career as a performer, I have also spent many years behind the curtain, so to speak - as a director, choreographer and coach – as well as on the business, administrative and production side of several arts organizations, both Jewish and Secular. The challenge of cultivating Art and Culture in the ‘real world’ is multi-faceted and complicated but not insurmountable, even in a difficult economy. My experience at the bargaining table and working closely with Broadway and Off Broadway producers has given me valuable insight into the business side of creating a successful and creative environment that nurtures talent and learning in a fiscally responsible way.

Experience

1999-Present Director/Choreographer/Author, *Kids & Yiddish, Folksbiene Theatre, NYC*

- 1999: “*Kids & Yiddish – A Musical Adventure*”
- 2000: “*Kids & Yiddish 2000*”
- 2001: “*2001-A Space Mishegas*”
- 2002: “*The Mazldike Mystery Tour*”
- 2003: “*Farmisht and Farfetched*”
- 2004: “*The Mishegas Continues...*”
- 2005: “*Unplucked*”
- 2006: “*Bagels and Yux*”
- 2007: “*An Ode to Oy!*”
- 2008: “*Puttin’ on the Shmaltz*”
- 2009: “*Happy Birthday Kids & Yiddish: A Perfect Tsen!*”

Annual Off-Broadway family show whose mission is to teach Yiddish language and Jewish Culture to youngsters using Pop Culture, traditional Jewish melodies and folk references. In addition to the Adult performers, the cast has included children and young adults ranging in age from 9-22.

2008 Event Committee /Assistant to the Producer, “Fred Astaire Awards”, NYC

Worked with Fred Astaire’s daughter, honorary chair Ava Astaire on the annual awards program honoring Broadway and Film Dancers and Choreographers. Helped to coordinate high profile talent, production and fundraising activities. Guests and honorees included Brooke Shields, Tommy Tune, Savion Glover, Jane Powell, Arlene Dahl and Lee Roy Reams.

2008 Instructor, Vocal Program, *KlezFest London, England, UK*

Faculty member for ‘Tumbala’ – London Yiddish Song School division of The Jewish Music Institute (JMI), based at SOAS, University of London. Co-teaching with Shura Lipovsky, responsibilities include teaching and coaching Yiddish theatre and folk songs to both professionals and highly motivated amateurs.

2007 Assistant to the Producer, “Hooray For Hollywood” Steiner Studios, NYC

Worked with New York producer Jennifer Dumas coordinating high profile talent and production for a large scale performance benefitting the Auditory Oral School. Guests and honorees included Count and Countess de Lesseps, Patricia Neal, Celeste Holm, Robert Osborne and Eli Wallach.

2006 Choreography/Musical Staging, “Memories of the Yiddish Theatre” *One People – Many Voices, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, CA*

Staging, Choreographer and Performer in a concert featuring maestro Gerard Schwarz, leading the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Choral Society of Southern California and world-renowned soloists. Worked with Leonard Nimoy, Theodore Bikel, Bruce Adler and mezzo-soprano, Elizabeth Shammash. Co-conceived with Neil Levin of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City.

- 2006** **Director, ESN! A Klezmer Cooking Show, JCC Manhattan, NYC**
 Worked with Adrienne Cooper, Lorin Sklamberg and Frank London on this musical, interactive, improvisational culinary experience. Direction and musical staging created in the unpredictable environment of a working kitchen as the Actors trade stories and cook their favorite Jewish recipes
- 2002-Present** **Vocal Program Coordinator, Instructor, Klez Kanada, QC, Canada**
 Faculty member at Canada's premiere Yiddish Folk Music Festival. Responsibilities include teaching and coaching Yiddish Song and Yiddish Theatre.
- 2005-Present** **Creator and Coordinator, LOYF TSUNOYF, Klez Kanada, QC, Canada**
Loyf Tsunoyf is the annual 5K Walk/Run that raises money for the KlezKanada Scholarship Fund. Funds are raised through direct donations, and sponsoring participants.
- 2003-Present** **Theatre and Song Instructor, Living Traditions/Klez Kamp, NYC**
 Faculty member at the original Yiddish Folk Arts Program in the United States. Responsibilities include teaching and coaching Yiddish Song and Yiddish Theater. Students range from age 15-Adults
- 2003-2004** **Instructor, Social Justice & Yiddish Culture, Camp Kinder Ring, NY**
 Developed and taught programs combining Yiddish Culture with Social Action. Curriculum included songs, storytelling, research and art projects for campers ages 8-18.
- 1999-2001** **Assistant Director, Ass't Producer Naked Boys Singing, Actors' Playhouse, NYC**
 Worked with Producer Jennifer Dumas and Director Robert Shrock and on an original off-broadway musical that has played around the world, and is currently being filmed for theatrical release.
- 1994-Present** **Instructor, Guest Lecturer, Guest Performer**
Usdan Center for the Creative and Performing Arts, NY
 Taught movement and theatre dance, as well as choreographed 4 musicals for theatre students, ages 8-18. Lectures and workshops have included subjects ranging from Experimental Yiddish Theatre to classic Broadway.
- 1989** **Assistant Director, Picking up the Pieces/Plaisir D'Amour, Eighty-Eights, NYC**
 Worked with Director Sara Louise Lazarus on an original revue show highlighting the music of BMI Workshop director, Skip Kennon
- 1989** **Choreographer, Starting Here, Starting Now, Cider Mill Playhouse, Endicott, NY**
 Worked with Director Jeff Martin on the Maltby/Shire Musical, starring Walter Willison, Yvette De Botton and myself.
- 1989** **Assistant Director, Hollywood Opera, The Ballroom, NYC**
 Worked with director Sara Louise Lazarus on an original revue show that 'musicalized' (and parodied) Hollywood classic films, including The Birds and Now Voyager and Three Faces of Eve.
- 1988** **Assistant Director, Starting Here, Starting Now Centenary Stage Company, NJ**
 Worked with Director Sara Louise Lazarus on the Maltby/Shire Musical
- 1987** **Choreographer, She Loves Me, Yale University, New Haven, CT**
 Worked with Director Sara Louise Lazarus on Yale University's annual undergraduate musical at The Yale Dramat, starring Melissa Errico.
- 1987** **Choreographer/ Instructor, Stage Door Manor:**
 Henry Sweet Henry, Sweet Charity, Pirates of Penzance
 Stage Door Manor is a Summer Theatre Camp for professional, semi-professional and amateur students. Teaching responsibilities included Theatre Dance, Period Dance and organizing evening theatre activities for students ranging from 7th – 12th grades. Worked with Director, Michael Larsen.
- 1985-1988** **Choreographer, New Hyde Park High School, NY:**
 Barnum, The Boyfriend, Sweet Charity, Fiddler on the Roof
 Choreographer for the annual musical at a public school with students ranging from 7th thru 12th grades. Worked with Director, Michael Larsen.
- 1982** **Choreographer, Cider Mill Playhouse, Endicott NY:**
 Celebration!, A Little Night Music,
 Choreographer for the 1982 Summer season of a professional Summer Stock in Upstate New York. Worked with directors Tom Kremer and Richard G. Smith, respectively.

Affiliations & Credentials

1999-Present Antoinette Perry Awards: Tony Voter

1999-Present Actors' Equity Association: National Council/Eastern Regional Board Member

Chair, Guest Artist Committee;

1st Vice Chair, Equal Employment Opportunities; (formerly Committee for Racial Equality)

Vice Chair, Advisory Committee for Chorus Affairs

Vice Chair, Eastern Regional Board (2003-2004)

Production Contract (2000, 2004, 2008 Broadway Negotiations)

Off Broadway (2002, 2006 Negotiations)

ANTC Theatres (Chair, 2003 Negotiations)

Committee Member: National Public Policy, Member Education, Health Care, Alien Actors,

Executive Search Committee (2006-2007)

2006-Present Member (AEA Representative), *Associated Actors and Artists of America*

2004-2008 National Executive Board, Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring

National Chair, Center for Social and Economic Justice

2006-Present Member, Forward Association

2004-Present Member, Canadian Equity Association

1996-Present Member, American Federation of Television and Radio Artists

1985-Present Member, Screen Actors' Guild

1983-Present Member, Hebrew Actors' Union

1982-Present Member, Actors' Equity Association

Education

1979-1982 Bachelor of Arts, Binghamton University

1990-1991 Alliance Francaise

References

- Jennifer Dumas, Executive Producer, *Folksbiene Theatre, Auditory/Oral School of NY*
(917) 592-2326 dumasnyc@aol.com
- Michael Larsen, Program Director, *Stagedoor Manor*, Supervisor, *New Hyde Park High School*
(561) 654-3235 stagedoormichael@gmail.com
- Paige Price Artistic Director *Theatre Aspen*
(917) 538-6980 paigeprice212@mac.com
- Flora Stamatiades, Director of Organizing and Strategic Alliances, *Actors' Equity Association*,
(212) 869-8530 flora@actorsequity.org
- Mary Lou Westerfield, Executive Secretary, *Associated Actors and Artists of America*
(323) 978-8080 mlw@actorsequity.org
- Dale Lewis, Andrew Copper, *Usdan Center for the Creative and Performing Arts*
(212) 772-6060 acopper@usdan.com
- Hy Goldman, Sandy Goldman, Executive Directors, *KlezKanada*
(514) 489-9014 hysangoldman@gmail.com
- Jeff Warshauer, Program Director, *Klez Kanada*
(347) 623-4228 Warschauer@aol.com
- Sherri Mayrent, Henry Saposnik, Program Directors, *Klez Kamp*
(617) 923-2143 KlezKamp@oyfpro.com
- Adrienne Cooper, External Affairs Officer, *The Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring*
(212) 889-6800 x226 acooper@circle.org