

Our Volunteers

Last and most important are the friends and supporters who generously contributed to so many of our activities. Some-
 Lone once said, "Finding valuable volunteers is akin to discovering gold bars under rocks." Indeed, VTDS is enriched by the countless volunteer hours and kind acts that shape our successes. For example: our TapCo parents, who collectively support the TapCo performances and fundraising efforts, or, how about a shout out to Larry DiStefano, who stepped up to bat to create a festival video for projection on a giant screen in downtown Vancouver. Also, Linda Sum who consistently conducts the silent auction at our winter celebration and the fabulous concession stand stocked and set up entirely by the MacKinlay family. These are just a small sampling of the many kind and generous acts – too numerous to list here - that the entire VTDS organization is honored and humbled to receive. Thank you for your invaluable contributions to the Society and the art form of tap dancing that has brought us together. Please continue to stay involved in our exciting future.

The VTDS TEAM

Sas Selfjord	Executive Director
Anna Kramer	Manager
Rocko Vaugeois	Studio Maintenance and Tech Support
Nicole Ballou	Reception
Dayle Giesbrecht	Reception
Mika Komatsu	VTDS Director of Programs, TapCo, Artistic Director
Troy McLaughlin	Performance Development, Tap
Shelley Stewart Hunt	Theatrical Tap, Artistic Director, Heart and Sole
Mary Lou Brien	Stage
Angela Lowndes	Hip Hop
Amanda Buckingham	Jazz and Tap, Outreach Program
Sasha Hodgson	Tap, Jazz, Outreach Program, Assistant to Mika Komatsu
Oscar Nieto	Videographer

Board of Directors

Barbara Stewart, Chair
Bianca Fusco Zanatta
Les Puskas, Treasurer
Audree Metcalfe
Arlene MacDonald
Cliff Amiel
Karen Gram, Secretary
Mary Galaugher (Jan.- Aug.) Interim Treasurer



Vancouver Tap Dance Society 2009 Annual Report

An Introductory Note From Sas Selfjord, Executive Director

As we look back on the past year, in some ways it all seems like a blur, jam-packed with special events and moments, as activity after activity gathered momentum in a remarkable 12 months in the history of the Society.

Our organization is primarily about tap, an art form that we are so passionate about. Our many successes during the year are undoubtedly the result of the hard work of our accomplished staff. Our board, with Barbara Stewart as our Chair, continued to provide governance and financial stewardship, diligence and leadership. A thank you to Mary Galaugher, who had to leave mid term, for all the financial stewardship and leadership she provided to staff and the board. In fact, our entire team shares a winning formula, combining passion with dedication and expertise, in order to contribute individually and collectively to our many accomplishments in 2009.

This brief annual report provides an opportunity to not only focus on some highlights, but also to share an overview of the wide range of activities, so that we can move forward with justifiable pride and confidence into an exciting 2010.

Tap Academy

Over 200 tap enthusiasts came through VTDS doors, some were returning to continue their dedicated studies and others were new faces toting shiny unused tap shoes under their arms. The Academy delivers over 40 classes a week, the majority dedicated to tap classes for all ages and skill levels. Hip hop and Jazz classes are complementary programs to our tap training. Classes dedicated to boys have been a hallmark of the



Academy and TapCo's rigorous program attracts pre-professional dancers requiring the unique training program at VTDS. Adult classes with a focus on the legends of tap, or theatrical tap for those with a penchant to Broadway, are just some of the examples of the many creative programs our faculty proudly presents.

Artist in Residence

Gene Medler's contribution to our programming and to the co presentation of North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble and TapCo in "Maple Leaf, Stars and Stripes," was very successful. The cultural exchange between the two companies nurtured an important ongoing relationship. He shared his finely honed teaching lens with our staff and Gene's artistic imprint will guide our company to new levels of excellence. TapCo will flourish as a result of his insights into our curriculum, training methodology and pedagogy.



Guest Artist - to round out our training regime, Danny Nielsen shared his talent and passion with TapCo and DaBoyz 2 Men. Danny's choreography with the boyz was a winning combination.

Grants

VTDS continued to provide innovative, quality programming and to spearhead initiatives as a result of the following ongoing support:

Canada Council for the Arts - "Rising Tide: Canadians in Tap Conference."

BC Arts Council - Vancouver Tap Ensemble's rehearsals and the commissioning of Lane Alexander choreography.

Canadian Heritage, Arts Presentation Program - the production of a range of performances during the 2009 Vancouver International Tap Festival.

City of Vancouver, Office of Cultural Affairs - The 10th Annual Vancouver International Tap Festival, and the first national gathering, Rising Tide: Canadians in Tap Conference.

Scotia Bank Dance Centre - co production of "Tap Rising" at the Vancouver International Tap Festival

Burnaby Arts Council - variety of presentations.

BC Gaming Commission Direct Access - for a range of VTDS activities.

Summer Camp

So you think you can Flap? Last year's summer boot camp was created and delivered by our very own Troy McLaughlin and Mika Komatsu. Filled to capacity with 30 students the camp created an invaluable opportunity for 30 hours of intense study of the history and work of Tap Masters. The dancers committed to a rigorous program that may have produced a few blisters, but also provided greater understanding and insight into the complexity of the art form and respect for the roots of tap dance. The week culminated with a showcase for friends and family.

TapCo

What a tremendous year it was! Under the ongoing artistic direction of Mika Komatsu, the technical prowess of TapCo dancers continued to develop as their performance skills reached the levels of seasoned performers.

The 2009 tour consisted of 40 performances with the premiere artist-in-education program, "ArtStarts." The presentation of "Just in Time" was experienced by 20,000 enthusiastic kids in elementary schools.

The year began with a trip to Seattle to see Savion Glover perform in Bare Soundz. TapCo also traveled to the Vancouver Island Children's Festival where it presented five performances at the Port Theatre.

As well, the company attended the Chicago Human Rhythm Project, Youth Tap Ensemble training program where they had access to choreography from StepAfrika, Jason Janas and Dormeshia Sumbry Edwards. TapCo was also voted "festival favorite" by Chicago festival participants.

VTDS was especially proud to present TapCo at the Vancouver International Festival in "aHa Tap!"

Then, once again, in the fall, TapCo took to the road and continued to delight and educate audiences with high stepping performances in 100 Mile House and Williams Lake.



Vancouver Tap Ensemble

One of the highlights of 2009 was the formation of a professional tap company. The Vancouver Tap Ensemble dancers share a vision of staying true to the art form. Created and supported by VTDS, it will provide an important new avenue for local dancers, building on such features as the connection of tap to live World and Jazz music and further developing audiences and interest in tap.

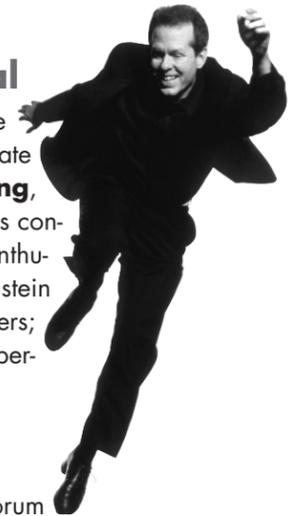
Vancouver Tap Ensemble premiered at the Vancouver International Tap Festival and presented a one-hour show in the Dance Allsorts series of dance productions.

Heart and Sole

Under the artistic direction of Shelley Stewart Hunt this adult recreational company performs a range of theatrical tap creations that support non-profit and community special events with highly entertaining routines. Heart and Sole continues to develop a repertoire and reputation for ensuring that special events are, in fact, really special.

10th Annual Vancouver International Tap Festival

Against a backdrop of 45 master classes, five outstanding highlight events were staged: **Tap Journals** at the Vancouver Public Library, a unique and intimate celebration of the careers of Arthur Duncan and Eleanor Powell; **Tap Rising**, Canada's tap elite took to the stage in a unprecedented showcase of our nation's considerable talent; **Hot Feet**, at Grandview Ballroom, one of the most energetic, enthusiastic and eclectic ranges of work ever presented; **aHa! TAP**, at Norman Rothstein Theatre, an once-in-a-lifetime premier presentation of the world's greatest tap dancers; and **Cellar Jazz Club**, where Jazz met tap and featured Canada's top dancers performing with Jazz musicians.



Canadians in Tap Conference

Rising Tide: Canadians in Tap Conference, was the first-ever national forum to share our knowledge, experience and our future, coast to coast. By taking advantage of the largest gathering of the country's tap community, we seized an opportunity to provide a catalyst for tremendous "untapped" creative energy, to fine-tune our collective focus and forge new national initiatives.

One immediate result was the development of Canada's Tap Dance Network, providing a forum on Facebook to communicate tap activities, performances, and workshops across Canada.

Outreach Programs

We continued to reach out to communities by packing up bins and bins of our used tap shoes and delivering tap dance classes far and wide. In 2009, in Nanaimo and Victoria people who attended the Vancouver Island Childrens Festival had a chance to try out a shuffle or two. Kitsilano Secondary, Queen Elizabeth and David Livingstone Elementary were also introduced to the joys of tap dance.

Competitions

Our dancers repeatedly presented stellar performances which were awarded by judges.

Dance Power: Jr Tap 2nd, Supreme 2nd, Boyz 2 Men – received High Mark for small group as well as the Judges Choice Award, and Danny Nielsen earned a Choreography award for his work.

Da Boyz received High Mark for its complex routine and was the recipient of the Group Winner of the Power Championships.

Tap Pups were runner-up in Small Group and the dynamic duo of Matisse & Bryce received runner-up for High Mark Duo.

Peak Competition:

Bryce and Matisse were awarded 1st for their Top duo and Da Boyz, 1st; Tap Pups, 1st, Jr Tap, 3rd, Dem Gurls, 1st, Da Boyz 2 Men, 1st and Supreme 2nd.



Strategic Planning Session

Board and key staff members, facilitated by Mary Galaugher, embarked on a visioning and strategic planning session which resulted in goals and priorities for the organization. The key priorities from this session were the formation of a professional tap company, creation of the adult recreational company, a marketing postcard for the general public, goals which were all achieved in 2009.