

## BIO NANCY SPANIER

### INTRODUCTION

Nancy Spanier (Artistic Director, Choreographer/Director, and Videographer) is founder of Nancy Spanier Dance Theatre/Performance Inventions. Her organization is a not-for-profit 501c3 founded in 1974 with a strong history of artistic achievement and creative evolution. It has established itself as a recognized contributor to the art of performance locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Spanier's work has pioneered dance and theatre forms. Performances and workshops have taken place in venues ranging from rural arts centers in Colorado to opera houses in Europe.

### FACTS

Her work has had over 300 performances abroad during 12 tours that include a 33 performance season in Paris at Théâtre Tristan Bernard, appearances at the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland and the Aarhus Festival in Denmark, and a tour of Southern Germany sponsored by the Intercontinental Alliance where her Company served as cultural emissaries for the United States representing the arts of Colorado. Other tours include Stockholm, Berlin, Munich, Nürnberg, Tübingen, Regensburg, Amsterdam, Copenhagen and through-out France. The U.S. State Department officially authorized the Company's cultural ambassadorship.

Over 1,500 performances of her work have been given throughout the United States including the Rocky Mountain Region, New York City, Los Angeles, New England, and Washington, D.C. at the Kennedy Center.

### GRANTS

The Company has received city, state, federal, corporate, foundation and private funding for touring, choreography commissions, artistic collaborations, video, salary support and administration. Support for the organization has been provided by:

- Celestial Seasonings
- Chevron U.S.A.
- City of Boulder Arts Commission
- Colorado Council on the Arts
- Daniels and Associates
- Danish Ministry of Culture
- Dayton Hudson Foundation
- Denver Ballet Guild
- Denver Technology Center
- Fay Carter Foundation
- Gates Foundation
- Gerbic Family Foundation
- Gulf Oil
- I.B.M.
- King Soopers
- Mayagor
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Neodata Endowment
- Petro Lewis
- Singer Foundation
- U.S. State Department
- Union Pacific Foundation
- University of Colorado
- van Itallie Foundation

## PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

Nancy Spanier began dancing at age four in New York City with creative dance pioneer, Blanche Evan. When she was eleven years of age, her own choreography was first presented at Carnegie Recital Hall. She pursued her studies with José Limon and Martha Graham, at the School of American Ballet and the Metropolitan Opera Ballet School where she performed in several operas. She attended the Professional Children's School and the Juilliard School of Music. She received her B.A. degree in Dramatic Literature from Middlebury College and her M.A. degree in Dance from Mills College.

She has performed throughout the USA, Canada, South America and Europe with renowned companies that have included José Limon, Pearl Lang, Tamiris-Nagrin and Charles Weidman as well as with her own Company. She served as an ambassador of good will on the very first State Department tour of South America dancing in Doris Humphrey's *Day on Earth*.

## TEACHING

Her teaching credits include workshops at colleges, universities, private studios and professional performance conservatories throughout the USA and Europe. She has taught actors and dancers at such institutions as Mills College, The American College Dance Festival, Naropa University, Stockholm's Statens Dansskola, Orebro Sweden's Lansteatern, Denmark's Aarhus Teater Skole and Copenhagen's Actor's Union, Bali's College of Performing Arts, and New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, and was on the faculty of the University of Colorado from 1969 to 2003 where she was a Full Professor of Theatre and Dance. She initiated the Movement Program at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts' National Theatre Conservatory.

## CHOREOGRAPHER/DIRECTOR

After choreographing over 70 major works for her Company during 13 years, she decided to work primarily as a freelancer on a project by project basis. She was invited to Denmark to direct a prominent Danish actor in a one-man production of *Hamlet on One Player* which had performances at Elsinore Castle. She returned to the U.S. and transformed this work into *Hamlet Reclassified* which has toured Colorado, Vermont, Sweden and Denmark. She was the Movement Designer for Jean Claude van Itallie's play *The Traveler* which had its premiere at The Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles during its 20th Anniversary season. She choreographed van Itallie's production of Genet's *The Balcony* at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. She was invited to Svalegangen Theatre in Denmark to create, direct, assemble text and choreograph an original Body Theatre work, *Knivens Aeg* (Cutting Edge), on a Danish repertory theatre company. Following this commission, she created an original one-woman show, *Fixing A Hole*, on a Danish actress who performed the piece for a month long run in Copenhagen. Her one-man show *On the Sunny Side: An Outrageous Cabaret* has had performances in France, Germany, and Denmark as well as the USA. Her most current French music theatre creation, *Temps et tant d'amour*, has been performed in France and the USA. In 2004 she choreographed *Envolée on y espacio creativo artes*, a contemporary dance and theatre company based in Madrid.

## VIDEOGRAPHER

Video is now a major thrust of her work. Her video credits include *Flesh Chronicles* on the theme of aging, *Once Before A Time*, a movement/music fairy tale, *Echos, Esprits et Traces dans l'ancien Hospice de Hautefort*, a docudance and *Flesh Sites*, a poetic video exploring nude movement improvisations in ancient, sacred European sites.

Her most recent dance videos, shot in southwestern France, include *Of Memory*, a merging of the body into nature, *Le Jardinier de la Gafferie*, a semi narrative glance into a gardener's private fantasy, *Contemplations at 70*, exploring what it means to be an artist in later life, and *Post-Op*, a lyrical poetic tribute and gateway into human intimacy, tenderness, and vulnerability.

*In Splendid Unison*, is a documentary navigating the intimate nexus of art and life featuring Spanier and her husband/muse Paul Oertel as they recall 46 years of their journey together while viewing archival and current footage of their work and partnership. Her videos have been screened as part of Sans Souci Festival of Dance Cinema in Colorado, Barcelona, Mexico City, and Germany and at The American Dance Festival's International Screendance Festival.

She received the prestigious Creative Fellowship in Choreography from the Colorado Council on the Arts and in 2020 was a recipient of an Artist Residency from The Emily Harvey Foundation, Venice, Italy.

She continues to innovatively weave together dance, movement, music, voice, sound, text, video and the visual arts into, what she has coined, Performance Inventions.