

JANELLE ABBOTT STALEY / BIOGRAPHY

A professional dancer with over 25 years in the industry, Janelle Abbott Staley has performed on stages around the country and abroad with ballet and modern dance companies, musicals, in film and on television. Originally from Michigan, she received her early training as a company member of the Grand Rapids Ballet under the direction of former Joffrey Ballet dancers Charthel Arthur and Robert Estner. She went on to earn a BFA in Ballet Performance from the University of Utah, where she was awarded the Olga V. Alexandria Award merit scholarship and trained with esteemed faculty Conrad Ludlow, Bene Arnold, and Elisabeth Nesi.

In New York City, Janelle danced with Andrew Palermo and Taye Diggs' contemporary dance company dre.dance, and was the longtime assistant to Salim Gauwloos (Slam), whom she helped create and set numerous original works in NYC, for Fernando Bujones' Orlando Ballet, the Houston Met, and Argentina's Mozarteum Program. Her other NYC company credits include: Terra Firma Dance Theatre, LightCurve Dance, New York Contemporary Dance Theatre, Ollom Dance Theatre, and Ballet for Young Audiences.

Janelle has been featured in several commercial and film projects by renowned photographer/director David LaChapelle, including Elton John's *The Red Piano* concert (soloist onscreen in "Don't Let the Sun Go Down On Me"), Norah Jones' "Those Sweet Words" music video, and Elton John's "Answer in the Sky" music video (assistant choreographer). Most recently, she performed at Rocca di Frassinello's Gala in Gavorrano, Italy as a guest artist under his direction (world premiere of John Byrne's commissioned work *Gravitational Intoxication*).

Janelle has performed on Broadway stages—for BC/EFAs's *Gypsy of the Year* (award-winner with *Aida* cast) and *Easter Bonnet*, off-Broadway, at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. She has had the fortune of working with and assisting esteemed choreographers Adam Cates (New World Stages, *Peter Pan*), John Byrne (Elton John's "Answer in the Sky"), and Shea Sullivan (Broadway Bares). Favorite regional productions include Shakespeare Theatre Company's *Twelfth Night* directed by Tony Award-winner Rebecca Taichman and choreographed by Seán Curran (Featured/Dance Captain), *Peter Pan* at the Sondheim Center (Tiger Lily/Dance Captain), *A Chorus Line*, and *Cabaret* at The Seacoast Repertory Theatre. She was a guest artist with the Tom Finlay Trio in Barbados, performing at the Jazz Festival with legendary singer Barbara Morrison.

Off stage, Janelle has taught at Broadway Dance Center and Steps on Broadway in NYC, as well as master classes around the country for Dancers Inc., Fluid Dance Conventions, and the Broadway Experience. She is a certified Level II Power Pilates Mat instructor, and was a senior Barre instructor at Physique 57 in Manhattan before relocating to New England, where she taught Core Fusion barre and cardio barre at Exhale Spa in Boston.

Janelle has directed and produced industry events, workshops, and fashion shows for *Dance* and *Dance Spirit* magazines in New York, Orlando, and Las Vegas. She co-produced the *Dance Magazine Awards* presentation in New York City, honoring legendary artists like Carmen de Lavallade, Gelsey Kirkland, Bebe Neuwirth, and Wendy Whelan, and featuring performances by Paul Taylor Dance Company, ABT, and Philadanco, among others. In Cambridge, she spent a season as Marketing Director for Special Projects at Green Street Studios and helped launch new performance opportunities for local dance artists and companies, including Boston Ballet II.

Now in New England, Janelle has performed with the Boston-based companies Kat Nasti Dance and Fukudance, and has worked with Annex Contemporary Dance Company in Maine, and New Hampshire Dance Collaborative. She performed at the MIT Centennial Performance organized and directed by Pilobolus, and in the site-specific "Words & Shadows: Truths that Arise Remembered" at the African Burying Ground Memorial in Portsmouth, NH with artist Jerome Meadows and choreographer Brea Cali.

Janelle is currently a faculty member of The Dance Annex Studio for the Dance Arts in Kittery, ME, and continues to teach Barre fitness, fusion and Pilates Mat classes at Evolve Mindful Movement in Portsmouth, NH. She lives in Cape Neddick, Maine with her husband, two joyful daughters, and their puppy Winnie.