

PRESS RELEASE
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High res photos available upon request

Jena C. Woodbury, Executive Director, to step down from leadership at the end of Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company's 59th Season

(Salt Lake City, UT) After 12 years as Executive Director, over 25 years with the Company, and a lifetime in service to the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company legacy, Jena Woodbury is stepping down as Executive Director at the end of the 2022/2023 Season to pursue other endeavors. Woodbury will be working closely with the Board of Trustees and [Pathway](#) Associates to launch a search for the new Executive Director in early January.

"Through my long-time associations with the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company, on the Board of Trustees, as an Ambassador, and as a long-time patron, I have observed Jena's positive impact on the operations of the Company. She has ensured the vision and culture intended by the founders and has fostered growth and success through both fruitful and challenging times. Her unflagging commitment to the dancers, staff and the community coupled with her insightful leadership has set the stage for a strong future for the Company. While Jena leaves an admirable legacy, we are equally excited to welcome and support the leadership of the new Executive Director with respect for the esteemed history of this institution and embrace the bright future ahead." - Roberta Schlicher, Board of Trustees Chairperson

The 59-year-old dance company has traveled all over the world, performed many historically preserved and newly created dances, and brought contemporary dance to various communities under Jena Woodbury's leadership. The daughter of co-founder Joan Woodbury, Jena grew up with the dance company and played many roles in its administration.

At a very young age, Woodbury's first roles within the Company were Marketing and Education Director. She moved to Portland, OR and served as Associate General Manager with Imago Theatre and Touring Director with Do Jump. From 2000 to 2003 she was the Company Manager for Marcel Marceau's North American and Asian tours. She returned to Ririe-Woodbury as the Booking Manager and later moved back to Salt Lake to assume the role as Executive Director. Ririe-Woodbury's state, national, and international tours have been responsible for one-third of

the Company's annual funding under her management as Booking Manager. Woodbury managed the touring of Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company and the Nikolais Dance Theatre - which holds exclusive rights to the full evening performances of legendary choreographer Alwin Nikolais. Company tours included; three performances to the Joyce Theatre in New York City as well as international tours to China, England, Ireland, East Germany, Mongolia, South Korea, France, Italy, Spain, and Singapore.

As Executive Director; the first non-founder Executive Director; Jena Woodbury ushered the Company into new artistic, education and outreach direction by hiring Artistic Director, Daniel Charon, Education Director, Ai Fujii Nelson as well as former Outreach Director, Juan Carlos Claudio, to evolve and enhance the Company's education and outreach efforts.

During the COVID pandemic, Jena Woodbury tirelessly secured funding and loans to ensure the dancers and administration of Ririe-Woodbury remained continuously employed while guiding them through shifting tides of technology, audience development, and community engagement to ensure the lasting future of the Company.

Woodbury has implemented strategic plans for operational stability and established the Company as an institution ready for a non-family-member driven organization with artistic innovations, educational offerings, and a commitment to the necessary diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility for our local, national, and international audiences.

"It has been my great honor to help solidify the extraordinary legacy Shirley Ririe and Joan Woodbury created. These two remarkable women nurtured the Company from its humble inception into a renowned institution that has influenced countless dancers and brought dance education to schools, underserved groups, and communities far and wide. While I feel that it's now time for me to explore new endeavors, I am extremely proud of the work we've all accomplished together over the past twelve years. I'm inspired by the number of new commissions and dance education programs that have come to fruition, the number of people the Company has reached, and the many extraordinary tours we've triumphantly completed. It has been my privilege to work with so many talented artists, donors, board members, administrators, volunteers, and colleagues. Ririe-Woodbury's strength continues to be that it is a family of individuals who believe that dance is a fundamental human experience and a vital part of our shared humanity." - Jena Woodbury, Executive Director

The national search for a new Executive Director will open early January, 2023 on [Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company's website](#) with the new leadership set to start in June of 2023. All applicants and questions regarding the hiring process can be directed to [Pathway Associates](#) by contacting Joelle Kanshepolsky joelle@pathwayassoc.com.

About Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company

Ririe-Woodbury (Rĭ-rē Woŏd-bŭr-ē) Dance Company is Utah's most established institution for contemporary dance. Founded in 1964, the Company actively embraces...and commissions the work of contemporary choreographers, tours worldwide, and develops dynamic education and community outreach programming. Through performance and educational undertakings, the Company pursues its mission to make dance a viable part of everyone's life— whether it be as creators, performers, dance educators, critics, or as participating audience members. Over the 59 years of its history, Ririe-Woodbury has toured nationally and internationally, always advocating the philosophy that “dance is for everybody.”

Under the direction of Executive Director Jena C. Woodbury, Artistic Director Daniel Charon, and Education Director Ai Fujii Nelson, Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company is committed to building upon the vision of its founders as it continues to evolve as an important voice for innovation in contemporary dance and dance education.

Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company's Mission

Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company is committed to furthering contemporary dance as an accessible and valued art form through performance and dance education that raise the standards, deepen the understanding and promote personal connections with dance.

The Company pursues this overall vision through:

- Performing innovative original works and commissioning choreographers of exceptional talent
- Providing dance education for all levels and outcomes
- Touring regionally, nationally, and internationally
- Training artists as performers, educators, and choreographers
- Developing dance audiences

Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access

Dance is for Everybody

Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company is dedicated to pursuing ongoing inclusion across race, gender, culture, spirituality, identity, age, ability, and experience. Dance is a timeless form of human expression and inspiration, and through dance, we are committed to fostering equity, diversity, access, and inclusion for all. The Company stands against racism and continues to engage in meaningful internal dialogue to make measurable changes to our policies, procedures, and programming to meet all of these goals.