

THE AJKUN BALLET THEATRE ARTISTS

DR. CHIARA AJKUN – *Artistic Director*



One of the most well-known and trusted ballet professionals in the world, Dr. Chiara Ajkun is the artistic director of the Ajkun Ballet Theatre and oversees the professional company, the ballet school and the financial aid fund for dancers.

Award-winning choreographer, teacher of classical ballet and dance medicine pioneer, Chiara works for dance companies and ballet schools in Australia, Europe, North America and South America.

Thanks to her leadership, Ajkun Ballet Theatre has performed for millions of people in theaters, television and online platforms, provided thousands of dollars in dance education and has created a world network of dance companies promoting youth employment and empowerment.

Chiara is a tireless advocate for diversity, multiculturalism and equality embodied by the many philanthropic programs she created.

Her accomplishments as a global cultural leader have established Chiara Ajkun as one of the most respected and admired public figures today.

Who is Chiara Ajkun?

Chiara was born in Mantova, a historic city in the northern region of Lombardy (Italy), in the landmark “Palazzo Valentini” (1830) home to her family. She comes from a distinguished lineage of patrons of the arts, tracing back 1200 years, that proudly advanced women education. Her mother Daniela, dance professor and university's chancellor, and her late father Demetrio, an academic, raised her with an emphasis on education and the arts. Chiara also credits her grandparents Umberto and Rina for her love of classical music and opera which she calls “the soundtrack of my childhood”. Her sister Valentine is an author and professor at the University of Padua. Chiara has two sons: Wolfrantz and Alexeij.

Chiara treasures traveling, meeting new people, learning about different cultures and is especially interested in history, philosophy, law and scientific innovations. She also enjoys fashion, horseback riding, yoga and Pilates, watching movies, trying diverse cuisines and spending time with her family and friends around the world.

Chiara lives in New York City and travels the world to choreograph.

Leadership

Dr. Ajkun became Artistic Director in 1985, appointed by the University of Dance, Theater and Liberal Arts where she is still a Guest Artist in residence, therefore serving the company “Balletto Regionale di Mantova” until returning to NYC. Chiara created and directed the European dance competition “Premio DanzaEuropa”, the European Opera competition “Premio Katia Ricciarelli” in collaboration with National Opera Houses of Italy, Hungary and Albania, and the Festival “Dance in Italy” for the European Union and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Dr. Ajkun served as a panelist for the Boards of Education in Lombardy, Lazio, Puglia, Calabria (Italy) and currently serves as an expert in the public school districts of New York City and Westchester County (USA).

“You are preserving our culture and heritage and demonstrating that our diversity is our greatest strength.”

from a letter by Hilary Rodham Clinton – Secretary of State of the United States of America

Choreographer

Multi Award winning choreographer Chiara has created ballets for foremost national companies and theaters in Albania, Argentina, Australia, France, Gran Canaria, Italy, Netherlands, Malta, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States. Chiara's choreography has also been commissioned for movies, from national televisions (ABC, BBC, FOX, RAI), and for preeminent dancers of companies such as American Ballet Theatre, Royal Ballet, Paris Opera, Het National Ballet, Australian Ballet, Moscow Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, among others.

“Chiara Ajkun's choreography is a work of genius, combining beautifully coordinated motion with astute interpretation of the composer's intention.” Portland Press Herald – Christopher Hyde

www.ajkunbt.org/chiara-ajkun.html

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"Chiara Ajkun's interpretation of Carmen is superb.... an outstanding success... much finer characterization of the various personalities." London Times – M. Ghirlando

Ballet Teacher

Chiara Ajkun is the creator of the Ajkun ^(c) Methodology, a scientific learning system that facilitates the understanding of complex training concepts while aiming to prevent posture disorders and to lengthen performing careers.

Chiara is credited for the technical and artistic achievements of many notable dancers; her students have performed all over the world in such companies like Australian Ballet, Ballet de Montecarlo, Honk Kong Ballet, New York City Ballet, Royal Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, Vienna Staatsoper, among others. Professional dancers, Dance Students and Dance Teachers travel every year from all over the world to benefit from Chiara's outstanding teaching and her Trainee Program has been accredited for H3 visa by the United States since its conception.

At certain times of the year, Chiara enjoys sharing her extensive knowledge with young generations of dancers through master classes offered at various dance institutions in Australia, Europe, North and South America, while continuing to coach professional dancers for their performances and reconditioning periods.

"I owe so much to the incredible Chiara Ajkun, but life-changing is the one that comes to mind"
Sophia Sing – Phoenix, AZ

Awards

Medal for the Arts by the Prime Minister of Malta (1990), Best Choreography in "Malta Festival" by The London Times (1991), Best Choreography in "Fiuggi Europa Platea" (1995), Best Choreography in "Manfredonia Awards" (1996 & 1997), "Dame Grand Cross" appointed by Grand Master H.R.H. Prince Humbert Ferdinando the Third (1999), Honorary Membership to "New Rochelle High School – Performing And Visual Arts Education, PAVE" (2008).

"This honor is awarded to Dr. Chiara Ajkun for her invaluable contribution to the Arts. Let Dr. Ajkun's work be of inspiration for the global community" - Grand Master H.R.H. Prince Humbert Ferdinando the Third

Performing Career and Education

As principal dancer Chiara has danced most of the great classical roles and neoclassical choreography.

Chiara's magnificent technique and acting sensibilities allowed her to excel in many different roles, although she is perhaps best known for her performances of Kitri (Don Quixote), Odette/Odile (Swan Lake), Nikiya (La Bayadère), Juliet (Romeo & Juliet) and Aurora (The Sleeping Beauty) gracing the stages of the Royal Opera House in London, the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City, the State Opera in Vienna, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris and International Festivals and Ballet Galas in Italy, France, Belgium, UK, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and the USA. Fundamental for her performing career have been the collaborations with Rudolf Nureyev, George Balanchine, Oleg Vinogradov and impresario Dimitri Papoutsis.

Chiara studied ballet in Italy, France, England and New York with Serge Peretti (Paris Opera), John Field (Royal Ballet), Ninel Kurgapkina (Mariinsky Theater), Felia Doubrovskaya (School of American Ballet) and Milorad Miskovitch (La Fenice), pas de deux with Ekaterina Maximova and Vladimir Vassiliev (Bolshoi Ballet) and Víktor Róna (La Scala) and perfected her artistry with the invaluable coaching of Alexandra Danilova (New York City Ballet). Chiara's formal education includes degrees in "International Literature", specializations in Pedagogy and Business Administration, a Master in "Performing Arts" and a Ph.D. in "Pathology of Ballet".

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