



Happy Halloween

2D



Celebrate Women

4A



Food fright

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DON'T BE LEFT OUTSIDE THE insider

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'So You Think You Can Dance' choreographer visits Plano dance studio

By Kim Nguyen
Staff writer

The Senior Pulse company of KJ Dance Designs was in for a treat last week, as Joey Dowling, a professional choreographer, teacher and dancer, worked closely with the group for three days.

"She is like the Chita Rivera of today," said Kristy Ulman, KJ Dance artistic director and owner. "She's choreographed all over the world and is very well known in the dance industry."

Ulman and various KJ Dance companies have attended the annual New York City Dance Alliance conference, where Dowling is a staff member, every year

for the last 15 years.

"That's how we've come to know each other closely," Ulman said. "Joey travels the country doing events like this to inspire dancers to keep pursuing their dreams. It's a win-win situation to have her here with the girls. We support the conference and everything they do, and they reciprocate the support."

The Senior Pulse dance company is an elite 16-member group of high school-aged dancers who have trained with KJ Dance for the past 10 years.

"These are all very dedicated students who all have a very good work ethic," Ulman said. "This opportunity is special for them —

you can see the joy they have in their dancing."

Teaching a musical theater piece to Peggy Lee's "Why Don't You Do Right," Dowling was excited to be able to spread the knowledge she gained firsthand in the dance industry to a group of dancers that showed so much promise.

"These girls are on the right track," Dowling said. "When you see a group with a lot of potential, you want to do all you can to help them grow even more, knowing it will only benefit them in the long run."

"Why Don't You Do Right" is a story about different ways a man treats a

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KIM NGUYEN/STAFF PHOTO

Professional choreographer Joey Dowling works with Senior Pulse dancers at KJ Studio in Plano.

Dance

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woman wrongly, Dowling said.

"Through their dance movements, they emanate different emotions depending on what scenario they have," she said. "The male figure is a mannequin and he's being passed around all the girls on stage. It's very sultry and powerful."

"Musical theater has been around for quite some time; it's often seen in movies from the 1930s and 40s, with Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly," Dowling said. "But it is a genre of dance that is not always understood or taught well, so I am glad to have this opportunity to teach it to the girls."

Ulman said Dowling's choreography for the piece is challenging for the dance

company, but the challenge motivates them to perfect the movements.

"Great things are being offered besides a new piece of work," Ulman said. "Joey is offering them knowledge and experience, which gives the girls the ability to transform themselves even more when they're dancing."

Dowling also hopes that the Senior Pulse Company takes the knowledge she has taught not only to further their dancing careers, but also give back to the community that has always supported them.

"For a dancer, it's better than Christmas when a professional choreographer comes to teach you a routine and they are all soaking up information like a sponge. I'm glad that they're excited to learn and continue learning," she said. "To me, it's fun to have worked so hard to get where I am now and then do events like this that get me back to my

roots. It's come around full circle."

Joey Dowling has been teaching, choreographing and dancing in New York City since she was 18. She has danced on numerous film, live and stage performances including Mariah Carey's "Butterfly" world tour, VH1 Vogue Fashion Awards, Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, "Chicago: the Movie" and the movie "The Producers." Dowling has also appeared on Broadway in "Sweet Charity," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" and "Dance of The Vampires." She was a Rockette at Radio City and was featured in "The Mambo Kings." Recently she was one of the new choreographers for the television show "So You Think You Can Dance," and currently she is the associate choreographer for the Tony Award-winning Broadway hit "In The Heights."

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