

## **Instructors for Hire**

**Dean Avdalas (San Francisco, CA)**

**Email: [iamskabanis@yahoo.com](mailto:iamskabanis@yahoo.com)**

**Regions Covered:** Epirus, Vlachs from Epirus and Macedonia and Thessaly, Thrace Asvestathes, Neo Monastiri/Meyalo Monastiri (Anatoliki Romilia), and most of Macedonia.

**Jordan Elrod (Boca Raton, FL)**

**Email: [jordanelrod@gmail.com](mailto:jordanelrod@gmail.com)**

Jordan Elrod has been dancing since a young age, instructing for the past 16 years, and was the director at St. Mark Greek Orthodox Church in Boca Raton, Florida for ten of those years. He has taught and participated in many workshops across the United States and Greece, as well as organized workshops in South Florida including The Winter Dance Conference in 2005 which had over 250 dancers attend seminars taught by instructors brought in from across Greece. He was on the executive board for the Metropolis of Atlanta's Hellenic Dance Festival and has taught workshops across Florida and the U.S. (Chicago, New York, California, Georgia, and the Carolinas among others), as well as performed with, and played music for multiple award winning groups at the Metropolis of Atlanta's "Hellenic Dance Festival", the Metropolis of San Francisco's "Folk Dance Festival", and "America's Greek Dance Competition" out of Chicago, where he also served on the board. While Jordan enjoys all aspects of Greek dancing, he has focused most of his time researching and studying dances from the Dodecanese and Crete while attending college at the University of the Aegean in Rhodes through a scholarship earned from the "Hellenic Society Paidea" through the University of Connecticut. While attending school in Greece, he spent much of his time meeting local musicians and researching the music and dance traditions of the different islands and villages they contain. He spent most of his energy researching the island of Rhodes, as well as the island of Kos in the Dodecanese, but traveled, learned, and danced throughout the Greek Islands during his time spent there. While many of the traditions and variations of dances and music across this stretch of islands are being "homogenized" in a sense, it has been Jordan's effort to try to find and record the differences, not only from island to island, but from village to village. Such extensive efforts are the main reason that he feels he has only truly "researched" a few islands of the Dodecanese.

**Joe Graziosi (Centerville, MA)**

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Joe Kaloyanides Graziosi, of Greek and Italian ancestry, grew up in the Boston area and graduated with a degree in History from Brandeis University in Waltham, MA. With a mania for Greek music and dance from an early age, Joe has done extensive research on regional dance in Greece and among Greek communities in the U.S. He has taught throughout the world for community groups and at major folk dance camps, including the Balkan Music and Dance Workshops since 1982. He was a co-founder of New York's Greek American Folklore Society (GAFS) along with its director, Paul Ginis, where he taught throughout the decade of the 80s. Joe has taught and introduced people to Greek dance in Taiwan, Canada, Brazil, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands and England and has taught regularly in Japan since 1990, and will be returning there again in 2016. Joe has also given talks on traditional Greek music and dance for the ethnomusicology departments at UCLA and UCSB. He has served as judge and

advisor for the west coast Greek Orthodox (San Francisco Metropolis) Folk Dance Festival (FDF) since 1984, and judge and advisor for the Atlanta Metropolis' Hellenic Dance Festival (HDF) for the past 12 years. He is, along with Ahmet Luleci, co-founder of the annual World Music & Dance Camp, now in Iroquois Springs, NY.

**Yvonne Hunt (Seattle, WA)**

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**Regions Covered:** While everyone associates me with Serres, I have also worked throughout Greece since 1975, and have researched in many, many areas. The following are some of them: Ipiros, Thessalia, Makedonia, Western Thrace, Megara, Kriti, Kythnos, Karpathos. In addition, I have worked with the sub-groups of Vlachs and Sarakatsans.

Yvonne Hunt has been teaching and researching Greek dances for more than 30 years, working with Father Homer Dimopoulos to establish the dance program at St. Demetrios Church (Seattle) in 1974. She has organized, directed and taught at summer seminars throughout the country, and has been conducting carnival seminars in the Serres region since 2001. In addition, she has taught seminars throughout Europe, the US and Canada. Yvonne was on the organizing staff of the IOFA (ΔΟΛΤ) conferences in Larissa from 1987-1990, was a guest lecturer at Dora Stratou Theatre, on more than one occasion, and had the privilege of presenting her work with Flambouro, Serres, both at a seminar there and at the theatre premier opening in 1989.

**Sarantos Kaperonis (Charlotte, NC)**

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**Regions covered:** Thrace (Villages throughout Evros, Anatoliki Romilia/N. Thrace); Villages of Drama; The islands of Paros and Kefalonia.

Sarantos has been directing for 8 years and currently directs the Thrylos Adult Group from Holy Trinity Charlotte, NC. His group, Thrylos, has had much success ranking first in Division II (Diamond award) at HDF 2013, 2014, 2015 and first in Division I (Sweepstakes Award) at FDF 2015. Sarantos travels to Greece and has done first hand research in the field of Greek Dance since 2011. He focuses mainly on the region of Thrace, Drama, Peloponnesos, and a few islands. He has taught and presented his research at workshops throughout the Carolina's, Southeast, Pennsylvania, California, and Canada. He also plays Thracian Gaida, Thracian Lyra, Trumpet, and Flogera. What he offers: Assist groups in picking out a suite, teaching a suite of dances of a particular region/village while focusing on stylistic nuances of the area, assist in staging suites, help with a-Capella singing and singing along with instruments, offers live music assistance and instrumentation recommendations, access to various resources such as songs, videos, lyrics, and research.

**Stavros Karagiorgis (Winston-Salem, NC)**

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**Regions Covered:** Makedonia (Drama, Edessa, Florina, Kozani), Sterea Ellada, Thrace (focus on Evros), Cyclades, Dodekanisa, Northern Aegean Islands, Erythraia (Asia Minor).

Stavros has been directing for over 10 years in his local parish. He currently serves as a mentor to other directors in his parish and the surrounding area by assisting new directors into becoming better instructors and providing the utmost authentic experience for their students. Stavros has directed various groups of all ages in his community and annually received top prizes at HDF and AGDC in Chicago. He has also served several years on the HDF Executive Committee and even served as the HDF Management Team Co-Chairperson from 2012 to 2015. Additionally, Stavros has been to Greece several times and has performed first-hand field research in various villages throughout Thrace, the Cyclades, the Northern Aegean Islands, Sterea Ellada, and Makedonia. He has furthermore presented this research to various dance programs across the United States and even Canada. **What He Offers:** Suite selection, teaching the steps, but more importantly, the stylistic nuances of a village and/or region, staging assistance, vocal training for correct vocalizations for a particular village/region, live music assistance and instrument recommendation, access to various resources such as songs, videos, lyrics and other research.

**John Peppes (Michigan)**

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**Regions Covered:** Dodecanese Islands (Kalymnos, Kos, Leros, Patmos), Northern Aegean (Samos, Chios, Ikaria), Cyclades (Naxos, Paros, Kythnos, Kimolos, Amorgos)

**Demetri Tashie**

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**Aris Yortzidis: (Washington, DC)**

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Mr. Aris Yortzidis has been Greek folk dancing since 1982. Originally from southern California, he was an active member of the dance program at his parish of St. George in the suburb of Downey, CA. He also performed with groups at the St. Anthony parish in Pasadena, CA and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary parish in Long Beach, CA. In 1987, he began competing at the Diocese (now Metropolis) of San Francisco's Greek Orthodox Folk Dance and Choral Festival (FDF). Until his departure from southern California in August 2000, Aris taught six dance groups at three different Greek Orthodox parishes (St. George, Downey, CA; Sts. Constantine and Helen, Cardiff-by-the-Sea, CA; and St. Katherine, Redondo Beach, CA). Aris began to research Greek dance intensively in 1995. His success as a dance director earned him the Metropolis of San Francisco FDF Directors Scholarship from the FDF Board of Trustees in 1996. This scholarship allowed him to attend Ms. Yvonne Hunt's Loutra Seminar where he learned dances of the region of Serres (Eastern Macedonia) at Loutra, near Sidirokastro, Serres. After the seminar, Aris continued his tour by researching the dances and traditions of his father's village of Chrysochorafa (Gagauzika), also in Serres and the Vlachs of Serres. He finished his tour that summer by researching dances of Pontos in Serres and Katerini (where his mother is from), and in Thessaloniki. This work earned him FDF's "Director of the Year" Award in 1997. Aris has attended seminars in Greece and the United States and has been fortunate to work with highly esteemed Greek folk dance experts from Greece, the United States, and Canada. He has obtained broad knowledge of the dances of Thrace, Macedonia, the islands, and other regions of Greece. He has taught and presented his research and work at seminars across the United States and has served as a Greek dance consultant to groups in

California; Washington, DC; Virginia; Maryland; North Carolina; South Carolina; Georgia; Florida; Washington; and others. Aris has also served as a judge at several Greek folk dance events and competitions in the United States (Metropolis of San Francisco FDF; Hellenic Dance Festival, Metropolis of Atlanta; America's Greek Dance Competition, Chicago, IL), and in South America (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Buenos Aires and South America).