

# HILARY THORNBURGH NICOLAI

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[Ballet With Hilary](#)  
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## EDUCATION

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| <b>MA</b> | New York University, Dance Education: ABT Pedagogy<br>Thesis: "American Ballet Theatre Outline and Analysis"<br>Advisors: Pamela Levy (ABT) and Allegra Romita (NYU) | 2023-2025 |
| <b>BA</b> | Columbia University, Literature and Writing<br>Graduated Cum Laude                                                                                                   | 1999-2003 |

## PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

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| ABT® National Training Curriculum: Pre-Primary through Level 5 | 2014-2015 |
| Full certification through Level 7 & Partnering                | 2024      |

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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| <b>Essex Dance Academy</b> , Fairfield, NJ<br>Ballet, Pointe <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Head of ballet division, 2025</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 2025-Present |
| <b>New Jersey School of Ballet</b> , Florham Park, NJ<br>Ballet, Pointe, Repertoire, Choreographer <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Summer Intensive, 2024 and 2025</li><li>Year-round faculty, upper division, 2024 and 2025</li></ul>                                                                                                         | 2024-Present |
| <b>Ballet With Hilary</b> , New Jersey and New York City<br>Private Coach <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ballet technique, pointe, variations, conditioning, mentorship</li><li>All ages and abilities</li><li>Built strong online presence</li><li>Established loyal clientele</li></ul>                                                     | 2020-Present |
| <b>AC Dance</b> , Bloomfield, NJ<br>Ballet Master: Technique, Pointe, Variations, Rehearsal Director <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increased classroom numbers by 50%</li><li>Assessed for pointe readiness and class advancement via researched criteria</li><li>Boosted revenue for studio by \$100 per week via private lessons</li></ul> | 2022-2023    |

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| <b>5678 Dance</b> , Totowa, NJ<br>Ballet, Senior Company                                                                                                                                                                  | 2022-2023 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full year ballet faculty</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                              |           |
| <b>New Jersey Dance Theater Ensemble</b> , Summit, NJ<br>Ballet, Pointe, Variations                                                                                                                                       | 2021-2022 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer intensive and full year faculty, upper division</li> </ul>                                                                                                                |           |
| <b>Sharron Miller Academy for the Performing Arts</b> , Montclair, NJ<br>Ballet, Pointe, Variations, Choreographer                                                                                                        | 2013-2020 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of ballet division</li> <li>• Taught upper-level classes</li> <li>• Participated in department meetings and annual open houses</li> <li>• Parent/teacher liaison</li> </ul> |           |
| <b>Class Act Performing Arts School</b> , South Orange, NJ<br>Ballet, Choreographer                                                                                                                                       | 2017-2018 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men's and women's classical ballet technique classes</li> </ul>                                                                                                                  |           |
| <b>Prestige Academy of Dance</b> , Fairfield, NJ<br>Substitute Teacher, Competition Coach                                                                                                                                 | 2015-2016 |
| <b>Dance Works Studios</b> , Montclair, NJ<br>Ballet, Pointe, Choreographer                                                                                                                                               | 2014-2015 |

#### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Metropolitan Opera Ballet</b>                                                                           | 1998-1999 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tannhauser</li> <li>• Turandot</li> </ul>                         |           |
| <b>Ballet Internationale</b>                                                                               | 1997-1998 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giselle</li> <li>• The Nutcracker</li> <li>• Walpurgis</li> </ul> |           |
| <b>Indianapolis Ballet Theater</b>                                                                         | 1987-1997 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swan Lake</li> <li>• The Nutcracker</li> <li>• Giselle</li> </ul> |           |

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

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- Joffrey Ballet School 1996
- School of American Ballet 1993-1995
- Indiana University Ballet Theater 1991-1993
- The Rock School of the Pennsylvania Ballet 1992
- School of Washington Ballet 1991
- Chautauqua School of Dance 1990
- Jordan College Academy of Dance 1981-1991

## HONORS AND AWARDS

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### [Suburban Essex Magazine: Best of Essex 2024](#)

Silver Winner for Best Children's Instruction

### [Suburban Essex Magazine: Best of Essex 2023](#)

Bronze Winner for Best Children's Instruction

## CONSULTANT PROJECTS

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### **Essex Dance Academy**

- Head of ballet program
- Designed holistic training curriculum for competition dancers
- Increased enrollment for 2025/2026 season

### **AC Dance**

- Co-crafted and edited Mission Statement
- Brainstormed ideas with management including, but not limited to scholarship initiatives, performance opportunities, classroom attire, staffing
- Increased social media engagement through successful online marketing strategies

### **Sharron Miller's Academy for the Performing Arts**

- Ballet consultant on teacher and student assessment templates
- Oversaw evaluation classes and level placement

## LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

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**NDEO Poster Presentation, Detroit, MI** 2025

- Centering Feminist Leadership Pedagogy for 14–18-Year-Olds in a Preprofessional Ballet Program: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Curriculum

**Sharron Miller's Academy for the Performing Arts** 2015

- Researched, created, and co-presented 'Pointe Shoe Workshop'

**School of American Ballet**

1995

New York City Ballet Education Department

Lecture Demonstration Program, under the direction of Suki Schorer

- Martin's *Eight Easy Pieces*
- Balanchine's *Sugar Plum Fairy*
- Balanchine's *Puss n' Boots*
- Balanchine's *Cortege Hongrois*

**PREPROFESSIONAL PERFORMING EXPERIENCE**

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**School of American Ballet**, Avery Fisher Hall, NYC

1993-1995

Spring Workshops

- *Serenade*
- *Western Symphony*
- *La Source*
- *Four Temperaments*

**School of American Ballet**, Avery Fisher Hall, NYC

1994

Fall Workshop

- Christopher Wheeldon's inaugural choreographic piece, *Le Voyage*

**Indiana University Ballet Theater**, Bloomington, Indiana

- Principal roles in *Swan Lake* and the *Nutcracker*, under the direction of Patricia McBride and Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux

**Jordan College Academy of Dance**, Clowes Hall, Indianapolis, Indiana

- *Les Sylphides*, *Coppélia*, *Paquita*

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND DEVELOPMENT**

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National Dance Education Organization (NDEO)

2023, 2024, 2025

Dance New Jersey

2023, 2024, 2025

New York State Dance Education Association (NYSDEA)

2023, 2024, 2025

Steinhardt Dance Education Association (SDEA), *first year representative*

2023

Armatus Learn to Protect System, *Abuse Prevention Training*

2019

**CHOREOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCE**

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New Jersey School of Ballet, End of Year Performance

2025

[Advanced Workshop](#)[Level 5 Workshop](#)

New York University, Masters Concert

2025

[Sneaker Ballet](#)

|                                                                          |      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| New Jersey School of Ballet, Student Division Performance                | 2025 |
| Class Act Performing Arts School, End of Year Showcase                   | 2017 |
| Montclair High School Dance Company, End of Year Showcase                | 2017 |
| Sharron Miller's Academy for the Performing Arts, Annual Benefit Concert | 2016 |
| Dance Works Studios                                                      | 2014 |

#### **SCHOLARSHIPS AND COMPETITIONS**

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Peggy Dorsey Scholarship, First Place  
 Young Woman of the Year, First Place, *Don Quixote*  
 Carey Rose Winski Scholarship, honorable mention

#### **PRESS AND MEDIA**

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|---------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| <a href="#"><u>Interview with To The Pointe Nutrition</u></a> | 2025 |
| Insights on balance, nutrition, wellness                      |      |
| <a href="#"><u>Interview with The Whole Dancer</u></a>        | 2023 |
| Insights on balance; from professional dancer to dance coach  |      |
| <a href="#"><u>Montclair Local: Baristanet Profile</u></a>    | 2020 |
| Ballet With Hilary interview                                  |      |
| <a href="#"><u>Macaroni Kid</u></a>                           | 2020 |
| Enrichment options for outdoor activity during the pandemic   |      |
| <a href="#"><u>Toni's Kitchen</u></a>                         | 2020 |
| Montclair Business Improvement District donation              |      |

#### **INTERNSHIP**

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| Kofago Dance Ensemble                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 2025 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media marketing: content planning/visual branding</li> <li>• Cultural fluency: deepened understanding of West African aesthetics/design elements</li> <li>• Team communication: collaborating with staff on visual and promotional strategies</li> </ul> |      |

#### **REFERENCES**

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**Kelby Brown**, Dance Educator  
 American Ballet Theatre, Alvin Ailey, Pace University  
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**Pamela Levy**

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Coordinator, ABT NTC Student Examinations

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**Raymond Lukens**

ABT National Training Curriculum Associate Emeritus

Former Artistic Director, ABT National Training Curriculum

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**Deborah Damast**

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Associate Clinical Professor

Artistic Director of Concerts, Kaleidoscope Dancers, and Uganda Study Abroad

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