Baltimore School for the Arts Announces Iris Andersen Grizzell ‘96 As Its New Dance Department Head

BALTIMORE — After conducting a nationwide search, Baltimore School for the Arts (BSA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Iris Andersen Grizzell ’96 as the next leader of its Dance Department. Iris has been at BSA for 10 years, serving as TWIGS Program Manager as well as on faculty with the Dance Department, teaching for both the after-school program, TWIGS, and in the high school. Her institutional knowledge and commitment to providing exceptional dance training will help her lead the department.

“The committee was thrilled to have such an incredible pool of candidates apply for the position and could not be more excited about the future of the program under Iris’ leadership!” said Sam Polakoff, the Search Committee chair.

Commenting on the appointment, Tony Wilson, a longtime BSA dance faculty member, states: “Iris possesses the administrative expertise, fine teaching skills and futuristic vision to lead and evolve the dance department.”

Andersen Grizzell is a graduate of the Baltimore School for the Arts and holds a B.F.A. from the California Institute of the Arts. Her training began at the Peabody Preparatory Institute with Dale Center, followed by Caryl Maxwell Classical Ballet with Caryl Maxwell and Caroline Denzler, and then Kinetics Dance Theatre with Dottie Fried and Donna Pidel. She has trained with the Eglevsky Ballet, the Washington Ballet, and the Ailey School. During her four years at California Institute of the Arts, she was nominated for the Princess Grace Award and studied abroad in London at the London Contemporary Dance School.

Andersen Grizzell danced with the Pasadena Dance Theatre in California from 2003 to 2011, and from 2004 to 2011, she danced with the Francisco Martinez Dance Theatre in both concert and outreach performances throughout California. She received first place for her work in Howard County Ballet’s Young Choreographer’s Showcase in April 2011. She has performed with Bowen McCauley Dance, the Campbell Dance Experience and the Harford Ballet. During her time as the program manager of the TWIGS program, Andersen Grizzell also taught ballet, pointe, and modern for the high school students.
“Iris is an amazing alum, teacher and artist. She has served BSA tirelessly for many years in the Dance Department and TWIGS. I’m excited for the collaborative energy and thoughtfulness she brings to every endeavor,” said Principal Rosiland Cauthen, the Executive Director of the school.

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**Baltimore School for the Arts** is a nationally recognized public arts high school that provides its students with intensive pre-professional training in the arts in conjunction with a rigorous academic curriculum. BSA graduates go on to the most selective arts and university programs nationwide and achieve prominence in theater, film, music, dance and visual arts. Additionally, BSA’s highly acclaimed TWIGS program offers free after-school arts instruction to 750 city elementary and middle school children from schools across Baltimore, as well as other outreach initiatives to thousands more. Founded in 1979, the school is an integral and vibrant part of Baltimore’s educational and cultural communities.

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