



## BALLET PIXELLE\*

INARRA SAARINEN - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CHOREOGRAPHER

## **PERFORMERS**

AMELIE DIBOU - DANCER & BALLET MISTRESS
DEYNA BROEK - DANCER
LINA LAGEOS - DANCER
NEENA BOTANICAL - DANCER &
SCHEDULING MANAGER
PYPER DOLLINGER - DANCER &
WARDROBE MISTRESS
TATIANA KURRI - DANCER
TIK MERLIN - DANCER & SCRIPTER
VIVIENNE DARCY - DANCER

## **CREW**

CALIA CACHIN - MS SAARINEN'S ASSISTANT
AND FINANCE MANAGER
ESPRESSO SAARINEN - ROADIE/BUILDS
HALDEN BEAUMONT - MACHINIMATOGRAPHER
MARK CASSINI - MC/SETS/SET BUILDS
MARIEL VOYUNICEF - PHOTOGRAPHER/ARTIST
WILLIS ROSSINI - SOUND ENGINEER
ASAMI LARSSON - CULTURAL CONSULTANT
& TRANSLATOR

\* NÉE SECOND LIFE BALLET

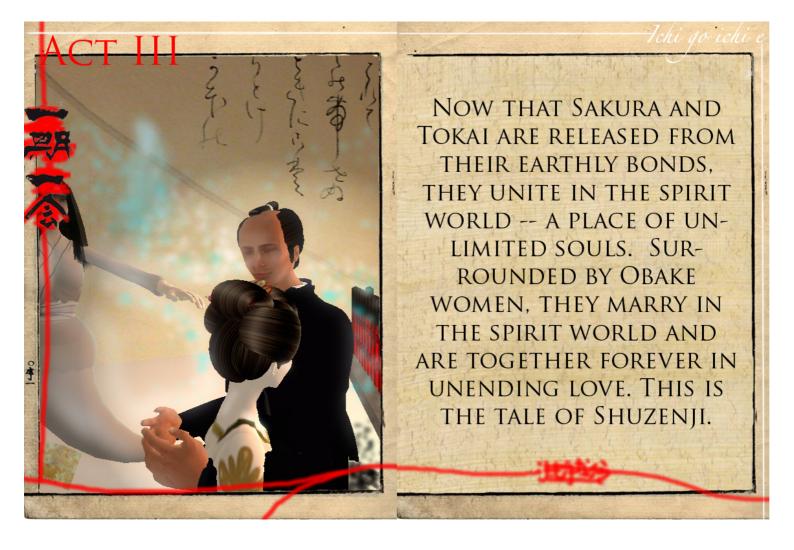


TOKAI AND SAKURA ARE LOCKED IN AN EMBRACE. SUDDENLY, TOKAI IS SUR-ROUNDED BY FOUR ENRAGED OIRAN, OR COURTESANS. THEY ARE JEALOUS OF THE LOVE BETWEEN TOKAI AND HIS LOVER, SAKURA. HE TRIES TO FIGHT BACK, BUT IN A JEALOUS RAGE THEY KILL HIM. SAKURA SEES HIS DEATH AND HIS SPIRIT LEAVE HIS BODY. HE HAS BECOME A YUREI -- A SPIRIT THAT IS TIED TO THE PLACE OF A VIOLENT DEATH.





SAKURA KNOWS TOKAI'S SPIRIT MUST STILL BE AT SHUZENJI. HER DEEP LOVE FOR TOKAI CALLS HIS SPIRIT AND HE TRANSFORMS INTO TOKAI IN HUMAN FORM! THEY DANCE IN LOVE AND DELIGHT. NOW TOKAI'S SPIRIT IS FREE AND HE CAN LEAVE THE PLACE OF HIS DEATH, SHUZENJI. HOWEVER, SAKURA CANNOT BEAR TO LOSE HIM AGAIN. SHE KILLS HERSELF TO BECOME A GHOST HERSELF AND JOIN HIM IN THE AFTERLIFE.







# INARRA SAARINEN DIRECTOR-CHOREOGRAPHER

MS. SAARINEN IS THE FOUNDER AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF BALLET PIXELLE (NEE SECOND LIFE BALLET). SHE IS ALSO A FIRST LIFE DANCER AND CHOREOGRAPHER FOR STAGE, FILM, AND VIDEO. SHE IS INTERESTED IN EXPLORING THE UNIQUE CAPABILITIES AND INTERSECTION OF MOVEMENT IN VIRTUAL AND PHYSICAL SPACE AND INVESTIGATING AND DEVELOPING AN AESTHETIC AND VOCABULARY OF VIRTUAL DANCE -- WHETHER IT BE BY TIGER, DRAGON, BIRD, OR HUMAN.





## AMELIE DIBOU DANCER, BALLET MISTRESS

MS. DIBOU HAS DANCED WITH BALLET PIXELLE (NÉE SECOND LIFE BALLET) SINCE NOV 2006 AND HAS PREMIERED IN OLMANNEN, WINDOWS, THE NUT - PLAYING ALL LEAD AND SUPPORTING ROLES. SHE ALSO SERVES AS BALLET MISTRESS, MASTERING ALL PARTS AND REHEARSING THE DANCERS. FOUNDER OF DIBOUTANICALS AND DIBOUTIQUE, HER BOTANICAL CREATIONS HAVE ALSO BEEN FEATURED IN THE BALLET SETS. A HIGHLAND DANCER, SOCIAL DANCER, AND MUSICIAN IN FIRST LIFE, AMELIE LOVES DEVELOPING THESE ARTS IN SECOND LIFE.



## DEYNA BROEK DANCER

DEYNA BROEK IS A 31 YEAR OLD CALIFORNIAN WHO IS A LOVER OF DANCE AND MUSIC. SHE IS FROM A FAMILY THAT IS INTO THE ARTS. SHE IS AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER AND LOVES TEACHING AND LOVES TEACHING HER STUDENTS TO DANCE.



LINA LAGEOS DANCER

A BALLROOM AND LATIN DANCER IN HER FIRST LIFE, MS. LAGEOS WELCOMES ANY OPPORTUNITIES IN HER SECOND LIFE TO JUMP OFF THOSE POSEBALLS AND REALLY DANCE!



NEENA BOTANICAL DANCER, SCHEDULING MANAGER

A LIFELONG BALLETOMANE, MS. BOTANICAL IS A FIRST LIFE MUSICIAN WITH A DEGREE FROM BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC. SHE HAS TWO BEAUTIFUL FIRST LIFE KIDS. IN SECOND LIFE, MS. BOTANICAL IS A VERY ARDENT ART SUPPORTER.



## PYPER DOLLINGER DANCER

MS. DOLLINGER DISCOVERED HER FIRST LIFE LOVE FOR DANCE 25 YEARS AGO AND TO BE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE DANCE IN SECOND LIFE IS A NATURAL EXTENSION OF HER PASSION. CLASSICALLY TRAINED IN BALLET, MODERN, LYRICAL AND OTHER DANCE GENRES, MS. DOLLINGER BRINGS TO BALLET PIXELLE (NEE SECOND LIFE BALLET) TRUE LOVE, TALENT, AND APPRECIATION FOR THE ART OF DANCE.



## TATIANA KURRI DANCER

TRAINED AS A SWING DANCER AND BELLYDANCER IN HER FIRST LIFE, MS. KURRI ENJOYS THAT THESE TWO TYPES OF DANCES ARE ALSO IN HER SECOND LIFE. SHE ALSO LOVES TO START EACH DAY IN REAL LIFE AND SECOND LIFE WITH TAI CHI.

SHE HAS A WONDERFUL PARTNER, ROCK FLINTOFF, WHO HAS ALWAYS SUPPORTED HER IN EVERYTHING SHE HAS. DONE AND ACCOMPLISHED IN SECOND LIFE.



## TIK MERLIN DANCER

MR. MERLIN IS A COMPOSER IN HIS FIRST LIFE, OFTEN SURROUNDED BY KEYBOARDS, MUSICAL APPLICATIONS AND PROGRAMMING SNIPPETS. HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN MESMERIZED BY THE BEAUTY OF MOVEMENT AND AMAZED BY THE WEIGHT OF HIS FEET. DREAMS DO COME TRUE AND HE'S BEEN PASSIONATELY LEARNING THE ART OF DANCING WITH BALLET PIXELE... PLUS THE MAGIC OF GRACEFULLY ESCAPING FROM INSIDE TINY NUTCRACKER AVATAR!



## VIVIENNE DARCY DANCER

MS. DARCY IS DANCING FOR JOY AT THE OPPORTUNITY TO DON HER TOE SHOES FOR BALLET PIXELLE! VIVI IS FROM COLORADO AND WHEN NOT SKIING LOVES TO DANCE!





MR. LARSSON IS FASCINATED IN BALLET PIXELLE (NÉE SECOND LIFE BALLET) AS ART, AND ALWAYS THINKS ABOUT CULTURAL EXCHANGES. HE LIVES IN JAPAN. MR. LARSSON IS A PROFESSIONAL PATENT AND INDUSTRIAL TRANSLATOR AND A RESEARCHER OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW IN FIRST LIFE.



CALIA CACHIN
ASSISTANT TO MS. SAARINEN
& FINANCIAL MANAGER

MS. CACHIN PROVIDES RIGHT-BRAIN ASSISTANCE TO MS. SAARINEN.



## ESPRESSO SAARINEN

BUILDS, LIGHTING ARCHITECT, GENERAL ROADIE

MR. SAARINEN IS AN OVER-ATTENUATED COMPUTER SCIENTIST IN FIRST LIFE, WHICH HAS GIVEN HIM A SMALL LEG UP IN THE VARIOUS TASKS OF BUILDING, SCRIPTING, AND GENERAL TECHNICAL WORK TO ASSIST THE BALLET.



## HALDEN BEAUMONT MACHINIMATOGRAPHER

MR. BEAUMONT IS A YOUNG MULTIMEDIA CREATIVE PRODUCER AND DOCUMENTARY DIRECTOR. IN SECOND LIFE HE HAS BEEN DIRECTING AND PRODUCING MACHINIMA, INCLUDING A SERIES FOR NATIONAL PORTUGUESE TELEVISION. TWO OF HIS RECENT WORKS HAVE BEEN DISTINGUISHED BY DIVX. SECOND LIFE MACHINIMA PRODUCTIONS AND PROJECTS SUCH AS BALLET PIXELLE BROUGHT NEW CHALLENGING AND REWARDING WAYS FOR HIM TO EXPRESS HIMSELF THROUGH VIDEO.



## MARIEL VOYUNICEF ARTIST & RESIDENT PHOTOGRAPHER

ALTHOUGH SHE'S NOT A DANCER, MS. VOYUNICEF FULFILLS HER PASSION BY MOVING THE POSITIONS OF EACH STEP INTO STILL IMAGES FOR BALLET PIXELLE (NEE SECOND LIFE BALLET). SHE IS A STUDENT IN FIRST LIFE.



## MARK CASSINI MASTER OF CEREMONIES & SET HUD ARCHITECT

MR. CASSINI IS THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES FOR BALLET PIXELLE. NOTE THE INITIALS (MC). HE ENJOYS FINDING NEW AND DIFFERENT AVATARS IN SECOND LIFE; THE SNOW LEOPARD IS STILL HIS FAVORITE. HE HAS A SENSITIVE AND ARTISTIC BENT, ENJOYS MAKING NEW FRIENDS, AND MAKING HIMSELF GENERALLY USEFUL. WHEN GIVEN A CHANCE, MARK ENJOYS EXPLORING SCRIPTING AND BUILDING IN SECOND LIFE.



## **CULTURAL & CAST EXPLANATIONS**

## SHUZENJI

ONE OF THE OLDEST STRUCTURES IN EASTERN JAPAN, THE TEMPLE DATES FROM SOME 1200 YEARS BACK. FOR NEARLY FOUR AND A HALF CENTURIES, THE TEMPLE WAS USED FOR THE SHINGON, THEN ZEN, AND THEN RINZAI SECTS. THE TEMPLE FEATURES PROMINENTLY IN THE HISTORY OF THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE.

NOTE: SHUZENJI IS A CURRENT, AND REAL, TEMPLE IN THE IZU PENNISULA IN JAPAN. I HAVE USED IT HERE AS A NAME OF A SHINTO SHRINE. NO IMPLICATIONS ARE INVOLVED. NONE OF THE STORY OR ITS CHARACTERS REPRESENT ANY HISTORY OF SHUZENJI TEMPLE.

## SAKURA

THE CHERRY BLOSSOM IS VERY IMPORTANT IN JAPANESE CULTURE BECAUSE IT EXEMPLIFIES SPRING, FEMININE BEAUTY, AND THE EPHEMERAL
NATURE OF LIFE. THE TRANSIENCE
OF THE BLOSSOMS, THE EXTREME
BEAUTY AND QUICK DEATH, HAS
OFTEN BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH MORTALITY.

## TOKAI

THERE IS A PART OF CENTRAL JAPAN'S CHOBU REGION CALLED, TOKAI, BUT NO REFERENCE TO THAT REGION IS INTENDED.

## OIRAN

**OIRAN WERE HIGH-CLASS COURTE-**SANS IN JAPAN. THE WORD "OIRAN" CONSISTS OF TWO KANJI, MEANING "FLOWER" AND "LEADER" OR "FIRST." THE OIRAN AROSE IN THE EDO PERIOD, 1600 - 1868. AT THIS TIME, LAWS WERE PASSED RESTRICTING **BROTHELS TO WALLED DISTRICTS** SET SOME DISTANCE FROM THE CITY CENTER. IN THE MAJOR CITIES THESE WERE THE SHIMABARA IN KYOTO, THE SHIMMACHI IN OSAKA, AND IN EDO (PRESENT-DAY TOKYO), THE YOSHIWARA. THESE RAPIDLY GREW INTO LARGE, SELF-CONTAINED "PLEASURE QUARTERS" OFFERING ALL MANNER OF ENTER-TAINMENTS.

## YOUKAI

YOUKAI ARE "APPARITIONS", "SPIR-ITS", OR "DEMONS", A CLASS OF, OR EQUIVALENT TO, OBAKE. THESE ARE CREATURES IN JAPANESE FOLKLORE RANGING FROM THE EVIL ONI TO THE MISCHIEVOUS KITSUNE OR SNOW WOMAN YUKI-ONNA. YOUKAI GENERALLY HAVE A SORT OF SPIRITUAL OR SUPERNATURAL POWER, AND SO ENCOUNTERS WITH HUMAN BEINGS TEND TO BE DANGEROUS. YOUKAI ALSO HAVE DIFFERENT MOTIVES AND AGENDAS FROM HUMAN BEINGS, WHICH ARE OFTEN COMPLETELY INCOMPREHENSIBLE.



YUREI ARE JAPANESE GHOSTS. THE NAME CONSISTS OF TWO KANJI, (YUU), MEANING "FAINT" OR "DIM", AND AND (REI), MEANING "SOUL" OR "SPIRIT." ALTERNATIVE NAMES INCLUDE (BOREI) MEAN-ING RUINED OR DEPARTED SPIRIT, (SHIRYO) MEANING DEAD SPIRIT, OR THE MORE ENCOMPASSING (YOKAI) OR (OBAKE). THEY ARE THOUGHT TO BE SPIRITS KEPT FROM A PEACEFUL AFTERLIFE. THEY REMAIN NEAR THE PLACE OF THEIR SUDDEN, SHOCKING, VIOLENT, OR EMOTIONAL POWER-FUL DEATH.

## MIKO

MIKO, LITERALLY "SHRINE MAIDEN", IS A JAPANESE TERM THAT ANCIENTLY MEANT "FEMALE SHAMAN, SHAMANESS; MEDIUM; PROPHET" WHO CONVEYED DIVINE ORACLES, AND CURRENTLY MEANS "SHRINE MAIDEN; VIRGIN CONSECRATED TO A DEITY" WHO SERVES AT SHINTO SHRINES. MIKO CONTINUE TO EXIST AND DANCE IN JAPANESE SHRINES TODAY.



A CLASS OF MONSTER OR SPIRIT IN JAPANESE FOLKLORE. LITERALLY THE TERM MEANS A THING THAT CHANGES, REFERRING TO A STATE OF TRANSFORMATION OR SHAPESHIFTING. THESE WORDS ARE OFTEN TRANSLATED AS GHOST, BUT PRIMARILY THEY REFER TO LIVING THINGS OR SUPERNATURAL BEINGS WHO HAVE TAKEN ON A TEMPORARY TRANSFORMATION, AND THESE BAKEMONO ARE DISTINCT FROM THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD.

## **OKAME**

THIS WHITE JAPANESE MASK HAS TWO NAMES, OTAFUKU AND OKAME. OTAFUKU LITERALLY MEANS "MUCH GOOD FORTUNE", AND OKAME MEANS "TORTOISE", ALSO A LUCKY SYMBOL FOR LONG LIFE. OTAFUKU REPRESENTS A LOVELY, ALWAYS SMILING JAPANESE WOMAN WHO BRINGS HAPPINESS AND GOOD FORTUNE TO ANY MAN SHE MARRIES.

## The Making of a Ballet in Virtual Space Inarra Saarinen

Creating Ballet Pixelle's (nee Second Life Ballet) original ballets is truly an amazing experience. They take several months from concept to completion. Besides the normal artistic challenges there are also technical and logistic challenges.

I created Ballet Pixelle with a crazy idea, some fabulously talented and committed people, and a ton of perseverance.

#### STORY

Artistically, the stories are written and become more clarified over time and rehearsals. Part of the beauty of writing the story specifically for Ballet Pixelle is that I am able to utilize the unique aspects of Second Life to bring the story to life. For example, In Olmanen, I saw dragon-like creatures appearing in the air, a couple in love spiraling down and up, sprites flying, and a beautiful woman transforming instantly into an old woman while the man transformed into one of the evil beings. In Windows, I saw silhouetted women dancing in the air, teenagers doing slow aerial flips, and a dream sequence where a man transforms to his younger self and the lovers spiral up together.

## PEOPLE

I find some wonderful collaborators in places all around the world, and we work live, something that would be very difficult in First Life. Our composer for our first ballet lives in London, our architect is in Australia, and our dancers and crew are from Austria, Denmark, East Coast of the U.S., England, Hawai'i, mid-West U.S., Netherlands, Portugal, and the West Coast of the U.S.

It was a challenge to find a costume designer, lighting designer, set designer, videographer, and stage manage at first. The dancers are also cross-trained in some crew positions. We also originally had a challenge keeping dancers because of First Life changes and commitments. Now, however, the understanding of the commitment is a part of the audition process. These dancers put in very significant dedication and work to Second Life Ballet and are a large part of why the ballet works. The entire cast and crew are volunteers that are interested in pursuing artistic movement and dance in Second Life.

#### **ANIMATIONS**

Technically, I used Avimator, Qavimator, Poser and others to create the animations. I began with some ballet animations and created quite a number over the course of the choreography. All in all, I now have approximately 400 original animations. The main difference between dance animations at clubs in Second Life and these ballet animations is that 100% of the ballet animations do not loop and run under the precise control (SL willing) of the dancer. The animations are put into gestures, which I make akin to musical phrases in ballet. This way the choreographer and dancers and composer are able to work in a normal First Life style. The gestures also allow very precise timing between animations (in tenth of seconds but, alas, not counting lag) and compound animations. That is, in a gesture if you do not add a "wait" step the two animations happen at the same time. The dancers map the gestures to function keys or use chat "/gesture\_name" to activate the phrase. It is up to the dancers to rehearse and time the execution of each gesture in order.

During these times, I have tried working with both off-the-shelf and custom HUDs, but neither of them gave me all of the functionality that I needed. There were added lags in a HUD, for example, even though having buttons might have been convenient for the dancers.

## REHEARSALS

Once the story begins to fall in place, I am able to animate most of my visions. What a wonderful release to be able to choreograph with dancers who have grand jete's that are full splits in the air, perfect "turn-out", and timely forever turns! This allows me to really produce many of the effects I want. Of course, these are real dancers, so there are always the "I thought said you wanted me to come downstage?" kind ofdiscussions. The dancers are not scripted!

Rehearsals take place in almost exactly the same way a First Life rehearsal does -- except for the "I need you to hover up a bit" kind of directions.

#### STAGE

Our home theatre in Quat is where we first debuted. The theatre originally held 20, then 30, then 40 avatars, and then we could no longer hold our audience. So we investigated and researched plans for a more efficient, reduced lag, larger theatre. Eventually, we built a similar theatre to our home theatre hosted by IBM in the IBM sims . This theatre stretches across two sims -- the audience of 80 is in one and the stage and dancers are in another. Besides reducing lag, and allowing for a larger audience, security is enabled by simply putting different access restrictions on the stage sim.

### COSTUMES

Because of the lack of a costume designer, we spend a significant amount of time finding and assembling off-the-rack costumes and AVs that fulfill the artistic vision, and then spend some time negotiating to make them "transfer ok". In this way, costumes can go out to the dancers and then are transferred back into Ballet Pixelle (née Second Life Ballet) wardrobe department. Our Wardrobe Department is an automated system that allows the dancers to "check out" costumes while letting everyone know who has what. Designers who contribute costumes are acknowledged in the playbill.

## WHAT NEXT?

In closing, this is an exhilarating experience with an absolutely wonderful committed artistic team. We are learning an amazing amount of what Second Life can and cannot do, and what virtual and physical dance is and how it interconnects. We look forward to more exploration in the future.

If you have the chance to sit it out or dance, dance!

### THANKS TO IBM FOR HOSTING US.

### THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

SAKURA-ACT 1 AUTUMN LEAVES HIKIZURI (KIMONO) SAKURA-ACT 2 SCARLET HEXAGONS HIKIZURI AND

SAKURA-ACT 3-GOLDEN HEXAGONS (BLACK) HIKIZURI FROM:

FLOWER AND WILLOW-

HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/JAVA%20ISLAND%20II/109/109/42

### TOKAI-WANDERER-[GB]MATATABI SET

KATANA SWORD V1.2 (WITH ANIMATIONS)-- FROM: 2EXTREME HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/PRIDE%20ISLES/215/212/22

JAPANESE GHOST AVATAR FROM: MONACA2 HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/MARYPORT/67/34/56

ORIAN- [SH]KIMI+HAIR (KIMONO, HAIR, SHOES) FROM: SWEETAHOLIC HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/GRASP/106/142/225

SAKURA-ACT 2-MIDNIGHT CONE HAT (BLACK) FROM: ORCHID DREAMS-TRADITIONAL JAPANESE FASHION AND ASIAN ACCESSORIES HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/ASAGAO/54/33/22

SHRINE MAIDEN KIMONO-AHEINW MISWNA- (KITSUNENEYA YA MIKO TYPE 1 VER 1.3HO)-

SAKURA-ACT 3WEDDING KIMONO (KIMONO HAKKAKU) FROM: AOHARU HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/AOHARU/112/125/23

TOKAI-ACT 3JAPANESE MALE WEDDING COSTUME FROM: HOUSE OF SHEAE HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/SAMURAI%20TOKYO/40/111/27

OBAKE- ROYAL GEISHA KIMONO FROM LING LING HTTP://SLURL.COM/SECONDLIFE/AZABU/87/102/22

