

ROSINA DIDYK

*Aman Dance Educators:
Folk Dance Workshops*

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Rosina Didyk was born into a house where music from all over the world was playing on a constant basis. Starting at about four years old, her parents would bring her along to their recreational folk dance group, where people were getting together to enjoy dances from different places, mostly Eastern Europe. She was the tiny person tagging along at the ends of the lines with a huge smile on her face.

Later, she studied gymnastics, ballet, jazz dance, modern, tap, and anything else she could get access to. But, she was always drawn back to those rhythms from places like Bulgaria, Macedonia, Hungary, North Africa, Ireland and even the Appalachian Mountains of the United States. Something about the music just made her want to move and she has been moving to all those rhythms ever since! In the course of her career she has performed as a soloist for AMAN Folk Ensemble, Karpatok Hungarian Folk Ensemble, Viviane's Egyptian Dance Theater and toured internationally with The Brigham Young University Folk Ensemble and Collage Dance of Boston. Ms. Didyk has toured independently, as well, in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Turkey and Macedonia. In addition, she was also the Artistic Director of AMAN from 1998 until it closed its doors in 2004.

In following her love of folk dances, Rosina also discovered a love for sharing these dances with people of all ages. She has been teaching folk dance in Southern California schools for 13 years. Now, as a founding member of the Aman Dance Educators, she is exploring new ways to share these dances, incorporating creative components that allow students to more deeply understand these traditions by re-creating them for themselves.

ABOUT THE GROUP:

Aman International Folk Ensemble worked for over 30 years to bring performances and workshops of world dance and music to audiences all over the world. Following the closure of the company, five talented members of this internationally known group have created Aman Dance Educators, and are taking Aman's mission to a new level. All seasoned professionals, the artists include Dawn Dyson, Kristen Smiarowsky, Shyamala Moorty, Rosina Didyk and István Szabó.



MUSIC·CENTER

ABOUT THE WORKSHOPS:

The Aman Dance Educators help students, teachers and others learn dances from Europe, Asia, Africa and North America. With each workshop, participants also expand their knowledge of geography, history and culture, as well as improve their coordination, creativity and rhythm skills. Cooperation and teamwork drive these fascinating and engaging workshops. All lessons are carefully crafted to be grade-appropriate and to correspond to the California Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Standards. The work also makes connections to standards in History/Social Science, Foreign Language, math, English/Language Arts and Physical Education. These Aman educators work with schools to create a custom dance experience for students and can select workshops covering a variety of topics, including the following.

Dance and Community (all grade levels):

In this residency, students use their bodies as active tools to learn about different cultures and to understand their own communities in new ways. Participants experience traditional folk dances from a variety of cultures and engage in creative activities that teach them how to create their own unique movement vocabulary that can culminate in a new community dance.

Legends through Dance (K-3rd grades):

Sessions in this residency addresses the Language Arts Standards by using dance as the medium to tell stories. Featuring examples of Native American and Polynesian dances, these workshops allow students to explore the basic elements of dance, learn how to communicate or tell a story through gestures, and bring a legend to life through movement.

Dances of California/USA (4th and 5th grades):

These workshops make curriculum connections to the 4th and 5th grade social studies standards by using line, square and circle dances from early United States history. The sessions can also include dances related to Fort Ross, California Ranchos and the Gold Rush.

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP:

- Please have the students wear nametags for the workshop. It saves time if they are made beforehand.
- Review the importance of listening and observing. Ask the students what it means to be a good listener. What does it mean to be a good observer? Why is it important in daily life? Why is it important when the artist is here?
- Please encourage the students to dress appropriately – in clothes that allow them to move comfortably.

AFTER THE WORKSHOP:

- Review the dances learned in the workshop. Discuss what the students remember about the specific culture in which the dance originated and ideas connected to the theme, steps or music. What parts of the workshop did the students like best? What did they learn about dance? What did they learn about themselves?
- Review students' ideas about folk dance, underscoring the idea that it is a universal social form of expression for many cultures of the world. Discuss the importance of dancing together with others. Where can they use this skill in their lives? (e.g. focus, working cooperatively with others, listening to directions, remembering sequences, etc.)
- Research some other folk dances and learn them as a class.