



MEET THE DIRECTORS

Gail Parmel Artistic Director



A graduate of the Northern School of Contemporary Dance, Artistic Director Gail Parmel brings the influences of her Antiguan heritage and contemporary training to her work.

Gail joined Kokuma Dance Theatre in 1992 under the direction of Jackie Guy, and worked with artists such as Germain Acogny, Koffi Koko, Patsy Ricketts, Eduardo Riveria and Sheryll Berryman-Millar. She went on to work with Badejo Arts on Living Circle and Agbo Aye. Gail founded ACE dance and music with her husband, Ian, in 1996.

Gail has choreographed five successful touring productions for ACE dance and music: The Path, Colours Within, Solitude or Sanctuary, 3 Shades and En-Trance.



Gail has researched and travelled extensively throughout Europe, the Caribbean and Africa. She participated in the Black Choreographic Initiative, which received support from international choreographers L'Antionette Stines, David Rousseuve, We Were Liking and Janice Garret, and has also worked with Batanai, the National Dance Company of Zimbabwe.

Gail continues to build on her skills and expertise as a performer and choreographer through strategic research. She recently embarked on a high profile education projects with African Caribbean choreographer and lecturer Beverly Green, Director of Irie Dance Company. Gail's current choreographic collaborations have included working with Nu Century Arts Theatre Company, Birmingham, and Red Earth Theatre Company/Nottingham Playhouse. Gail continues developing new relationships with artists from a range of different genres.

Ian Parmel

Musical Director

Born into a family of musicians, Ian began drumming and playing steel pan at the age of seven in his homeland, Trinidad and Tobago, performing for the first time in the Best Village Competition. Ian was invited to England in 1988 to teach Steel pan music in the UK. He joined Kokuma Dance Company in 1991 and later went on to perform and compose for companies such as Badejo Arts, Brummalata, Black Voices, Sampad and Pan Project before founding ACE dance and music.

As a composer, Ian has created and directed music the ACE dance and music productions *The Path*, *Colours Within*, *Solitude or Sanctuary*, *3 Shades* and *En-Trance*. He has also created work for *Badejo Arts Living Circle*, *Sisi Agbe Aye*, and *Agbo Aye*.

Ian has also performed as an individual practitioner, visiting the Ivory Coast, South Africa, Nigeria, Benin, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe, and has worked extensively in Europe and the Caribbean. He has trained with gurus such as Simon Di'jobi, Jurwon Ogunbe, Arona Ndaiyi and Karl Massado, and has played for International Practitioners such as Koffi Koko, George Momboye and Neville Cambell.

Ian has taught at Bami Jo Summer School for three years, WOMAD and the International Workshop Festivals.

In 2000, Ian trained in Digital Media in Birmingham, introducing to the company a new way of creating music encompassing both traditional and modern styles. Ian also works with Soundbeam, a computerised sound package that enables sound to be triggered by interacting with invisible beams. He continues to explore digital science within the music arena.

