



Tri-Tone Tap and Percussive Arts Summer Intensive 2026

2026 Faculty Biographies:

Tasha Lawson, Lisa La Touche, Laura Donaldson, Jon McCaslin & Live Jazz Trio.



Tasha Lawson is an internationally recognized dance artist with more than 25 years of experience as an educator, adjudicator, choreographer, artistic director, performer, and festival producer.

She is the Founder and Artistic Director of Tri-Tone Productions, through which she has established several signature programs, including the Tri-Tone Rhythm Ensemble, Rhythm Body and Soul Tap Festival, International Tap Day Celebrations, Tri-Tone Teacher Training, the Tap and Percussive Arts Summer Intensive, and the Lawson Percussive Dance Arts Interdisciplinary Company.

From 2010 to 2011, Ms. Lawson toured the United States and Japan as Assistant Artistic Director of Cirque du Soleil's *KOOZA*, where she was responsible for maintaining show quality and overseeing artist integration. She has also led body percussion workshops for Cirque du Soleil casts in Las Vegas and presented work at International Body Music Festivals in San Francisco, Paris, and Greece.

Ms. Lawson toured and performed with Tapestry Dance Company in Austin, Texas, under the direction of Acia Gray, and served as Artistic Director of Tapestry's apprentice company, *Visions in Rhythm*. She has been a guest artist and adjudicator at festivals across North America, South America, and Europe, and has served as faculty for the inaugural Professional Tap Program at Jacob's Pillow.

Tasha holds diplomas in Dance Teacher Training and Dance Performance from Grant MacEwan University and has studied extensively with many tap masters globally. She is dedicated to developing well-rounded dancers with strong technique, musicality, and historical context, while encouraging individual artistry, creativity, and self-discipline. She is grateful for the guidance of numerous mentors, including Dianne Walker, Acia Gray, Brenda Bufalino, Roxane Butterfly, Max Pollak, Heather Cornell, Barbara Phillips, Keith Terry, and Fernando Barba, among others. For more information visit www.rhythmbodyandsoul.com or www.tashalawson.com
Instagram - @Tritonetapyyc & @RBStapfest



Lisa LaTouche

A New Yorker of Canadian and Trinidadian ancestry, **Lisa La Touche** is a Tap Dance artist, choreographer, educator, and cultural historian whose work bridges performance, research, and Black history. Her Broadway credits include *Shuffle Along*, choreographed by Savion Glover and directed by George C. Wolfe, for which both the Fred Astaire Award and the Actors' Equity Award for Outstanding Broadway Chorus were received. She is a former "Armstrong Now" Artist in Residence with the Louis Armstrong House and Museum and a current research fellow with the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation.

Lisa's creativity and research centers on lineage and folklore, including her ongoing project "Trinidad & Tap Dance: As Folklore," developed in collaboration with Etienne Charles. Her television credits include the 70th Annual Tony Awards and Amazon's *Z: The Beginning of Everything*. Performance highlights include touring with Savion Glover's *Stepz*, appearances at Harlem's Cotton Club with Dormeshia, and performances with *STOMP* both Off-Broadway and on its North American tour.

Since 2010, she has directed her own company, Tap Phonics, and has been commissioned by institutions such as the National Jazz Museum in Harlem, Brooklyn Museum, 92Y, Gibney Dance, Jazz Power Initiative, Decidedly Jazz Danceworks, and more. As an accomplished educator, she works with Apollo Education and serves on faculty at PACE University and Marymount Manhattan College, with prior teaching appointments at NYU, Jacob's Pillow, the University of Calgary, and the American Tap Dance Foundation.

As a writer and director, she has collaborated on documentary projects including her film *TRAX*, exploring African American migration to western Canada. Above all, her greatest inspiration is being a mother.

www.lisalatouche.com. Photo Credit: William Frederking



Laura Donaldson is a tap dancer, choreographer, and educator from Calgary, AB. Her performance and choreographic work has been featured internationally at major festivals including Fall for Dance North, Fluid Festival, Tap Dance Days at tanzhaus nrw (Germany), Tap Liège Festival (Belgium), and the Toronto International Tap Dance Festival.

A graduate of The School at Jacob's Pillow, Laura trained under leading artists Michelle Dorrance, Dormeshia, and Derick Grant. Laura has performed in works such as Danny Nielsen's *On Foot* and Lisa La Touche's *Fool's Gold*, and recently toured Québec as a principal dancer in (in)sight dance's *M/W/D: Sentiment du moi*. In 2022, Laura co-founded Boys' Club Tap Dance Collective, presenting original work across Canada, Europe, and the U.S. Most recently they performed at PASIC in Indianapolis with percussionists Dr. Morris Palter and Nathan Smith under the artistic direction of the Grammy award winning composer Bob Becker. Laura also

has over 10 years of experience teaching and sharing with the next generation of dancers across Alberta, British Columbia, Québec and Ontario and she recently joined the faculty of Power Dance Conventions.

Laura grew up in Calgary, training in multiple styles of dance, where she completed her RAD Advanced I exam. Later, she trained extensively with the Tri-Tone Rhythm Ensemble under the direction of Tasha Lawson and is a graduate of the Tri-Tone Teacher Training program. Laura holds a Bachelor of Health and Physical Education and is committed to providing exciting, quality tap dance education that honours the roots and history of the form; she continues to develop her artistic voice through practice, teaching, and performing in Canada and abroad.



Jonathan McCaslin – Jazz Drummer Recognized as one of Western Canada’s leading jazz drummers and educators, Jon McCaslin brings excitement and his passion for the jazz tradition and its future to the bandstand and to the classroom.

Raised in Regina, Saskatchewan Jon began playing the drums at the tender age of nine while progressing through the Regina Lions Junior Band and award winning music program at his high school, Campbell Collegiate, soon developing a passion for playing the drums and jazz.

Ultimately, Jon's interest in music led him to enroll in the Jazz Studies program at McGill University, graduating with distinction in 1999. While at McGill, Jon had the opportunity to study with some of the finest jazz educators in the country including Gordon Foote, Kevin Dean, Jan Jarczyk, Joe Sullivan, Remi Bolduc, Chris McCann, Andre White, Michel Lambert and Dave Laing.

He attended the Banff Centre for the Arts in 1997, where he performed with Canadian jazz greats Hugh Fraser, Don Thompson and Kenny Wheeler. In the spring of 2002 McCaslin completed his Master's in Jazz Studies at McGill University where he studied jazz drumming, improvisation and composition.

In 2012 he released his album “Sunalta” on the Cellar Live jazz record label featuring Brad Turner, Phil Dwyer, Tilden Webb and Jodi Proznick. This music was nominated in 2013 for the Western Canadian Music Awards in the “Best Jazz Recording” category. As a busy sideman he has also performed with such internationally recognized artists as Mulgrew Miller, Peter Bernstein, Ralph Bowen, Hendrik Meurkens, Sean Jones, PJ Perry, Charlie Biddle, Hadley Caliman, Kelly Jefferson, Ian McDougall, Jeff Johnston, Lorraine Desmerais, Steve Amirault, Hugh Fraser, Chucho Valdes, Uri Caine, Peter Apfelbaum, Wycliffe Gordon, Terell Stafford, Dick Oatts, Luis Bonilla, Linda Oh, Harold Mabern and Pat LaBarbera. Dr. McCaslin completed his Doctorate in Jazz Studies through the University of Toronto in 2015, researching the conceptualization of contemporary melodic jazz drumming. Since 2009 he has authored “Four on the Floor” www.jonmccaslinjazzdrummer.blogspot.com, one of the world’s most recognized on-line jazz drumming blogs.

He is currently based in Calgary where he maintains a busy performing and teaching schedule across Canada.

