

Michael Vernon started dancing at the Nesta Brooking School of Ballet in London before studying at the Royal Ballet School in London with such legendary teachers as Dame Ninette de Valois and Leonide Massine. He performed with the Royal Ballet, the Royal Opera Ballet, and the London Festival Ballet before moving to New York in 1976 to join the Eglevsky Ballet as ballet master and resident choreographer. He retained those positions under the directorship of the famed Edward Villella, and himself became artistic director of the Long Island-based company in 1989. He remained in that position until 1996.

Vernon choreographed numerous ballets for the Eglevsky Ballet, in addition to ballets for many professional companies in the United States and worldwide, such as BalletMet of Columbus, Ohio, and North Carolina Dance Theatre. Mikhail Baryshnikov commissioned him to choreograph the highly successful pas de deux *In a Country Garden* for American Ballet Theatre (ABT). His solo *S'Wonderful* was danced by ABT principal Cynthia Harvey in the presence of President and Mrs. Reagan and shown nationwide on CBS television. He also served as assistant choreographer on Ken Russell's movie *Valentino*, starring Rudolph Nureyev and Leslie Caron.

Vernon has taught at Steps on Broadway (New York City) since 1980, working with dancers from New York City Ballet, ABT, and many other high-profile companies. He is an integral part of the Manhattan Dance Project, which brings New York-style master classes to all regions of the United States. He has been involved with the Ballet Program of the Chautauqua Institute since 1996 and is Artistic Director for the Ballet School of Stamford (Conn). In addition, he is permanent guest teacher at the Manhattan Youth Ballet and has had a long association with Ballet Hawaii. He taught for the Alvin Ailey American Dance theatre and its school for 18 years.

Vernon has been company teacher for American Ballet Theatre, Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Metropolitan Opera Ballet, and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. He has guest taught in companies all over the world, including the West Australian Ballet, the National Ballet of China, the Hong Kong Ballet, the Birmingham Royal Ballet, Berlin Ballet, the Royal Swedish Ballet, and the Norwegian Ballet. He has been a guest teacher for The Juilliard School and The Joffrey School, and recently joined the panel of judges for the Youth America Grand Prix regional semi-finals.

Since being appointed Chair of the Ballet Department at the Jacobs School of Music, Vernon has choreographed *Cathedral* (2006), *Endless Night* (2009), *Jeux* (2010) and the ever popular seasonal ballet *The Nutcracker*. He has staged and provided additional choreography for the full-length classics *Swan Lake* (with American ballerina Cynthia Gregory) and *The Sleeping Beauty*. He re-choreographed *Spectre de la Rose* (the ballet that made Nijinsky famous) for New York City Ballet Principal Daniel Ulbricht.

He has choreographed for many IU Opera Theater productions, including *Faust*, *Cendrillon*, *Rigoletto*, and most recently supplied the movement for the world premiere of *Vincent*.