

REBECCA DAVIS *the business of dance*

Rebecca Davis, *BBA SBM '04*, has unusual professional credentials for a ballerina — an honors degree in business and management from Temple's Fox School. The combination of tutus and calculators may appear to be incongruous until Davis makes it clear that it was always part of her business plan to launch her own dance company. "I spent 20 years studying dance and four years studying business," she explains.

Dance has been her passion since she was a child, growing up in Vancouver, British Columbia. She enrolled at York University in Toronto to learn how good business practices would help her create and sustain an enterprise. But when the program failed to focus on entrepreneurship, she transferred to Temple's Fox School of Business. "One of the main reasons I transferred to Temple was its IEI [Innovation & Entrepreneurship Institute]," says Davis. "I knew I wanted to be immersed in an academic environment that facilitated entrepreneurial thinking. Another reason was that Philadelphia was a good fit for me artistically because it's not as competitive as New York, yet large enough for me to gain important business contacts and experience."

Davis spent the summer of 2002 in Russia working as an arts management intern and studying the Russian language. And in 2004, she won Temple's Business Plan Competition, sponsored by the University's IEI. The \$6,000 prize money was slated for start-up capital. Following graduation, she also won a Fulbright Scholarship to study dance and choreography at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory; by now her Russian was fluent.

Back in the U.S., she decided to call Philadelphia home and launched the Rebecca Davis Dance Company. The company combines a professional dance-theater troupe with a pre-professional training program for 12-to-18 year olds. Its performances are modern ballet productions based on famous literary works and significant historical events.

The first project of the Rebecca Davis Dance Company is *Antigone*, a modern ballet that combines text, music, speech, and movement and advances an innovative pedagogical approach to the

performing arts. The ballet, a contemporary version of Sophocles' play, will premiere at the Kimmel Center on March 16-17, 2006. Davis began working on a variant of this ballet at The Mussorgsky Theater



in Russia. Timofey Buzina, one of the youngest professional composers in Russia, created an original score for the American version.

"I really want to see the cultural landscape of Philadelphia change for the better," Davis says. "And that's going to require vision, commitment, and perseverance." Executive Director of Temple's IEI, Chris Pavlides, says, "She exemplifies that entrepreneurship can come in any field, including the arts and non-profit sector."

At almost six feet tall, Rebecca Davis is a stand-out whether in a leotard or a power suit.

— Lisa Meritz

POOJA SHAH, *BA SCT '04*, returned to Temple University to pursue a master's degree in political science after serving as the managing editor at the *Wilton Villager* and *Stamford Times* in Stamford, Conn.

JENNIFER A. GARDNER, *DPT '05*, is a physical therapist specializing in wound care at Philadelphia's Mercy Hospital. This past September, she took part in the People-to-People Ambassador Program in which physical therapists travel to Russia and Poland to take part in an educational exchange with European healthcare professionals.

CARLA HILL, *BFA Mus '05*, a Philadelphia choreographer and dancer, presented her dance, *Dominion*, as part of the Boarding Pass dance show at The Philly Fringe festival in September.



David Kanze, '00



Hugh Rosen, '01

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