

“Ashtalea’s performances are crisp, sensual, intelligent and Humorous. Her choreographies show both traditional and modern influences in Mideastern dance.” --Kathryn Ferguson

Ashtalea is a performer, choreographer and teacher of Middle Eastern dance with over 45 years of dance training and experience. Her choreographed works have been performed all over the U.S.A., Mexico and Canada. She uses her knowledge of Arabic drum rhythms, and musical background, to blend Middle Eastern dance movement to music with great ease. She has a very strong classical ballet and contemporary jazz background which allows her to fuse the elegance of ballet arms and posture, and the jazz theatrics, with Middle Eastern dance steps. She cites her years studying Middle Eastern dance with Kathryn Ferguson as her inspiration to create her own unique style. Ashtalea was a member of Ms. Ferguson’s Xanadu Middle Eastern Dance company from 1996-2003. During her years as a Xanadu Dancer she had the honor of dancing with famed musicians, Georges & Elias Lammam, Souhail Kaspar and Naser Musa.

Ashtalea also has an extensive theater background. She has either directed, choreographed and/or produced stage shows for College of Southern NV, Reed Whipple Cultural Center in Las Vegas NV, the “Young Living Convention 2010” at the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City UT, “The Fox City Show” at the Tropicana Hotel and Casino and the “Las Vegas Belly Dance Intensive” at the Flamingo Hotel and Casino on the Las Vegas Strip.

Ashtalea is most known for her chorographical skills and technique especially when working with large groups of dancers. Hence her long running Ah Ya Helu dance troupe. She was recognized and honored for her talent when asked to be the choreographer for the Raks Sharki portion of the “Las Vegas Bellydance Intensive and Festival’s” event “So You Think You Can Belly Dance” contest. A title she held for all six years of its existence. Ashtalea was affiliated with the LVBDI either as a teacher, director or both since its inception in 2003 to its finale in 2015. She is also the winner of the 2015 Shimmy Mob Choreography contest where her choreography was showcased all over the world to promote awareness of domestic violence and support local shelters and victims of abuse everywhere. For more info on and how you can also help, please visit www.shimmymob.com. Her highest and most meaningful honor came when she was asked to choreograph the “Xanadu Alumni” dance for the “Mediterranean Nights the Finale” show in 2017. A tribute to Kathryn Ferguson, her teacher, mentor and friend who passed away from cancer earlier that year.

Teaching is her number one love. Along with teaching workshops throughout the southwest, she has taught at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and College of Southern Nevada (CSN). Currently she divides her teaching time between her home studio in Las Vegas NV and the “Xanadu Dance Studio” <http://kathrynferguson.net/> in Tucson AZ. Ashtalea is truly dedicated to her students. “Nothing gives me more joy then to see former students of mine go out and perform professionally. I feel like a proud mom.” --Ashtalea