A full-page photograph of Robin Nasatir, a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling and dancing. She is wearing a long-sleeved, deep blue, floor-length dress with a V-neckline and a gathered waist. Her arms are raised, and her legs are in a dynamic, dancing pose. The background is a dark, solid color.

# Robin NASATIR

growing bolder

By Andree Duggan

Special thanks to Robin Nasatir

Dancing with the Young at Heart



**R**obin Nasatir started dancing at Elmwood's nonprofit dance studio Shawl-Anderson Dance Center as a child, and has been performing and teaching modern dance on and off since 1980. She's still at it and is not ashamed to say, "This year I'll celebrate the first anniversary of my 60th birthday."

When you walk or drive past Shawl-Anderson, you might picture young dancers on both floors of the two-story studio spinning this way and that, and having a blast dancing to their favorite tunes. For Robin's students, all of that is true except the young part. She has started classes at Shawl-Anderson for older adults, ranging in age from 30 to 80, but most are in their 50s and 60s. The classes are becoming quite popular.

Robin was personally noticing that she was having a hard time finding classes that met her own evolving needs as a mature dancer. She talked to her peers who were experiencing the same frustrations of not being able to keep up physically or even mentally with the modern dance classes available, even though she is still active as a performer and teacher. That's when she came up with the idea of starting a series of classes at Shawl-Anderson catering to the special needs of the older dancer. "If you don't remember the combination, join the club! Perfection is not our goal." Robin is there to guide her mature modern dancers through seated floor warm-ups, barre work, and dance sequences that each person can make as gentle or invigorating as they want them to be.

Observing the class, you see dancers of all levels ... but they all share the need for extra-long warm-ups, choreography that is safe for their bodies, and a friendly, non-competitive atmosphere where they don't feel marginalized as the "old" person in the corner. Some wear bare feet, some socks, some use dance shoes, while others wear sneakers for extra balance. Some skip the spinning, while for others, they are 10 years old again. Robin says, "The goal in the class is to develop strength and ease in the body while challenging the mind and experiencing the joy of moving."

Her impressive techniques in working with the older dancer were recently featured in the national publication, *Dance Teacher Magazine* in which a fellow teacher and modern dancer, April C. Taylor, commented, "She's hit on something really necessary in the modern dance world." Vicki Gunter, a former studio owner in her late 60s echoed the sentiment, saying, "This class has given me the opportunity to keep dancing. It's a gift."

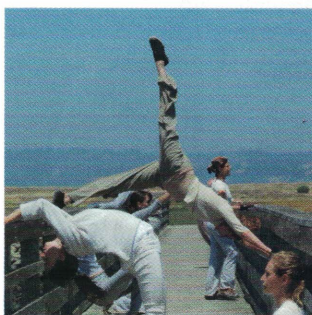
*If you would like to learn more about Robin Nasatir and the Shawl-Anderson Dance Center classes, visit [www.Shawl-Anderson.org](http://www.Shawl-Anderson.org), or Robin's website, [www.RobinNasatir.com](http://www.RobinNasatir.com).*



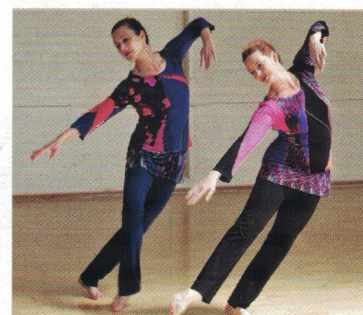
Are you, or someone you know, aging well? Having fun? Pushing the limits of what it means to age? We want to know! Email [ClaremontElmwoodSocial@n2pub.com](mailto:ClaremontElmwoodSocial@n2pub.com).



Robin Nasatir (center in purple) at Shawl-Anderson Dance Center with some of her mature modern dance students feeling strong!



Robin (center) with the Nina Heft Company in 2016. Photo by Jeff Chanin.



Robin Nasatir (on the left) dancing with Constance Clare-Newman in the Ruth Botchan Dance Company, 2010.



Robin leading seated floor warm-ups