

Fusion Belly Dance

tracey@fireflybellydance.co.nz | 027 756 4460

www.fireflybellydance.co.nz



Firefly Belly Dance

www.fireflybellydance.co.nz

www.facebook.com/fireflybellydancecompany

www.instagram.com/firefly_belly_dance

www.youtube.com/channel/UCn6mgXnxL5HZx5qUndft_uA

What is Fusion Belly Dance?

Defining Characteristics

Fusion Belly Dance is a modern form of belly dance which has evolved from American Tribal Style® Belly Dance, blending many styles of dance. It frequently incorporates elements from Popping, Hip Hop, Breakdance, 'Egyptian' or 'Cabaret/Oriental' belly dance, as well as from traditional forms such as Flamenco, Indian Odissi, Balinese, and other folkloric dance styles.

It's characterised by accentuated sharp movements interspersed with gooey sinuous movements and lots of layering – so a sharp movement layered otop of a soft movement, or a slow muscular movement otop of a shimmy. It is a very muscular dance form, adopting moves from other dance forms and adapting them to be driven by muscles rather than by the skeletal system, and this is what gives it a distinctive style and aesthetic over all.

Tribal fusion can be performed by a solo dancer, a duet or any number in a large group. If a group is dancing together there will usually be a choreography, if it is a solo dancer they may use a choreography, improvise to the music using the fusion movements and combos they know, or do a mixture of both.

History and Development

Rachel Brice was an American Tribal Style® Belly Dance (ATS®) student of Carolena Nericcio's from FatChanceBellyDance® in San Francisco & is widely credited with being an initial developer of the style - she coined the term Tribal Fusion Belly Dance to describe what she was doing. Around the US many other dancers were experimenting with fusing traditional belly dance with ATS® and other dance styles. Significantly Jill Parker & her troupe Ultra Gypsy were performing a fusion style in the late 1990's that inspired many of the dancers who are synonymous with the dance style today.

Initially almost all of those experimenting with this new dance style had a background in ATS®, but as Fusion became a dance genre of its own it began to be referred to as Fusion Belly Dance, with the Tribal at the front if the dancer wished to acknowledge the ATS® lineage and training informing their movement vocabulary.

Fusion Belly Dance gained more exposure in the wider belly dance community and to the general public when Rachel Brice, Zoe Jakes and Kami Liddle joined the touring group Belly Dance Superstars.

There are now many sub-genres of Tribal Fusion Belly Dance, including Gothic Fusion, Steampunk and Vaudeville.

Costume and Aesthetic

The costuming and aesthetic is extremely diverse – initially the look was similar to American Tribal Style® Belly Dance with rich antique fabrics, heavy jewelry and makeup but without the large skirts, favouring pantaloons or a more slimline skirt. Now the costumes may be anywhere from a pared back look through to full theatrical costumes with large headresses and outlandish props to suit the music, setting or theme in use.

For costume, jewelry and makeup examples for ATS® check out the Firefly Belly Dance Pinterest board:

<https://www.pinterest.nz/fireflybellydance>

Music

Music for fusion tends to be more modern than is used for either oriental or tribal style belly dance, and there are now quite a few bands who compose pieces specifically for use by tribal fusion dancers (e.g Beats Antique, Maduro, Solace), but there is really no limit to what music a tribal fusion dancer can use – so if you prefer classical, rock, industrial, electro-swing or love ballads that's no problem as anything goes musically in fusion – so long as the quality and tempo of your movements are reflecting and interpreting the music.

Fusion and Firefly Belly Dance

Fusion is one of the two main styles taught & performed by Tracey & Firefly Belly Dance, with Tracey being fortunate to have studied directly with many of the pioneers and master teachers of the genre including Rachel Brice, Jill Parker, Zoe Jakes and Kami Liddle in the US.

Sources

Tribal Massive Fusion Belly Dance Intensive training in Las Vegas
8Elements Dance with Rachel Brice

Suggestions for Further Research

If you are a fellow dance geek here are some key names to look up online & on YouTube:

- Rachel Brice
- Kami Liddle
- Zoe Jakes
- April Rose
- Sharon Kihara
- Belly Dance Superstars
- Amy Sigil
- Luciterra
- Anasma Tribal
- Mardi Love
- Jill Parker
- Ultra Gypsy