

 NASHVILLE
BALLET

PAUL VASTERLING, Artistic Director

NASHVILLE'S NUTCRACKER

DECEMBER 9–24, 2022 • TPAC'S JACKSON HALL

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PAUL VASTERLING, Artistic Director

NICK MULLIKIN, CEO and Associate Artistic Director

The title "NASHVILLE'S NUTCRACKER" is rendered in a highly decorative, golden, serif font. The word "NUTCRACKER" is significantly larger and more ornate than "NASHVILLE'S". The entire title is framed by intricate golden scrollwork and floral motifs, including holly leaves and berries, giving it a festive, holiday feel.

December 9–24, 2022

Tennessee Performing Arts Center

Jackson Hall

Choreography and Story Interpretation by

Paul Vasterling

Music by **Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**

Act II Grand Pas de Deux Choreography after

Lev Ivanov

Original Costume Design and Additional Scenery

Designs by **Campbell Baird**

Scenery Design by **Shigeru Yaji**

Lighting Design by **Scott Leathers**

Music conducted by **Ming Luke, Nashville Ballet**

Music Director and Principal Conductor

Music performed by the **Nashville Symphony**

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ACT I

— APPROXIMATELY 45 MINUTES —

During the autumn of 1897, Clara Stahlbaum and her favorite Uncle Drosselmeyer visit the Tennessee Centennial Exposition at the Parthenon. Clara is entranced by the magic of the fair and inspired by the many cultures she encounters there. Drosselmeyer, who is a magician, entertains Clara with tricks. He presents her with a beautiful Nutcracker from a German toymaker, but then makes it disappear! Two months later, several families pass through Shelby Bottoms on their way to a holiday party at the Stahlbaums' home. The area has frozen over and ice skaters move gracefully (and not so gracefully) across the ice. Drosselmeyer appears carrying many gifts for Clara and the other children at the party. His handsome young assistant, who is visiting for the holidays, assists him. At the Stahlbaum home, Clara and her brother, Fritz, eagerly wait outside the parlor door for their first view of the beautifully lit Christmas tree. Just before their governess opens the door to let them in, Fritz surprises Clara with a mouse! Guests arrive at the party, give gifts, and dance to celebrate the holiday season.

When Drosselmeyer and his assistant arrive, Drosselmeyer performs his magic tricks and presents his life-sized dolls for the guests. Drosselmeyer saves the best gift of all for Clara—the Nutcracker doll that she saw at the Centennial Exposition! In a jealous fit, Fritz grabs the Nutcracker and breaks it, but Drosselmeyer uses his magic to repair the Nutcracker.

After an evening of holiday festivities, the guests bid farewell and the Stahlbaums go to bed, leaving the Nutcracker by the fireplace. The Stahlbaum parlor is dim and quiet. The peace is suddenly disturbed by several baby mice, followed by medium mice, and large mice. Clara gets out of bed and goes downstairs looking for her new gift. She takes the Nutcracker to the couch and falls asleep. She is startled awake by the Mouse King, who steals the Nutcracker from her. Drosselmeyer appears and Clara tearfully explains to him what happened. Drosselmeyer reassures her and begins to perform his magic. Suddenly the parlor disappears, and the Christmas tree begins to grow. The Nutcracker appears and he, too, has grown!

His army of frontiersmen, cavalry, and toy soldiers fight a fierce battle against the mice while the Nutcracker duels with the Mouse King. Just as it appears the Mouse King will get the better of the Nutcracker, Clara distracts him by hitting him with her shoe. Thanks to her help, the Nutcracker is able to win the battle! Frightened by Drosselmeyer's powers, the mice scurry away and the Nutcracker reappears as a handsome prince. The Nutcracker Prince takes Clara on a wonderful journey. As they travel through a crystal wonderland that looks just like the magical mica stone Clara saw at the exposition, they come upon a Snow Queen and King. Beautiful snowflakes dance in the sparkling palace until the Snow Queen and King send Clara and the Prince onto their next adventure.

— 20 MINUTE INTERMISSION —



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ACT II

— APPROXIMATELY 45 MINUTES —

On their journey, Clara and the Nutcracker Prince stop in the Parthenon Garden, where they encounter the garden fairies and their queen, the Dew Drop Fairy. The Dew Drop Fairy and the Nutcracker Prince, along with the flowers of the forest, dance a beautiful waltz for Clara. After leaving the Parthenon Garden, Clara and the Nutcracker Prince arrive in a land of magic, the Kingdom of the Sugar Plum Fairy. The Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier welcome Clara and introduce visitors from other lands, who look like those Clara saw at the Centennial Exposition. The Spanish, Chinese, Eastern, and Russian visitors each greet Clara with a dance. She also meets a Shepherdess and Shepherd, as well as Madame Bonbonniere and her colorful bon bons. The Sugar Plum Fairy and the Cavalier dance for Clara, who then boards a magical flower carriage for her trip home. Drosselmeyer appears and transforms the Nutcracker Prince back into the Nutcracker doll and places the doll into Clara's arms. As the curtain falls, the magical flower carriage is transformed, and Clara is fast asleep on the couch in her parlor.



PAUL VASTERLING, Artistic Director

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FULL CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

*To view the casting specific to this performance
please click here.*

ACT I

AT THE 1897 TENNESSEE CENTENNIAL EXPOSITION

Clara *Nashville's Nutcracker*
Youth Cast

AJ Gift, Anna Caroline
Henry, Margaret Rick,
Anna Sloan

Drosselmeyer Michael Burfield,
Owen Thorne,
Jon Upleger (Guest
Artist)

Spanish Vendor Ivana Brown, Melanie
Eilenstine, Asia Parham,
Marina Profy

**Snake Charmer
from the East** Wade Mesecar

Chinese Puppeteer Nicholas Posluszny

Russian Doll Maker Katrina Chen, Sophie
Cserey, Greer Gage,
Cassie Thoms

French Bonbonniere Rachael Dean, Erin Diehl,
Madeline Diehl, Maia
Nguyen

Swiss Shepherdess Alexis Bull, Isabella
Davila, Mackenzie
Kenyon, Dargen
Swearingen

German Toy Maker Isaac Lee

ICE SKATING AT SHELBY BOTTOMS

Country Father Noah Miller,
Brett Sjoblom

Country Mother Marissa Stark, Farin Taft

Actress Kennedy Brown,
Claudia Monja

Actress' Escort James Lankford,
Nicolas Scheuer

Physician Justin Abel

Physician's Wife Maia Montgomery,
Autumn Tierney

Grandfather Samuel Mayer

Grandmother Celeste Borman,
Colette Tilinski

Dancing Bear Ivana Brown, Alexis Bull,
Melanie Eilenstine

Drosselmeyer's Assistant Michael Burfield,
James Lankford,
Garritt McCabe,
Jaison McClendon

Children *Nashville's Nutcracker*
Youth Cast

AT THE STALBAUM HOUSE

Clara's Brother Fritz *Nashville's Nutcracker*
Youth Cast

Jonah Bratton,
Cyrus Pittman

Clara's Mother Julia Eisen,
Imani Sailors

Clara's Father Daniel Rodriguez, Owen
Thorne, Jon Upleger
(Guest Artist)

Governess Annalyn Bakland,
Anneliese Guerin

Butler Isaac Lee

University Chancellor Nicholas Posluszny

Chancellor's Wife Isabella Davila,
Raquel Smith

Cuban Ambassador Aeron Buchanan

Ambassador's Wife Emily Ireland-Buczek,
Sarah Pierce

Centennial Park Guard

Joshua O'Connor,
Christian Renforth,
Shabaz Ujima (Guest
Artist)

Guard's Wife

Melanie Eilenstine,
Jasmine Wheeler

Italian Ballerina Doll

Celeste Borman, Imani
Sailers, Mollie Sansone,
Marissa Stark

Commodore Doll

Garritt McCabe,
Jaison McClendon,
Noah Miller

Children

Nashville's Nutcracker
Youth Cast

BATTLE SCENE

Baby Mice

Nashville's Nutcracker
Youth Cast

Medium Mice

Nashville's Nutcracker
Youth Cast

The Mouse King

James Lankford, Joshua
O'Connor, Noah Miller

Large Mice

Justin Abel,
Nicholas Posluszny,
Wade Mesecar

The Nutcracker Michael Burfield,
James Lankford,
Garritt McCabe,
Jaison McClendon

American Infantry *Nashville's Nutcracker*
Youth Cast

Frontier Soldiers *Nashville's Nutcracker*
Youth Cast

Commodore Cavalry *Nashville's Nutcracker*
Youth Cast

Dancing Bear Cavalry *Nashville's Nutcracker*
Youth Cast

SNOW SCENE

Snow Queen Jamie Kopit, Claudia
Monja, Lily Saito, Colette
Tilinski

Snow King Daniel Rodriguez, Nicolas
Scheuer, Brett Sjoblom,
Owen Thorne

Snowflakes Artists of Nashville Ballet
and NB2

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ACT II

THE PARTHENON GARDEN

Dewdrop Fairy Julia Eisen, Sarah Pierce,
Imani Sailors, Mollie
Sansone

Nutcracker Prince Michael Burfield,
James Lankford,
Garritt McCabe,
Jaison McClendon

Flower Demi-soloists Anneliese Guerin,
Emily Ireland-Buczek,
Maia Montgomery,
Raquel Smith, Marissa
Stark, Farin Taft, Jasmine
Wheeler

Flower Corps Artists of Nashville Ballet
and NB2

Garden Fairies *Nashville's Nutcracker*
Youth Cast

Parthenon Court Students from School
of Nashville Ballet's
Professional Division

THE KINGDOM OF THE SUGAR PLUM FAIRY

Sugar Plum Fairy Jamie Kopit, Mollie Sansone, Lily Saito, Colette Tilinski

Sugar Plum Cavalier Christian Renforth, Daniel Rodriguez, Nicolas Scheuer, Brett Sjoblom

Sugar Plum Court Students from School of Nashville Ballet's Professional Division

Spanish Dance Justin Abel, Kennedy Brown, Aeron Buchanan, Anneliese Guerin, Emily Ireland-Buczek, James Lankford, Daniel Rodriguez, Imani Sailors, Raquel Smith, Farin Taft, Jasmine Wheeler

Chinese Dance Garritt McCabe, Jaison McClendon, Noah Miller

Dragon Artists of NB2

Snake Charmer Aeron Buchanan,

from the East Jaison McClendon, Christian Renforth, Daniel Rodriguez, Owen Thorne

Snake Lady

Kennedy Brown,
Julia Eisen, Claudia
Monja, Sarah Pierce

Charmer's Attendants

Wade Mesecar,
Nicholas Posluszny

Russian Dance

James Lankford,
Garritt McCabe,
Jaison McClendon

Russian Nesting Dolls

Nashville's Nutcracker
Youth Cast

Swiss Shepherdess

Celeste Borman, Sarah
Pierce, Imani Sailors,
Marissa Stark

Swiss Shepherd

Aeron Buchanan,
Michael Burfield,
Garritt McCabe

Lambs

Nashville's Nutcracker
Youth Cast

Madame Bonbonniere

Melanie Eilenstine,
Emily Ireland-Buczek,
Mackenzie Kenyon,
Autumn Tierney

Her Bon Bons

Nashville's Nutcracker
Youth Cast

NASHVILLE'S NUTCRACKER YOUTH CAST

Party Boy Penn Beutler, Daniel Bratton, Noah Carter, Del Hutson, Sam Leventis, Mikhail Lieberman, Aidan Pape, John-David Saysombath, Henry West, Tagg Zumwalt

Party Girl Kambria Ayers, Jade Collins, Amelia Johnson, Courtney Kurkowski, Kelsey Martin, Eleonore Ness, Adalyn Patel, Nora Rieck, Mackenzie Wade

Baby Mice Adalyn Brown, Matilda Crosswy, Mia Defeo, Caroline Gibson, Arya Horton, Margaux Lieberman, Campbell Lyman, Tatum Mantinan, Frances Melancon, D'Arcy Ramage, Abby Webb, Luciana Williams

Medium Mice Breen Bentzen, Rylee Braden, Victoria Jones, Vanessa Kurkowski, Grace Shibayama, Katelyn Smith, Jovanni Walker, Elizabeth Williams

Frontier Soldiers

Lorelei Anderson, Brenyn Carlton, Kermina Fakhry, Karrie Fakhry, Sophia Hill, Bailey Horton, Briar King, Alany Lopez, Kinley Meeker, Eva Stefansic, Althea Stefansic, Einmyria Thurman

Infantry

Luke Allison, Jonah Forsythe, Preston Gaines, Hadley Hancock, Freya Heard, Lauren Hill, Janesta Krueck, Lili Near, Angel Ochoa, Lillian Pyatt, Virginia Wingo

Commodore Cavalry

Cora Bivin, Adelyn Grant, Lana Hayworth, Brynne Keller, Tenley Mantinan, Lily Page, Anastasiya Parkhurst, Charlotte Spero, Hallie Thackston, Anais Walker, Eleanor Welbourn, Lydia Worsley

Dancing Bear Cavalry

Braelyn Bolden, Mylia Frederiksen, Hadley Hancock, Beatrice Harvey-Schwartz, Jaycie Lynn Krueck, Siena Mangeri, Cecilia Martus,

Ava Mays, Isabella Pedro,
Margaux Schneider,
Avery Weber, Shakia
Webster, Alexis Woods

Garden Fairies

Sarai Cadena, Shania
Davis, Elizabeth
Douglas, Emerson Rose
Duke, Sylvia Dunaway,
Panambi Isabel Edmonds
Cuellar, Fable Eim, Chloe
Goelzer, Keriah Goins,
Chloe Graham, Lily
Harwell, Winnie Haugen,
Grace Hill, Harper
Judd, Isla Kearney,
Frankie Layson, Iris Lee,
Sterling Lekki, Maclayne
Lewis, Esther Livshitz,
Lilian Lutz, Amelia Ly,
Emmeline Mansfield,
Mica Mays, Olivia
McDaniel, Evangeline
Meek, Evangeline Meyer,
Caroline Schultz, Isabella
Sutton, Livia Wernke, Ella
Wescott, Alex Wiggins,
Margaux Willis, Catherine
Yawn, Josefina Yeager,
Nurah Zehr

Russian Nesting Dolls

Eden Avery, Micayla Brown, Lennon Elkins, Samantha Everett, Sashenka Kooienga, Penelope Sexton, Laine Sharp, Emma Wade, Brynn West, Morgan Whiteley

Lambs

Marguerite Boyd, Camille Carter, Selah Frohock, Gia Hayes, Declan Meeker, Marleigh Mitchell, Harper Perry, Phoebe Richardson, Emme Shervik, Addison Wade

Bon Bons

Sabrina Concepcion, Natalie Croney, Carys Gaines, Carly Graham, Sophie Gross, Jordan Hamm, Piper Mackenzie Harris, Madison Herrington, Sarah Hill, Claire Massey, Clara Owen, Eva Pregont, Madilyn Riggsby, Isabel Shiliday, Lela Sisk, Clara Weedman, Sophia Wright

School of Nashville Ballet Professional Division Students

Paige Bernard, Laura Bitterman, Erica Borden, Emily
Efferson, Sarah Galinski, Claire Gorham, Erin Hall,
Anneka Jones, Madison Kemp, Chloe Larouche,
Emma Mayfield, Anna Sidorovich, Gwyneth Smith,
Kaci Wilkinson

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Enrico Lopez-Yañez, Principal Pops Conductor

Nathan Aspinall, Associate Conductor

Tucker Biddlecombe, Chorus Director

PERFORMING DECEMBER 9–18

VIOLIN I

Gerald Greer

Isabel Bartles

Sheri Peck

Kirsten Mitchell

Beverly Drukker

Kristi Seehafer

Ali Hoffman

Denise Baker

Esther Sanders

Mark Reneau

VIOLIN II

Jung-Min Shin

Johna Smith

Zoya Leybin

Louise Morrison

Likai He

Angela Caporale

Jessica Blackwell

Rachel Englander

VIOLA

Shu-Zheng Yang

Bruce Christensen

Charles Dixon

Tony Parce

Simona Rusu

Sarah Cote

CELLO

Una Gong

Bradley Mansell

Lynn Peithmann

Andrew Dunn

Alex Krew

Grace Hartman

BASS

Joel Reist

Kevin Jablonski

Evan Bish

Tim Pearson

FLUTE

Leslie Fagan

Celine Thackston

Gloria Yun

OBOE

Ellen Menking

ToniMarie Marchioni

Tamara Winston

CLARINET

Theresa Zick

Spencer Prewitt

Dan Lochrie

BASSOON

Gil Perel

Maya Stone

HARP

Licia Jaskunas

KEYBOARD

Robert Marler

HORN

Patrick Walle

Hunter Sholar

Anna Spina

Beth Beeson

TRUMPET

Pat Kunkee

Preston Bailey

TROMBONE

Ian Maser

Hiram Rodriguez

Prentiss Hobbs

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TIMPANI

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PERFORMING DECEMBER 21-24

VIOLIN I

Gerald Greer
Isabel Bartles
Sheri Peck
Jesse Kasinger
Anna Lisa Hoepfinger
Ali Hoffman
Annaliese Kowert
Nathan Lowry
Chris Robinson

VIOLIN II

Jung-Min Shin
Johna Smith
Zoya Leybin
Maria Conti
Likai He
Jessica Blackwell
Amy Helman
Angela Caporale

VIOLA

Chris Farrell
Charles Dixon
Clare Yang
Betsy Lamb
Simona Rusu
Henry Haffner

CELLO

Kevin Bate
Una Gong
Bradley Mansell

Lynn Peithmann
Anthony LaMarchina
Stephen Drake

BASS

Glen Wanner
Matt Abramo
Tim Pearson
Bleda Elibal

FLUTE

Hannah Hammel
Celine Thackston
Deanna Little

OBOE

Somerlie DePasquale
Diana Dunn
Keith Sorrels

CLARINET

Spencer Prewitt
Emily Bowland
Dan Lochrie

BASSOON

Gil Perel
Maya Stone

HARP

Licia Jaskunas

KEYBOARD

Robert Marler

HORN

Jennifer Kummer

Beth Beeson

Kristen Sienkiewicz

Hunter Sholar

TRUMPET

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PAUL VASTERLING, Artistic Director

Paul Vasterling's artistic career began at age 10 when he started studying piano, then expanded at age 16 when he started dancing. From this start, Mr. Vasterling landed at Nashville Ballet where he became a company dancer, teacher, rehearsal director, and choreographer. He stepped into the role of Artistic Director of Nashville Ballet in 1998, 10 years after he began his association with the organization.

A choreographer with a deep affinity for music, Mr. Vasterling has created works ranging from classical, full-length story ballets to contemporary one-acts. With a special focus on highlighting the wealth of artistry and rich history of Nashville, Mr. Vasterling's connection to music and passion for community have led to collaborations with numerous nationally and internationally renowned musicians and institutions, including The Bluebird Cafe, Ben Folds, Grammy Award winners Rhiannon Giddens and Francesco Turrisi, and more. Nashville Ballet has commissioned 22 original scores for brand-new ballets under his direction. Mr. Vasterling is also a gifted storyteller with a penchant for creating vivid narratives with stories such as *Peter Pan*, *Layla and the Majnun*, *Lizzie Borden*, *Cinderella*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Seasons*, *Nashville's Nutcracker*, which has been enjoyed by over half a million Middle Tennesseans, *Appalachian Spring*, and the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* acclaimed *Lucy Negro Redux*.

Beyond his own choreography, Mr. Vasterling has expanded the company's repertoire to include works by Salvatore Aiello, Jennifer Archibald, George Balanchine, James Canfield, Lew Christensen, Jirí Kylián, Matthew Neenan, Twyla Tharp, and Christopher Wheeldon, among many others. He has also edited and updated the classic productions *Giselle*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Swan Lake*, and has grown the company from a troupe of 12 to 32 professional dancers. With a commitment to cultivating an organization high on artistry and dramatic power, Mr. Vasterling has taken Nashville Ballet across the country and beyond—Nashville Ballet's company made its Kennedy Center debut in 2017 and has toured throughout the U.S., including performances in St. Louis, Charleston, Santa Fe, Virginia, Kansas City, Colorado, and a debut at the Chautauqua Institution in August 2018. The company has also toured internationally in South America and Europe, and many of Mr. Vasterling's original works have been staged by companies nationally and internationally. In 2020, he led the company to making their broadcast debut with the televised premiere of *Nashville's Nutcracker*, for which he won his first Emmy Award, and in 2022, his original ballet, *Lucy Negro Redux*, embarked on a nationwide tour and made its primetime debut on PBS' multi-award winning *Great Performances* series. Additionally, he has helped increase Nashville Ballet's operating budget by 800%, prioritized several accessibility and inclusivity initiatives, launched the company's

first-ever free virtual season, and oversaw the purchase and expansion of the company's home base, the Martin Center for Nashville Ballet.

Mr. Vasterling graduated Magna Cum Laude from Loyola University. He is a Fulbright Scholar and has been awarded many prestigious fellowships and grants, including three from the National Endowment of the Arts. He is also a Virginia Center for the Creative Arts Fellow and was selected as one of the Fellows in residence for the 2017-2018 academic year at The Center for Ballet and the Arts at New York University.

NICK MULLIKIN, CEO and Associate Artistic Director

Nick Mullikin began his training at the Wisconsin Dance Ensemble in Madison, and continued at the Virginia School of the Arts and Houston Ballet Academy. Upon his completion of training with Houston Ballet Academy, he was invited to join Houston Ballet with Artistic Director Ben Stevenson, and subsequently joined Ballet West under the direction of Jonas Kage. During his tenure as a performing artist, Mullikin performed notable works by William Forsythe, George Balanchine, Ben Stevenson, Anthony Tudor, and more. Additionally, he toured nationally and internationally including at the Edinburgh International Festival in 2004 and performed as a guest artist for Ballet Arizona, and regional companies throughout the country.

SUSAN UNDERWOOD PHYSICAL THERAPY



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While at Ballet West, Mullikin was an elected union representative for the American Guild of Musical Artists before joining the administrative staff as the Company/Tour Manager and Assistant to the Artistic Director in 2006. Since that time, he has worked as Company Manager for The Washington Ballet and as Assistant Manager at the Dance Institute in Austin, Texas. Mullikin has guest taught at summer programs and schools across the country, coached students for competition at the Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP), taught in after school programs in the Washington, D.C. area, and consulted on the creation and setup of Honolulu Classical Ballet in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Since joining Nashville Ballet's staff in 2015, Mullikin has made numerous contributions to the organization. Under his direction, School of Nashville Ballet has grown exponentially both in numbers and in strength of training, and NB2, Nashville Ballet's second company, performed its first mainstage production. Promoted to Associate Artistic Director in 2018, Mullikin's advanced role in working with Nashville Ballet's Company has been integral to recent programming choices, defining a more prominent through line from the School of Nashville Ballet Academy to the Company, and much more.

Currently, with his responsibilities at Nashville Ballet, he acts as a YAGP judge, and has coached dancers for YAGP and the International Ballet Competition in Varna, Bulgaria. In 2012, Mullikin graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, majoring in

Government, minoring in Communications, while completing the Business Foundations Program at the McCombs School of Business.

KATIE VASILOPOULOS, Company and Artist Relations Manager

Katie Vasilopoulos developed a love of dance while studying at Maple Avenue Dance in Rockville Centre, NY, then furthered her training at Ballet Academy East in New York City. She joined NB2 in 2008 and progressed to the main company during the 2012 season. She originated several soloist roles in Paul Vasterling's choreography including one of the Three Witches in *Macbeth*, Tiger Lily in *Peter Pan*, and the Mother Figure in *Appalachian Spring*. She was also featured in Jiri Kylian's *Petite Mort*, as the Dark Angel in George Balanchine's *Serenade*, and in Salvatore Aiello's *Afternoon of a Faun*. Other highlights include the Swan in *Carmina Burana*, Snow Queen and the Sugar Plum Fairy in *Nashville's Nutcracker*, the 4th Movement lead in Balanchine's *Western Symphony*, Lilac Fairy in *The Sleeping Beauty*, and The Fairy Godmother in *Cinderella*.

While still dancing, Katie Vasilopoulos graduated summa cum laude from Belmont University with a degree in Business Administration through the ongoing Nashville Ballet/Belmont partnership. She received the Kathleen B. Horrell Scholarship award at graduation for being the undergraduate with the highest scholastic record.

NASHVILLE BALLET WOMEN IN CREATIVE LEADERSHIP



Support the work of female artists by making a gift to Nashville Ballet's Women in Creative Leadership Initiative.

Nashville Ballet is committed to uplifting a wide variety of voices and creating opportunities for female artists to choreograph new works, compose new music, and create for the mainstage. By making a donation to Nashville Ballet's Women in Creative Leadership Initiative, you are investing in equity opportunities for female artists both here in Nashville and across the United States.

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kbennett@nashvilleballet.com or visit NashvilleBallet.com.*

Following her retirement in 2021, Katie Vasilopoulos joined the administrative team at Nashville Ballet as the Events Coordinator. She managed vendors, volunteers, and funders, in a yearlong effort culminating in Ballet Ball 2022 which yielded a record breaking \$486,000. Now as Company and Artist Relations Manager, Ms. Vasilopoulos works closely with artistic leadership, dancers, and visiting artists for artistic collaborations. She manages the contracting, negotiations, and scheduling for operations within the Company.

KATE CREWS LINSLEY, Rehearsal Director

Kate Crews Linsley is a current Rehearsal Director for Nashville Ballet, formerly the School of Nashville Ballet Academy Principal. Linsley enjoyed a successful dance career as a soloist with Ballet West for 10 seasons and danced with Kansas City Ballet from 1995–2000. Most recently, Linsley performed as a guest artist in Salt Lake City with NOW-ID Dance Company and AVA Ballet Theater, where she performed Principal roles in ballets such as *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker*. Ms. Linsley trained at Kansas City Ballet School under Todd Bolender and The Pacific Northwest Ballet School. Professionally, Linsley's time at Ballet West was highlighted in works in the following world-renowned dance festivals and tours: Edinburg International Dance Festival in Scotland, Dance Across America in Washington, D.C., and Fall

for Dance in New York City. Most memorable roles for Linsley were dancing the Principal Pas de Deux in Balanchine's *Agon*, Pas de Deux couple in Ulysses Dove's *Red Angels*, Myrthe in *Giselle*, The Siren in Balanchine's *Prodigal Son*, Lilac Fairy in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Lady Capulet in Kage's *Romeo and Juliet*, and The Lark in Bruce Mark's *Lark Ascending*. In February of 2009, cast as the Hostess in Diaghilev's *Les Biches*, Linsley was honored to be on the cover of *Dance Magazine* in celebration of Diaghilev's centennial anniversary. From her time with Ballet West and Kansas City Ballet, Linsley's resume contains many works from Tudor, Balanchine, Forsythe, Cranko, Morris, Tharp, and Ashton, to name a few.

After retiring from her professional dance career in June of 2010, Linsley served as the Dance Department Chair at The Waterford School, as well as the Director of the Waterford Dance Academy in Sandy, Utah from 2012 to 2017. During her time there, Linsley restaged the following ballets: *The Nutcracker*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Swan Lake*, *Cinderella*, and *Carnival of Animals*. Linsley was on staff at Ballet West Academy where she taught in the school, as well as coached and created works for dancers for YAGP, Creative Arts Academy Ririe- Woodbury Dance Company, Salt Lake Ballet, AVA Ballet Theater, Utah Regional Ballet, and The University of Utah, among others. Linsley moved to Nashville with her family in 2018 to accept the role of School of Nashville Ballet Academy Principal, where she oversaw the artistic aspects of the School

and trained dancers in the Academy, Professional Training Division, NB2, and Company. During her time with Nashville Ballet, Linsley has staged and coached works for the Academy and NB2 working with Nashville Ballet Artistic Director, Paul Vasterling restaging his work, *Fresco* and with Associate Artistic Director, Nick Mullikin in his creation, *He Loved Big Brother*. Linsley also worked with guest choreographers like Charlotte Boye-Christenson, Michael Bearden, and Gina Patterson in her creation of *72 Steps*. Linsley also staged works on School of Nashville Ballet's Academy, including *Paquita* and *The Sleeping Beauty Suite*. In 2021, Linsley was promoted to Rehearsal Director for Nashville Ballet's main company.

Beyond her career in dance and dance education, Linsley was Chairman of the Board for Inbody Outreach after five years as Executive Director for the Utah nonprofit, which supplies qualified yoga instructors to populations in need. She has served on staff in the Utah yoga community at Centered City Yoga, The Yoga Center, University of Utah, and Primary Children's Medical Center. She is certified to teach yoga to veterans through the Yoga Warriors

Program and at-risk youth under the Street Yoga training. She is also certified in the Mindful Schools curriculum to implement mindfulness teaching in schools. Linsley has led mindfulness sessions on trips traveling with Rivers of Recovery working with Vets with varying degrees of PTSD.

ALLISON ZAMORSKI, Rehearsal Director

Originally from Virginia, Allison Zamorski began her formal dance training with the Virginia Ballet Theatre. She was an honors graduate from the Virginia Governor's School for the Arts High School Dance Program, majoring in both ballet and modern dance. In 1999, after being awarded a scholarship with School of Nashville Ballet, Zamorski relocated to Nashville to train under the direction of Adam Sage. She danced in NB2, Nashville Ballet's second company, developed her skills as an apprentice, and was promoted to full company member in 2002 under Artistic Director Paul Vasterling. Zamorski danced professionally with Nashville Ballet for four years and had multiple ballets set on her including Vasterling's *Cinderella*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Giselle*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Swan Lake*. After retiring as a dancer in 2006, Zamorski continued her expression of dance as a faculty member with School of Nashville Ballet, teaching a variety of dance classes to children and adults including ballet, pointe, modern, character, improvisation, and repertory.

She has worked extensively with the Education and Outreach Department, exposing approximately 30,000 Middle Tennessee residents to the art of dance. Now, as Rehearsal Director with Nashville Ballet, Zamorski stages and rehearses various main company performances and oversees all youth casts in Nashville Ballet productions. Also, Zamorski has the distinct honor of being entrusted to set the works of Paul

Vasterling in Nashville, throughout the country and internationally. Outside of Nashville Ballet, Zamorski has attended the Regional and National High School Dance Festivals to teach master classes and act as adjudicator multiple times.

MING LUKE, Music Director and Principal Conductor

With the “energy, creativity and charisma not seen since Leonard Bernstein” and “vibrant,” “mind-blowing,” and “spectacular” conducting, Ming Luke is a versatile conductor that has excited audiences around the world. Highlights include conducting the Bolshoi Orchestra in Moscow, performances of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cinderella* at the Kennedy Center, his English debut at Sadler’s Wells with Birmingham Royal, conducting Dvorak’s *Requiem* in Dvorak Hall in Prague, recording scores for a Coppola film, and over a hundred performances at the San Francisco War Memorial with San Francisco Ballet. He has been recognized nationally for his work with music education and has designed and conducted education concerts and programs with organizations such as the Berkeley Symphony, Houston Symphony, Sacramento Philharmonic, San Francisco Opera and others. Luke has soloed as a pianist with Pittsburgh Symphony, Sacramento Philharmonic, and San Francisco Ballet. Long time critic Allan Ulrich of the San Francisco Chronicle said, “*Ming Luke delivered the best live theater performance I’ve ever heard of [Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet]*” and in 2016 Luke’s *War Requiem*

was named best choral performance of 2016 in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Passionate about collaboration with dance companies and deepening the impact of movement to live music, Luke has guested with Boston Ballet, New York City Ballet Orchestra, Nashville Symphony/Ballet, San Diego Ballet and others and conducted l'Orchestre Prométhée in Paris as part of San Francisco Ballet's residency with Les Etés de la Danse. Noted for his work with Ballet. Famed dancer Natalia Makarova stated, *"Ming has a mixture of pure musicality and a sensitivity to needs of the dancers, which are such rare qualities."*

Luke has written, arranged, and performed over 150 education concerts with the Berkeley Symphony and has served on grant panels for the National Endowment of the Arts and the Grants and Cultural Committee of the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission. An exciting pops conductor, Luke has created and conducted a variety of pops concerts in many venues, from baseball stadiums, to picnics in the park with over 4,000 people in attendance, traditional concert halls and recording for Major League Baseball.

Ming Luke holds a Master of Fine Arts in Conducting from Carnegie Mellon University and a Bachelor of Music in Music Education and Piano Pedagogy from Westminster Choir College of Rider University.

CAMPBELL BAIRD, Costume and Set Designer

Campbell Baird designed costumes for Nashville Ballet's productions of *Nashville's Nutcracker* and scenery and costumes for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Peter Pan*, all choreographed by Paul Vasterling. He has designed for dance companies around the world, including Oregon Ballet Theatre, Texas Ballet Theatre, and Joffrey Ballet (resident designer for eight years in New York City). He designs for musical theatre, opera, and drama, including recent productions of *Happy Birthday* for TACT in New York and *The Music Man* and *Crazy For You* at Muhlenberg Summer Music Theatre. He was principal design assistant to Oliver Smith, a co-director of American Ballet Theatre for 11 years, supervising productions around the world. For 15 years, he was a scenic artist for the Metropolitan Opera in New York. He is currently an Associate Arts Professor at NYU Tisch School of the Arts, teaching there since 1991. Originally from Wilmington, N.C., he now lives with his partner John McKernon and their Pembroke Welsh corgis in Phillipsburg, N.J. and New York City.

SCOTT LEATHERS, Original Lighting Designer

Scott Leathers served as the Resident Lighting Designer for Nashville Ballet from 1987-2022. He has also served as the Resident Lighting Designer for Nashville Children's Theatre since 2003, Kentucky Repertory Theatre ('04-'08), Chattanooga Symphony



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and Opera and Ballet TN. He periodically serves as interim Lighting Director for the Ryman Auditorium. Mr. Leathers has designed lighting for theatre, opera, ballet and modern dance since 1981 to critical acclaim. His design experience includes work with the Nashville Repertory Theatre, Opera Omaha, Studio West Dance Theatre, Milwaukee Ballet, Theatre Craft, Stage One, American Negro Playwrights Theatre, Amun Ra Theatre, Musical Theatre Louisville, Karen Steele Dance Quintet, Ballet Omaha, Ballet Austin, Cumberland County Playhouse and Dollywood. He has also worked internationally with performing arts organizations such as Tanz Ensemble Cathy Sharp (TECS-Switzerland) and Ballet Manila (Philippines). He has also designed scenery for numerous productions including Nashville Ballet's productions of *Robin Hood*, *Postcards from the Boys*, *The Bell Witch*, *Harvest Home*, *Western Stars*, and *Fête Champêtre*.

JON UPLEGER, Guest Artist

Jon Upleger began his formal training in 1997 under the direction of Petrus Bosman and David Keener at the Virginia School of the Arts. Upon graduation, he received the school's prestigious Dean's Award and then joined Nashville Ballet as an apprentice in 2000. During his time at Nashville Ballet, Mr. Upleger performed roles from such varied repertoire as Romeo in Nashville Ballet Artistic Director Paul Vasterling's *Romeo and Juliet*, the Sugar Plum Cavalier in *Nashville's Nutcracker*, Prince Siegfried

in *Swan Lake*, and Albrecht in *Giselle*. Other leading roles include Salvatore Aiello's *Satto*, Sarah Slipper's *Ploughing the Dark*, Twyla Tharp's *Sinatra Suite*, and Paul Vasterling's *Awaiting Redemption*, *Firebird*, *Cinderella*, *Carmina Burana*, *Peter Pan*, and *The Ben Folds Project: Concerto*. In addition to performing with Nashville Ballet's Company, Mr. Upleger has performed with Configurations Dance Theater in New York, Missouri Ballet Theater, and Terpsicorps Theater of Dance in Asheville, N.C. He also taught men's class and pas de deux to students from across the country at School of Nashville Ballet's Summer Intensive. Mr. Upleger helped create Nashville Ballet's Young Men's Scholarship Program, which provides tuition-free ballet training for males age 6–18, and served as a principal instructor. He is now an adjunct professor at Grand Valley State University and recently founded the Grand Rapids School of Dance in west Michigan, which provides ballet-focused training for students ages 2–18 in a nurturing and supportive environment.

SHABAZ UJIMA, Guest Artist

Shabaz Ujima first studied dance at Nashville School of the Arts (1995–1996) and Nashville Ballet (1996–1999). He continued his training at New World School of the Arts (1999–2001) in Miami, Florida and went on to dance in Nashville Ballet's Second Company (2002–2003) before enjoying a successful career in contemporary dance with Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble (2003–2007) and Dayton

Contemporary Dance Company (2008–2014) under his stage name, Hershel Deondre Horner III. Mr. Ujima has performed works by choreographers such as Alvin Ailey, Donald McKayle, Milton Myers, Matt Maddox, Susanna Linke, Jose Limon, and Christopher Huggins. Upon his professional dance retirement in 2014, Mr. Ujima returned to Nashville Ballet. He is currently a full-time faculty member in modern and contemporary dance at School of Nashville Ballet. Mr. Ujima is also a teaching artist for Nashville Ballet's Community Engagement Program, which introduces the art of dance to 40,000 community members each year through visits to schools, libraries, and more. Outside of his work at Nashville Ballet, he teaches mindfulness and yoga to local youth and in the Davidson County Juvenile Detention Center.

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NASHVILLE BALLET 2022-2023 COMPANY ARTISTS



CELESTE BORMAN

From Denver, North Carolina
With Nashville Ballet since 2019

Training and Education

Charlotte Ballet Academy, San Francisco Ballet, Washington Ballet, Boston Ballet, Nashville Ballet

Previously

NB2



KENNEDY BROWN

From Chesterton, Indiana
With Nashville Ballet since 2017

Training and Education

Eclipse Performing Arts, Phoenix Ballet, A&A Ballet

Previously

NB2



AERON BUCHANAN

From Hyattsville, Maryland
With Nashville Ballet since 2020

Training and Education

Maryland Youth Ballet, The Washington Ballet, Baltimore School for the Arts, Boston Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet

Previously

Cincinnati Ballet II



MICHAEL BURFIELD

From Lubbock, Texas
With Nashville Ballet since 2018

Training and Education

Lone Star Ballet, Ballet Lubbock, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Ballet Austin II

Previously

Ballet Austin, Sarasota Ballet

NASHVILLE BALLET 2022-2023 COMPANY ARTISTS



JULIA EISEN

From Chapel Hill, North Carolina
With Nashville Ballet since 2010

Training and Education

The Ballet School of Chapel Hill,
North Carolina School of the Arts,
Richmond Ballet, Terpsicorps
Theatre of Dance, National
Choreographer's Initiative

Previously

NB2



EMILY IRELAND-BUCZEK

From Los Angeles, California
With Nashville Ballet since 2017

Training and Education

The School of American Ballet

Previously

NB2



JAMIE KOPIT

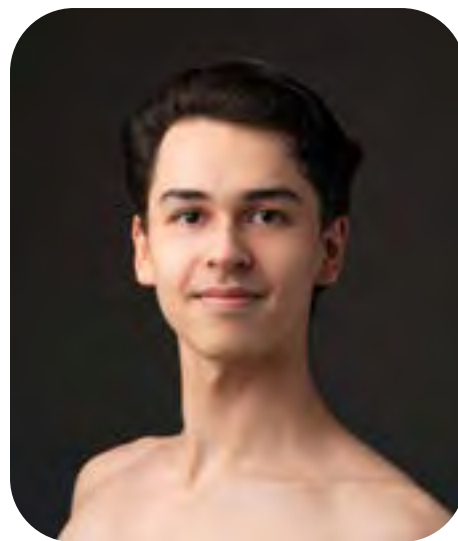
From Huntington Beach, California
With Nashville Ballet since 2018

Training and Education

Southland Ballet Academy,
The Royal Ballet Upper School

Previously

American Ballet Theatre



JAMES LANKFORD

From Hanau, Germany
With Nashville Ballet since 2018

Training and Education

School of Nashville Ballet Young
Men's Scholarship Program

Previously

NB2

NASHVILLE BALLET 2022-2023 COMPANY ARTISTS



GARRITT McCABE

From Macungie, Pennsylvania
With Nashville Ballet since 2021

Training and Education

Boston Ballet School, Pennsylvania
Ballet

Previously

Pennsylvania Ballet



JAISON McCLENDON

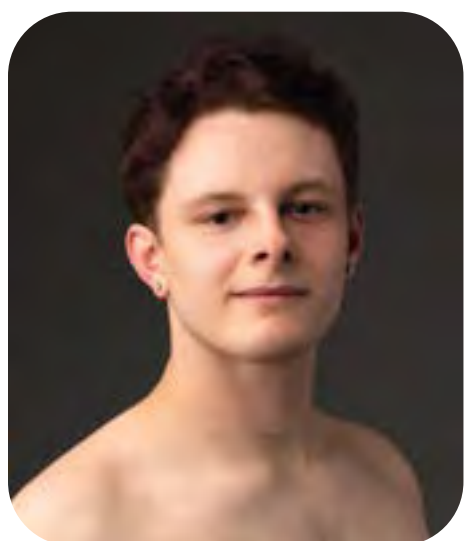
From Tampa, Florida
With Nashville Ballet since 2020

Training and Education

Patel Conservatory, Sarasota Ballet

Previously

BalletMet 2, Ballet Idaho



NOAH MILLER

From Lake Forest, California
With Nashville Ballet since 2019

Training and Education

Laguna Dance Theater, Dmitri
Kulev Classical Ballet Academy,
Houston Ballet Academy, Texas
Ballet Theater

Previously

Texas Ballet Theater



CLAUDIA MONJA

From Havana, Cuba
With Nashville Ballet since 2021

Training and Education

Elemental Ballet School, Cuban
National Ballet School

Previously

Cuban National Ballet, Ballet de
Camagüey, Joburg Ballet

NASHVILLE BALLET 2022-2023 COMPANY ARTISTS



SARAH PIERCE

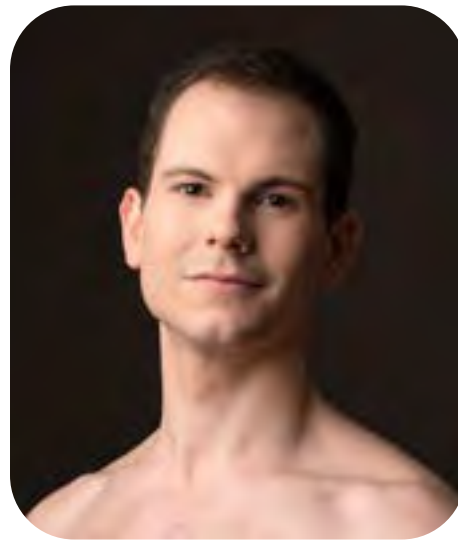
From Cambridge, Massachusetts
With Nashville Ballet since 2016

Training and Education

Boston Ballet Pre-Professional Program, School of American Ballet, Chautauqua School of Dance

Previously

NB2



CHRISTIAN RENFORTH

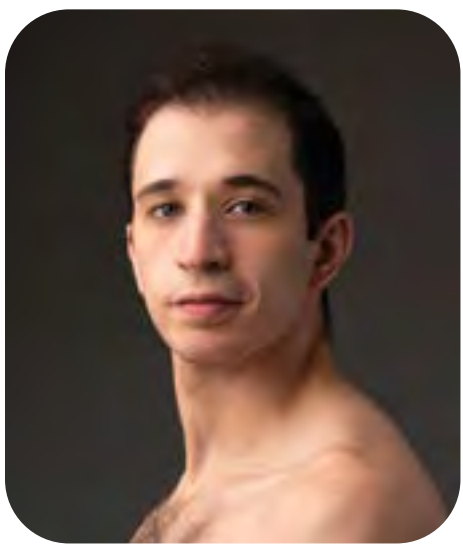
From Richmond, Virginia
With Nashville Ballet since 2022

Training and Education

Butler University

Previously

Royal New Zealand Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, National Choreographer's Initiative



DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

From New York, New York
With Nashville Ballet since 2019

Training and Education

Manhattan Youth Ballet, Laguardia High School of Music and Art & Performing Arts

Previously

Charlotte Ballet, Sarasota Ballet, Dayton Ballet, Kansas City Ballet



IMANI SAILERS

From Chicago, Illinois
With Nashville Ballet since 2017

Training and Education

Chicago Multi-Cultural Dance Center, Indiana University Jacobs School of Music

Previously

NB2

NASHVILLE BALLET 2022-2023 COMPANY ARTISTS



LILY SAITO

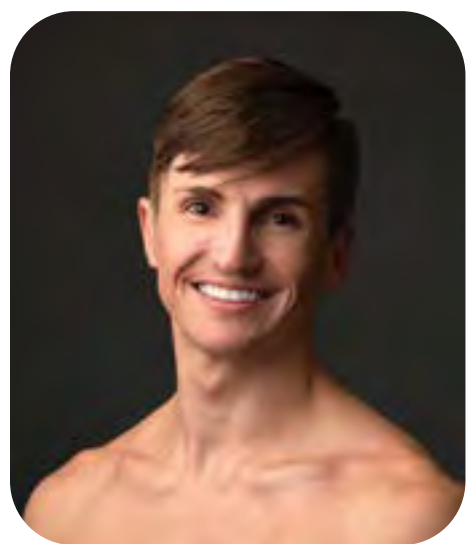
From New York, New York
With Nashville Ballet since 2018

Training and Education

School of American Ballet,
Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School,
Ellison Ballet, Washington Ballet

Previously

American Repertory Ballet



NICOLAS SCHEUER

From Joinville, Brazil
With Nashville Ballet since 2012

Training and Education

Bolshoi Theatre School of Brazil,
Boston Ballet School, New English
Ballet Theatre London

Competitor in

2016 Varna International Ballet
Competition

Previously

Nashville Ballet Apprentice



MOLLIE SANSONE, Resident Choreographer

From Jacksonville, North Carolina
With Nashville Ballet since 2004

Training and Education

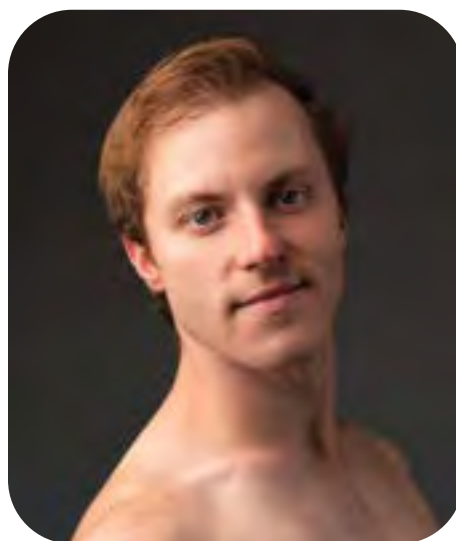
The Joffrey Midwest Workshop, the
Nutmeg Ballet Conservatory, Atlanta
Ballet

Also With

Piedmont Dance Theater, Quixotic
Fusion and MOTION Dance + Theater

Previously

NB2



BRETT SJOBLUM

From Columbia, Missouri
With Nashville Ballet since 2012

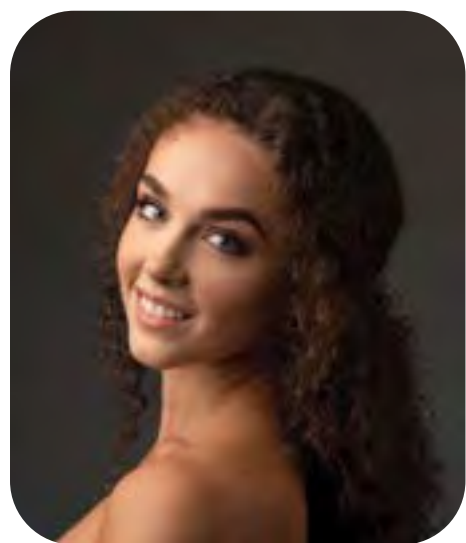
Training and Education

Columbia Performing Arts Center,
Virginia School of the Arts, The
Boston Conservatory

Previously

NB2

NASHVILLE BALLET 2022-2023 COMPANY ARTISTS



MARISSA STARK

From Purcellville, Virginia
With Nashville Ballet since 2018

Training and Education

The Art of Technique, The
Washington School of Ballet,
The Washington Ballet

Previously

NB2



OWEN THORNE

From New Orleans, Louisiana
With Nashville Ballet since 2018

Training and Education

School of Nashville Ballet,
Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet,
San Francisco Ballet

Previously

Houston Ballet, Scottish Ballet,
Joburg Ballet, Royal Opera, DeNada
Dance, Boca Ballet Theatre, The
Peter Schaufuss Company, Antonia
Franceschi Dance, Nashville Ballet



COLETTE TILINSKI

From Atlanta, Georgia
With Nashville Ballet since 2017

Training and Education

Metropolitan Ballet Theatre

Previously

NB2



JASMINE WHEELER

From Chicago, Illinois
With Nashville Ballet since 2020

Training and Education

Ballet Chicago, A and A Ballet,
Kansas City Ballet

Previously

Kansas City Ballet

NASHVILLE BALLET 2022-2023 COMPANY APPRENTICES



JUSTIN ABEL

From League City, Texas
With Nashville Ballet since 2021

Training and Education

Next Generation Ballet, Feijoo Ballet School, Royal Academy of Fine Arts

Previously

NB2



ANNALYN BAKLAND

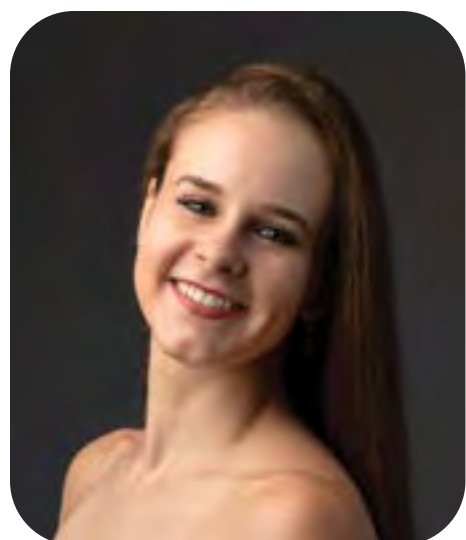
From Redlands, California
With Nashville Ballet since 2021

Training and Education

School of International Ballet, Ballet Idaho, Pacific Northwest Ballet

Previously

NB2



ANNELIESE GUERIN

From Spokane, Washington
With Nashville Ballet since 2019

Training and Education

Pacific Northwest Ballet School, San Francisco Ballet School, Pacific Northwest Ballet School

Previously

NB2



MAIA MONTGOMERY

From West Palm Beach, Florida
With Nashville Ballet since 2022

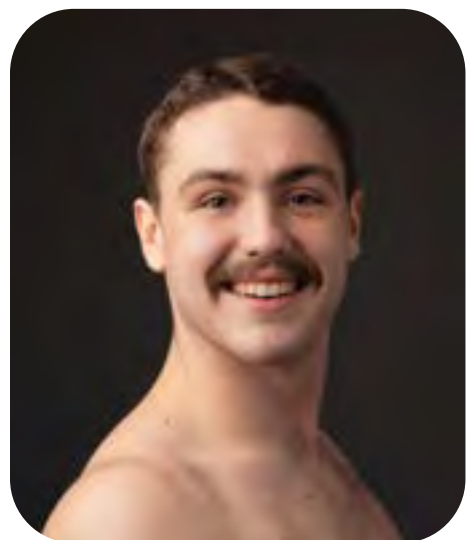
Training and Education

Julie Bravata, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Graduate School

Previously

Next Generation Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre

NASHVILLE BALLET 2022-2023 COMPANY APPRENTICES



JOSHUA O'CONNOR

From Waterford, Michigan
With Nashville Ballet since 2021

Training and Education

Rochester School of Dance, Cary
Ballet Conservatory

Previously

NB2



RAQUEL SMITH

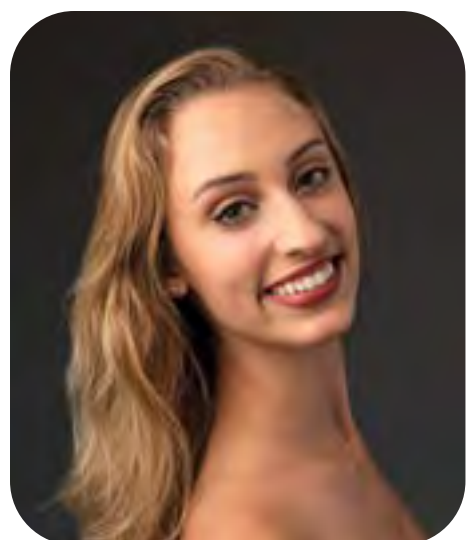
From Los Angeles, California
With Nashville Ballet since 2021

Training and Education

Lauridsen Ballet Centre, San
Francisco Ballet

Previously

Richmond Ballet



FARIN TAFT

From Littleton, Massachusetts
With Nashville Ballet since 2018

Training and Education

Boston Ballet

Previously

NB2, Boston Ballet



AUTUMN TIERNEY

From Merrimack, New Hampshire
With Nashville Ballet since 2019

Training and Education

Southern New Hampshire Dance
Theatre, Boston Ballet School, Ballet
West Academy

Previously

NB2

NASHVILLE BALLET 2022-2023 NB2 MEMBERS

NB2: Nashville Ballet's Second Company



2022-2023 NB2 Members

left to right: Isabella Davila, Isaac Lee, Sofia Williams, Elisabeth Baehman, Nicholas Posluszny, Kyra Piper, Melanie Eilenstine, Wade Mesecar, Samuel Mayer, Veronica Jaspers



2022-2023 NB2 Trainees

front row left to right: Cassie Thoms, Rachael Dean,* Asia Parham, Madeline Diehl, Sophie Cserey, Mackenzie Kenyon, Dargan Swearingen, Katrina Chen


back row left to right: Maia Nguyen, Erin Diehl, Marina Profy Ivana Brown, Alexis Bull, Greer Gage

*Promoted to NB2 as of November 2022

**not pictured Emily Bailey



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Pam Atha

Colleen Garatoni

Sarah Newman

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Michele Boswell

Zuwhan Gaston

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Tyler Rose

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Programs Manager

Kate Kastelnik

Nicole Koenig, Syllabus Manager/
Practical Teaching Supervisor

Lydia McRae, Social Media Assistant

Shabaz Ujima

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Lara Parker

Dargan Swearingen

Celina Merrill

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Alex Winer

Antonette Arsenault

Ashley Peluse

Brett Sjoblom

Che Clausen

Claire Hahn

Dargan Swearingen

Elisabeth Baehman

Elisabeth Johnson

Emily Skaug

Eric Harris

Hannah Mathews

James Lankford

Jamie Bubb

Justin Abel

Krissy Dodge

Kristin Beutel

Lara Parker

Madeleine Bean

Melissa Cassidy

Melissa Mangold

Mollie Sansone

Rachel Nasuti

Sarah Pierce

Thea Jones

Victoria Clerico

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Joshua Carter

Bill White

Svetlana Keith

Al Marcelli

Tony Crow

Sav Rang

Mary Countess

Evee Hunnel

Company Rehearsal Pianist

Alessandra Volpi

Youth Cast Stagers

Anaïs Chalendar

Kate Kastelnik

Nicole Koenig

Lydia McRae

Shabaz Ujima

Assistant Youth Cast Stagers

Madeleine Bean

Melissa Mangold

Dargan Swearingen

Backstage Youth Cast Stager Assistants

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Madeleine Bean

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Adam Crosslin

Che Clausen

Sydney Emeson

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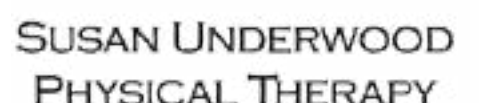
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Land Acknowledgement

As we share this space today, let us acknowledge the history and wisdom that the ground beneath our feet holds. We recognize that the land that is holding us is the ancestral and traditional Land of the Eastern Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Shawnee peoples, who today have nation boundaries in Oklahoma, after the Indian Removal Act of 1830 led to the forced removal of southern tribes west of the Mississippi River via the Trail of Tears, which weaves throughout this region. We also recognize the Yuchi tribal nation. As residents and culture bearers here now, we are connected to the Indigenous communities of this place through the land. We must honor the people and their history.

The foundation of this land acknowledgment was developed in collaboration with the 2021 Racial Equity in Arts Leadership cohort.

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