

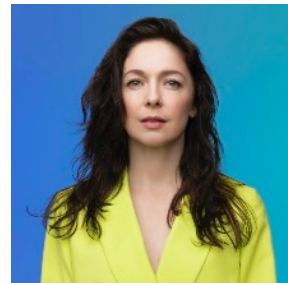
Fall 2024 news

an association of pre-professional companies — training dancers and shaping minds since 1966

Our Mission: To raise the standards of American ballet through education, performance, and community engagement

Artistic Directors Plan the 2024-2025 Season

The Ballet Alliance held its bi-annual membership meeting on September 15th via Zoom. Member company Artistic Directors forged plans to the further development of the organization, as well as the Evaluation process leading up to the annual Festival. The 2024-2025 panel of Festival Artistic Directors is made up of Nicholas Ade, CEO of Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet; Melody Mennite, choreographer, artist and dancer with Vitacca Ballet; and Lisa Slagle, master teacher, adjudicator and coach. Our artistic directors are looking forward to working with these knowledgeable and inspiring professionals throughout the season, and culminating in the annual Festival.



Festival Artistic Directors
Nicholas Ade, Lisa Slagle and Melody Mennite

Fall Takes Off With A Bustle Of Activity

Each Ballet Alliance member company has started their own season with a flurry of events: auditions, rehearsals, guest and resident choreographers at work, schools opening and settling into the rhythm of the fall session. Following is a peek into what some of our member companies have been up to lately.

Heartland Youth Ballet recently performed in an outdoor concert with the Omaha Symphony. It was exciting for the dancers to work with live music, to feel the energy from the orchestra and to adapt to tempos at a moment's notice. It was such an important experience for these young dancers.



HYB Artistic Director Rachel Vickery looks forward to sharing her dancers' experiences throughout the coming season!

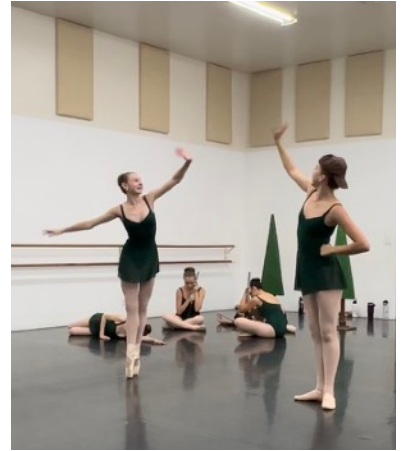


Idaho Regional Ballet has already hosted their annual fall gala, and had a company photo shoot at Château des Fleurs, shown above. Company dancers Kellen and Annie below, are grateful to have received scholarships at the 2024 TBA Festival from the Maple Peace Love Sunshine Fund, which enabled each of them to attend the Miami City Ballet summer intensive program.



Ballet Yuma is thrilled to be celebrating its 30th season this year!

At right, Ballet Yuma dancers rehearsing upcoming performances of "Peter and the Wolf" for their local outreach program into community schools. Below, the company in rehearsal for the Snow Scene, which will be presented in the company's 30th annual production of "The Nutcracker."



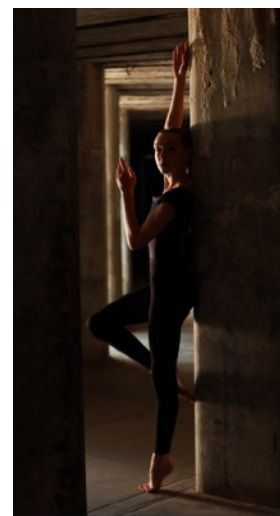
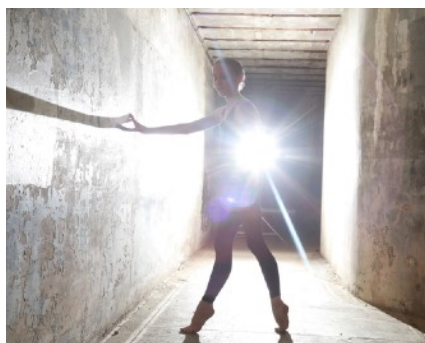
San Jose Dance Theatre is dedicated to providing its dancers a professional audition experience, even at a young age (aspiring dancers are pictured at right with director Brooke Wertwijn). SJDT is excited to have a live orchestra for their annual production which spans two weekends of performances.

The company set its prospective pieces for The Ballet Alliance Festival early in the season, one of which is pictured above in rehearsal.



Whidbey Island Dance Theatre had its yearly company photos taken at the historic Fort Casey, which was built with the intention to create a "triangle of fire" against invading ships.

WIDT had a huge turn out for "Nutcracker" auditions and they look forward to starting rehearsals the first of October.



WIDT is excited to host Eva Stone for an in-studio choreography workshop, as well as an acting workshop for the dancers to expand their stage presence during theatrical productions like "The Nutcracker."

Peninsula Dance Theatre

spent the last week of August with guest and resident choreographers, learning pieces to be evaluated for TBA. The two pieces are very different, but both challenging for the dancers.



PDT Artistic Directors Mallory Morrison and Nicole Cisler look forward to watching the dancers grow in each piece.



Columbia Dance students had the incredible opportunity to work with Sandra Jennings of the Balanchine Trust this September. Sandy instructed them in daily technique classes and taught them a portion of George Balanchine's "Serenade." Next up for Columbia Dance — in addition to "Nutcracker" preparations, they are readying themselves to perform excerpts of "Swan Lake" with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra this December.

Spring performance footage from "Swan Lake," in preparation for this year's excerpts with live orchestra, at right. Below, the company and Artistic Director Becky Moore with Sandra Jennings.



State Street Ballet Young

Dancers has been busy at work on its holiday shows, as well as setting new works for the Spring. A local Santa Barbara choreographer and SSBYD alumna has been setting her abstract modern work "Chronophobia," an award-winning piece with quirky choreography that showcases the company's diverse movement capabilities. A former State Street Ballet dancer set an ocean-inspired piece, utilizing the dancers' classical technique, as well as their own unique talents.



Central Indiana Dance Ensemble is already rehearsing pieces for Festival consideration, pictured here. Artistic Directors Ashley Jacobs and Casey Clark are looking forward to so many opportunities for the dancers at Festival 2025: scholarship to summer programs and college and universities, classes with outstanding faculty, and being inspired by other members companies at their performance.



Juline Regional Youth Ballet recently hosted "Ballet Buddy Day," a fundraising event for JRYB, pictured at left.



Below left and at right: the dancers in rehearsal for the "Nutcracker Sweet" performances, which will be held at the end of November.



4S Ballet has been working on setting the Snow Scene for their "Nutcracker," pictured here, and a company dancer and an alumna are creating new emerging choreography works for Festival consideration.



The company dancers recently had a Pas de Deux workshop with Lester Ramos and Friends, pictured at right.



Bay Area Youth Ballet began its season with two choreography workshops, pictured here. Two pieces were created by the guest choreographers during the workshops for Festival consideration. The dancers enjoyed working with each choreographer and exploring new movement styles. Company dancers were selected for casting and they look forward to performing at the next Festival!



Following auditions, Bay Area Youth Ballet welcomed 30 company dancers for the 2024-2025 season, and a "Nutcracker" cast of 70 dancers. BAYB is preparing their sixth annual holiday production.



Mid-Columbia Ballet started the season learning a new contemporary work for Festival consideration, pictured below in rehearsal. The company dancers have begun "Nutcracker" rehearsals and are also learning "Paquita." MCB recently held its season opening event, welcoming new parents into the fold and teaching them about the relationship between the for-profit school and non-profit MCB. The company dancers were invited to take company class with the the Grand Kyiv Ballet before a performance of "Don Quixote." The touring company is made up of professional Ukrainian ballet dancers and MCB was thrilled to join in their warm up class, which was taught almost in entirely in Russian.



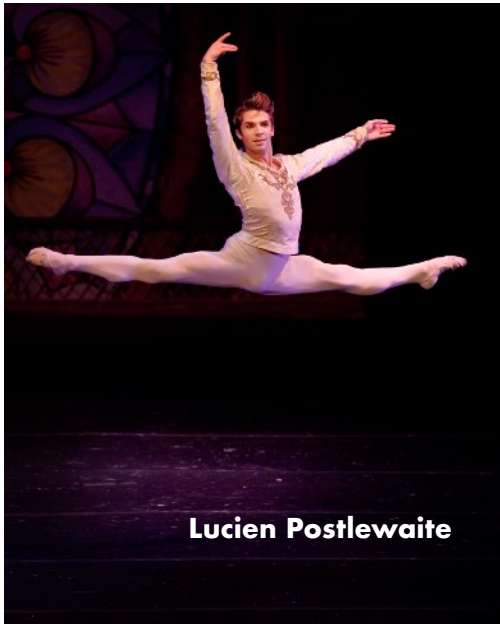
MCB dancers with the Grand Kyiv Ballet company dancers onstage, at right.



Santa Barbara Festival Ballet kicked off their "Nutcracker" season with auditions for their company dancers. Captured here are some sweet smiles amongst the nerves of the audition experience.



North Coast Ballet California held their season opener event "Tutus & Tapas," pictured here. The event includes a performance in which the Junior company dancers made their NCBC debut and graduating seniors each performed a variation from the classical repertoire. A silent auction with music by the local youth symphony bridged the day between two sold-out performances. Next the company will prepare for its 38th annual "Nutcracker" production.



Lucien Postlewaite



Eric Snyder

Featured Alumni

Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre alumnus Lucien Postlewaite is in his 21st season as a professional dancer, currently a principal with Pacific Northwest Ballet. He was the recipient of the Princess Grace Award in 2008 and also danced with Les Grand Ballets de Monte-Carlo 2012-2017. Photographed in "The Nutcracker" with SCBT by Lynne Owen. [@lucienpost](#)

Ballet Yuma alumnus Eric Snyder is currently a Junior Soloist with English National Ballet. Eric was a finalist in the Prix de Lausanne 2018 and winner of English National Ballet's Emerging Dancer Award in 2022. Shown above in "Fortitude," an emerging choreography piece by Lily Cong for Ballet Yuma, photographed at Festival 2018 by Scott Martinez. [@erishnikov](#)

Next Generation Spotlight



Joshua Burnham

is a direct product of The Ballet Alliance. Josh started his training with the school of Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre, then moved to eastern Washington and continued his training with Debra Pearse Rogo and Mid-Columbia Ballet. Upon graduation, Josh was a trainee with San Francisco Ballet and danced for six seasons with Cincinnati Ballet. He settled at Manassas Ballet, where he danced, taught in the school and was Ballet Master for twelve years. Josh retired from the stage last spring, returning home to Tri-Cities Washington. He now fills the crucial role of Associate Director of Mid-Columbia Ballet and teaches all levels at MCB's official school, Tri-Cities Academy of Ballet.

A snapshot of Josh's dancing life through the years, clockwise from top left: with Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre (TBA member from 1984-2024), making a guest appearance with SCBT at the age of 16 in Alan Hineline's "Sans Souci," as Prince Siegfried in MCB's "Swan Lake Act II," as the Nutcracker Prince in MCB's "Nutcracker," as Prince Siegfried in "Swan Lake" with Manassas Ballet, as Albrecht in "Giselle" with Manassas Ballet, in the Waltz of the Flowers from "Nutcracker" with MCB, as Albrecht in "Giselle" with Manassas Ballet, and once again as Prince Siegfried in "Swan Lake" with Manassas Ballet.



2024-2025 Professional Development and Ongoing Dancer Education

- **College and University Dance Program webinar** for dancers and parents took place early this fall, and featured recruiters from 13 universities, including Brigham Young University, Butler University, CPYB/Dickenson College, Florida State University, Indiana University/Jacob's School of Music, The Juilliard School, Point Park University, UC Irvine, University of Arizona, University of Oklahoma, University of Utah, Utah Valley University, Western Washington University.
- **Lynne Charles — 4Pointe:** Pre-Pointe seminar for Artistic Directors, following up on Festival 2024 4Pointe training for dancers
- **Seminar for Artistic Directors with Nicholas Ade,** CEO of Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet
- **Danscend Mental Wellness Seminar** — seminar for Artistic Directors and their faculty and staff. Topics: helping our students deal with stress and create a more positive internal dialogue, and cultivating more resilient dancers.
- **Dr. Darcy Lei — Seminar on hip flexor and leg extension:** in-person at Festival for dancers, and webinar for Artistic Directors prior to Festival