

30 BALLET CHICAGO

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE



THE NUTCRACKER

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MILLENNIUM PARK

balletchicago.org

THE NUTCRACKER

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ARTISTIC DIRECTION

Daniel Duell, Founder and Artistic Director
Patricia Blair, Associate Artistic Director and School Director
Ted Seymour, Resident Choreographer and Rehearsal Director
Kara DelGrosso, Children's Rehearsal Assistant
Emma Wittig, Children's Rehearsal Assistant

GUEST ARTISTS

Ahmad Hill* and Ted Seymour

BALLET CHICAGO STUDIO COMPANY

Leighton Baumgartner, Ellie Berger, Tyler Bianchi, Verity Blucher, Hannah Bueno de Mesquita, Veda Calhan, Noah Fenn, Valerie Hagedorn, Trevon Haggard, Lucy Hoy, Sofia Mae Hunt, Sofia Hutton, Brielle Jones, Leila Kantner, Mimi McKelly, Isabella Medina, Anne Muschenheim, Lucia Neibel-Spruill, Harlowe Ngo, Andrew Poston, Damon Ribka, Rachel Ross, Skylar Rutman, Quinn Rutman, Nikyle Scott, Caroline Stoughton, Nicole Van Eekeren, Nadya Wang-Lee, Abigail Welenc, D'Andre Williams, Patrick Williams, Emma Wittig

THE SCHOOL OF BALLET CHICAGO STUDENT DIVISION

Celeste Arevalo, Arsheen Baniassadi, Madeline Caron, Aurora Catenacci, Sofia Catenacci, Sarina Chaturvedi, Shaila Chaturvedi, Riya Chinnappan, Samantha Chorak, Jordan Chung, Lois Classen, Aditri Das, Evelyn Detrych, Natalie Dickler, Genevieve Drummer, Mila Eickhoff, Isla Garcia, Sophia Gassel, Eila Gnat, Harley Gorgas, Elizabeth Jarousse, Zarah Javed, Zoe Keenan, Mira Kindelsperger, Alice Li, Elissa Li, Quinnie Li, Noelle Liu, Amelia Mickelsen, Tate Million, Katelyn Park, Janelle Pelaez, Isabella Rossi, Camila Serna, Margot Shriner, Isabella Speh, Zoya Szidik, Caroline Tang, Arabella Vitale, Olivia Wolcott, Annika Zion

THE SCHOOL OF BALLET CHICAGO PREPARATORY DIVISION

Sophia Allen, Elaina Bankov, Lena Camic-Surdell, Annabel Caron, Emilia Catenacci, Pepper Dubuque, Adelyne Gonzalez, Kai Gorgas, Dante Medina, Margot Moy, Scarlett Saxton, Ruby Shapiro, Giovanna Wiewel, Sophia Yeh

THE TUTU SCHOOL CHICAGO

Imani Carrero, Rose Clouser, Ella Colon, Leah Dunn, Maya Egger, Greta Gerlach, Olivia Hansen, Isabella Hansen, Adeline Hill, Gwendolyn Hirschak, Ada Huff, Evie Huff, Dakota Hurt, Vesper Knook, Raven Kvietok, Alyssa Martin, Sawyer McCarter, Danielle Pak, Alina Perez, Leilani Perez, Noa Ramos, Ava Rueda, Aria Rueda, Aaliyah Sanders, Marlee Samson, Juliet Sergio, Maren Stanley, Madeline Streicher, Emmaline Weber

WALK-ON PARTY GUESTS

Josh Hunt, Bob Kennan, David Park, Steve Rossi

*Ahmad Hill performs courtesy of Deeply Rooted Dance Theater.

THE NUTCRACKER

DECEMBER 21ST AT 2:00 PM THE HARRIS THEATER

Music by Peter Illyich Tchaikovsky
Choreography and Staging by Daniel Duell and Patricia Blair
Children's Ballet Master - Ted Seymour

Act I - Prologue

Mrs. Stahlbaum.....YASSAFURA KUZHANBAYEVA
Dr. Stahlbaum.....NIKYLE SCOTT
Marie.....ARABELLA VITALE
Fritz.....EVELYN DETRYCH
Herr Drosselmeyer.....TED SEYMOUR
Maids.....SOFIA MAE HUNT and SOFIA HUTTON

Guests at the Home of Dr. and Mrs. Stahlbaum

Abigail Welenc and Josh Hunt, Ellie Berger and Damon Ribka,
Mimi McKelly and Patrick Williams, Verity Blucher and D'Andre Williams,
Nadya Wang-Lee and Trevon Haggard, Skylar Rutman

Children's March

ARABELLA VITALE

Celeste Arevalo, Elizabeth Jarousse, Zoe Keenan,
Katelyn Park, Zoya Szidik, Olivia Wolcott

Columbine Doll.....LEIGHTON BAUMGARTNER
Soldier Doll.....TATE MILLION

Little Dolls

Lena Camic-Surdel, Annabel Caron, Emilia Catenacci, Rose Clouser, Adelyne Gonzalez,
Isabella Hansen, Margot Moy, Danielle Pak, Noa Ramos, Aria Rueda,
Marlee Samson, Juliet Sergio

Marche Miniature

Arsheen Baniassadi, Aurora Catenacci, Madeline Caron, Sarina Chaturvedi,
Riya Chinnappan, Isla Garcia, Amelia Mickelsen, Elissa Li, Camila Serna, Caroline Tang

Children's Gallop

SOFIA CATENACCI and EVELYN DETRYCH

Samantha Chorak, Lois Classen, Natalie Dickler, Mila Eickhoff, Sophia Gassel,
Harley Gorgas, Eila Gnat, Zarah Javed, Mira Kindelsperger, Alice Li,
Margot Shriner, Isabella Speh

Act I - Dream

Nutcracker.....AHMAD HILL
Mouse King.....DAMON RIBKA

Soldiers

*Veda Calhan, Lucy Hoy, Noelle Liu, Isabella Medina, Tate Million,
Harlowe Ngo, Katelyn Park, Olivia Wolcott*

Mice

*Hannah Bueno de Mesquita, Noah Fenn, Trevon Haggard, Brielle Jones, Leila Kantner,
Rachel Ross, D'Andre Williams, Patrick Williams*

Little Mice

*Sophia Allen, Elaina Bankov, Imani Carrero, Leah Dunn, Greta Gerlach, Kai Gorgas,
Olivia Hansen, Adeline Hill, Vesper Knook, Raven Kvietok, Alyssa Martin,
Sawyer McCarter, Dante Medina, Emily Pak, Alina Perez, Leilani Perez,
Ava Rueda, Ruby Shapiro, Maren Stanley, Sophia Yeh*

* * * *

Act I - Land of Snow

Snow Pas de Deux.....CAROLINE STOUGHTON and ANDREW POSTON

Waltz of the Snowflakes

*Leighton Baumgartner, Ellie Berger, Verity Blucher, Valerie Hagedorn, Sofia Mae Hunt,
Sofia Hutton, Mimi McKelly, Lucia Neibel-Spruill, Skylar Rutman, Nicole Van Eekeren,
Nadya Wang-Lee, Abigail Welenc*

INTERMISSION

Act II - Land of the Sweets

Angels

*Arsheen Baniassadi, Madeline Caron, Aurora Catenacci, Sarina Chaturvedi,
Riya Chinnappan, Jordan Chung, Lois Classen, Aditri Das, Isla Garcia, Eila Gnat,
Amelia Mickelsen, Elissa Li, Quinnie Li, Janelle Pelaez, Camila Serna,
Caroline Tang, Annika Zion*

Sugarplum Fairy.....EMMA WITTIG
Her Cavalier.....NIKYLE SCOTT

Sugarplum Attendants

*Verity Blucher, Valerie Hagedorn, Sofia Mae Hunt, Sofia Hutton,
Leila Kantner, Lucia Neibel-Spruill*

Hot Chocolate

NADYA WANG-LEE and ANDREW POSTON

Coffee

MIMI MCKELLY

Tea

ELLIE BERGER

Ukranian Babka

AHMAD HILL

Trevon Haggard, Damon Ribka, D'Andre Williams, Patrick Williams

Marzipan

CAROLINE STOUGHTON

Veda Calhan, Lucy Hoy, Isabella Medina, Harlowe Ngo, Katelyn Park, Olivia Wolcott

Polichinelles

ARABELLA VITALE

*Celeste Arevalo, Arsheen Baniassadi, Aurora Catenacci, Sofia Catenacci, Lois Classen,
Shaila Chaturvedi, Samantha Chorak, Eveyln Detrych, Natalie Dickler, Mila Eickhoff,
Sophia Gassel, Harley Gorgas, Eila Gnat, Elizabeth Jarousse, Zarah Javed, Zoe Keenan,
Mira Kindelsperger, Noelle Liu, Isabella Rossi, Margot Shriner, Isabella Speh, Zoya Szidik*

Waltz of the Flowers

LEIGHTON BAUMGARTNER

Skylar Rutman and Abigail Welenc

*Ellie Berger, Verity Blucher, Valerie Hagedorn, Lucy Hoy, Sofia Mae Hunt, Sofia Hutton,
Leila Kantner, Lucia Neibel-Spruill, Nicole Van Eekeren, Nadya Wang-Lee*

Grand Pas de Deux

EMMA WITTIG and NIKYLE SCOTT

*Choreography for the Grand Pas de Deux by
George Balanchine © The George Balanchine Trust*

Finale

Full Company

*This performance of the Grand Pas de Deux from George Balanchine's The Nutcracker,
a Balanchine® Ballet, is presented by arrangement with The George Balanchine Trust and has been
produced in accordance with the Balanchine Style® and Balanchine Technique® Service standards
established and provided by the Trust.*

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THE NUTCRACKER

ACT ONE

When the curtain rises, we are in the Stahlbaum home. Dr. and Mrs. Stahlbaum, their young daughter Marie, and their son Fritz are preparing for their annual holiday party – a festive gathering for relatives and close friends, but most of all, a party for the children.

The children arrive with their parents as the doors open. All rejoice at the large, lighted tree, and the children speculate about what is in the package. While everyone greets each other, puzzling things begin to occur – the lights flicker and build to a frenzy, it's almost as though there's a lightning storm in the grand parlor. Then, at the door, an eerie glow fills the portal and a mysterious old gentleman appears. We soon learn that the gentleman is none other than Marie's beloved godfather, Herr Drosselmeyer. He is a marvelous inventor of moving toys, and he has brought with him magical gifts. Drosselmeyer brings out a large Nutcracker and gives it to Marie. He shows everybody how it works and Marie is delighted with her present. Drosselmeyer conjures life-size magic dolls that perform for the guests, after which the children dance, and all receive wonderful presents.

Dr. Stahlbaum and his wife perform a final dance. As the party ends, the guests shake hands solemnly, reluctant to say goodnight to each other, hoping that they will meet again soon. Everyone goes off to bed, the room darkens, and only by the lights of the Christmas tree can we make out the empty space. It is midnight. Marie has fallen asleep with her Nutcracker. Drosselmeyer enters and sends Marie wondrous dreams of dancing mice, a battle between a fearsome Mouse King and the Nutcracker (now life-sized) and a magical forest with a Snow King and Queen and their dancing snowflakes.



ACT TWO

When the curtain rises, Marie's dream has taken us to a magical Land of Sweets. Angels glide about the stage. The Sugarplum Fairy, who rules this land, makes a regal entrance. She dances a charming variation and welcomes a full assortment of delightful dancing treats: Hot Chocolate, Coffee, Tea, Caviar, Marzipan, Polichinelles, and a bouquet of sparkling, jeweled flowers. Next, Marie enters and meets the Sugarplum Fairy, who asks Marie how she came to be in this magical place. Marie relays, in pantomime form, that on Christmas Eve, after a grand and glorious party, she dreamt of tiny mice and a fight between the Mouse King and the Nutcracker Doll. Defending her Nutcracker, she threw her slipper at the King of Mice, magically dispatching him with one mighty throw. The mysterious Drosselmeyer then rewarded her with this extraordinary journey. The Sugarplum Fairy congratulates Marie and escorts her to a place where she can watch the entertainment that has been arranged for her pleasure.

Marie watches a series of dances by the denizens of the Land of Sweets. When they are finished, the Sugarplum Fairy and her Cavalier perform the grandest dance of all. All return for a spirited finale as the Sugarplum Fairy, her Cavalier and Marie bid everyone farewell.



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ARTISTIC DIRECTION

Daniel Duell

**Founder and Artistic Director, Ballet Chicago
Repetiteur, The George Balanchine Trust**



Ballet Chicago Artistic Director Daniel Duell is a leading figure in the development of American Classicism and is passionate about advancing ballet technique in its purest and most energetic form. As a dancer with the New York City Ballet from 1972 to 1987, he was taught and coached daily by George Balanchine. Rising quickly through the ranks, Mr. Duell was promoted to Soloist in 1977 and then to Principal Dancer in 1979. He performed a wide-ranging repertoire, including leading roles in ballets by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Peter Martins, and Jacques d'Amboise, among others, and danced in several works created specifically for him.

A Ford Foundation Scholarship recipient from the age of 13, Mr. Duell trained with the Dayton Civic Ballet and The School of American Ballet. At 19, he was invited to join NYCB. In addition to his fifteen years at NYCB, he was a featured guest artist for numerous companies nationwide and appeared in several PBS Dance in America public television programs.

Mr. Duell has been choreographing since 1980 and has created works for Ballet Chicago, Ballet Hispanico of New York, Dayton Ballet, Harkness Dance Theatre, The Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and The School of American Ballet. He also collaborated with WTTW Channel 11 in Chicago to design two programs: an Emmy Award-winning special (Outstanding Cultural Programming) on Ballet Chicago, and Love in Four Acts, showcasing four Chicago choreographers selected by Mr. Duell. He received the prestigious Ruth Page Award from the Chicago Dance Community for his artistic direction of The Ballet Chicago Studio Company.

A frequent lecturer on ballet, music, and the arts, Mr. Duell also serves on several nonprofit and advisory boards and has been an adjudicator for the National Endowment for the Arts and The Illinois Arts Council. He is a renowned répétiteur for The George Balanchine Trust and stages ballets across the United States.

In addition, Mr. Duell conducts master classes in both the United States and Europe, including repeated engagements at The School of American Ballet, Indiana University at Bloomington, The University of Iowa, and the Bulgarian National Dance Academy in Sofia, Bulgaria. He has taught and coached the Royal Danish Ballet Company in preparation for their New York seasons and Copenhagen performances of Balanchine/Stravinsky masterworks. He returned to The School of American Ballet to teach in March 2019 and also taught company class to the New York City Ballet during their March 2024 residency in Chicago.

ARTISTIC DIRECTION

Patricia Blair

Associate Artistic Director, Ballet Chicago

School Director, Ballet Chicago

Répétiteur, The George Balanchine Trust



Patricia Blair was born in New York City and began studying ballet at the age of 7. She launched her professional performing career at 17. She trained at various schools, including the North Carolina School of the Arts and Harkness House for Ballet Arts, but credits her summer at The School of American Ballet with igniting her passion for and commitment to the Balanchine Technique®. While at North Carolina School of the Arts, she was honored to dance the role of Myrtha in *Giselle* alongside principal dancers Svea Ekloff (Grande Théâtre de Genève) and Burton Taylor of American Ballet Theatre.

After leaving NCSA, she returned to NYC, studied with Wilhelm Burman, David Howard, and Nanette Charisse, and joined the Eglevsky Ballet under the direction of NYCB former principal Edward Villella. Six years later, while still dancing full-time with the company, she became one of the organization's Ballet Masters.

Ms. Blair performed as a guest artist, developing new works with numerous NY choreographers, danced in musical theater productions across the US and on Broadway, and briefly entered the LA motion picture world with *Pavanne for a Dying Princess*, a solo dance film created especially for her.

Highly committed to the artistic education and personal well-being of young dancers, Ms. Blair began working with children at the age of 15. Her dedication to classical ballet and passing it on to young artists remains one of her greatest passions. In the late 70s and early 80s, she volunteered to teach at-risk youth in East Harlem, in both churches and community centers. She also taught at Steps NY and Harkness House for Ballet Arts.

Ms. Blair moved to Chicago in September 1987 at the invitation of Daniel Duell to stage ballets for Chicago City Ballet's fall season. After just three weeks of working together, Mr. Duell invited her to relocate to Chicago and join his artistic team.

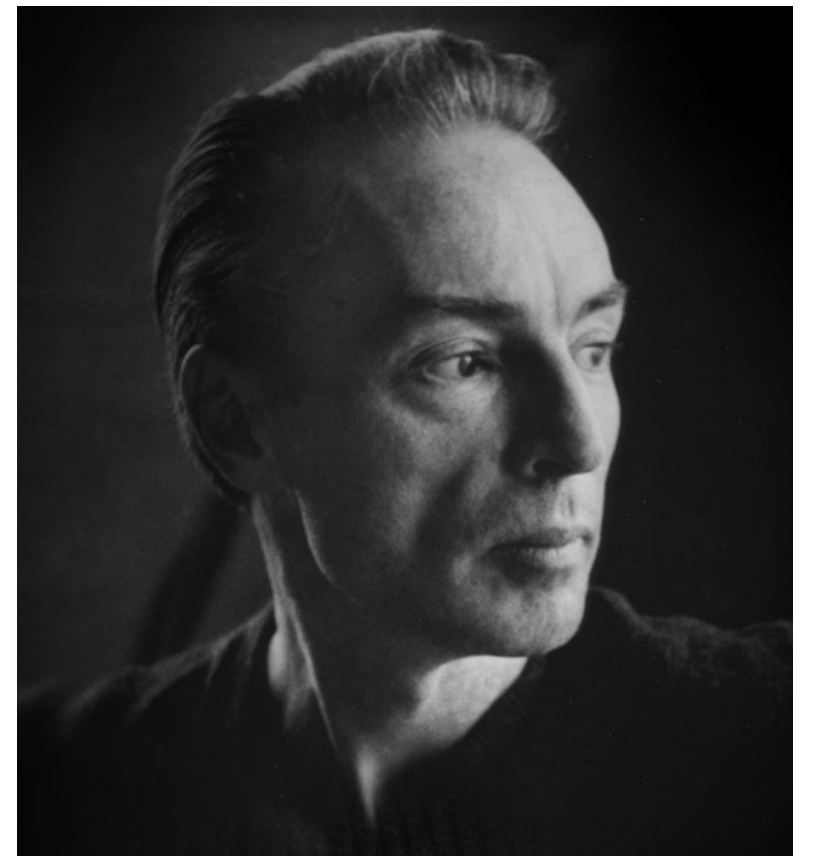
Later that year, they founded Ballet Chicago. Ms. Blair has served in many capacities—teacher, répétiteur, ballet master, and administrator—and now shares all aspects of artistic and administrative management with Mr. Duell.

In addition to her work with Ballet Chicago, she has been a guest teacher for Carolina Ballet, St. Louis Ballet, Ballet Idaho, Pacific Northwest Ballet School in Seattle, National Dance Institute, New Mexico School of the Arts in Santa Fe, and Indiana University in Bloomington. She has also had the honor of teaching at The School of American Ballet in New York City.

Ms. Blair has a lifelong love for the ballets of George Balanchine. She values both the privilege of having performed many of them and the joy of passing them on to today's dancers. As a répétiteur for The George Balanchine Trust, she is responsible for staging and maintaining a large body of work for Ballet Chicago and has also staged Balanchine's ballets for St. Louis Ballet, Indiana University Bloomington, and Huntsville Ballet.

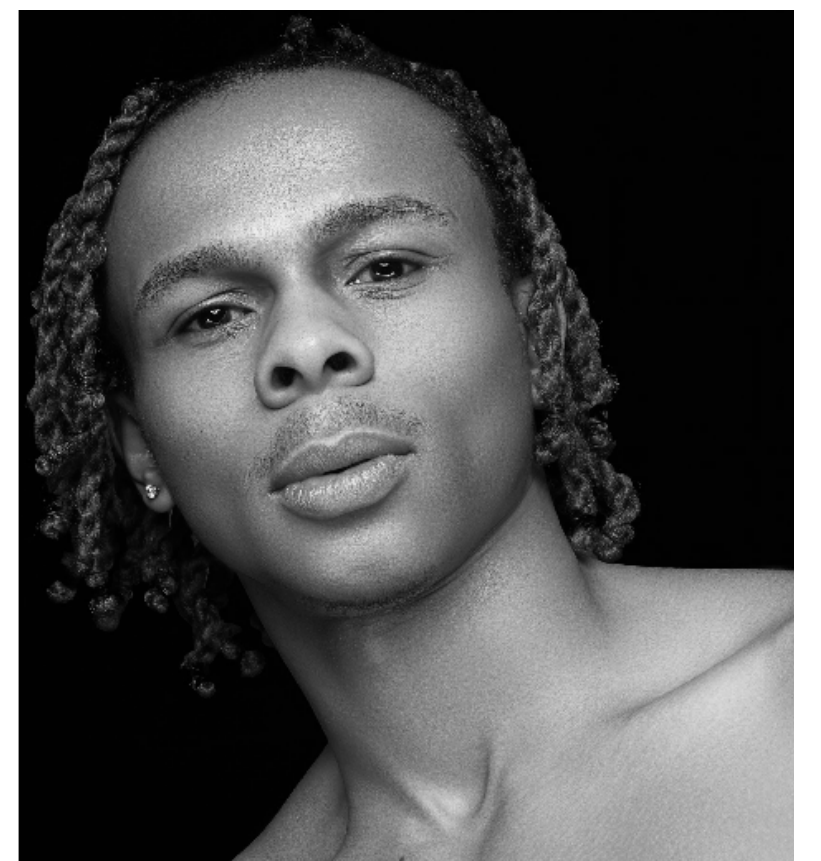
ARTISTIC DIRECTION & GUEST ARTIST

George Balanchine **Choreographer, Sugar Plum Pas de Deux**



Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, George Balanchine (1904-1983) is regarded as the foremost contemporary choreographer in the world of ballet. He came to the United States in late 1933, at the age of 29, accepting the invitation of the young American arts patron Lincoln Kirstein (1907-96), whose great passions included the dream of creating a ballet company in America. At Balanchine's behest, Kirstein was also prepared to support the formation of an American academy of ballet that would eventually rival the long-established schools of Europe. A major artistic figure of the twentieth century, Balanchine revolutionized the look of classical ballet. Using classicism as his base, he heightened, quickened, expanded, inverted, and streamlined the fundamentals of the 400-year-old language of academic dance. This had an inestimable influence on the growth of dance in America. Although at first his style seemed particularly suited to the energy and speed of American dancers, especially those he trained, Balanchine's ballets are now performed by major classical ballet companies throughout the world. The George Balanchine biography information provided courtesy of the New York City Ballet.

Ahmad Hill **Guest Artist,** **Nutcracker, Snow King, Ukranian Babka**



Ahmad Hill (Chicago, IL) started dancing through the dance ministry of St. Mark Methodist Church and then trained with Russell Talbert until he was accepted to Chicago High School for the Arts (ChiArts). A meeting with Kevin Iega Jeff led Ahmad to the summer program with Deeply Rooted Dance Theater (DRDT) where he also met guest instructor Kevin Thomas who invited him to apprentice with his company, Collage Dance Collective. He also worked with Joshua Ishmon's project-based company, Production: COLORS, before returning to DRDT where he performed works such as Heaven, Church of Nations, When Men, and Flack. Ahmad danced for GreeneWorks Project directed by Terrence Greene. He performed the lead in Greene's Coming of the King and assisted Greene in setting his work Empathy on Ahmad's alumni school ChiArts. Ahmad also joined Ballet Austin II, during his time spent there, he's performed Steven Mills's version of The Nutcracker as the Nutcracker Prince, as well as the Lead Male in Paquita.

GUEST ARTIST

Ted Seymour Guest Artist, Herr Drosselmeyer



Ballet Chicago alumnus Ted Seymour brings a wealth of unique experience to the teaching of young dancers. After beginning his training at Dallas Metropolitan Ballet, Mr. Seymour studied on full scholarship for two years at the School of Ballet Chicago, where he performed major roles in Balanchine masterpieces with the Ballet Chicago Studio Company (BCSC). He then continued his studies at the School of American Ballet, also on full scholarship. Following his graduation performance, where he took on the demanding partnering role of "Waltz Boy" in Balanchine's *Serenade*, Mr. Seymour joined Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet for two years, working with prominent contemporary choreographers such as Nicolo Fonte, Edwaard Liang, and Benoit-Swan Pouffer. In 2007, he was invited to join The Suzanne Farrell Ballet, where he has performed featured roles in many Balanchine works, including *Episodes*, *La Valse*, and the beautiful Act II pas de deux from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

A gifted teacher from an early age, Mr. Seymour joined the Ballet Chicago faculty in 2009. His teaching is characterized by a deep understanding of classical vocabulary, a passion for precise execution, innate musical comprehension, a strong commitment to both expansive movement and meticulous detail, and formidable partnering skills. As a brilliant dancer still in his performing years, Mr. Seymour demonstrates male technique with clarity and flair.

Mr. Seymour is also a rising choreographer and began creating dances in 2001 for Ballet Chicago. While a student at SAB, he was invited by Peter Martins to participate in the New York Choreographic Institute. He has steadily created new works for the Ballet Chicago Studio Company's main stage performances and educational programs, showcasing a distinctive voice and an innovative, elegant movement vocabulary that blends contemporary movement with a classical foundation.

Mr. Seymour recently completed several critically acclaimed works, including *Creatures of Prometheus* for the 2012 International Beethoven Festival, *Celestial Rites* for Ballet Chicago's 25th Anniversary Season at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance in 2013, *Danzón No. 2* to the music of Arturo Márquez, commissioned by and performed live with Chicago's Lakeview Orchestra in April 2014, and *Intermezzi*, a world premiere performed with live piano at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance in May 2014. Mr. Seymour was named Resident Choreographer for Ballet Chicago in Fall 2012.

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For more information on how you can support Ballet Chicago and enjoy exclusive donor benefits, contact Kylie Gutierrez, Development Manager, at 312-251-8838 or kgutierrez@balletchicago.org.

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THE NUTCRACKER

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Thank you to our generous performance sponsors

December 13, 2024 7pm
Rachael Pontikes and Bob Keenan

December 20, 2024 7pm
Don and Carina Markel

December 14, 2024 2pm
Level 5 Families

December 21st 2pm
Lee Ann and Andrew Jarousse

December 14, 2024 7pm
Lee Ann and Andrew Jarousse

December 21st 7pm
Level 5 Families

December 15, 2024 2pm
Don and Carina Markel

December 22, 2024 2pm
Rachael Pontikes and Bob Keenan

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Party Scene
Bernice and David Park

Snow
Kipphut-Ngo Family

Snow
Jennifer Kucich

Thank you to our generous character sponsors

Baby Mouse
Anonymous
Bryan and Rachel Allen
Barbara J. Kerr

Angel
Margaret Hughes
Jorge Gonzalez
Momei Qu

Sugarplum Fairy
Leslie Stoughton
Marzipan Sweet
Wolcott Family

Snow Queen
Anonymous
Marie
Lisa Vitale

For more information on how you can support Ballet Chicago, contact
Kylie Gutierrez, Development Manager, at 312-251-8838 or kgutierrez@balletchicago.org.

DANIEL DUELL
Artistic Director
Founder

PATRICIA BLAIR
Associate Artistic Director
School Director

DANCER SALUTES



Caroline Tang

Caroline Tang

Caroline: you shine bright in all you do and we can't wait to see you in the spotlight on stage! We are so excited to watch you perform two beautiful roles in the Nutcracker, and will be cheering you on!

Love: Mommy, Daddy, Connor, Nainai

Riya Chinnappan

To Our Darling Riya, Seven years ago, you twirled into our lives and now you grace the world with your love for dance. I see how hard you work, your courage when you stumble and your resilience when you rise again, stronger than ever. You remind us that beauty is in the effort and magic happens when you dance with our heart. Whether you dance before thousands or in the quiet corners of your heart, we will always be your most devoted audience. Your hard work inspires, your passion ignites and your spirit soars higher than any grand jete. Dance on, our love, for the world is your stage and you are its brightest star.

Love Mama, Dada, and Ariyan

Mila Eickhoff

Mila, Congratulations on another beautiful Nutcracker season with our friends and mentors at Ballet Chicago! We love watching you shine on stage!

Cheers to a fabulous 2024 season of amazing performances!

We LOVE you! Mumma, Dada & Ellister



Riya Chinnappan

BALLET 30 CHICAGO

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DANIEL DUELL
Artistic Director
Founder

PATRICIA BLAIR
Associate Artistic Director
School Director

DANCER SALUTES



Katelyn Park



Arabella Vitale

Katelyn Park

Katelyn, you amaze us each day with your determination and love for ballet! We enjoy watching you grace the stage every year! May all your performances be filled with joy! We love and support you always,
The Park and Garcia Families

Arabella Vitale

Arabella, we are so very proud of you, and celebrate you and your amazing journey! You have overcome so much in these last few years. Your passion, dedication, and hard work for ballet is incredible and admirable. Keep reaching for your dreams and making them come true!
With much love,

Nicole Van Eekeren

Congratulations to the Ballet Chicago dancers and staff on another incredible Nutcracker season! Nicole, I am so proud of your hard work, passion and dedication year after year!!

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DANIEL DUELL
Artistic Director
Founder

PATRICIA BLAIR
Associate Artistic Director
School Director

DANCER SALUTES



Zoe Keenan



Olivia Wolcott

Zoe Keenan

Congratulations Zoe! We are so proud of you.
Love, Mom & Dad

Olivia Wolcott

Olivia, we are so proud of all the hard work and joy you put in to ballet!
We love you, Mom, Dad and Michael

Sophia Allen

We love you, Sophia! We're so proud of you. We're sure that someday you'll live your dream of playing Marie, but for now we know you'll be an amazing baby mouse! Don't throw your slipper at the Mouse King!
-Love, Mom, Dad, and William

Caroline Stoughton

We are so proud of you, Caroline! You light up the stage every time you step onto it. We are so impressed with your dedication and passion for ballet. You're going to have a great Nutcracker season!

DANIEL DUELL
Artistic Director
Founder

PATRICIA BLAIR
Associate Artistic Director
School Director

DANCER SALUTES



Brielle Jones

Congratulations, to our daughter, Brielle! Watching you perform warms our hearts, and makes us smile. We are proud to be your parents. With every leap every delicate movement it show cases your dedication and love of ballet. Your hard work truly shows on stage, We want you to know the world is waiting for you to use it as your stage and to perform with elegance in every stride. We love you!

“We are so proud of the hard work and dedication of our dancers!”

From the Level 5 Parents



Level 5 Dancers

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Gift of Dance

Every year, Ballet Chicago shares the magic of ballet through our **Gift of Dance** program by donating tickets to our performances, including *The Nutcracker* and our Spring Series: *Balanchine + Beyond*.

This weekend, we are proud to welcome patrons from the following organizations:

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Cradles to Crayons Chicago
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KEEN Chicago
Make-a-Wish Illinois
Mercy Home for Children
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Tickets for Kids
Urban Gateways Chicago
VetTix

If you would like to help us bring the joy of ballet to even more patrons, please donate to our **Gift of Dance** program or underwrite ticket donations for future performances by reaching out to Kylie Gutierrez (kgutierrez@balletchicago.org).

Additionally, if you know of a nonprofit organization that would like to attend our spring performance on May 10, 2025, we'd love to hear from you!

Please contact Sharyn Pulling (spulling@balletchicago.org) to learn more.
Together, let's make ballet accessible to all!

For more information on how you can support Ballet Chicago contact Kylie Gutierrez at 312-251-8838 or kgutierrez@balletchicago.org.

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A Special Salute to our Masterworks Society Members

Masterworks Society Members provide critical annual funding for the scholarships and opportunities that are available to the young people who train here. The generosity of these donors enable our dancers to perform the Nutcracker and Spring Series performances on professional stages for audiences numbering in the thousands.

We are grateful for their enduring support.

Stephen Arnold and Laurie Bauman
Sarah Baumgartner
Joyce Chelberg
Jennifer Cormier
Michael and Melinda Dickler
Philip and Marsha Dowd
Daniel Duell and Patricia Blair
Sonia Florian
Megan Hasse
Josh Hunt and Brooke Kelley
Lee Ann and Andrew Jarousse
Terrance and Margi Johnson
Diana and Chris Kantner
Mahima Keswani, MD and Vivek Chaturvedi, MD
Jennifer Kucich
Ellen and Steven Mannos
Donald and Carina Markel
Michael Mendes and Wendy Berry
Patrick Myers, MD and Bree Andrews, MD
Hugh Park Jedwill
Rachael Pontikes and Robert Keenan
Charles Richard
Stephen and Ellen Rossi
Alex and Jyothi San Juan
Ravi Shah
Leslie and Sean Stoughton
Jessica Strang, PsyD and Andrew Strang

For more information on how you can support Ballet Chicago contact Kylie Gutierrez at
312-251-8838 or kgutierrez@balletchicago.org.

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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

Celebrating Artistic Excellence

We gratefully acknowledge our donors during this past year.

January 1, 2024 to December 4, 2024

\$25,000+

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Happy Holidays

Ravi P. Shah and his colleagues at McNally Capital are proud to support Ballet Chicago!

We wish all the dancers, faculty and staff a
Happy Holidays!

30 BALLET CHICAGO

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

*Ballet Chicago extends a special thanks to
Philip and Marsha Dowd for their continued support of*

The Philip and Marsha Dowd Merit Scholarship Program

The Philip and Marsha Dowd Merit Scholarship Program was established in 2002 through a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. Dowd. The Merit Scholarship Program offers tuition assistance to gifted students and supports world-class faculty members, répétiteurs, and guest teachers. Many of the students you see on stage are part of the Scholarship Program. Philip and Marsha Dowd have generously offered to match all donations dollar for dollar up to \$60,000 annually.

We gratefully acknowledge our donors to the Dowd Merit Scholarship during this past year.
January 1, 2024 to December 4, 2024

\$25,000+

Artistic Directors Circle

Philip and Marsha Dowd

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Choreographers Circle

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BALLET 30 CHICAGO

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

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Jacob Snodgrass, Technical Director
Jesus Chavez, Production Assistant
Corrine Budris, Wardrobe
Isla Ireland, Wardrobe

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

Sara Giroux
Pahola Ramos

30 BALLET CHICAGO

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

WINTER INTENSIVE

for Advanced, Intermediate, and Junior Dancers

Thursday -- Saturday 10AM to 4PM

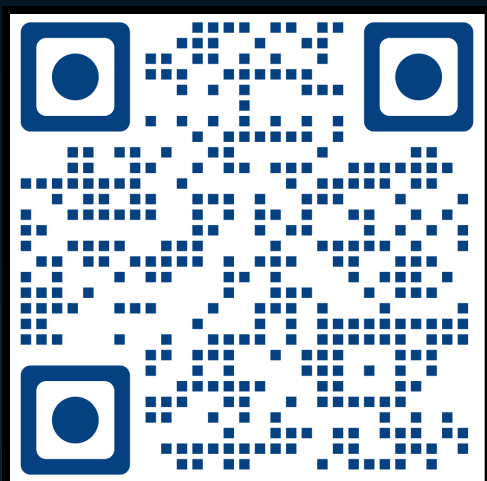
Sunday 10AM to 11:30AM

January
2nd-5th
2025

Get ready for audition season with Ballet Chicago!

Our Winter Intensive offers rigorous, multidimensional classes designed to prepare serious dancers for audition success.

The curriculum includes Technique, Men's Technique, Pointe, Pilates, Stretch, Body Conditioning, and a Dancer Wellness Seminar with Endeavor Health.



REGISTER AT [BALLETCHICAGO.ORG/WINTERINTENSIVE](https://balletchicago.org/winterintensive)



BALLET 30 CHICAGO

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Associate Artistic Director
School Director

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DCASE and The Chicago Cultural Center	Sugarbliss
Deeply Rooted Dance Theater	Toon in with MeTV
Harris Theater for Music and Dance	Tutu School Chicago
Kendra Scott Jewlery	University Center
Susan Holiday	University Club of Chicago
	Wear Moi - Justine Pouzens

BALLET CHICAGO PARENT VOLUNTEERS

A very special thank you to all of the volunteers who have worked on this production. Your time, energy, and dedication play an essential role in making Nutcracker 2024 a success.

From sewing costumes and organizing the donation booth to working backstage and ensuring the dancers are dressed for the stage, your efforts make all the difference. You manage to work tirelessly with grace, positivity, and a true sense of teamwork. The faculty and staff of Ballet Chicago are grateful for the strong community that surrounds and uplifts our dancers every day. Thank you all for being an integral part of the Ballet Chicago family!

30 BALLET CHICAGO

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

NATIONAL AUDITION TOUR 2025

**5 WEEK SUMMER
INTENSIVE PROGRAM**

6/23-7/25

**2 WEEK ADVANCED
REPERTORY WORKSHOP**

7/28-8/8

**PRE-PROFESSIONAL
ANNUAL PROGRAM**

2025-2026



**PRE-REGISTER AT
[BALLETCHICAGO.ORG/AUDITION-TOUR](https://balletchicago.org/audition-tour)**

DANIEL DUELL
Artistic Director
Founder

PATRICIA BLAIR
Associate Artistic Director
School Director

About Ballet Chicago

Co-founded in 1987 by acclaimed New York City Ballet Principal dancer Daniel Duell, and former ballerina Patricia Blair, Ballet Chicago is an internationally recognized training program. The school curriculum is based on the ballet technique established by George Balanchine, the 20th century's most celebrated choreographer. Ballet Chicago is dedicated to providing each student superior ballet training in a culture that fosters personal growth, and is known for its ability to transform dancers through highly focused guidance, correction, and validation for each student.

ANNUAL PROGRAMS

PREPARATORY DIVISION

Ballet Chicago's Preparatory Division classes provide an inspired introduction to the arts with a focus on creativity, group interaction, motor skill development and the joy of self-expression.

- Tiny Dancers (ages 3 - 5) - Sessions
- Creative Movement (ages 3 - 4)
- Introduction to Ballet (age 5 - 7)

STUDENT DIVISION

The School of Ballet Chicago offers a comprehensive training environment that provides students with the skills necessary to pursue a career in classical ballet and inspires each of them to reach their very best potential through the study and discipline of classical ballet. The technique taught at The School is based on standards established by George Balanchine and emphasizes the energy, musicality, articulation, and generosity of spirit that is the hallmark of Balanchine trained dancers.

- Ballet 1 (ages 7 & 8) - no audition required
- Ballet 2 - audition required
- Ballet 3 - audition required
- Ballet 4 - audition required
- Ballet 5 - audition required

PROFESSIONAL DIVISION

The Professional Division offers a comprehensive training program for the serious student who aspires to be a professional dancer. Admittance to the program is by audition only. The students in the program train daily to master advanced technical skill, consistency, musicality, articulation, and natural expression. To provide performing experience that is a critical component to the student's development, the Ballet Chicago Studio Company was created in the fall of 1997. Composed of advanced level students, The Ballet Chicago Studio Company performs professional level repertoire in theatrical venues throughout metropolitan Chicago. The company repertory consists primarily of the works of George Balanchine, whose ballets are performed by dance companies all over the world. This unique opportunity to perform the ballets of Mr. Balanchine is made possible through a special arrangement with the George Balanchine Trust.

- Ballet 6 (ages 14 and up) - audition required
- Ballet 7 (ages 15 and up) - audition required
- Ballet 8 (ages 16 and up) - audition required

Contact Sharyn Pulling at spulling@balletchicago.org or visit balletchicago.org for more information.

30 BALLET CHICAGO

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE



Register Now for Spring 2025 Sessions!
Visit balletchicago.org/tiny-dancers.

This series introduces children ages 3-5 to ballet through a structured progression of movement that emphasizes physical creativity and group interaction. Classes meet once a week for five weeks.



Each session 5-week encourages imagination and self-expression while introducing children to basic ballet movements and musical concepts. Parents are encouraged to enroll their tiny dancers in consecutive sessions to build their confidence and strength before registering them for our more formal year-round courses.

DANIEL DUELL
Artistic Director
Founder

PATRICIA BLAIR
Associate Artistic Director
School Director

Ballet Chicago Summer Programs



Photo by Ron McKinney Photography

Professional Training

Ballet Chicago Boot Camp (June 16 - 20, 2025)

A one week "get in shape" workshop that prepares dancers for summer training programs.

Summer Intensive (June 23 - July 25, 2025)

Ballet Chicago's five-week Summer Intensive offers the serious ballet student an unparalleled training experience. Our comprehensive curriculum includes Ballet Technique, Pre-Pointe, Pointe, Repertory, Men's Technique, Pilates, Stretch Classes, Modern (Horton and Graham), Spanish dance, and Pas de Deux (upper levels only).

Advanced Repertory Workshop (July 28 - August 8, 2025)

Ballet Chicago's two-week Advanced Repertory Workshop, focusing on ballets of George Balanchine, is a perfect complement to our five-week Summer Intensive. Dancers immerse themselves in learning a complete ballet during the program.

Curriculum: Technique, Pointe, Men's Technique, Pas de Deux and Repertory, with supplemental classes in Stretch and Pilates. Learning and perfecting repertory is a key element of this workshop. Students are coached daily to gain the skill, musicality, and self confidence that enable



Photo by Margaret Najarian

Children's Programs

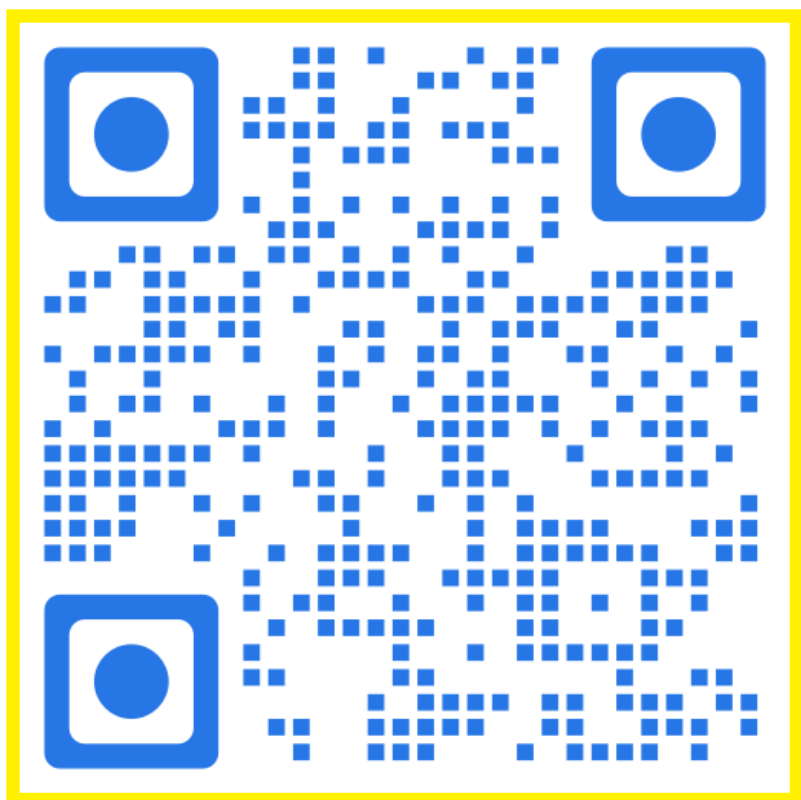
Junior Intensive (June 16 - 20, July 28 - August 1, August 4 - 8, 2025)

We believe that all students deserve the opportunity to develop their technical abilities and explore their creativity. Ballet Chicago's Junior Intensive Program provides students the foundation necessary to excel in both areas. We inspire them to cultivate beautiful posture, teach them how to combine purity of form with individual expressiveness, and show them how to increase focus for their minds and their bodies. Both in the classroom and in performance, Ballet Chicago builds technique, artistry, awareness and self-confidence.

The Junior Intensive curriculum includes Ballet Technique, Repertoire, Modern Dance, and Classical Spanish Dance, Body Conditioning and Stretch classes. Two class levels are available; placement is based on age, amount of training, and level of advancement. Additionally, pointe and pre-pointe classes are available for those enrolled in Level B.

Tiny Dancers (5 week sessions beginning Spring 2025)

This series introduces children ages 3-5 to ballet through a structured progression of movement that emphasizes physical creativity and group interaction. Classes meet once a week for five weeks. Each session encourages imagination and self-expression while introducing children to basic ballet movements and musical concepts. Parents are encouraged to enroll their tiny dancers in consecutive sessions to build their confidence and strength before registering them for our more formal year-round courses.



balletchicago.org/annualprograms

Contact Sharyn Pulling at spulling@balletchicago.org or visit balletchicago.org for more information.

BALLET 30 CHICAGO

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

DANIEL DUELL
Artistic Director
Founder

PATRICIA BLAIR
Associate Artistic Director
School Director

Ballet Chicago alumni are spanning the globe
and excelling in their careers!

Since 2001, when our first students began branching out on their own, they have joined companies, attended universities, become professional dancers, teachers, choreographers, actors and designers, doctors, lawyers, writers, business professionals in many areas, and most of all, wonderful human beings. We are proud of each and every one of them and are honored to have helped them on their way.

DANCE COMPANIES JOINED

Alabama Ballet
American Ballet Theatre II
American Repertory Ballet
Ballet Austin
Ballet Austin II
Ballet Idaho
Ballet Magnificat
Ballet Memphis
Ballet Met
Ballet Nebraska
Ballet NY
Ballet Spartanburg
Ballet St. Polten
Balletto Del Sud
Carolina Ballet
Cedar Lake Ensemble
Charleston Ballet Theatre
Cincinnati Ballet
City Ballet of San Diego
Colorado Ballet

Columbia City Ballet
Company C
Continuum Contemporary Ballet
Dallas Opera
Dance Theatre of Harlem
Festival Ballet
Georgia Ballet
Grand Rapids Ballet
Introdans
Jessica Gaynor Dance
Kansas City Ballet
Les Grands Ballets Canadiens
Los Angeles Ballet
Louisville Ballet
Lyric Opera of Chicago
Madison Ballet
Mama Mia/Las Vegas
Miami City Ballet
Milwaukee Ballet
Milwaukee Ballet II
Minnesota Ballet

Minnesota Dance Theatre
Nashville Ballet
New Mexico Ballet Co.
New York City Ballet
Oakland Ballet
Oklahoma City Ballet
Orlando Ballet
Pacific Northwest Ballet
Pennsylvania Ballet
Pennsylvania Ballet II
Quad Cities Ballet
Richmond Ballet
River North Dance Chicago
Royal Danish Ballet
Sacramento Ballet
Sophia Opera Ballet
Stattstheater Schwerin
St. Louis Ballet
Suzanne Farrell Ballet
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Bard College
Brigham Young University
Butler University
Columbia University
Cornell University
DePaul University
Duguesne University
Duke University
Fordham University
Georgetown University
Harvard University
Indiana University,
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John Marshall Law School
Loyola University
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Middlebury College
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New York University
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Yale University

"I am Lucie Richard, and I have been a ballet dancer for 15 years, with the past three as a student at the School of American Ballet in New York City. My journey began when I was two years old at Ballet Chicago, inspired by my older sister's love for dance and the school. From that early age, Ballet Chicago's remarkable Balanchine-based training and nurturing environment shaped who I am as a dancer and a person, cultivating my skills, discipline, and artistry and paving the way for me to follow my dreams at SAB."

Lucie Richard, School of American Ballet

"I could have never made it this far without the foundation I gained at The School of Ballet Chicago. I am forever indebted and grateful."

Lara O'Brien, Principal Dancer, Carolina Ballet