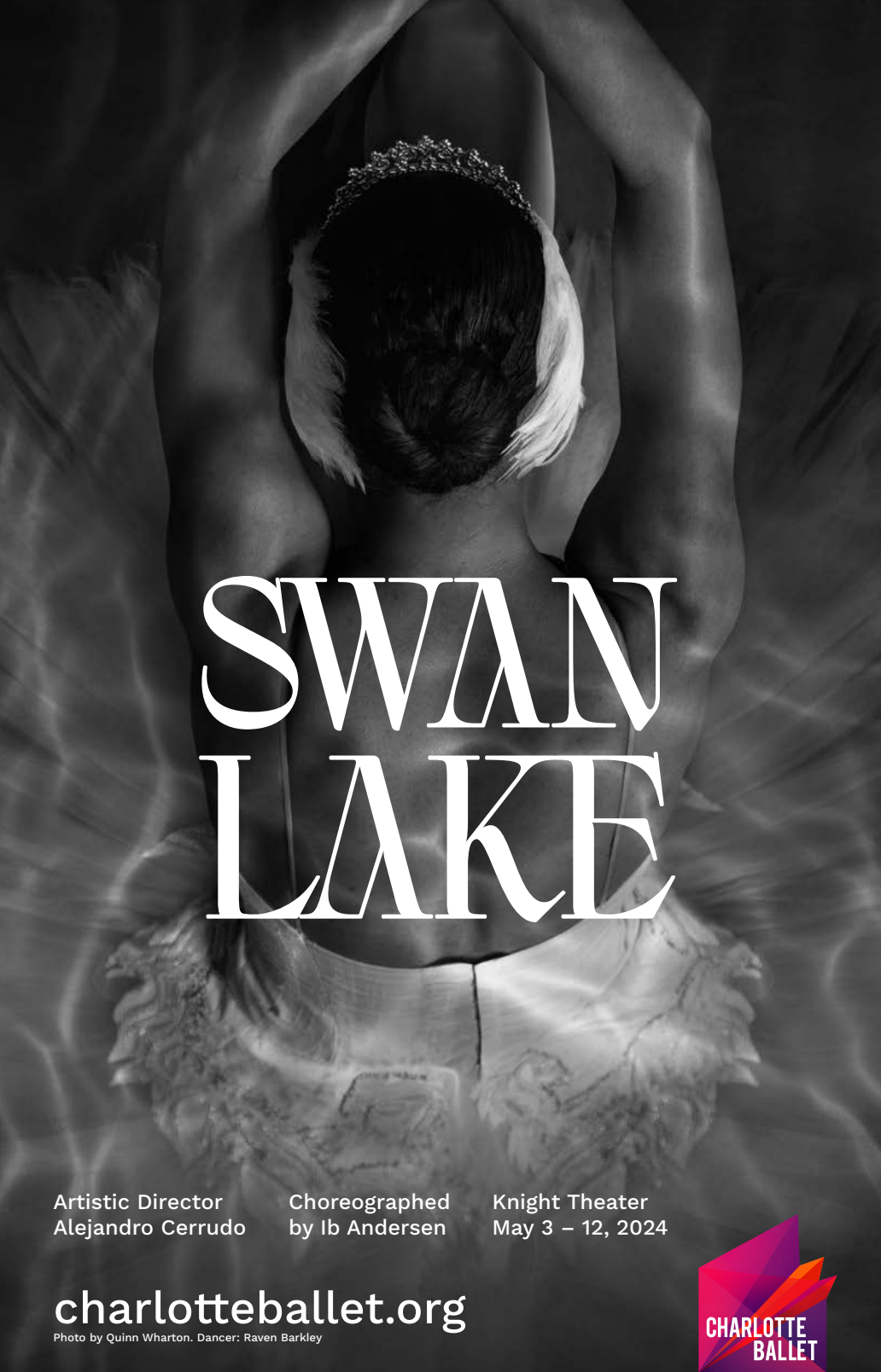




SWAN LAKE

Artistic Director
Alejandro Cerrudo

Choreographed
by Ib Andersen

Knight Theater
May 3 – 12, 2024

charlotteballet.org

Photo by Quinn Wharton. Dancer: Raven Barkley





SWAN LAKE

Alejandro Cerrudo
Artistic Director

Douglas Singleton
Executive Director

Robert Lindgren
Founder

CHARLOTTE BALLET

Isaac Aoki ▪ Raven Barkley ▪ Luke Csordas ▪ Lorenzo Dunton
Ashley Eleby ▪ Isabella Franco ▪ Mario Gonzalez ▪ Ben Ingel
James Kopecky ▪ Rees Launer ▪ Anna Mains ▪ Maurice Mouzon Jr.
Oliver Oguma ▪ Remi Okamoto ▪ Anna Owen ▪ Humberto Ramazzina
Samantha Riester ▪ Evelyn Robinson ▪ Shaina Wire

CHARLOTTE BALLET II

Izonna Chaires ▪ Liam Colclough ▪ Elaina da Fonte ▪ Bridget Fox
Pierce Gallagher ▪ Karsen Gresham ▪ Clay Houston ▪ Roan Zaragoza

CHARLOTTE BALLET PRE-PROFESSIONAL DIVISION TRAINEES

Amelia Ackles ▪ Bella Assante ▪ Christopher Bartlett ▪ Aneliese Benson
Samuel Carper ▪ Hannah Cherry ▪ Magnolia Chesney ▪ Violet Dubreuil ▪ Maile Fitzgerald
Delaney Hart ▪ Mia Ignacio ▪ Emily Jodka ▪ Addison Koerner ▪ Marisol Lockhart
Annalise Maciejewski ▪ Carol Mahan ▪ Addie Mitcham ▪ Lucy Newell ▪ Sofia Niebuhr
Caleb Olenick ▪ Abigail Otte ▪ Gabriel Roush ▪ Chloe Smith

STUDENT PERFORMERS FROM CHARLOTTE BALLET ACADEMY®

*The performance by the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra for this production is made possible
by gifts from Susan and Loy McKeithen & Jane and Hugh McColl.*



SWAN LAKE

Charlotte Ballet's presentation of *Swan Lake* is a tribute to Dale Halton, whose belief in the transformative power of ballet was unparalleled.

As we partake in tonight's performance, we reflect on her passion and wish she could have joined us in this special moment.

Sponsored by:

Deloitte.

Support is also provided by:

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation endowment for Charlotte Ballet, investing in the acquisition of master works and the creation of new works.

Special thanks to:



Infusion Fund
A Partnership for Arts + Culture



Dancers flip roles – pun intended.

Dancers flip roles for our choreographic workshop series: FLIP. Dancers take the lead at the front of the room to choreograph and coordinate new works. This series offers Dancers an opportunity to refine choreographic skills and develop new understandings of all the efforts that go into producing performances. This series focuses and uplifts the artists that live in Charlotte – giving them an opportunity to creatively thrive in the Queen City.

CHOREOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP: FLIP



Center for Dance | June 6–8, 2024

CHARLOTTEBALLET.ORG

Photo by Quinn Wharton. Dancer: Andrés Trezevant.

SWAN LAKE

A message from Charlotte Ballet's Artistic Director

Dear Audience,

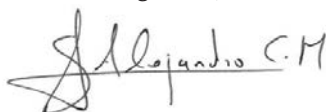
Many of us may remember being read to before drifting off to dreamland as a child. Often we heard fairy tales, stories of good and evil. Sometimes there were dark forces to contend with, but there was always comfort in knowing you were safe in the storyteller's embrace.

It is with great pleasure that we are able to present you with the story of *Swan Lake*. It is one of the most iconic classical ballets of all time. Many will recognize the music by Tchaikovsky, and perhaps you know the tragic love story of Odette and Prince Siegfried, but now our dancers get to perform *Swan Lake* for you for the first time in Charlotte Ballet's history! This was an organization wide effort, and I am so proud of our artistic and production teams, the staff, the Academy and our dancers, for all their hard work. It is one of the most demanding ballets, and our dancers perform it with poise, strength, stamina and grace.

It is with much gratitude to Susan and Loy McKeithen and Jane and Hugh McColl that we are able to enjoy *Swan Lake* with live music from the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, which adds a tremendous dimension to the experience. Their generous gifts will provide live music for this production and more in the coming seasons.

Now after much anticipation, it is finally time for our dancers to take the stage. Let yourself be transported by this enchanting tale of sorcery, deception and undying love. I invite you to leave the outside world behind, and fully immerse yourself in the Charlotte Ballet's telling of *Swan Lake*. For everyone should experience such timeless beauty.

Con gratitud,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alejandro C.M.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alejandro Cerrudo
Artistic Director

SWAN LAKE

Choreography by Ib Andersen after Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov

Repetiteur: Maria Simonetti

Performed in partnership with Charlotte Symphony Orchestra

Conducted by Gavriel Heine

Music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Scenic and Prop Design by Jay Depenbrock, courtesy of Cincinnati Ballet

Costumes courtesy of Ballet Arizona

Additional Principal Costumes courtesy of Atlanta Ballet

Lighting Design by Michael Korsch

Associate Lighting Design by Jenni Propst

Act I

Prince Siegfried and his friends are celebrating his 21st birthday in the palace gardens when his mother, the Queen, arrives to present her son with a crossbow as a gift. The Queen reminds Siegfried of his duty to choose a bride and marry, but he replies that there is no one with whom he is in love. The Prince's mother and friends leave him in a melancholy mood. He is heartened when a flock of swans fly overhead, and he chases.

Act II

Siegfried is hunting in the forest when he encounters Von Rothbart, an evil sorcerer who is the ruler of this enchanted place. Frightened, Siegfried prepares to shoot when Odette, Queen of the Swans, arrives in time to come between him and Von Rothbart. Odette explains how Von Rothbart has transformed her and her friends into swans, except between the hours of midnight and dawn when they resume their human forms. The only way to break this evil spell is if a man promises to marry her and never love another. Siegfried swears his faithfulness. After affirming their love, Odette and Siegfried are interrupted by Von Rothbart. It is dawn and Odette, and her friends fall under the spell of the wicked sorcerer, leaving Siegfried alone in the forest.

INTERMISSION

Act III

The Queen has arranged a ball in honor of her son in the hopes that he will choose a bride from among the royal guests. After dancing with several prospective brides, Siegfried tells his mother he will not marry any of them since he loves only Odette. Von Rothbart arrives with his daughter, Odile, whom he has transformed into the likeness of Odette. Rothbart hopes to trick Siegfried into promising to marry Odile, thereby keeping his spell on Odette unbroken. The guests from foreign lands dance a Spanish dance, a Hungarian czardas, a lively Neapolitan dance and a Polish mazurka. While dancing with Odile, Siegfried is enchanted by Von Rothbart's creation. As Siegfried swears eternal love to Odile, a vision of Odette appears, but it is too late. The Prince's oath is Von Rothbart's triumph, and the scene ends with Siegfried tormented by the agony of guilt.

Act IV

In despair, Odette arrives at the lakeside to tell her friends of Siegfried's betrayal. Siegfried finds Odette among the swans and begs her forgiveness. Although Odette forgives Siegfried, she realizes that their love is doomed. Von Rothbart gathers a storm in hopes to separate the lovers, but Odette breaks away to leap into Siegfried's arms for one last embrace. Torn between her love for Siegfried and the power of Von Rothbart, Odette ultimately succumbs to the powers of evil. Faced with the reality that Odette will forever remain a swan, Siegfried collapses, brokenhearted.

CASTING

M = Matinee, E = Evening, SF = Sensory Friendly, ED = Educational
Casting subject to change. Scan here for the most up to date casting.



The performance will run for 2 hours and 17 minutes including a 20 minute intermission.

Act I

Odette/Odile	Evelyn Robinson (3E, 5M, 8SF, 10ED, 11E) Isabella Franco (4M, 9ED, 10E, 12M) Angelica Generosa (4E, 9E, 11M)
Prince Siegfried	Oliver Oguma (3E, 5M, 8SF, 10ED, 11E) Lorenzo Dunton (4M, 9ED, 10E, 12M) Daniil Simkin (4E, 9E, 11M)
Von Rothbart	James Kopecky (3E, 5M, 8SF, 10ED, 11E) Mario Gonzalez (4M, 9ED, 10E, 12M) Maurice Mouzon Jr. (4E, 9E, 11M)
Queen Mother	Ayisha McMillan Cravotta (3E, 4E, 9, 11M) Heather Ferguson (5M, 10E, 12M) Jamie Dee Clifton (4M, 11E)
Court	(3E, 5M, 8SF, 10ED, 11E) Karsen Gresham & Luke Csordas, Remi Okamoto & Isaac Aoki, Anna Owen & Liam Colclough, Shaina Wire & Rees Launer, Raven Barkley & Maurice Mouzon Jr., Anna Mains & Mario Gonzalez (4M, 9ED, 10E, 12M) Samantha Riester & Humberto Ramazzina, Remi Okamoto & Isaac Aoki, Bridget Fox & Liam Colclough, Shaina Wire & Luke Csordas, Raven Barkley & Maurice Mouzon Jr., Anna Mains & James Kopecky (4E, 9E, 11M) Elaina da Fonte & Humberto Ramazzina, Remi Okamoto & Isaac Aoki, Izonna Chaires & Liam Colclough, Karsen Gresham & Rees Launer, Raven Barkley & Mario Gonzalez, Anna Mains & James Kopecky
Pas de Trois	(3E, 5M, 8SF, 10ED, 11E) Bridget Fox, Humberto Ramazzina & Samantha Riester (4M, 9ED, 10E, 12M) Karsen Gresham, Rees Launer & Anna Owen (4E, 9E, 11M) Bridget Fox, Luke Csordas & Anna Owen
Servers	Victoria Perez** & Elyn Jenkins** (3E, 5M, 11E) Avery Johnson** & Mileigh Davis** (4M, 10E, 12M) Lily Chen** & Elyn Jenkins** (4E, 9E, 11M)
Page	Russell Abel** (3E, 4E, 5M, 9E, 11M, 11E) Connor Jackson** (4M, 10E, 12M)
Ladies in Waiting	Victoria Dubreuil* (4M, 4E, 5M, 8SF, 9E, 10E, 11M, 11E, 12M), Abigail Otte*, Addison Koerner*, Annalise Maciejewski* (3E), Chloe Smith*, Mia Ignacio*

CASTING

M = Matinee, E = Evening, SF = Sensory Friendly, ED = Educational
Casting subject to change. Scan here for the most up to date casting.

The performance will run for 2 hours and 17 minutes including a 20 minute intermission.



Pause

Act II

Odette/Odile, Prince Siegfried, Von Rothbart

Cygnets	Samantha Riester, Bridget Fox, Shaina Wire, Elaina da Fonte
Tall Swans	Remi Okamoto, Anna Owen, Karsen Gresham, Raven Barkley
Swans Corps	Hannah Cherry*, Ashley Eleby, Bella Assante*, Addie Mitcham*, Mia Ignacio*, Anna Mains, Annalise Maciejewski*, Izonna Chaires, Maile Fitzgerald*, Sofia Niebuhr*, Chloe Smith*, Addison Koerner*, Violet Dubreuil*, Marisol Lockhart*, Magnolia Chesney*, Delaney Hart*

INTERMISSION

ACT III

Odette/Odile, Prince Siegfried, Von Rothbart and Queen Mother

Master of Ceremonies	Roan Zaragoza (3E, 5M, 8SF, 10ED, 11E) Gabriel Roush* (4M, 4E, 9ED, 9E, 10E, 11M, 12M)
Ladies in Waiting	Phoebe Gray* (3E), Abigail Otte*, Addison Koerner*, Annalise Maciejewski* (3E)
Court Ladies	(3E, 4E, 5M, 9E, 11M, 11E) Katherine Phoebe Gray**, Elyn Jenkins**, Caylin Hayes**, Sophia Gruber**, Isabelle Wierzbicki**, Zoe Deitemeyer** (4M, 10E, 12M) Lola Boothe**, Mileigh Davis**, Amia Socolovsky-Holl**, Kate Campbell**, Arabel Garofalo**, Ansley Johnson**
Fiancees	(3E, 4E, 5M, 8SF, 9E, 10ED, 11M, 11E) Elaina da Fonte, Izonna Chaires, Ashley Eleby Delaney Hart*, Hannah Cherry*, Sofia Niebuhr* (4M, 9ED, 10E, 12M) Elaina da Fonte, Izonna Chaires, Ashley Eleby Delaney Hart*, Hannah Cherry*, Maile Fitzgerald*

CASTING

M = Matinee, E = Evening, SF = Sensory Friendly, ED = Educational
Casting subject to change. Scan here for the most up to date casting.



The performance will run for 2 hours and 17 minutes including a 20 minute intermission.

Spanish Dance

(3E, 5M, 8SF, 10ED, 11E)

Karsen Gresham & Maurice Mouzon Jr., Anna Owen & Isaac Aoki
(4M, 9ED, 10E, 12M)

Karsen Gresham & Maurice Mouzon Jr., Samantha Riester & Isaac Aoki
(4E, 9E, 11M)

Karsen Gresham & Clay Houston, Anna Owen & Isaac Aoki

Czardas

(3E, 5M, 8SF, 10ED, 11E)

Shaina Wire & Mario Gonzalez with

Maile Fitzgerald* & Caleb Olenick*, Amelia Ackles* & Gabriel Roush*
Bella Assante* & Clay Houston, Lucy Newell* & Christopher Bartlett*
(4M, 9ED, 10E, 12M)

Shaina Wire & James Kopecky with

Sofia Niebuhr* & Caleb Olenick*, Amelia Ackles* & Roan Zaragoza
Magnolia Chesney* & Clay Houston, Lucy Newell* & Christopher Bartlett*
(4E, 9E, 11M)

Shaina Wire & James Kopecky with

Maile Fitzgerald* & Caleb Olenick*, Amelia Ackles* & Roan Zaragoza
Bella Assante* & Samuel Carper*, Lucy Newell* & Christopher Bartlett*

Neapolitan Dance

Samantha Riester & Lorenzo Dunton (3E, 4E, 5M, 8SF, 9E, 10ED, 11M, 11E)
Anna Owen & Oliver Oguma (4M, 9ED, 10E, 12M)

Mazurka

Bridget Fox & Humberto Ramazzina, Anna Mains & Liam Colclough,
Remi Okamoto & Rees Launer, Raven Barkley & Luke Csordas

Swan Silhouette

Elaina da Fonte

Pause

ACT IV

Odette/Odile, Prince Siegfried, Von Rothbart and Swans

*Member of Pre-Professional Program

**Student from Charlotte Ballet Academy

LEADERSHIP



Alejandro Cerrudo / Artistic Director

Alejandro Cerrudo was born in Madrid, Spain. His professional career includes work with Victor Ullate Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theater 2 and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago (HSDC). Cerrudo became HSDC's first-ever resident choreographer in 2008 and held that position until 2018.

Cerrudo's body of work has been performed by over 20 professional dance companies around the world. Honors include an award from the Boomerang Fund for Artists (2011) and the Prince Prize for Commissioning Original Work from the Prince Charitable Trusts (2012) for his acclaimed, first evening-length work, "One Thousand Pieces." In 2014 he was awarded the USA Donnelley Fellowship by United States Artists. Also, Cerrudo was one of four choreographers invited by New York City Ballet's Wendy Whelan to create and perform original duets for "Restless Creatures." In 2017 Cerrudo was invited by Daniil Simkin to choreograph a site-specific performance for the Guggenheim Rotunda, a Works & Process Rotunda Project commission, featuring Daniil Simkin and original costumes by Dior. Cerrudo's "Sleeping Beauty," created with Ballet Theater Basel in 2016, was nominated as "Production of the Year" in Switzerland in the "Tanz, Jahrbuch 2016" by the Neue Zürcher Zeitung.

In 2020 Cerrudo was appointed Pacific Northwest Ballet's first-ever resident choreographer. Independently, he directed and choreographed his show, "It Starts Now," which premiered 2020 at The Joyce Theater in New York. In 2022, Cerrudo was appointed Artistic Director of Charlotte Ballet.



Douglas Singleton / Executive Director

Doug Singleton's passion for dance began at Spoleto Festival USA with a performance of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. After graduating from the College of Charleston, he moved to New York City and spent over five years traveling with the Ailey company. While in New York, he was the producing manager for the premiere performances of Complexions Contemporary Ballet, led by Dwight Rhoden and Desmond Richardson, and worked with dance luminaries such as Judith Jamison, Masazumi Chaya, Jerome Robbins, Garth Fagan, Elisa Monte and Lar Lubovitch.

Doug joined Charlotte Ballet in 1996. Now in his 17th year as the company's Executive Director, Doug has led Charlotte Ballet through a period of transformational growth and international attention. During his tenure, he has partnered with many community leaders to establish the Reach Program, allowing every child the opportunity to train for dance as a career. He also successfully completed multiple campaigns to enhance the brand and repertoire as well as established a permanent home at the Patricia McBride & Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux Center for Dance in the heart of Charlotte's vibrant Uptown. During this period, Charlotte Ballet made its first-ever appearances at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC and the Joyce Theater in Manhattan with long awaited returns to American Dance Festival as well as Jacob's Pillow under the artistic leadership of Hope Muir.



Yarina Conners / Director of Artistic Operations

Yarina Conners began her non-profit arts management career at The Cleveland Orchestra in 2008, managing all operations of three youth choruses, in addition to working with the renowned Cleveland Orchestra Chorus. From 2010-2016, Yarina worked as Senior Operations Manager at Classical Movements, a premiere concert touring company located in historic Old Town Alexandria in Virginia. While at Classical Movements, Yarina arranged orchestral tours for The Minnesota Orchestra, Cincinnati

Symphony Orchestra, and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. She also arranged international and national tours for choral ensembles and produced an international choral festival in Washington, DC. Joining the artistic planning team at The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland in 2016, Yarina served as Artistic Administrator for the programming department. Focusing specifically on the operational and administrative aspects of the presenting program, Yarina played a key role as the liaison for the artistic planning team with the various departments of The Clarice. In January 2022, Yarina joined the Charlotte Ballet as Director of Artistic Operations. Yarina emigrated from Moscow, Russia in 1994 to Cleveland, Ohio and earned her Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music in 2008. After spending ten years in the Washington, DC area from 2010-2020, her family relocated to Charlotte in December 2020. Yarina currently resides in South Charlotte with her family.

**Ana Lopez / Rehearsal Director**

Ana Lopez began her formal training at Conservatorio de Danza Diputacion de A Coruña. Upon graduating Isaac Diaz Pardo High School, she continued her training at Centro Internacional de Danza Carmen Roche. Lopez danced with Joven Ballet Carmen Roche, with Compañía Nacional de Danza 2 in works by Nacho Duato and Tony Fabre, and Ballet Theater Munich under the directorship of Philip Taylor.

From 2008 to 2019 she danced with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago where she performed works by choreographers such as Jiri Kylian, Mats Ek, Ohad Naharin, Crystal Pite, William Forsythe, Jorma Elo, Alejandro Cerrudo, and many others. She was named one of Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch" in 2012, and in 2017, she was invited to perform in Daniil Simkin's "Falls the Shadow", a site-specific work choreographed for the Guggenheim Rotunda and commissioned by Work & Process. She has been acting as Assistant to the Choreographer and Stager for Alejandro Cerrudo for over a decade, setting his works in companies all over the world. In 2022, she helped stage several works at Charlotte Ballet and is excited to work with the dancers and the rest of the organization further.

**Alicia Delgadillo / Rehearsal Director**

Alicia Delgadillo began her career with Hubbard Street 2 and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. She was a founding member of PARA.MAR Dance Theatre in 2020 and later joined Gibney Company as an Artistic Associate from 2021-2023. Delgadillo has collaborated with a wide array of choreographers and institutions, including Crystal Pite, Ohad Naharin, Alejandro Cerrudo, The Art Institute of Chicago, and The Second City.

She graduated with Honors from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program where she was able to foster her passion for arts outreach through JUNTOS Collective, a non-profit dance outreach organization. She has taught through residencies with NYU Tisch School of Dance and Bard College, and also served as Artistic Coordinator for Hubbard Street Summer Intensive, Company Manager and Guest Rehearsal Director for PARA.MAR Dance Theatre, and has produced various artistic projects.



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CHOREOGRAPHER AND ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTORS



Ib Andersen / Choreographer

Ib Andersen Ib Andersen's career performing on the world's greatest ballet stages led him to become the Artistic Director of Ballet Arizona and The School of Ballet Arizona in 2000. Born in Copenhagen, he began his journey in ballet at the Royal Danish Ballet, where he rose to become its youngest principal dancer at age 20. Joining New York City Ballet in 1980, Andersen became popular for his mastery of Balanchine's style, leading to principal roles in several notable ballets. His choreographic talent emerged in 1987 with "1-2-3—1-2" for the Royal Danish Ballet, foreshadowing a prolific career beyond the stage. Transitioning from NYCB to Ballet Arizona, Andersen's direction infused the company with a blend of classical and contemporary repertoire, earning national recognition for groundbreaking works like "Diversions" and "Topia." His 2012 premiere of "Cinderella" and subsequent New York debut at the Joyce Theatre showcased Andersen's choreographic prowess, applauded by esteemed publications like The New York Times. Under Andersen's leadership, Ballet Arizona thrived, culminating in the 2016 presentation of "Round" at the Desert Botanical Garden, which drew praise from critics like Alastair Macaulay, who proclaimed in his review that Ballet Arizona is '...one of the most enterprising companies anywhere,' affirming the company's status as a beacon of innovation.



María Simonetti / Repetiteur

A native of Buenos Aires, Ms. Simonetti trained as a dancer at Teatro Colón and danced with La Joven Guardia of Ballet Nacional de Cuba before becoming assistant to Laura Alonzo and regisseur (stage director) for Cuballet. She was on the faculties of the Magda Aunon School of Ballet, Pittsburgh's Point Park College, and the Baltimore School for the Arts before becoming Ballet Mistress for the esteemed Hubbard Street Dance Chicago in 1995. As assistant to choreographer Daniel Ezralow, she helped create the multi-media production *Mandala* for a South American tour; *Torino Notte di Stelle*, an arts special for Italian national television (RAI Uno); choreography for Pope John Paul II's celebration of International Youth Day; and *Aeros*, an innovative showcase for the Romanian National Gymnastics Team. On her own, Simonetti staged *Lady Lost Found* for the Bratislava Dance Theatre in Slovakia and the pas de six from Bournonville's *Napoli* for the National Ballet of Greece. She became Rehearsal Director for Ballet Arizona in 1997, but continues her active career as a visiting artist. She returns to Hubbard Street Dance Chicago every summer as a guest teacher, and was engaged in 2006 in a similar role by Montreal's Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. In the 2014-2015 season, Simonetti and Ib Andersen staged Andersen's acclaimed production of *Romeo & Juliet* with Kansas City Ballet as the finale of that company's 50th-anniversary season. Most recently Simonetti was a guest teacher for Nederlands Dans Theater.



Michael Korsch / Lighting Designer

Michael Korsch is a lighting, projection and scenic designer based in Philadelphia, PA, where he earned his BA in theatre from Temple University. He has worked with numerous directors and choreographers, creating hundreds of visual designs for dance, theatre and other live performances throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, as well as New Zealand. Michael has been the resident lighting designer for Complexions Contemporary Ballet since 1998, and Ballet Arizona since 2001. In addition, Michael has created designs for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theatre, Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Backhausdance, BalletMet, Ballet Nice Méditerranée, Ballet West, BalletX, Carolina Ballet, Charlotte Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Cleveland Play House, Czech National Ballet, DanceBrazil, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, Disney Creative Entertainment, English National Ballet, FELA! The Concert, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, MOMIX, Oakland Ballet, Philadelphia Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Royal Danish Ballet, Sacramento Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Staatsballett Berlin, and Washington Ballet among others.



Gavriel Heine / Conductor

U.S.-born Gavriel Heine is one of the most sought-after conductors of ballet today. A graduate of the Moscow Conservatory, he was a resident conductor of the Mariinsky Theatre for 15 years, where he led over 850 performances (both in St. Petersburg and on 14 international tours) before resigning in April 2022 in protest over the war in Ukraine. While at the Mariinsky, classics such as *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker*, *Paquita*, *Raymonda*, *La Bayadère*, *Cinderella*, and *Romeo and Juliet* ran exclusively under his direction. He has been Music Director of Northern Lights Festival Opera in Minnesota since 2011.

Heine has guest conducted for Opéra de Paris Ballet (*Don Quixote*), the Royal Ballet (*Swan Lake*), New York City Ballet (*Nutcracker*), Boston Ballet (*Romeo and Juliet*), Béjart Ballet (*Firebird, Bolero*), State Ballet of Georgia (*Romeo and Juliet, Serenade, Concerto Barocco, Mozartiana*), United Ukrainian Ballet (*Giselle*), the Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet (*Nutcracker* and graduation performances), Ballet Arizona (*Nutcracker*), Opéra de Lausanne (*Eugene Onegin, Candide*), and the Mikhailovsky Theatre (*Die Zauberflöte*).

Heine has performed in some of the world's most important theaters and concert venues, including the Royal Opera House, Opéra de Paris Bastille, the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, the Bolshoi Theater, Teatro Regio Torino, Bunka Kaikan and many more. He has guest conducted the Sinfonieorchester Basel, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, La Verdi Orchestra of Milan, the Orchestra Filarmonica del Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Orchestra Teatro Regio Torino, the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra, and many others.

Upcoming performances include a new production of *Candide* at the Northern Lights Music Festival, and a debut at Norwegian National Ballet (*Jewels*).



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky / Composer

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (May 7, 1840 - November 6, 1893), was a Russian composer of the Romantic era. He began his musical education at age 5 with piano lessons. Even though music had always fascinated him, law was selected as a career path. He did not make his passion of music a livelihood until later in life. At 19, Tchaikovsky graduated with the rank of titular counselor, a low rung on the civil service ladder. Three years later, Tchaikovsky changed career paths to pursue his passion of music. He enrolled at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory where he flourished in his studies. His first public showing was a work titled "Characteristic Dances" on September 11, 1865. He later composed the ballet *Swan Lake* from 1875-1876. This ballet, initially done in four acts, was based upon Russian folk tales. Tchaikovsky received 800 rubles for payment which was considered a small fortune in his day. 800 rubles is about 23 dollars in today's world. The original premiere of *Swan Lake* was not well received. The critics of that time claimed that the music was too complex to be a ballet piece. History has overruled their criticisms as *Swan Lake* is now thought to be one of Tchaikovsky's most valuable and memorable pieces.

(1875-1876): *Swan Lake*, Op. 20. Tchaikovsky's first ballet and was first performed (with some omissions) at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow in 1877.

(1888-1889): *The Sleeping Beauty*, Op. 66. Tchaikovsky considered this work one of his best. Its first performance was in 1890 at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

(1891-1892): *The Nutcracker*, Op. 71. Tchaikovsky himself was less satisfied with this, his last ballet. It was only in his last years, with his last two ballets, that his contemporaries came to really appreciate his qualities as a ballet music composer.

CONNECT WITH US

Check out behind-the-scenes footage from *Swan Lake*
and share your favorite moments from the show

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CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY

Kwamé Ryan
music director designate
Christopher James Lees
resident conductor
Christopher Warren-Green
conductor laureate

2023 | 2024 MUSICIAN ROSTER

FIRST VIOLINS

Calin Ovidiu Lupanu

Concertmaster

The Catherine & Wilton Connor Chair

Joseph Meyer

Associate Concertmaster

Kari Giles

Assistant Concertmaster

Susan Blumberg^{oo}

Jane Hart Brendle

Cynthia Burton

Ayako Gamo

David Horak[†]

Lenora Leggatt

Jenny Topilow

Dustin Wilkes-Kim

Hanna Zhdan

SECOND VIOLINS

Oliver Kot, *Principal*

The Wolfgang Roth Chair

Kathleen Jarrell

Assistant Principal

The Pepsi-Cola Foundation of Charlotte Chair

Carlos Tarazona^o

Monica Boboc

Martha Geissler

Sakira Harley

Tatiana Karpova

Ellyn Stuart

VIOLAS

Benjamin Geller, *Principal*

The Zoe Buntun Merrill Principal Viola Chair

Kirsten Swanson[†]

Acting Assistant Principal

Matthew Darsey[†]

Ellen Ferdon

Wenlong Huang

Viara Stefanova

Ning Zhao

CELLOS

Jonathan Lewis

Principal

The Kate Whitner McKay Principal Cello Chair

Allison Drenkow

Acting Assistant Principal

Alan Black^{*}

Principal Emeritus

Marlene Ballena

Jeremy Lamb

Amy Sunyoung Lee

Sarah Markle

Oksana McCarthy[†]

DOUBLE BASSES

Kurt Riecken,^{*} *Principal*

Jason McNeel, *Acting Principal*

Judson Baines^{*}

Assistant Principal

Justin Cheesman[†]

Acting Assistant Principal

Jeffrey Ferdon

Luis Primera[†]

HARP

Andrea Mumm Trammell

Principal

The Dr. Billy Graham Chair

FLUTES

Victor Wang

Principal

The Blumenthal Foundation Chair

Amy Orsinger Whitehead

Erinn Frechette

PICCOLO

Erinn Frechette

OBOES

Erica Cice

Acting Principal

The Leo B. Driehuys Chair[†]

Teil Taliesin[†]

Terry Maskin

ENGLISH HORN

Terry Maskin

CLARINETS

Taylor Marino

Principal

The Gary H. & Carolyn M. Bechtel Chair

Samuel Sparrow

Allan Rosenfeld

E♭ CLARINET

Samuel Sparrow

BASS CLARINET

Allan Rosenfeld

BASSOONS

Joseph Merchant

Principal

Joshua Hood

Nicholas Ritter

CONTRABASSOON

Nicholas Ritter

HORNS

Byron Johns

Principal

The Mr. & Mrs. William H. Van Every Chair

Andrew Fierova

Philip Brindise[†]

The Robert E. Rydel, Jr. Third Horn Chair

Richard Goldfaden

Andrew Merideth[†]

TRUMPETS

Alex Wilborn

Principal

The Betty J. Livingstone Chair

Jonathan Kaplan

Gabriel Slesinger

Associate Principal

The Marcus T. Hickman Chair

TROMBONES

John Bartlett

Principal

Thomas Burge

BASS TROMBONE

Scott Hartman

Principal

TUBA

Colin Benton

Principal

The Governor James G. Martin Chair

TIMPANI

Jacob Lipham

Principal

The Robert Haywood Morrison Chair

PERCUSSION

Brice Burton

Principal

^o Non-revolving position

^{oo} Alternates between first and second violins

[†] Acting member of the Charlotte Symphony

[‡] Funded by The Symphony

^{*} Guild of Charlotte, Inc.

^{*} On leave

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League
of American
Orchestras

This roster lists the full-time members of the Charlotte Symphony. The number and seating of musicians on stage varies depending on the piece being performed.

A woman with dark hair pulled back into a bun, wearing a large red flower in her hair. She is wearing a dark, sleeveless top. The background is a solid light green color.

*A fine line
between love and
obsession*

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Dancer: Shaina Wire
Photo: Quinn Wharton

CHARLOTTE BALLET DANCERS



Isaac Aoki / Utah

Originally from Salt Lake City, Utah, Isaac Aoki made his debut at three as a frog in *Thumbelina* at the University of Utah. He does not remember a time he didn't love dance. He went on to study at Ballet West Academy, performing yearly in its *Nutcracker*. He then earned a full scholarship to the Kirov Academy in Washington DC where he studied Russian Vaganova technique. He then successfully auditioned for a full scholarship at the Professional Division program at Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle where he studied for

two years and performed with the company. From the age of 14, he attended programs every summer on scholarship – Kaatsbaan, The School of American Ballet, Miami City Ballet School, Springboard Danse Montreal and Nederlands Dans Theatre. Isaac was invited to join Grand Rapids Ballet in 2013 by its then new director – Patricia Barker, former principal dancer with Pacific Northwest Ballet. During his time there, he danced contemporary and classical works by George Balanchine, Lar Lubovitch, Jennifer Archibald, Olivier Wevers and Alejandro Cerrudo. Isaac also originated roles in new creations by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Penny Saunders and Robyn Mineko Williams. While living in Michigan Isaac was also a guest artist with Hubbard Street II, touring to Germany and at Lincoln Center to perform works by Alejandro Cerrudo, Peter Chu and Bryan Arias. He has choreographed four ballets since the inception of Grand Rapids Ballet's Jumpstart series, in which company dancers create their own works. He is most excited to join Charlotte Ballet and become part of the diverse and culturally rich Queen City.



Raven Barkley / New York

Raven, from Bronx, NY, began dancing at age 10 at Ballet Tech, the New York City Public School for Dance. She furthered her training at the Fiorello H. LaGuardia Arts High School for Music and Art and Performing Arts, where she graduated with honors. While at LaGuardia, Raven also attended the Dance Theatre of Harlem's (DTH) Pre-Professional Program as a scholarship student. While at DTH, Raven was selected as a featured dancer for the Scholastic Children's book, *Beautiful Ballerina* by Marilyn Nelson. During the summer of 2013 and 2014, Raven performed choreography by Tony Award winner George Faison for the NYC SummerStage Performance Series. In 2015, Raven graduated summa cum laude with a BFA in Dance with a concentration in ballet from SUNY Purchase. In 2018, Raven was recognized as one of *Dance Magazine's* "25 to Watch" and *The Charlotte Observer's* "1 to Watch." The following year she received the Delta Sigma Theta (Charlotte Alumnae Chapter) Outstanding Achievement in the Arts award (2019). In June 2022, Raven returned to Ballet Tech as an alumna guest artist performing the principal role in an excerpt of Marius Petipa's *Raymonda* for their Kids Dance performances at the Joyce Theater (New York City). She has performed work by Bryan Arias, George Balanchine, Aszure Barton, Rena Butler, Val Caniparoli, Eliot Feld, Robert Garland, Ja' Malik, Sasha Janes, Jifí Kylián, Jessica Lang, Arthur Mitchell, Matthew Neenan, Helen Pickett, Dwight Rhoden and Christopher Stuart.



Luke Csordas / Pennsylvania

Luke Csordas grew up outside of Allentown, Pennsylvania where he was drawn to dance due to its ability to tell stories and ignite joy. He studied at the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance where he trained with role models such as William Forsythe, Jermaine Spivey, Bret Easterling and Jodie Gates. He is passionate about bettering his community, having served on the Student Advisory Board all four years of his undergraduate studies. While studying to receive his BFA in Dance, Luke also focused on Cinematic Arts at USC's SCA.

Intersecting dance and media, Luke hopes to achieve his goals using cinematic storytelling in order to share, listen and encourage empathy through stories told by dancers. He is looking forward to this next chapter with Charlotte Ballet.



Lorenzo Dunton / California

Growing up in La Verne, California, Lorenzo started his dance training at Inland Pacific Ballet Academy in Montclair, CA at the age of four. While training at IPBA he attended summer programs with Joffrey Ballet and ABT. For the ABT summer program in 2016, he was named a National Training Scholar with a Bender Foundation award. Lorenzo represented IPBA at the Youth America Grand Prix for three years, placing first in the semi-finals and attending the finals in New York. In 2017 he continued his training at Canada's National Ballet School where he

graduated in 2020. While at NBS, Lorenzo was one of two NBS students selected to represent the school at the 2020 Prix de Lausanne Choreographic Workshop. He debuted in the world premiere *Andante Ballabile* created on the students by Mauro Bigonzetti. After graduation, Lorenzo spent a transitional year training with the San Francisco Ballet School. For the 21/22 season, he trained in the Post-Graduate program at Boston Ballet. While

in Boston, he was able to perform in the main company's production of *The Nutcracker* as well as performances with Boston Ballet 2 and the PG program. His favorite memory in Boston is performing in the school's Next Generation showcase, in Jorma Elo's *One with Mozart* under the direction of the Nancy Everink. In July 2022, Lorenzo worked with the Cirio Collective, founded and directed by Jeffrey and Lia Cirio, as an apprentice. Lorenzo is excited to continue his journey with Charlotte Ballet as a First Company member this season.



Ashley Eleby / Georgia

Born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, Ashley began dancing at the age of three training at various dance schools around Atlanta. During the summer, she attended summer intensives at Charlotte Ballet, University of North Carolina School of the Arts, and later, the International Summer Dance Intensive. Following high school, she went to college earning a B.F.A in Ballet and a B.A in Business receiving the Gold Key, an award for academic achievement as well as graduating with honors. She was invited to Vancouver to participate in what was formerly Arts Umbrella's PRéP program under the direction of Lesley Telford and hired for Bard on the Beach by Artemis Gordon. During her studies and travel, she was able to learn and perform repertoire by choreographers such as Jiří Kylián, Crystal Pite, Lesley Telford, William Whitener as well as Jon Ole Olstad. After relocating to Atlanta due to the pandemic, she performed with several companies. Most recently, she participated in Rainbow Serpent Collective's production of *Four World Ages*, a multimedia project inspired by a west African Igbo myth about the ages of humanity featured as a dance film and live performance.



Isabella Franco / California

Isabella Franco, born in Los Angeles, CA, began dancing at the age of three at the Marat Daukayev School of Ballet. She attended summer intensives on a merit scholarship at the Académie Princess Grace in Monaco and San Francisco Ballet School. She also danced in the summer programs of the School of American Ballet and Ballet Austin. Isabella was a 2016 YoungArts Finalist in Dance and was a semifinalist for the 2018 Presidential Scholar in the Arts award. She consistently placed in the top three in the Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) regional semifinals, earned the Junior Grand Prix award in Los Angeles and won 2nd place in the YAGP Finals in New York. She spent two years as a Butler Fellow at Ballet Austin. Isabella joined the first company of Charlotte Ballet in 2021. Her principal and featured roles at Charlotte Ballet include Aurora in Matthew Hart's *Sleeping Beauty: A Fairy Tailored Classic*, Sugar Plum Fairy in Jean Pierre Bonnefoux's *Nutcracker*, Tinkerbell in Christopher Stuart's *Peter Pan*, Rebecca West in Val Caniparoli's *Ibsen's House*, and Duet in Mthuzuzeli November's *From Africa with Love*. Isabella has also performed in Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort*, Rena Butler's *Subliminal Tsunami*, Ohad Naharin's *Kamuyot*, Alejandro Cerrudo's *Silent Ghost*, Helen Simoneau's *The Details are the Meaning*, and Jennifer Archibald's *HDrM*.



Mario Gonzalez / New York

Mario started dancing at the Marya Kennett School of Dance in Goshen, NY. He received his pre-professional training at Walnut Hill School for the Arts and went on to attain his BFA from the Conservatory of Dance at SUNY Purchase College. Mario has also studied dance at the San Francisco Ballet School, The Juilliard School, Nederlands Dans Theater, M.I.P., The Cunningham Fellowship Workshop, and Springboard Danse Montreal. Prior to joining Charlotte Ballet, Mario danced with Los Angeles Dance Project, Visceral Dance Chicago, and American Repertory Ballet.

During his career he has performed internationally, most recently Festival in Motion, the first ever western dance festival in Doha, Qatar. During his time at LADP he premiered Benjamin Millepieds *Romeo and Juliet* dancing the part of Juliet, later filmed for French TV networks. Throughout his career he has danced in works by Kyle Abraham, Danielle Agami, George Balanchine, Dimitri Chamblès & Kim Gordon, Merce Cunningham, Nicolo Fonte, Mark Godden, Madboots Dance, Charm La'Donna, Stephan Laks, Paul Lightfoot & Sol Leon, Jose Limon, Benjamin Millepied, Matthew Neenan, Kevin O'Day, Kirk Peterson, Salia Sanuo, Erica Sobol, Bobbi Jean Smith & Or Schraiber, Jermaine Spivey & Spenser Theberge, Pam Tanowitz, Saburo Teshigawara, Doug Varone, Yin Yue and others.



Ben Ingel / North Carolina

Ben is from Charlotte, NC and began his dance training at age nine with Ginny Siano-Eck of Foothills Dance Conservatory in Seneca, SC and Pavel Gurevich of Boston Ballet. He then transferred to Charlotte Ballet Academy. Ben attended his freshman and sophomore year of high school at North Carolina School of the Arts and continued his training at the Boston Ballet School and the Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy. Ben has had

the privilege of working with Alonzo King, Mark Diamond, Claudio Munoz, Dwight Rhoden and Twyla Tharp. Ben has performed various classical and contemporary repertoire including Ohad Naharin's *Minus 16*, Johan Inger's *Walking Mad*, Jiri Kylian's *Forgotten Land*, George Balanchine's *Who Cares?* and Dwight Rhoden's *The Groove*. Ben began his professional career with Charlotte Ballet II during the 2012/2013 Season and was promoted to the first company in the 2014/2015 Season.



James Kopecky / Illinois

Born and raised in the suburbs of Chicago, James grew up dancing at Dancenter North. He trained in ballet, jazz, tap, modern and musical theater. After high school, James studied at Butler University under Marek Cholewa, Susan McGuire, Derek Reid, Cynthia Pratt, Tong Wang, Stephan Laurent and Michelle Jarvis. In 2010, he graduated with a BFA in Dance and was offered an apprenticeship at Ballet San Jose under the artistic leadership of Dennis Nahat. In his second season, James was promoted to Corps de Ballet. During his five years with Ballet

San Jose, he was featured in a number of works including Paul Taylor's *Piazzolla Caldera*, Twyla Tharp's *In The Upper Room* and Jorma Elo's *Glow/Stop*. Since arriving at Charlotte Ballet, James has enjoyed performing a number of pieces such as Alonzo King's *Map*, Dwight Rhoden's *The Groove*, Jiri Kylian's *Sechs Tanzen*, Helen Pickett's *IN Cognito* and Johan Inger's *Walking Mad*. As a choreographer, James has done works at Butler Ballet, Ballet San Jose School, Opera San Jose, Charlotte Ballet II and Charlotte Ballet. In the summer of 2022, he was selected to take part in the inaugural University of Utah Ballet Choreographic Institute.



Rees Launer / Idaho

Rees began his dance training with Ballet Idaho and Idaho Regional Ballet at age 12. He attended Walnut Hill School for the Arts for three years and graduated cum laude in 2016. He went on to dance with The Joffrey Ballet's trainee program and Studio Company. During his years in training, he attended numerous summer intensives including Netherlands Dance Theater, Pacific Northwest Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theater, Arts Umbrella, Jacobs Pillow and The Royal Danish Ballet where he was awarded the Birger

Bartholin Scholarship. Rees has been a guest artist for Peoria Ballet and Idaho Dance Theatre. He began his professional career with Charlotte Ballet in 2019.



Anna Mains / Tennessee

Anna Mains grew up in Nashville, Tennessee, and began her training at age eight with Centennial Youth Ballet. From 2016-2018, she danced as a Trainee with the Nashville Ballet. Anna attended summer intensives at American Ballet Theatre, Houston Ballet, Arts Umbrella and Joffrey Ballet in Chicago. She was invited to join Joffrey Ballet's Trainee program in 2018 and was promoted to Joffrey Ballet's Studio Company in 2019. Anna spent two years in Charlotte Ballet's Second Company and danced in original works by

Christopher Stuart and Rena Butler and performed the role of Lady of the Sea in Val Caniparoli's *Ibsen's House*. She was selected to participate in the 2022 National Choreographer's Initiative and premiere works by Emily Adams and Jennifer Hart.



Maurice Mouzon Jr. / Maryland

Maurice, a Baltimore native, was first introduced to dance at age 14 and started his formal training at Baltimore School for the Arts. After graduating, Maurice continued his dance training at Purchase College State University of New York. After completing a year at SUNY Purchase, Maurice joined Charlotte Ballet II. While in the second company, Maurice had the opportunity to dance the solo in Ohad Naharin's *Minus 16*, which led to his promotion to the first company. Maurice has also performed works by Johan Inger, Filipe Portugal, Javier de Frutos,

Bryan Arias, Sasha Janes, Robyn Mineko Williams and Myles Thather. He attended summer intensives with Dance Theatre of Harlem, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Miami City Ballet.



Oliver Oguma / New York

Oliver Oguma was born and raised in New York City. He grew up as a hip-hop dancer and Ford model before he began dancing ballet at the age of eight. He trained at The School of American Ballet, The Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School at American Ballet Theatre, The Rock School for Dance Education and San Francisco Ballet School before returning to NYC to join American Ballet Theatre studio company. In 2014, he joined Ballet West, he danced soloist roles and also choreographed ballets for the company. In 2019 he joined Ballet de

l'Opera National du Rhin in France. He has danced works of Ohad Naharin, Jiri Kylian, Alexei Ratmanský, George Balanchine, William Forsythe and many more.



Remi Okamoto / Japan

Remi Okamoto is a professionally trained dancer who has been dancing worldwide for over 7 years. She is from Kyoto, Japan and started ballet at the age of five in Keiko Honda Ballet School. As her love for dance grew, she decided to further her education at the Benedict Mannigel Ballet School and Company in München, Germany. Here, she studied dance with a focus on ballet, contemporary dance, and character dance. Soon after, she won a bronze medal in the Tanz Olymp competition of Berlin.

After graduation, she began her professional career with the Opera Wroclawska Ballet Troup in Poland where she built strong professional skills and fine tuned her artistic movement. Here, she performed in numerous classical ballets such as *Swan Lake*, *Nutcracker*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Don Quichotte* and *Coppelia*.

Remi spent three years in Wroclaw before joining the State Opera Plovdiv in Bulgaria. Here, she held a contract of a year where she danced important roles like Two Sisters in *Cinderella*, Big Swan in *Swan lake*, Carmen, and also main roles in contemporary work. In 2019 she joined L'opéra Grand Avignon in France where she danced in multiple main roles in both neo classical and contemporary works such as those choreographed by Martin Harriague, Carolyn Carlson, Pontus Lindberg and Julien Guérin. She has also danced in Tivoli Ballet company in Copenhagen for *Nutcracker* in winter 2022.

Her experiences create her love for being on stage and through her passion for dance she delivers joy and happiness to the audience.

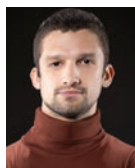


Anna Owen / Georgia

Hailing from Atlanta, Georgia, Anna first discovered her passion for dance at Perimeter Ballet. During this time, she also received coaching and mentorship from former Atlanta Ballet principal Kristine Necessary Loveless, before continuing her training at Terminus Ballet School in 2020. The following year, Anna was selected for the Protégé Program, which allowed her to work closely with Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre company artists and perform alongside them in signature works. She has had the privilege of working with celebrated choreographers such as Ana Maria Lucaci, Troy Schumacher, Heath Gill, Tara Lee and more. She also had the opportunity to explore and develop her own choreographic voice while working with Terminus Ballet School students, as well as perform with Atlanta Contemporary Dance Company in their debut season.

Anna has attended summer programs with Atlanta Ballet, Ballet West, and Pacific Northwest Ballet and in 2022, as a member of Regional Dance America, she received the title of Senior Classical Outstanding Soloist.

Currently an undergraduate business student at Georgia State University, as well as a dancer and emerging choreographer, Anna continues to cultivate her passion for dance as a vital art form and is thrilled to join Charlotte Ballet for the 2023/2024 season.



Humberto Ramazzina / Brazil

Humberto was born in São Paulo, Brazil and started his classical ballet training at age eight. In 2014, he joined The Harid Conservatory in Boca Raton, Florida as a freshmen. After graduating high school he joined Charlotte Ballet II where he performed for two years before being promoted to the first company. Humberto has performed in numerous works by various choreographers during his years in the first company.



Samantha Riester / Indiana

Samantha Riester trained at the School of American Ballet from 2012-2015. She attended summer courses at the School of American Ballet and Miami City Ballet. After graduating from SAB, she joined Cincinnati Ballet's Second Company and was promoted to their main company in 2017. Samantha has danced soloist roles in repertoire such as Jiří Kylián's *Sechs Tanze*, "Pas de Trois" in *Swan Lake*, "Lady of the Sea" in Val Caniparoli's *Ibsen's House*, "Duet Mabul" in Ohad Naharin's *Minus 16*, "Curly Cue" in Septime Weber's *Wizard of Oz*, "Beauty Fairy" in *Sleeping Beauty*, "Summer Fairy" in *Cinderella* and in Andrea Schermoly's *Swivet*.

Samantha has performed numerous ballets choreographed by George Balanchine, Twyla Tharp, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Henkel Pickett, Ma Cong, Septime Weber, Nicole Fonte, Stephanie Martinez, Adam Houghland, Jennifer Archibald, Garrett Smith, Victoria Morgan, Myles Thatcher and David Morse. She has enjoyed dancing with outside organizations such as the Cincinnati Opera for its 100th anniversary celebration production of *Aida*, as well as guesting for her home studio in Indiana where she performed principal roles in George Balanchine's *Emeralds* and *Concerto Barocco*.



Evelyn Robinson / Texas

Evelyn Robinson was born in Tyler, Texas, where she began her training at age seven at Tyler Junior College Academy of Dance under Thereza Bryce-Cotes and Shurrell Wiebe. At the age of 15, Evelyn began attending the University of North Carolina School of the Arts high school dance program. At UNCSCA from 2017 to 2020, she trained under Jennet Zerbe, Susan Jaffe, Eva Draw, Angelina Sansone, Jared Redick, Laura Martin, and many other UNCSCA dance faculty members. During her time there, Evelyn danced principal roles in Ethan Steifel's *The Nutcracker*, Frederick Ashton's *Symphonic Variations*, Joseph Mazilier's *Paquita*, Ilya Kozadayev's *Dream(s)pace*, and Marius Petipa's *Harlequinade* and *Sleeping Beauty*. Evelyn competed at the 2020 Prix de Lausanne and was one of 21 dancers who advanced to the finals.

After graduating in 2020, Evelyn joined Atlanta Ballet 2. In 2022, after two seasons, she was promoted to the main company. During her time with Atlanta Ballet, she performed in Marius Petipa's *Giselle*; Justin Peck's *In Creases*; Kiyon Ross' *Sum Stravinsky*; Claudia Schreier's *Carnivale*; Remi Wörtmeyer's *Significant Others*; and Yuri Possokhov's *The Nutcracker*, *Don Quixote* and *Classical Symphony*. Evelyn thanks her family and teachers for their love, support and guidance. She is beyond excited and grateful to be joining Charlotte Ballet this season.



Shaina Wire / New Jersey

Shaina, from Sussex County, NJ, started dancing at age eight at Branchville Dance Centre. Shaina has attended summer intensives at The Nutmeg Ballet Conservatory, North Carolina Dance Theatre, Chautauqua Institution, Houston Ballet, Boston Ballet and The Joffrey Ballet School. At age 13, Shaina was invited by Ethan Stiefel to attend the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. When she returned to New York, she joined The Joffrey Ballet School as a trainee, and a year later was invited to join the Joffrey Ballet Concert Group under the direction of Davis Robertson. She has performed principal roles in various ballets, including Balanchine's *Serenade* and *Valse Fantaisie*, and Gerald Arpino's *Birthday Variations*, *Light Rain*, *Kettentanz*, *Suite Saint-Saens* and *Viva Vivaldi*. Shaina had the opportunity to perform at the Florence Dance Festival in Florence, Italy and Beijing Dance Academy's 60th anniversary.

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GUEST DANCERS

Charlotte Ballet is pleased to welcome guest dancers Daniil Simkin and Angelica Generosa for select performances of *Swan Lake*.



Daniil Simkin / Germany

Daniil Simkin was born in Novosibirsk, Russia, in 1987, the son of acclaimed ballet dancers Dmitriy Simkin and Olga Aleksandrova. His family moved to Western Europe in 1990 and took residence in Wiesbaden, Germany, where Daniil grew up.

At the age of nine, Daniil began ten years of daily ballet training with his mother. In these training years, he won several important ballet awards, including the Senior Gold Medal at the Jackson International Ballet competition in 2006, the Grand Prix at the Helsinki

International Ballet Competition in 2005 and the Gold Medal at the International Ballet Competition in Varna in 2004. After graduating academic high school in Germany, Daniil joined the Vienna State Opera Ballet as a demi-soloist in 2006 and began his career as a guest performer around the world. In 2008, he joined American Ballet Theatre as a soloist and was subsequently promoted to principal dancer in 2012. He since then has danced most major classical and neoclassical roles in the company's repertoire. In his professional career, Daniil has performed throughout North and South America, Asia, and the Middle East.

In 2015, together with the Joyce Theater in New York, Daniil spearheaded and produced an evening of contemporary original choreography called "INTENSIO," which toured the United States and internationally. This was followed in 2017 by a production of a multidisciplinary dance installation at the Guggenheim Museum in New York which involved generative video projections and costumes by Dior. Beginning with the 2018-2019 season Daniil joined Staatsballett Berlin as a principal and maintained his position at ABT, performing with both companies as often as his schedule allows. In 2021, Simkin founded the production company Studio Simkin to explore and develop dance opportunities for the next era with the highest production value and artistic standard, encouraging ballet to evolve within a digital environment and for new forums.



Angelica Generosa / New Jersey

Angelica Generosa is from South River, New Jersey. She studied on scholarship at the School of American Ballet and Princeton Ballet, and she attended summer courses at the School of American Ballet, Chautauqua Summer Program, and New Jersey Ballet. She also studied with Gina Forcella in Sayreville, New Jersey. In 2011, Ms. Generosa joined Pacific Northwest Ballet as an apprentice. She was promoted to corps de ballet in 2012, soloist in 2016 and principal in 2020.

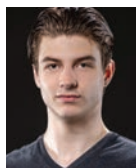
Ms. Generosa was the recipient of the Youth American Grand Prix Regional Hope Award in 2005, and she was a YAGP New York finalist in 2007. She also was the recipient of the School of American Ballet Mae Wien Award for Outstanding Promise. She has performed as a guest artist with the Vail International Dance Festival, American Academy Ballet, Chautauqua Alumni Dance Festival and International Dance Galas in Asuncion del Paraguay and Montreal, Canada. Some of the leading roles she has performed include the principal role in George Balanchine's Theme and Variations, Princess Aurora in Ronald Hyde's The Sleeping Beauty, Odette/Odile in Kent Stowell's Swan Lake, Peter Boal and Doug Fullington's production of Giselle, William Forsythe's The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude, Emergence by Crystal Pite, Tarantella, Rubies, and Justin Peck's Year of the Rabbit. She has also worked with many Choreographers including Alexei Ratmansky, Dwight Rhoden, Crystal Pite, Annabelle Ochoa, Edwaard Liang and Alejandro Cerrudo to name a few.

CHARLOTTE BALLET II DANCERS



Izonna Chaires / New York

Izonna, from Scotia, NY, began dancing at age five at Myers Ballet School in Schenectady, NY. At age 12, Izonna continued her training at the Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet school in Carlisle, PA, where she had the opportunity to perform roles in George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*™ as well as Balanchine's *Raymonda Variations*, and *Who Cares?* Izonna was accepted into The School of American Ballet (SAB) in New York, NY at age 15 and continued there until her graduation at age 19. While at SAB, Izonna choreographed two ballets as part of the Student Choreography Workshop and performed in the school's annual end-of-year Workshop performances. During Izonna's years at SAB she was the recipient of an Honorary Scholarship named for Judge Judith Kaye. Izonna has attended summer programs at Boston Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and Charlotte Ballet. Izonna joined Charlotte Ballet II in 2022.



Liam Colclough / Minnesota

Liam is from Duluth, Minnesota, where he started his ballet training at the age of four with the School of the Minnesota Ballet. He has attended summer intensives at Milwaukee Ballet, Ballet Austin, Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, and Ellison Ballet NYC.

After competing and receiving first place at Youth America Grand Prix regionals in 2020, Liam received a full tuition scholarship to train with Joffrey Academy in Chicago where he danced from 2020-2022.

At Joffrey, he studied character, classical, contemporary, Cunningham, and Horton techniques. Liam also received first and third places at Youth America Grand Prix regionals and competed as a finalist in Tampa representing the Joffrey Academy.

In 2022, Liam joined the Rochester City Ballet as a company dancer where he grew his technique and developed his artistry further.

Some of Liam's most notable roles include Fritz in Allen Fields' *The Manhattan Nutcracker*, the male lead in *Giselle: Peasant Pas de Deux*, staged by Karin Ellis-Wentz, and Russian in Timothy Draper's *The Nutcracker*.



Elaina da Fonte / Connecticut

Elaina da Fonte grew up in Roxbury, Connecticut, and has been dancing since she was three. After her early training under Kerry Gallagher and Elizabeth Parkinson at Finline Theater Arts, Elaina moved to North Carolina at age 16 to attend the University of North Carolina School of the Arts high school program.

Upon graduating, Elaina continued her ballet education at Indiana University Ballet Theater where she trained with instructors Sarah Wroth, Sasha Janes, Kyra Nichols, Michael Vernon,

Christian Claessens, and Carla Korbes. During her time at IU, Elaina performed principal roles in Sasha Janes's *Chaconne*, Dwight Rhoden's *Ballad Unto*, Mark Godden's *Angels in the Architecture* and Bournonville's *Kermesse Pas de Deux*. Elaina also performed works by George Balanchine, Marius Petipa, Antony Tudor, and many other legendary choreographers.

Elaina is extremely excited to begin her professional career with Charlotte Ballet!



Bridget Fox / Illinois

Bridget Fox began her dance training at the Academy of Movement and Music in Oak Park, Illinois. At age 15 she joined A&A Ballet in Chicago where she performed in various lead roles, including the Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*. During this time Bridget competed in the Youth America Grand Prix international finals both as a soloist and in ensembles. She has toured internationally in Guatemala and Cuba. In addition, she has spent summers training with San Francisco Ballet School, Joffrey Academy, Kansas City Ballet School, and Orlando Ballet School.

Bridget joined Charlotte Ballet's Pre-Professional Trainee Division in the fall of 2022. There she performed with Charlotte Ballet in Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux's *Nutcracker*, including roles as Marzipan, Snow, and Flowers, and in Christopher Stuart's *Peter Pan*. During her time as a trainee she performed as the lead ballerina in George Balanchine's *Walpurgisnacht Ballet* from *Faust*, staged by Patricia McBride, and in Alejandro Cerrudo's *Lickety Split*. Bridget is excited to be beginning her professional career with Charlotte Ballet II.

**Pierce Gallagher / North Carolina**

Pierce Gallagher is from Waxhaw, North Carolina and began training at Charlotte Ballet Academy at the age of 8. During his time in the Academy he performed in works such as eight productions of Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux's *Nutcracker*, two productions of *Sleeping Beauty*, two productions of *Peter Pan* and Mark Diamond's *The Little Mermaid*. Pierce spent one season as a trainee in Charlotte Ballet's Pre-professional division. During his time as a trainee, he had the opportunity to choreograph an original piece. Pierce has attended summer intensives at Charlotte Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and the Chautauqua Institution. He has performed in works such as Sasha Janes' *Loss* and excerpts of Balanchine's *Raymonda* and *Who Cares?* staged by Patricia McBride. Pierce is very excited to begin his professional career with Charlotte Ballet.

**Karsen Gresham / North Carolina**

Karsen is from Charlotte, NC and grew up dancing at Charlotte Ballet Academy and Havilah Dance Company. Karsen spent 14 years as a competition dancer training in all styles and genres. As an Academy student, Karsen performed in eight seasons of Jean Pierre Bonnefoux's *Nutcracker* in roles ranging from 'Clara' to 'Marzipan.' Karsen has also performed in Charlotte Ballet's *Little Mermaid* and *Sleeping Beauty*. This past season she performed the soloist role of the 'Golden Vine Fairy' in the 2022 *Sleeping Beauty: A Fairy Tailored Classic*. Karsen spent two years as a Trainee in Charlotte Ballet's Pre-Professional program under the direction of Laszlo Berdo, Kati Mayo and Patricia McBride. During her time as a Trainee, Karsen was a dual enrolled CMS student and graduated high school with her Associate Degree from CPCC. Karsen has attended summer intensives at Charlotte Ballet, Miami City Ballet, Alonzo King Lines Ballet, Juilliard, Pittsburgh Dance Theatre and the Chautauqua School of Dance, (under the direction of Jean Pierre Bonnefoux, Patricia McBride and Sasha Janes.) Karsen has performed in works by Sasha Janes, Mark Godden, Bianca Bonner, Naimah Kioski, Kati Mayo, Emily Bowen, Kyle Shawell, Heather Ferguson, Brittany Vachon and George Balanchine.

**Clay Houston / North Carolina**

Clay Houston, a Charlotte native, began competing in dance at four years old. He has trained at Charlotte Ballet Academy and spent a year dancing as a Trainee in the Pre-Professional Division. After graduating high school, he moved to New York to further pursue contemporary and modern dance forms. He has most recently participated in the inaugural cohort of GibneyPRO's professional division under the direction of Alexandra Wells and Gilbert T Small II.

Clay has performed repertoire by Bryan Arias, Rena Butler and Maleek Washington, Laja Field, Elia Mrak, Aszure Barton, Amy Hall Garner, Alonzo King, Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux and Patricia McBride. He has also attended workshops at The School at Jacob's Pillow, The Juilliard School, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, LINES Ballet and Houston Ballet. He is looking forward to his first season with Charlotte Ballet II!

**Roan Zaragoza / California**

Roan, born and raised in Southern California, started his dance Journey with Anaheim Ballet School at 15 years old and graduated from V&T Classical Ballet Academy in 2022 at 18 years old. During this time he performed numerous lead roles in ballet's such as *Fairy Doll*, *Don Quixote*, *Nutcracker*, *Talisman*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Awakening of Flora*. Roan was also invited to compete in the Youth American Grand Prix international finals in 2020 as an ensemble and in 2021 as a soloist.

Roan joined Ballet de Barcelona as a trainee in 2022 after graduating high school. Here he was given the opportunity to perform in *Together*, choreographed by Antonio Carmena and Marcus Salazar soloist position, *Nutcracker* demi soloist position and *Coppélia* corps de ballet. Roan is thrilled to start his professional career with Charlotte Ballet II.

Charlotte Ballet dancer and leadership headshots by Jeff Cravotta

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