



CHARLOTTE

KNIGHT THEATER
OCTOBER 30 – NOVEMBER 1, 2025

WHISPERS

ECHOES

VOICES

CHOREOGRAPHERS

PETITE MORT by Jiří Kylián | SOLO ECHO by Crystal Pite

AS I AM, A World Premiere by Mthuzuzeli November



Photo by Taylor Jones

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WHISPERS, ECHOES, VOICES

Alejandro Cerrudo
Artistic Director

Douglas Singleton
Executive Director

Robert Lindgren
Founder

CHARLOTTE BALLET

Isaac Aoki ▪ Raven Barkley ▪ Luke Csordas ▪ Mario Gonzalez ▪ Karsen Gresham
Clay Houston ▪ Joseph Hetzer ▪ Rees Launer ▪ Maia Lee ▪ Anna Mains
Maurice Mouzon Jr. ▪ Stephen Myers ▪ Oliver Oguma ▪ Remi Okamoto
Anna Owen ▪ Samantha Riester ▪ David Senti ▪ Fuki Takahashi
Adriana Wagenveld ▪ Shaina Wire

CHARLOTTE BALLET II


Aysia Bates ▪ Bridget Fox ▪ Andre McGregor II ▪ Elliott Mumm ▪ Roberto Nicolau
David Anthony Scheuerman-Saucedo ▪ Stella Urbano ▪ Serafina Wagenveld


Cover Photo by Quinn Wharton. Dancer: Anna Mains.



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BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS

Bring a group, book club, friends, school group or art enthusiasts along for a one of a kind experience. Tours take place at the Center for Dance.

LENGTH OF PROGRAM: 45 minutes- 1 hour

COST: \$10 per person



**CHARLOTTE
BALLET**

education@charlotteballet.org

Photo by Toby Shearer

WHISPERS, ECHOES, VOICES

A message from Charlotte Ballet's Artistic Director

Dear Audience,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to *Fall Works: Whispers, Echoes, Voices*. This program honors the work of three choreographers whose vision and artistry have profoundly shaped and continue to shape the world of dance.

Jiří Kylián's choreography is renowned for its poetic depth and emotional resonance. When I first saw *Petite Mort*, I was a young classically trained ballet dancer, and it opened my eyes to what dance could be. It redefined contemporary dance. Kylián's influence is felt in the way dancers move, breathe, and connect—his legacy is one of pushing boundaries and inviting audiences into new realms of expression.

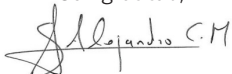
We are honored to be one of the few U.S. companies performing Crystal Pite's work, and I am thrilled to present *Solo Echo* to you. Pite's choreography explores the complexities of human experience and is both visually stunning and deeply moving. Her works have not only inspired a generation of artists to embrace new ways of approaching the art form, but have also provoked a new wave of innovation across the field of dance.

In this spirit, we are proud to recognize Mthuthuzeli November as our newly appointed Resident Choreographer, who is currently receiving worldwide recognition. Presenting his third world premiere with Charlotte Ballet, *As I Am* touches on the theme of honoring the past while embracing the strength of the future. In this moment in time, we are witnessing the beginning of a great journey together between Charlotte Ballet and one of the most special choreographic voices of today.

This program is a testament to the power of collaboration and the limitless possibilities of dance. Our dancers, inspired by these visionary choreographers, bring their powerful artistry and spirit to the stage, creating an unforgettable experience.

Thank you for joining us and for being part of our creative community. Your presence completes the circle—together, we celebrate the beauty, power, and evolution of dance.

Con gratitud,



Alejandro Cerrudo, Artistic Director

CONNECT WITH US

Check out behind-the-scenes footage from *Whispers, Echoes, Voices* and share your favorite moments from the show

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WHISPERS, ECHOES, VOICES

E = Evening | M = Matinee | ED = Educational

Casting subject to change

Petite Mort

Production concept / Choreography: Jiří Kylián

Assistant to the choreographer: Elke Schepers

Set Design: Jiří Kylián

Costume Design and supervision: Joke Visser

Lighting Design: Jiří Kylián (concept), Joop Caboort (realization)

Music: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Piano concerto Nr. 23 in A major, Adagio* and *Piano concerto Nr. 21 in C major, Andante*, performed by The English Chamber Orchestra, Jeffrey Tate (conductor) and Mitsuko Uchida (piano), courtesy of Universal Music, Decca Edition

World Premiere:

23 August 1991, Kleines Festspielhaus,
Salzburger Festspiele, Austria
Nederlands Dans Theater

10/30 E & 11/1 E

Shaina Wire & Isaac Aoki
Fuki Takahashi & Joseph Hetzer
Anna Owen & Luke Csordas

Remi Okamoto & Maurice Mouzon Jr.
Samantha Riester & Mario Gonzalez
Raven Barkley & Rees Launer

10/31 E & 11/1 M

Maia Lee & David Senti
Remi Okamoto & Maurice Mouzon Jr.
Fuki Takahashi & Joseph Hetzer

Samantha Riester & Mario Gonzalez
Karsen Gresham & Rees Launer
Adriana Wagenfeld & Isaac Aoki

"Petite Mort" is a poetic, and strangely significant way of describing the ecstasy of sexual intercourse. In French, and in some other languages, this sensation is described as "small death".

And it may be so, that in the moment of pleasure (or in the moment of potentially creating a new life) we are reminded of the fact that our lives are of a relatively short duration, and that death is never too far from us. In my work, I have based my choreography on two slow movements from the two most famous piano concertos by Mozart. I have cut them away from the fast movements, leaving them as mutilated torsos, lying helplessly in front of the listener and beholder. They lie there, just like some ancient torsos, without arms and legs, unable to walk or embrace.

There is no doubt, that it is perverse to do such a thing. But yet we do. And I am no exception. We live in a world in which nothing is sacred.

Since the time in which Mozart's music was created and today, many wars were fought and much blood had to flow under the "Bridge of Time". And, it was mostly men swaying swords in show of their potency and power.

And it is always a "Mort", which accompanies our lives, sometimes it is "Petite", sometimes it is "Grand", but it is the most faithful companion we have, from the dawn of our existence till the end.

Jiří Kylián - Den Haag September 23, 2007

WHISPERS, ECHOES, VOICES

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Casting subject to change

20-MINUTE INTERMISSION

Solo Echo

Choreography: Crystal Pite

Music: Johannes Brahms

Lighting Design: Tom Visser

Associate Light Designer: Reed Nakayama

Scenic Design: Jay Gower Taylor

Costume Design: Joke Visser, Crystal Pite

Staged by: Eric Beauchesne

Solo Echo was created for and premiered by Nederlands Dans Theater on February 9, 2012 at the Lucent Danstheater, Den Haag, the Netherlands.

Music by Johannes Brahms: "Allegro non Troppo from Sonata for Cello and Piano in E Minor, Opus 38," and "Adagio Affettuoso from Sonata for Cello and Piano in F Major, Opus 99," from the album Brahms Sonatas for Cello & Piano, courtesy of Sony Music Entertainment.

10/30 E & 11/1 E

Karsen Gresham	Anna Owen	Fuki Takahashi	
Maurice Mouzon Jr.	Mario Gonzalez	Luke Csordas	David Senti

10/31 E & 11/1 M

Karsen Gresham	Maia Lee	Samantha Riester	
Clay Houston	Isaac Aoki	Rees Launer	Joseph Hetzer

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LINES FOR WINTER

by Mark Strand

Tell yourself
as it gets cold and gray falls from the air
that you will go on
walking, hearing
the same tune no matter where
you find yourself —
inside the dome of dark
or under the cracking white
of the moon's gaze in a valley of snow.
Tonight as it gets cold
tell yourself
what you know which is nothing
but the tune your bones play
as you keep going. And you will be able
for once to lie down under the small fire
of winter stars.
And if it happens that you cannot
go on or turn back and you find yourself
where you will be at the end,
tell yourself
in that final flowing of cold through your limbs
that you love what you are.

Poem by Mark Strand: "Lines for Winter," from Selected Poems, © 1979 by Mark Strand. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Random House LLC. All rights reserved.

20-MINUTE INTERMISSION

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As I Am

World Premiere

Choreography: Mthuthuzeli November

Original Music composition: Mthuthuzeli November

Set Design and Build: Celia Castaldo

Lighting Design: Aaron Muhl

Costume Design: Mthuthuzeli November with Kerri Martinsen

Celia Castaldo's work on As I Am was supported in part by the McColl Center.

The rights and royalties of music used in this production are underwritten in part by Alan Kronovet and Cary Bernstein in honor of Mark and Louise Bernstein.

Dedicated to my late mother.

This work honours those who have come before, ones in the future and present. As I Am is a work about love, loss and truly arriving as you are, about making peace with the life you've lived.

I love my mother dearly, I wouldn't be the person I am today. So I hope this moment I can say thank you to my ancestors and to her. So I come to you as I am.

10/30 E

Soloist: Maurice Mouzon Jr.

Isaac Aoki Luke Csordas Mario Gonzalez Joseph Hetzer
Clay Houston Rees Launer Stephen Myers Oliver Oguma David Senti

10/31 E

Soloist: Raven Barkley

Karsen Gresham Maia Lee Remi Okamoto Anna Owen
Samantha Riester Fuki Takahashi Adriana Wagenfeld Shaina Wire

11/1 M

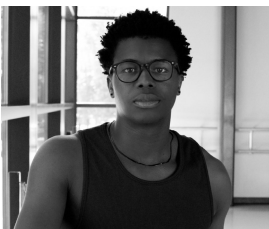
Soloist: Isaac Aoki

Luke Csordas Mario Gonzalez Joseph Hetzer Clay Houston Rees Launer
Maurice Mouzon Jr. Stephen Myers Oliver Oguma David Senti

11/1 E

Soloist: Remi Okamoto

Raven Barkley Karsen Gresham Maia Lee Anna Owen
Samantha Riester Fuki Takahashi Adriana Wagenfeld Shaina Wire



Welcome Charlotte Ballet Resident Choreographer
MTHUTHUZELI NOVEMBER

"I am finally surrounded by people who truly understand my movement. That understanding has opened the door to creating the kind of work I have always dreamed of. I feel welcomed and supported by the company, the dancers, and the overall energy and talent here. There is a real sense of belonging and a feeling that I am home. It gives me the freedom to create authentically, as I am, and with the hope that what we build resonates deeply with audiences across Charlotte."

- Mthuthuzeli November



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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 20th 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.

In 2008, he received the Charlotte Business Journal's 40 under 40 Award and was selected to the 2008-2010 Class of the William C. Friday Fellowship of Human Relations at the Wildacres Leadership Initiative. He is currently serving on the Steering Group for the City of Charlotte's Arts and Culture Advisory Board. He has served as a board member of the Cornelius Arts Center, founding member of Mecklenburg Executive Collaborative and the newly formed artist collaborative, VAPA (Visual and Performing Arts Center). Doug is the past board chair of Dance/USA and has served as a board member of Cain Center for the Arts, the Choir School at St. Peters and ARTS North Carolina, advocating for public funding to support arts programming throughout the state. He has also served on the Arts & Science's Advisory Council, the Cultural Life Taskforce as well as Knight Arts Advisory Committee, the NC Arts Council's Grants Panel and the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, MD. He and his wife Viki live in Charlotte and have three grown children.

**Neelanthi Vadivel / Director of Artistic Operations**

Trained in Canada as a classical and contemporary dancer, Neelanthi performed internationally for over a decade with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens (1995-1998) and Les Ballets jazz de Montreal (1998-2006), most notably featured in the works of choreographers Crystal Pite, Ohad Naharin, Edgar Zendejas and Rodrigo Pederneiras.

After touring as lead dancer for the Cirque du Soleil production, *Dralion* (2006-2009), Neelanthi led 3 world-renowned Cirque productions as Artistic Director, to over 40 countries (*Saltimbanco* 2009-2012, *Michael Jackson THE IMMORTAL World Tour* 2013, and *Totem* 2014-2017). During this period, Neelanthi discovered the complexities involved in this particular artistic field. From the perspective of a lifelong dancer, her intuition and training both challenged and enriched her work with the circus, and the lessons were profound.

Since then, Neelanthi managed operations and programming for a cultural center in Honolulu and more recently as Program Director with Charlotte's Tosco Music. Her posting with Charlotte Ballet is a much-appreciated return to her first love of dance. In this new position, she hopes to continue to leverage her extensive experience to foster personal growth and cultural enlightenment through the arts.

**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.

**Anna Amini / Artistic Administrator**

Anna Amini's love for dance started young and continued throughout her education and career. She took her first ballet class at age 6 at Canton Ballet in Ohio, where she danced with their pre-professional company for 10 years. She went on to pursue a degree in Writing, Literature, and Publishing with a minor in Dance from Emerson College in Boston. Her work as a dance writer began at Dance Magazine in NY, followed by writing dance reviews within the vibrant Chicago dance scene. She was

invited to join an Ecuadorian Folk Dance group, dancing for international audiences while sharing in Ecuadorian culture. She worked in Communications at The Joffrey Ballet before starting a family and relocating to Charlotte, NC. Now she is happy to be working as Artistic Administrator at Charlotte Ballet while raising her young family.

CHOREOGRAPHERS AND ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTORS



Jiří Kylián / Choreographer, *Petite Mort*

Jiří Kylián (Czechoslovakia, 1947) started his dance career at the age of nine, at the School of the National Ballet in Prague. He left Prague when he received a scholarship for the Royal Ballet School in London in 1967. Afterwards, he joined the Stuttgart Ballet led by John Cranko. In 1975, Kylián became artistic director of the Nederlands Dans Theater in The Hague (NL). In 1978, he put NDT on the international map with *Sinfonietta*. That same year, he founded Nederlands Dans Theater 2, which was intended to function as a breeding ground for young talent. In 1991, he started the Nederlands Dans Theater 3, a company of older dancers from forty till 'death'. This three-dimensional structure was unique in the world of dance. In 1999, after an extraordinary prolific tenure, with an oeuvre of almost 100 ballets, Kylián handed over the artistic leadership. He remained associated with NDT as house choreographer until December 2009. In the last ten years, Kylián has directed four films, the award-winning *Car-Men* (2006), *Between Entrance and Exit* (2013), *Schwarzfahrer* (2014) and *Scalamare* (2017).

In the course of his career, Kylián received many international awards, including: "Officer of the Orange Order" – the Netherlands, "Honorary Doctorate" – Juilliard School, New York, three "Nijinsky Awards" – Monte Carlo (best choreographer, company and work), "Benois de la Danse" – Moscow and Berlin, an honorary medal of the President of the Czech Republic, "Commander of the Legion d'Honneur" – France and in 2008 he was distinguished with one of the highest royal honors, the "Medal of the Order for Arts and Science of the House of Orange," given to him by Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands. Kylián received the "Lifetime Achievement Award in the field of dance and theater" by the Czech Ministry of Culture in Prague. In March 2019, Kylián became a member of the Académie des Beaux Arts in Paris. This highly prestigious recognition was complimented with the creation of a new section for "Choreography." In October 2024, Petr Pavel, President of the Czech Republic, decorated Kylián with the "Order of the White Lion," the country's highest honor recognizing Kylián's outstanding contribution to the global dance scene and his role in promoting Czech culture internationally.



Crystal Pite / Choreographer, *Solo Echo*

Canadian choreographer Crystal Pite is a former company member of Ballet British Columbia and William Forsythe's Ballett Frankfurt.

In a choreographic career spanning 35 years, Pite has created more than sixty works for companies such as The Royal Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theater, The Paris Opera Ballet, and the National Ballet of Canada. She is known for works that courageously address themes such as trauma, addiction, conflict, consciousness and mortality; her bold and original vision has earned her international acclaim and inspired an entire generation of dance artists.

She is an Associate Artist at three institutions: Nederlands Dans Theater, Sadler's Wells (London) and Canada's National Arts Centre. She has an honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from Simon Fraser University, is a Member of the Order of Canada and holds the honour of Officier de l'Ordre of Arts et des Lettres from France.

In 2002, she formed Kidd Pivot in Vancouver, a company that strives to distill and translate universal questions into artworks that connect us to essential parts of humanity. World-renowned for radical hybrids of dance and theatre, Kidd Pivot tours internationally with critically-acclaimed works such as *Betroffenheit*, *Revisor*, and *Assembly Hall* (co-created with Jonathon Young), *The Tempest Replica*, *Dark Matters*, *Lost Action*, and *The You Show*.

Pite's many awards include the 2022 Governor General of Canada's Performing Arts Award, the 2011 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award and the Canada Council's 2012 Jacqueline Lemieux Prize. In 2017, she received the Benois de la Danse for her creation *The Seasons' Canon* at the Paris Opera Ballet. In 2018, she received the Grand Prix de la danse de Montréal. She is the recipient of five Sir Laurence Olivier awards for creations with Kidd Pivot and The Royal Ballet.



Mthuthuzeli November / Resident Choreographer, *As I Am*

Mthuthuzeli November is a celebrated South African choreographer and dancer, known for his signature style that masterfully blends classical ballet with African dance. He began his dance journey at the age of 15 and graduated from the Cape Academy of Performing Arts in 2014. As a dancer, he was a two-time gold medal winner at the South African International Ballet Competition, taking home the award for Best Contemporary Work in both 2012 and 2014. He made his choreographic debut with the Cape Dance Company in 2014, where

he also created the works *Visceral* and *SUN - The Rite of Passage*. After performing with the Cape Dance Company and in a South African production of *West Side Story*, he joined Ballet Black in September 2015.

His time with Ballet Black marked a period of significant growth and critical acclaim. He created several award-nominated and award-winning works for the company, including the 2020 Laurence Olivier Award-winning *INGOMA*. He also received the Emerging Artist Award from the Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (KKNK) for his solo work.

As a sought-after freelance choreographer, November has collaborated with some of the world's most prestigious ballet companies. He created short pieces for the English National Ballet Emerging Dancer competitions in 2018 and 2020 and was commissioned by The Grange Festival to create a piece for their 2020 production of *Precipice*. In 2019, he created and performed for British artist Stormzy at the Glastonbury Festival. He also choreographed a film production of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* for Cape Town Opera and Cape Town City Ballet and a work entitled *Where Do We Go Now?* for The Washington Ballet.

His more recent works have garnered further accolades. In 2022, he was nominated for Best Soloist in a Production at the Black British Theatre Awards and for Best Classical Choreography at the Critics' Circle National Dance Awards for his piece *The Waiting Game*. The following year, he won Best Choreography at the Black British Theatre Awards 2023 for his piece *Nina: By Whatever Means*, created for Ballet Black. In a notable collaboration, he and his brother, Siphesihle November, were commissioned by Fall For Dance North to create *My Mother's Son*, which premiered in November 2023.

Mthuthuzeli November's influence and output continue to grow on the international stage. In 2025, he received the prestigious Benois de la Danse Award for Best Choreography for his work *Chapter 2*, which he created for Cape Ballet Africa. The Paris Opera Ballet's 2025 season saw his piece *Rhapsodies* enter the company's repertoire, and he also created the work *Fools* for Northern Ballet.

In 2025, Mthuthuzeli was appointed Resident Choreographer for Charlotte Ballet, where he has already premiered three world premieres: *From Africa with Love* (2023), *Vibes and Variations* (2024), and the upcoming *As I Am* (premiering in October 2025). His ongoing collaborations also include Northern Ballet, TanzLuzern, Cape Town City Ballet, and Ballett Zürich.



Jay Gower Taylor / Scenic Designer, *Solo Echo*

As a scenic designer Jay Gower Taylor has collaborated with Crystal Pite since 2008, creating onstage environments for works such as *Figures in Extinction* [1.0], *The Statement*, *Parade*, *Plot Point*, *Frontier*, *Solo Echo*, *In the Event* and *Atlas* (a co-production with Zurich Ballet) for the National Ballet of Canada; *Polaris* for Sadler's Wells; *The Seasons' Canon* and *Body and Soul* for the Paris Opera Ballet; and *Flight Pattern / Light of Passage* for The Royal Ballet. For Pite's own company, Kidd Pivot, he designed *Dark Matters*, *The Tempest Replica*, *Betroffenheit*, *Revisor*, and most recently *Assembly Hall*.



Celia Castaldo / Set Designer, *As I Am*

Celia Castaldo is an interdisciplinary sculptural artist based in Charlotte, NC whose practice spans metals, ceramics, fibers, plastics, and mixed media. Castaldo earned a BFA in 3D Interdisciplinary Studies and a BA in Art History from UNC Charlotte in 2025. Their work is informed by research into Surrealism, Modernism, and prehistoric visual culture, often engaging themes of memory, decay, and material transformation. Although new to set design, Castaldo's background in installation art and research into cave art provided the foundation for their role as designer and fabricator for Mthuthuzeli November's *As I Am*, commissioned in partnership with the McColl Center and Charlotte Ballet.



Joke Visser / Costume Designer, *Petite Mort*, *Solo Echo*

After ten years as a freelance designer for places such as Het National Ballet Amsterdam, Nederlands Dans Theater (1, 2 and 3) and the Dutch Opera Foundation, Joke Visser joined Nederlands Dans Theater officially in 1987. In 1989, she was appointed head of the NDT costume department. From this year onward, Joke Visser worked closely with Kylián and designed and fabricated the costumes for numerous works by him. Her design catalogue includes over 25 costume designs of Jiří Kylián's choreographies and numerous more with other choreographers. She also supervises and organizes all costume logistics of Kylián works around the world.

**Kerri Martinsen / Costume Designer, As / Am**

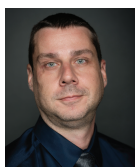
Kerri has been designing and making costumes for Ballet and Theater professionally for over 25 years. While working as the Assistant Costume Director at the Washington National Opera, she freelanced with the Washington Ballet and local ballet companies. After moving to North Carolina, she became the Costume Director at the Carolina Ballet, working with Robert Weiss, Lynn Taylor-Corbett, Zalman Raffael and emerging choreographers to help put their visions on stage. Recent designs with Charlotte Ballet include *HdrM* by Jennifer Archibald, *Innovative 1970s* designs for Rena Butler (*Subliminal Tsunami*) and Ja'Malik (*Gypsy Moths*). When not asked to design, Kerri loves to help put other's work onstage - coordinating and making costumes.

**Tom Visser / Lighting Designer, Solo Echo**

Born into a theatrical family, Thomas Visser grew up in the Irish countryside. Visser began working on musical theatre productions at the age of 18 and before moving into contemporary dance collaborations at age 24. Visser has worked with renowned performing arts companies including Nederlands Dans Theater, The Royal Ballet, Paris Opera, The Norwegian National Ballet, Les Ballet de Monte-Carlo, The Royal Swedish Ballet, Joffrey Ballet and Sadlers Wells to name a few. Visser has created original lighting designs for choreographers including Alexander Ekman, Johan Inger, Crystal Pite, Stijn Celis, Medhi Walerski, Lukas Timulak and Joeri Dubbe. Since 2016, Visser has started creating his own projects including art installations and interactive media.

**Reed Nakayama / Associate Light Designer, Solo Echo**

Reed Nakayama is a Lighting and Projections Designer based in Seattle, WA. He is the Lighting Director and Resident Designer at Pacific Northwest Ballet where he has designed for numerous choreographers including Alejandro Cerrudo, Alexei Ratmanský, Christopher Wheeldon, Edwaard Liang, Dani Rowe, and Jessica Lang. He has worked in the US and internationally for dance companies including Boston Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre and Les Ballets de Monte Carlo. His illuminations have also been seen in Theatre, Opera, Music, Circus and Roller Derby. He is a graduate with a BFA in Performance Production from Cornish College of the Arts.

**Aaron Muhl / Lighting Designer, As / Am**

Aaron Muhl (He/Him) is from Sarasota, FL and has over 20 years of experience in the performing arts. After earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatrical Design and Technology from the University of Central Florida, he began a freelance design career. Aaron joined the newly restored Historic Asolo Theater at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art as Technical Director in 2006. Simultaneously, he was also the Sarasota Ballet's resident lighting designer and supervisor for over 15 years. During Aaron's tenure there, he designed and/or recreated over 120 one-act and full-length ballets. His work has been presented at The Kennedy Center, The Joyce Theatre, New York City Center, and Jacob's Pillow. Recent designs include Mthuzeli November's *Vibes and Variations*, Omar Roman de Jesus' *Balum* and Rosie Herrera's *Florida Woman*. Other notable designs include Will Tuckett's *Changing Light* and *LuxAeterna*, Jessica Lang's *Shades of Spring*, and Sir Peter Wright's *Summertime and Giselle*.

**Elke Schepers / Assistant to the choreographer, Petite Mort**

Amsterdam born Elke Schepers studied ballet at the Scapino Dance Academy in Amsterdam and trained with, among others, Anne Marie Tannenbaum, Ivan Kramar and Benjamin Harkarvy.

Elke started her dance career in 1985 when she joined Nederlands Dans Theater 2, at that time called the Junior Group of the Nederlands Dans Theater.

That same year she won the 'Dansersfonds Encouragement' prize (Dancers Foundation established by Alexandra Radius and Han Ebbelaar).

In 1987, Elke was promoted to the main company, Nederlands Dans Theater 1, where she quickly became one of the muses of Jiří Kylián (in those days artistic director). Elke left NDT after 16 years in which she had worked with many world-renowned choreographers such as Hans van Manen, William Forsythe, Ohad Naharin, Mats Ek, Johan Inger and many others.

In 1997, she was awarded with the 'Silver Theatre Dance' prize for her leading role in *A Sort Of* by Mats Ek.

Currently Elke sets a variety of Jiří Kylián's works all over the world. Furthermore, she teaches yoga and participates in small dance projects.



Photo by @FourEyes

Eric Beauchesne / *Stager, Solo Echo*

Born in Québec, Eric has been on stage with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, the Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe and Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal, as well as with Canadian contemporary dance icons such as La Fondation Jean-Pierre Perrault, Paul-André Fortier, Louise Lecavalier and Crystal Pite. Company member since 2004, Eric now collaborates with Kidd Pivot as associate artistic director, and stages Pite's work on companies worldwide. Eric has served as guest teacher for several organizations as well as rehearsal director for Nederlands Dans Theater. He currently resides in Holland and devotes his spare time advocating for climate action in the dance world.

ONE THOUSAND
PIECES
BY ALEJANDRO CERRUDO

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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 Ariyas. 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 dance training at the Fiorello H. LaGuardia Arts High School for Music and Art and Performing Arts and the Dance Theatre of Harlem's (DTH) Pre-Professional program. While at DTH, she was selected as a featured dancer for the Scholastic Children's book, *Beautiful Ballerina* by Marilyn Nelson. Upon completion of her high school studies, she attended SUNY Purchase where she graduated summa cum laude with a BFA in Dance with a concentration in ballet. Since graduation and joining Charlotte Ballet, Raven has been recognized as one of *Dance Magazine's* "25 to Watch" and *The Charlotte Observer's* "1 to Watch." She is also the recipient of the Delta Sigma Theta (Charlotte Alumnae Chapter) Outstanding Achievement in the Arts award (2019) and The Links Incorporated (Crown Jewels NC Chapter) Crowning Achievements in the Arts Award (2025). In 2022, Raven had the opportunity to return to Ballet Tech as an alumna guest artist to perform 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 choreography by Tony Award winner George Faison for the NYC SummerStage Performance Series, Bryan Arias, George Balanchine, Aszure Barton, Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux, Rena Butler, Val Caniparoli, Alejandro Cerrudo, Eliot Feld, Robert Garland, Ja' Malik, Sasha Janes, Jiří Kylián, Arthur Mitchell, Ohad Naharin, Mthuthuzeli November, 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 his ability to tell stories and build community. He received his BFA from the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance, where he trained with role models such as William Forsythe, Jermaine Spivey, Bret Easterling, and Jodie Gates. After graduating, Luke joined Charlotte Ballet during Alejandro Cerrudo's first season of directorship. Luke has performed leading roles in works by Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, William Forsythe, Alejandro Cerrudo, and George Balanchine. He has originated roles in works by Mthuthuzeli November, Omar Román De Jesús, Hope Boykin, Bret Easterling, Jennifer Archibald, and Alejandro Cerrudo. Luke has a blossoming interest in choreography, having choreographed for Charlotte Ballet's *FLIP*. His work *get to the other side* was performed by Charlotte Ballet II. While studying to receive his BFA in Dance, Luke also focused on Cinematic Arts at USC's SCA and was an elected member of the Student Advisory Board.

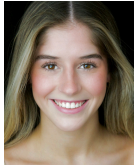


Mario Gonzalez / New York

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 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.



Karsen Gresham / North Carolina

Karsen is from Charlotte, NC and grew up dancing at Charlotte Ballet Academy and Havilah Dance Company. 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*.

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. After those two years, Karsen was promoted to the Second Company where she performed in works by Alejandro Cerrudo, Ashley Lindsey, Christopher Stuart, *Kamuyot* by Ohad Naharin, as well as soloist roles in Ib Andersen's *Swan Lake*.

Karsen attended summer intensives at Charlotte Ballet, Miami City Ballet, Alonzo King Lines Ballet, Juilliard, Pittsburgh Dance Theatre and the Chautauqua School of Dance. Karsen performed a work by Sasha Janes in the 2023 Chautauqua Alumni Allstar Gala.

In addition, Karsen has performed in works by Kara Wilkes, Mark Godden, Bianca Bonner, Naimah Kioski, Kati Mayo, Emily Bowen, Kyle Shawell, Heather Ferguson, Brittany Vachon and George Balanchine. Karsen loves calling Charlotte home.

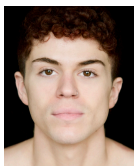


Joseph Hetzer / California

Joseph Hetzer started his classical training at South Bay Ballet in Torrance, California before becoming a member of the inaugural class at the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance. While in school, Hetzer worked closely with Jodie Gates and William Forsythe, diving into different genres and movement styles.

Hetzer joined Oklahoma City Ballet in 2019 and was promoted to soloist in 2023. During his time in OKC, he has performed featured roles including Mad Hatter/Lewis Carroll in Septime Webre's *ALICE (in wonderland)*, Gaston/Baron in Val Caniparoli's *Lady of the Camellias*, Hilarion in Ryan Jolicoeur-Nye's *Giselle*, and Von Rothbart in Ryan Jolicoeur-Nye's *Swan Lake*. Hetzer has also been featured in works by Jerome Robbins, Jessica Lang, Twyla Tharp, Stephanie Martinez, Alexander Ekman, Nicolo Fonte, and George Balanchine. During his off season, Joseph was chosen to participate in the National Choreographers initiative from 2022-2024.

Outside of ballet, Hetzer is a Lululemon Ambassador and is pursuing his MBA. In 2022 he was a recipient of Oklahoma's "Next Generation Under 30" for the Arts. He is very much looking forward to dancing with Charlotte Ballet for the 2025-2026 season.



Clay Houston / North Carolina

Charlotte native Clay Houston began competing in dance at the age of four. He trained at Charlotte Ballet Academy and was offered a trainee position in the Academy's pre-professional division. Following high school, he moved to New York to study contemporary dance forms at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and was a member of GibneyPRO's inaugural professional cohort. His additional training includes studies at The School at Jacob's Pillow, The Juilliard School, Hubbard Street Dance

Chicago, LINES Ballet, and Houston Ballet.

Clay initially joined Charlotte Ballet II for the 2023/2024 season. Throughout his career, he has performed works by Aszure Barton, Rena Butler and Maleek Washington, Sonya Tayeh and Jenn Freeman, Alejandro Cerrudo, Laja Field, Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux, and George Balanchine. He is thrilled to join Charlotte Ballet I as an emerging artist.

**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.

**Maia Lee / California**

Maia was born in Roseville, California, and began dancing at the age of six. She trained at various local and Bay Area studios under the instruction of many teachers, including Pat Colgate and Tina DeVine. In 2020, Maia joined the Sacramento Ballet Trainee program, and she was promoted to Sacramento Ballet 2 during the Second Company's inaugural year under the direction of Jill Marlow Krutzkamp.

After joining Sacramento Ballet's main company as an Apprentice in 2023, Maia had the opportunity to perform several featured roles in works by Ihsan Rustem, Val Caniparoli, and a new work by Andrea Schermoly. Since joining Charlotte Ballet, she has performed in pieces by Alejandro Cerrudo and Mthuthuzeli November.

**Anna Mains / Tennessee**

Anna Mains grew up in Nashville, Tennessee, and began her training at age eight with Centennial Youth Ballet. From 2016 to 2018, she danced as a Trainee with Nashville Ballet. Anna attended summer intensives at Arts Umbrella, GagaLab, Orsolina28, American Ballet Theatre, Houston Ballet, and Joffrey Ballet in Chicago. In 2018, she was invited to join the Joffrey Ballet's Trainee Program and was promoted to the Studio Company in 2019. She spent two seasons with Charlotte Ballet's Second Company and was promoted to the Main Company in 2022. Since joining, she has performed works by Alejandro Cerrudo, Johan Inger, Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, Mthuthuzeli November, Omar Román De Jesús, Helen Pickett, Christopher Stuart, Rena Butler, and Val Caniparoli.

**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, Brian 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.

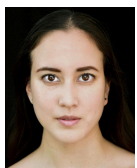
**Stephen Myers / Virginia**

Stephen Myers, from Chesterfield, Virginia, began dance training at the age of 5, and in a few years, he was competing in all genres. At 16, he decided to focus on ballet and accepted a scholarship to train at Next Generation Ballet (NGB) in Tampa, Florida, under the direction of Philip Neal and Julio Montano. While training at NGB, Stephen continued competing and became a 2017 YoungArts Winner, a Youth American Grand Prix New York finalist at Lincoln Center, and a Top 5 finalist at the 2018 USA International Ballet Competition in Jackson, Mississippi. He has since danced as a Trainee and Studio Company member with The Joffrey Ballet Academy in Chicago from 2018-2020. After dancing with Atlanta Ballet's Second Company from 2020-2023, Stephen joined Louisville Ballet for the 2023-2024 season. Stephen is grateful and thrilled to be joining Charlotte Ballet for the upcoming season. Favorite performances include Alun Jones' *Romeo and Juliet*, Andrea Schermoly's *Appalachian Springs*, *Napoli*, *Cinderella*, and the male principal in Balanchine's *Who Cares?* Stephen thanks his family and teachers for their support and guidance.

**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 8. 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'Opéra National du Rhin in France. He has danced to the 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 Manniguel 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 Wrocławsk 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 Wrocław before joining the State Opera Plovdiv in Bulgaria. Here, she held a contract for 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. Remi joined Charlotte Ballet's First Company in their 2023/2024 Season, and with them she has performed works by Alejandro Cerrudo, Ohad Naharin, Jiří Kylián, Mthuzeli November and Penny Saunders.

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

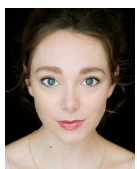
**Anna Owen / Georgia**

Originally from metro Atlanta, Anna first discovered her passion for dance at Perimeter Ballet. She also received coaching and mentorship from former Atlanta Ballet principal Kristine Necessary Loveless, before continuing her training at Terminus Ballet School in 2020, under the direction of John and Christine Welker. Anna was then 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 over the span of 2 years. She had the privilege of working with celebrated choreographers such as Ana Maria Lucaci, Troy Schumacher, Heath Gill, Tara Lee, and more.

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.

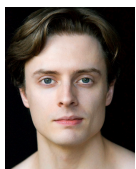
Performance highlights with Charlotte Ballet include Ohad Naharin's *Kamuyot*, Sugarplum Fairy in Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux's *Nutcracker*, Alejandro Cerrudo's *Little mortal jump*, and Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort*.

**Samantha Riester / Indiana**

Samantha Riester is from Greenwood, Indiana, and trained with Indianapolis Ballet before earning a scholarship to The School of American Ballet. She attended summer programs at SAB and Miami City Ballet, later joining Cincinnati Ballet's Second Company in 2015 and the main company in 2017. Samantha became a member of Charlotte Ballet in 2023.

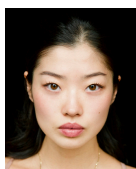
Her featured repertoire includes roles in Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort* and *Sechs Tänze*, Ohad Naharin's *Minus 16* and *Kamuyot*, Alejandro Cerrudo's *Cloudless* and *Little mortal jump*, Johan Inger's *Walking Mad*, Val Caniparoli's *Ibsen's House*, Septime Webre's *ALICE (in Wonderland)*, Victoria Morgan's *Cinderella*, Andrea Schermoly's *Swivet* and *Carmen*, as well as principal roles in *Nutcracker* and

Swan Lake. She has performed other works by George Balanchine, Twyla Tharp, Alejandro Cerrudo, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Helen Pickett, Mthuthuzeli November, Ma Cong, Nicolo Fonte, Stephanie Martinez, Adam Houglan, Jennifer Archibald, Devon Carney, Kirk Peterson, Ib Andersen, Garrett Smith, Myles Thatcher, David Morse and Taylor Carrasco and has appeared as a principal guest artist with Indianapolis Ballet and Cincinnati Opera.



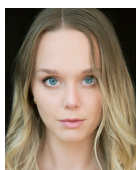
David Senti / Michigan

David Senti began dancing when he was six years old in his hometown of Holland, Michigan, studying at a local studio until his junior year of high school; to further his training, he attended summer programs at Joffrey Chicago, Cincinnati Ballet, and Grand Rapids Ballet. During his senior year, David had the opportunity to join Grand Rapids Ballet as a trainee, performing works by Penny Saunders, Brian Enos, Norbert De la Cruz III, Val Caniparoli, and Dani Rowe. After two years at GRB, David joined Louisville Ballet's studio company, getting promoted to company artist in 2021. During his time there, he enjoyed performing works by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Ronald Hynd, Robert Curran, Andi Schermoly, Adam Houglan, Robin Mineko Williams and Anne Jung. David has also had the pleasure of trying his hand at choreography, creating work for both the Louisville Ballet company and the studio company.



Fuki Takahashi / Japan

Fuki Takahashi was born in Yokohama, Japan and began her training at the age of 4. She studied at Yuzue Ballet Studio in Japan until her move to the US in 2010 where she trained with Princeton Ballet School and NY Dance Artistry Ballet. She earned silver in the Tanzolymp International Dance Competition in 2014. In 2014 and 2018 she competed in the International Ballet Competition. She joined Orlando Ballet II and through competing in USAIBC she joined Atlanta Ballet. Since joining Atlanta Ballet in the 2018-2019 season, she's had the opportunity to perform works by renowned choreographers such as Yuri Possokhov, Liam Scarlet, George Balanchine, Justin Peck, Lar Lubovitch, Dwight Rhoden, Claudia Schreier and Annabelle Lopez Ochoa.



Adriana Wagenfeld / Illinois

Adriana, originally from Puerto Rico, started her training at the age of 3. She studied many styles of dance before joining the Grand Rapids Ballet Company as a Trainee in 2015. Soon, she was promoted to Apprentice and has been a Company Member since 2019. Adriana has worked with many renowned choreographers such as Danielle Rowe, Penny Saunders, Robyn Mineko Williams, Alejandro Cerrudo and Andy Blankenbuehler. She has performed soloist and principal roles in multiple classical ballets, including Dark Angel in Balanchine's *Serenade*, Winter Fairy in Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella*, Jumping Girl in Balanchine's *Who Cares?* and Lilac Fairy in Devon Carney's *Sleeping Beauty*.

When she isn't dancing, Adriana enjoys teaching and choreographing, and coaches many students for regional and national competitions. She has made 4 pieces for the Grand Rapids Ballet Company in their Jumpstart series. Adriana has had the privilege of being a Top 25 To Watch in *Dance Magazine* and most recently, helped *Pointe Magazine* with an article on working and dancing with hypermobility.



Shaina Wire / New Jersey

Shaina, from Sussex County, NJ, began dancing at Branchville Dance Centre. 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 attended The Joffrey Ballet School as a trainee, and a year later was invited to join The Joffrey Concert Group under the direction of Davis Robertson and Nicole Duffy. There, she danced various principal roles and traveled internationally to perform. Since joining Charlotte Ballet in 2016, Shaina has had the opportunity to perform works by Ohad Naharin, George Balanchine, Jiří Kylián, Jerome Robbins, Helen Pickett, Mehdi Walerski, Christian Spuck, and Alejandro Cerrudo. Shaina is so excited for her 10th season with Charlotte Ballet!

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Corinne Littlefield	Education Manager
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