



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2016

Contact: Erika Overturff (Founder and Artistic Director), 402-541-6946

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GO WEST! PREMIERE HIGHLIGHTS BALLET NEBRASKA'S SEASON WRAP-UP

OMAHA -- Ballet Nebraska will wrap up its sixth season April 1 and 3 with a program highlighted by the premiere of a new frontier-themed ballet, *Go West!*

"I can guarantee there will be cowboys, tumbleweeds, and yodels in store," said Erika Overturff, Ballet Nebraska's founder and artistic director. "And since *Momentum* is our mixed-repertory program, we'll also offer a lively mix of other works that show off the range of what ballet can do."

Overturff said she choreographed *Go West!* as part of the ballet company's ongoing collaboration with Joslyn Art Museum, in celebration of its current special exhibition: *Go West! Art of the American Frontier from the Buffalo Bill Center of the West*.

Overturff said that what had struck her most strongly about the Joslyn exhibition was its sense of the West as a land of freedom and possibility.

"I was inspired by the excitement and energy of the westward expansion. I was also moved by the struggle and hardship that many faced. You can imagine yourself in the West as a daring explorer, a brave pioneer, or a heroic cowhand. The works in the exhibition, and the popular songs I used in my ballet, appealed to that freedom of imagination. And since we're dealing with imagination, that also gave us the freedom to have some fun!"

Also on the program, Overturff said, will be: the famous *Black Swan* pas de deux from *Swan Lake*; *Finch Concerto*, a recent work by Ballet Vero Beach artistic director Adam Schnell; *You've Gotta Be Kidding Me!*, by St. Louis-based independent choreographer Thom Dancy; and a new work, *One in Three*, by Ballet Nebraska dancer Erin Alarcón.

Performances of *Momentum: Go West!* will be Friday, April 1, at 7:30 pm at Joslyn Art Museum, and Sunday, April 3, at 2 pm at the Iowa Western Arts Center. Ticket information is available at

balletnebraska.org/performances .

Ballet Nebraska is the region's professional dance company. Season Six is sponsored by Omaha Steaks, with major support for *Momentum: Go West!* from the Iowa West Foundation, and additional support from the Douglas County Visitor Improvement Fund, the Nebraska Arts Council, and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

March 1, 2016

Contact: Erika Overturff (Founder and Artistic Director), 402-541-6946

SUMMARY: BALLET NEBRASKA'S *MOMENTUM: GO WEST!*

- What:** Ballet Nebraska's annual mixed-repertory program features the premiere of *Go West!*, a new frontier-themed ballet by artistic director and founder Erika Overturff.
- When:** Friday, April 1, 7:30 pm at Joslyn Art Museum;
Sunday, April 3, at 2 pm at the Iowa Western Arts Center, Council Bluffs.
- Tickets:** Joslyn performance: Ticket Omaha: www.ticketomaha.com; 402-345-0606; box office, 13th & Douglas. Tickets also are available for an optional patron reception in the Joslyn fountain court following the performance.
- Iowa Western performance: Arts Center box office, artscenter.iwcc.edu or 712-388-7140.
- Sponsors:** Season Sponsor - Omaha Steaks
Major Support - Iowa West Foundation
Additional Support - Douglas County Visitor Improvement Fund, Nebraska Arts Council, Nebraska Cultural Endowment

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Ballet

NEBRASKA

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

March 1, 2016

Contact: Erika Overturff (Founder and Artistic Director), 402-541-6946

[Click here for choreographer interviews](#) and additional information.

PROGRAM NOTES: BALLET NEBRASKA'S *MOMENTUM: GO WEST!*

Work: *Go West!* choreographed by Erika Overturff
Inspired by Joslyn Art Museum's current featured exhibition, *Go West! Art of the American Frontier from the Buffalo Bill Center of the West.*

Erika's take: "Joslyn's exhibition shows that in the popular imagination, the West could be many things: an exotic landscape to be explored, an arena of challenge and possibility, or a nostalgic memory of nobility and heroism. I combined those impressions with cowboy ballads from popular music to create our own Western landscape in dance."

Work: *Finch Concerto*, choreographed by Adam Schnell, artistic director of Ballet Vero Beach

Erika's take: "We first performed this work on one of our Florida tours, and we're excited to bring it to our home audience. I love Adam's beautiful interpretation of the musical score. The ballet uses the metaphor of flight to portray themes of individualism, innovation, and leadership. One unusual feature is that Adam created two completely different endings, and one of the dancers gets to choose which one to use as the performance comes to a close."

Work: *You've Gotta Be Kidding Me!*, choreographed by Thom Dancy

Erika's take: "Thom is a brilliantly inventive choreographer with Big Muddy Dance Company of St. Louis. This work is a funny and athletic duet featuring two male dancers -- one tall and one short -- who can't see eye to eye, both figuratively and literally. The tall dancer stays impassive, while the shorter dancer keeps going to greater and greater lengths in an effort to get a reaction. Thom says the piece is inspired by the love/hate relationship -- the mix of joy and frustration -- that all dancers feel about making progress in our dancing."

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Work: "Black Swan" *pas de deux* from *Swan Lake*

Erika's take: "This short dance for a couple is both a jewel of classical Russian choreography and a showcase for the dancers' dramatic skills. Odile, the Black Swan, is a sorceress who uses her dancing to enchant Prince Siegfried, tricking him into believing she is his beloved Odette, the Swan Queen. Erin Alarcón shows every facet of the charm, seduction and malice that the Black Swan directs toward Matthew Carter's Siegfried as she bends him to her will."

Work: *One in Three*, choreographed by Erin Alarcón

Erika's take: "*One in Three* is a new contemporary work choreographed by company dancer, Erin Alarcón that explores the idea of the female warrior. Performed by twelve company women, the piece celebrates their strength and individuality – while at the same time embracing their unity. The title comes from the statistic that one in three women will experience violence in their lifetime."

Ballet

NEBRASKA

BALLET NEBRASKA'S SEASON SIX COMPANY ARTISTS

Erika Overturff

Founder and Artistic Director

Artist Sponsor: Holland Foundation



Erika Overturff is the founder and artistic director of Ballet Nebraska, the region's professional ballet company. Under her leadership, Ballet Nebraska enriches the area through an exciting array of professional dance performances and a strong commitment to cultural education and community outreach programming.

Erika began her training in Iowa at the Academy of Ballet, studying at summer programs including North Carolina School of the Arts, American Ballet Theatre, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, and the Kirov Academy. Erika earned her B.F.A. in ballet performance and teaching from the University of Utah, which she attended on a full scholarship. She graduated *cum laude* in just three years and was chosen outstanding senior by the ballet department faculty.

Erika went on to dance with Montgomery Ballet, Alabama Ballet, and Omaha Theater Ballet. She has performed principal and soloist roles in a wide range of classical and contemporary repertoire. Area audiences have enjoyed Erika's performances in roles such as Eileen in *Swing, Swing, Swing!*, Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Lucy in *Dracula*, Snow Queen and Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*, Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland*, and Myrtha in *Giselle*. Erika has also been a faculty member and guest teacher for schools throughout the United States.

As a choreographer, Erika has received critical praise for her work. She served as *répétitrice* for Montgomery Ballet and resident choreographer for Omaha Theater Ballet. She has worked on several collaborations with Opera Omaha and regularly creates new works for Ballet Nebraska. As part of the company's ongoing collaboration with Joslyn Art Museum for Momentum, Erika has choreographed original ballets inspired by museum artwork or exhibitions, including *Connemara* and *Cleopatra*. Other featured works include *Tropico*, *Party Animals*, and *The Diner*. Erika also created Ballet Nebraska's lively and entertaining version of the holiday favorite *The Nutcracker*, which has premiered to enthusiastic audiences both at home and on tour. Additionally, Erika is a 2015 recipient of the Midlands Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Awards, honoring area entrepreneurs, executives, and professionals.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Matthew Carter

Ballet Master

Artist Sponsor: Nebraska Orthopaedic Hospital and OrthoWest



Matthew Carter began his training in Pennsylvania with Sharon Filone at the Lake Erie Ballet School and Sandra Barnett at Little's Dance Studio. He went on to study on full scholarship at North Carolina School of the Arts, Miami City Ballet School, and the Chautauqua Festival Dancers. Matthew has danced professionally with Ohio Ballet, Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, Lake Erie Ballet, and Omaha Theater Ballet. He has performed numerous leading roles within the classical repertoire, including Prince Desire in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Franz in *Coppélia*, and Mercutio in *Romeo & Juliet*, as well as in works by George Balanchine, Merce Cunningham, Donald Byrd, Heinz Poll, Laura Dean, Luis Montero, and many others. He has also performed as a Guest Artist with Hawaii Ballet Theatre, Neglia Ballet Artists, and Ballet Tucson.

Omaha audiences have enjoyed Matthew in roles such as Albrecht in *Giselle*, Cavalier in *The Nutcracker*, White Rabbit in Kennet Oberly's *Alice In Wonderland*, the Asp in Erika Overturff's *Cleopatra*, and Puck in Oscar Antunez's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Also a choreographer, he has premiered works with numerous schools and professional companies, including *Bacchanale Variations*, *Signs of Life*, *Sadako* and *Poseidon* for Ballet Nebraska. Matthew is the co-director of Motion41 Dance in Omaha and continues to serve as a guest teacher for schools throughout the country. Matthew returns for his sixth season as ballet master.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Erin Alarcón

Company Dancer

Artist Sponsors: Clyde and Deborah Overturff



Erin Alarcón received her dance training under Christine Taylor and Luba Gulyaeva at North Jersey School of Dance Arts in Hackettstown, NJ where she was also a member of New Jersey Civic Youth Ballet. Erin went on graduate *magna cum laude* with a B.A. in dance performance at Mercyhurst University under the direction of Tauna Hunter. During her time at Mercyhurst she performed both leading and soloist roles. During the summers she studied with Eglevsky Ballet and Joffrey Ballet. She has worked with a number of guest artists including Laura Alonso, Bruce Marks, Vivi Flindt, and Bill Evans.

Erin has studied abroad with Valerie Valentine of the Dutch National Ballet, danced professionally with SoMar Dance Works and Ballet Concert, and has appeared as a guest artist with Iowa Dance Theater performing the title role of *Cinderella*. With Ballet Nebraska, she has performed the principal roles in *Giselle*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and Sugar Plum Fairy in Erika Overturff's *The Nutcracker*. She has been featured in Mikhail Fokine's *The Dying Swan* and as Fee in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Erin also serves as Ballet Nebraska's operations manager and teaches classes and workshops throughout the state. This is Erin's sixth season with the company.

Ryan Christopher

Company Dancer

Artist Sponsors: Victor and Linda Mattes



Ryan Christopher grew up in Colorado playing baseball and football through high school. He received his classical ballet training at International Youth Ballet on a full scholarship under the tutelage of Mark Carlson and German Zamuel. Ryan also trained during summers at The Performing Arts Conservatory of Texas directed by H. Christopher Fairbank. Ryan previously danced with Denver's Ballet Ariel and Boulder Ballet where he performed soloist roles in classical repertory including *Le Corsaire*, *Les Sylphides*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Cinderella*, *The Nutcracker*, *Peter Pan*, *Giselle*, *Napoli*,

Beauty & the Beast, *Les Patineurs*, and many neoclassical and modern works. With Ballet Nebraska, Ryan has performed featured roles in *Giselle*, *Paquita*, *Snow White*, *The Nutcracker*, and several works in *Momentum* including Charles Weidman's *On My Mother's Side*. He has appeared as a guest artist throughout Colorado and around the United States. This is Ryan's third season with the company.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Vivi DiMarco

Company Dancer

Artist Sponsors: John Ritland and Greta Vaught



Hailing from Chicago, Vivi DiMarco trained in ballet, modern, and Vaganova character dance at the School of DanceWest Ballet under the direction of Ricardo and Regina Moyano. While attending college, Vivi continued to train at Hubbard Street's Lou Conte Dance Studio and the Ruth Page Center for the Arts. She also directed and choreographed for University Ballet, where she danced lead roles in student productions of *Giselle*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*. Vivi was a trainee at The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, performing in trainee productions of *Paquita* and Gerald Arpino's *Birthday Variations*. She graduated with honors from the University of Chicago with a B.S. in chemistry. At Ballet Nebraska, Vivi has danced as the Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*, the lead in *Paquita*, and featured roles in *Alice in Wonderland*, *Les Odalisques*, and George Balanchine's *Valse Fantaisie*. She also serves as Ballet Nebraska's marketing coordinator. Vivi returns for her fourth season at Ballet Nebraska.

Claire Goodwillie

Company Dancer

Artist Sponsor: Midlands Choice



Claire Goodwillie began her ballet training at Omaha Theater Ballet School of Dance. She spent summers training with Pacific Northwest Ballet and Ballet Austin, as well as in Banff, Canada. She appeared in numerous Omaha Theater Ballet productions as both a student and apprentice. With Ballet Nebraska, Claire has danced as Rat Queen and Chinese soloist in *The Nutcracker*, Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Vampire Bride in *Dracula*, Geisha in *Sadako*, Red Queen in *Alice in Wonderland*, Ostrich in *Party Animals*, Zulme in *Giselle*, and featured roles in *Paquita*, *The Diner*, and George Balanchine's *Valse Fantaisie*. She has also performed several times with Opera Omaha and Omaha Symphony. Claire returns for her sixth season with the company.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Bret Samson

Company Dancer

Artist Sponsor: Rebecca Liu-Huang and James Liu



Originally from Wisconsin, Bret Samson began her dance training at Lake Shore Dance with Amy Aichele and Gwen Agee in Saukville, and later with Melissa Anderson and Rafael Delgado in Milwaukee. Bret continued her training at Steps on Broadway in New York City. She has previously performed with Milwaukee Ballet II, Madison Ballet and Omaha Theater Ballet. Bret has performed in works by noted choreographers Harrison McEldowney, Oskar Antunez, Winthrop Corey, Kennet Oberly, and Jean-Paul Commélin.

A founding member of Ballet Nebraska, Bret has performed as Arabian Princess in *The Nutcracker*, soloist in Mikhail Fokine's *The Dying Swan*, Moyna in *Giselle*, and featured roles in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and many works in *Momentum*. She has also danced in Opera Omaha productions. This is Bret's sixth season with the company.

Kelsey Schwenker

Company Dancer

Artist Sponsor: First National Bank



Boulder native Kelsey Schwenker began her classical ballet training with Ballet Nouveau of Colorado, where she was a five-year member of its student company directed by Julia Wilkinson Manley. She trained during summers with Kansas City Ballet, Burklyn Ballet Theatre, Boulder Jazz Dance Workshop and Paul Taylor Dance Company. Kelsey received her B.F.A. in ballet performance, graduating *summa cum laude* from the University of Oklahoma, where she trained with Mary Margaret Holt, Donn Edwards, Steve Brule and Jeremy Lindberg. Kelsey has performed in notable works including *Rodeo*, *Divertimento*

No. 5, *The Firebird*, *Afternoon of a Faun* and *Les Biches*. With Ballet Nebraska, she has performed lead roles in *Alice in Wonderland* and *Poseidon*, as well as featured roles in *The Nutcracker*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Dracula*, *Les Odalisques*, *Bacchanale Variations*, *Sadako*, *Party Animals*, *Giselle*, *Paquita*, *The Diner*, and George Balanchine's *Valse Fantaisie*. She is rehearsal director for Repertory Ensemble, the company's youth performance group. Kelsey returns for her sixth season with the company.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Katie van der Mars

Company Dancer

Artist Sponsor: Anne Thorne Weaver



Katie van der Mars is a graduate of the University of Utah, where she received her B.F.A. in ballet performance. She began her training in classical ballet at Corvallis Academy of Ballet in Corvallis, Oregon. Katie trained during summers with Atlanta Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and Ballet West. During her time in Salt Lake City, she performed as a 3-year member of the university's resident company, Utah Ballet, where she danced in *Giselle*, *La Bayadere*, *Paquita*, the *pas de deux* from *Scheherazade*, *The Nutcracker*, *Les Odalisques pas de trois* from *Le Corsaire*, *The Firebird*, Fokine's *Ruslan & Ludmilla*, and many contemporary works. At Ballet Nebraska, Katie has danced the lead in George Balanchine's *Valse Fantaisie*, French soloist in *The Nutcracker*, and featured roles in *Alice in Wonderland*, *Party Animals*, *Giselle*, *The Diner*, and many works in Ballet Nebraska's mixed-repertory production *Momentum*. Katie returns for her fourth season at Ballet Nebraska.

Sasha York

Company Dancer

Artist Sponsor: Children's Hospital & Medical Center



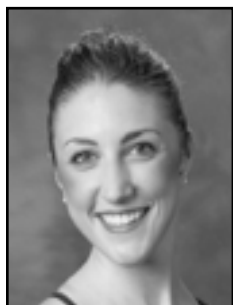
Originally from Chelyabinsk, Russia, Sasha York trained at Paavola School of Dance in Flint, Michigan. He later returned to Russia, where he trained with Urey Urivich. Sasha was accepted into the pre-professional program at Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, where he performed in company productions of *Don Quixote*, *The Nutcracker*, *Peter Pan*, and *Alice in Wonderland*. He has worked with many well-known choreographers such as Viktor Plotnikov, Septime Webre, and Harrison McEldowney. With Ballet Nebraska, Sasha has performed as Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Marc Antony in *Cleopatra*, Hilarion in *Giselle*, Prince Charming in *Snow White*, Cavalier and Snow King in *The Nutcracker*, White Knight in *Alice in Wonderland*, and lead roles in *Dracula*, *Swing Swing Swing!*, and Charles Weidman's *On My Mother's Side*. He previously danced for two seasons at Omaha Theater Ballet and is a featured guest artist in professional ballet productions throughout the United States. Sasha returns for his sixth season with the company.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Apprentices

Katherine Boatright



Katherine Boatright is a native of Bartlesville, Oklahoma. She began her classical ballet training at Inspirations Dance Studio and The Dance and Performing Arts Academy with Matthew Bridwell. Katherine earned her B.A. in dance performance with a minor in arts administration at Mercyhurst University under the direction of Tauna Hunter. During her summers, she has studied at Joffrey, American Ballet Theatre, Quartz Mountain and Summer Wind intensives. Katherine has previously danced with the Osage Ballet and Ballet Concerto. Katherine's repertoire includes *Firebird*, *Gaîté Parisienne*, *Giselle*, *La Bayadère*, *La Fille Mal Gardée*, *Le Corsaire*, *Les Patineurs*, *The Nutcracker*, *Tarentella*, *On My Mother's Side*, and numerous contemporary works by recognized as well as emerging choreographers. Katherine returns for her second season at Ballet Nebraska.

Rebecca Brenner



Ohio native and former member of Rochester City Ballet, Rebecca received her ballet training from Columbus City Ballet School and University of Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. She attended summer intensives with American Ballet Theatre in New York City, trained on merit scholarship at Orlando Ballet School in Florida, and participated in Youth American Grand Prix, competing twice in its New York City finals. She has performed Balanchine works including *Walpurgisnacht Ballet*, *Valse-Fantaisie*, *Stars and Stripes*, *Raymonda Variations*, and *Serenade*. At Rochester City Ballet, she appeared in *The Nutcracker*, *Cinderella*, *Serenade* and the premiere of Jamey Leverett's *New York Cityscapes*. At Ballet Nebraska, Rebecca has performed in *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Paquita*. This is Rebecca's second season with Ballet Nebraska.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Katherine Eppink

Artist Sponsor: Omaha Marketing Solutions



Katherine is a graduate of the University of Utah, where she earned a BFA from the department of ballet. Katherine began her classical ballet training in Des Moines at Iowa Dance Theatre. She also danced on scholarship as a member of Utah Ballet, the resident performing company of University of Utah, where she performed lead roles in *Serenade*, *Coppélia*, *Swan Lake*, *Ruslan and Ludmila*, and *The Nutcracker*. Katherine spent summers training with Pacific Northwest Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Joffrey Ballet, Ballet West, Nashville Ballet, Ballet Met, and Korean Ballet Theatre. At Ballet Nebraska, Katherine has danced in *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, *Paquita*, and *On My Mother's Side*. Katherine returns to Ballet Nebraska for her second season.

Jake Godek [new for Season Six]



Originally from Keller, Texas, Jake Godek studied dance at West Texas A&M University under Edward Truitt, Leslie Williams, and Crystal Bertrand. He danced for two seasons with Lone Star Ballet of Amarillo, performing the lead role of Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, Nutcracker Prince in *The Nutcracker*, and Caesar in *Cleopatra*, among others. Jake also performed three summers in the outdoor musical drama *Texas* as a dancer and as understudy to theatrical roles, eventually performing the lead role of Calvin. This is Jake's first season with Ballet Nebraska.

Alyssa Grimsley



Alyssa began her dance training at Western Arkansas Ballet in Fort Smith, Arkansas. She trained during summers at Joffrey Midwest, Ballet Austin, Tulsa Ballet, and Cincinnati Ballet. Alyssa graduated *summa cum laude* with a BFA in ballet performance from the University of Oklahoma, where she trained with Mary Margaret Holt, Clara Cravey, Steve Brule, Ilya Kozadayev, and Jeremy Lindberg. Alyssa toured with Oklahoma Festival Ballet at the Haydn's Classical Music Festival in Eisenstadt, Austria and with Burklyn Ballet Theatre to perform at Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland. She has performed in Ballet Nebraska productions of *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, *Paquita*, and *On My Mother's Side*. Alyssa returns for her second season with Ballet Nebraska.

Alexandra Hoffman [new for Season Six]

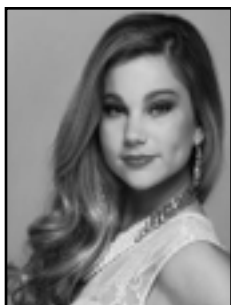
Ballet

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Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Alexandra Hoffman received her classical ballet training under the direction of Ana Lobe of Cleveland San Jose Ballet. As a dancer at Louisville Ballet, Alexandra performed a variety of roles including the principal girl in *La Vivandiere*, and a soloist in *Paquita*. She has danced in numerous classical productions including Bruce Simpson's *Swan Lake*, *Suite en Blanc*, *Giselle*, *La Sylphide*, Alun Jones' *Cinderella*, and Val Caniparoli's *The Nutcracker* and *A Cinderella Story*. Alexandra joins Ballet Nebraska for her first season with the company.

Kogan Murphy [new for Season Six]



A native of Chicago, Kogan Murphy trained with the Judith Svalander School Of Ballet before becoming a trainee with The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago for two seasons. She was also a member of Ballet Theatre of Indiana in its inaugural season. Kogan has performed lead roles including Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker* and Odette in *Swan Lake*, and appeared in Gerald Arpino's *Birthday Variations*. In addition to classical ballet, Kogan works with the Miss America Organization, where she competed for and won several talent awards and scholarships. This is Kogan's first season with Ballet Nebraska.

Laura Skold [new for Season Six]



Laura Skold was born and raised in West Des Moines, Iowa. She trained at School of Classical Ballet and Dance and performed with Ballet Des Moines before spending her final year of high school at the prestigious Walnut Hill School for the Arts. Laura earned her B.F.A. in Ballet at the University of Utah. During summers, she trained at the School of American Ballet, Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Colorado Ballet, and Ballet Austin. Laura has danced lead and soloist roles including both Swanhilda and Dawn variation in *Coppélia*, a lead in Ma Cong's *Passion There*, Summer Fairy in *Cinderella*, and featured roles in *La Bayadere* and *Swan Lake*. She has performed abroad in Seoul, South Korea and Zaragoza, Spain. This is Laura's first season with Ballet Nebraska.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Amaris Sharratt



Amaris began her training at Ballet Arts in Tucson, Arizona under the direction of Mary-Beth Cabana. She spent several summers training on full scholarship at Pacific Northwest Ballet, Houston Ballet, and Ballet Tucson. As a Marshall Thurber Scholarship recipient at Burklyn Ballet Theater, Amaris performed in Edinburgh, Scotland, at Fringe Festival, where she performed a featured role in Robert Royce's *Beauty and the Beast*. She also performed with Milwaukee Ballet II, Houston Ballet, Nevada Ballet Theater, Ballet Tucson, Earthen Vessels, and Hopestone Dance Company. Amaris danced featured roles in *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, *Paquita*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Amahl And The Night Visitors*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the title role in *Cinderella*, among many other classical and contemporary works. At Ballet Nebraska, Amaris has performed in *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Paquita*. Amaris returns for her second season with Ballet Nebraska.

Anna Swenson

Artist Sponsor: metroMAGAZINE/mQUARTERLY



Anna began her classical ballet training at Theater Ballet of Spokane, Washington, where she performed in original works by choreographers Charles Askegard, Dodie Askegard and Deidre A. Kellogg among others. She studied during summers at Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Joffrey Ballet's Jazz and Contemporary program, and School of Alberta Ballet in Calgary, Canada. She joined the trainee program at School of Alberta Ballet in 2012, performing in Aram Manukyan's *The Nutcracker* and in Yukichi Hattori's *Numbers*. With Ballet Nebraska, Anna has performed in *Giselle*, *Paquita*, *Snow White*, *The Nutcracker*, *On My Mother's Side*, and many roles in *Momentum*. Anna returns for her third season with Ballet Nebraska.

Whitney Walsh



Originally from Westlake Village, California, Whitney Walsh trained at the California Dance Theatre and performed leading roles with Pacific Festival Ballet. As a trainee with The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, she danced in Alexei Kremnev's *The Nutcracker Suite*, *Coppélia*, and *The Bluebird of Happiness*, Gerald Arpino's *Viva Vivaldi*, and in original pieces by William B. McClellan Jr., Alexei Kremnev and Stefanie Batten Bland. Whitney spent summers training with The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, American Ballet Theatre (New York), Houston Ballet, and Kirov Academy of Ballet. With Ballet Nebraska, Whitney has performed in *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, and *The Diner*. This is Whitney's second season with Ballet Nebraska.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

Chloé Watson

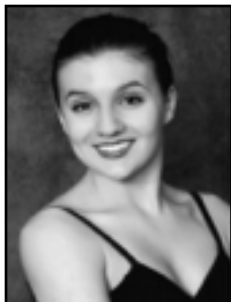
Artist Sponsors: Herbert & Carole Dewey



Chloé graduated *cum laude* from Purchase College Conservatory of Dance at State University of New York (SUNY) with a BFA in dance performance. She began her classical ballet training at Dallas Ballet Center and graduated with distinguished high honors from Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Dallas, Texas. She studied on scholarship at Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance and performed in George Balanchine's *Serenade* at Jacob's Pillow. While at university, Chloé studied at Paris Opéra Ballet at the invitation of Kazuko Hirabayashi, and traveled to Madrid with members of Compañía Nacional de Danza, where she performed in Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*. As a Ballet Nebraska trainee, Chloé performed in *Snow White*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Momentum*. She presented her original work *Temporary Dwelling* as part of Ballet Nebraska's *New Works* program. Chloé returns for her third season with Ballet Nebraska.

Trainee

Hannah Birdwell [New for Season Six]



Ballet Nebraska II Student Company
Motion41 Dance, Omaha, NE
Summer intensives at Joffrey Workshop (TX), Kansas City Ballet, Motion41 Dance,
Omaha Theater Ballet

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