



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 1, 2016

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

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**SWAN LAKE OPENS BALLET NEBRASKA'S SEASON SEVEN**

OMAHA -- Ballet Nebraska's dancers will start work next week on its seventh season of professional dance, which will open October 22 at Omaha's Orpheum Theater with the iconic classical ballet *Swan Lake*.

"If there's one great work that embodies classical dance, it's *Swan Lake*," said Erika Overturff, Ballet Nebraska's founder and artistic director. "Its signature roles – Odette, the noble Swan Queen, and Odile, the malevolently seductive Black Swan – have become symbols of ballet in popular culture. And its story is a powerful drama of love and hope against treachery and evil. It's a work with its own special tradition — a tradition that our dancers are eager to join, and that our audience will be inspired to see.

A chance encounter in Omaha's Old Market inspired a new Spanish dance for *The Nutcracker*, the family holiday favorite that comes next in the season lineup, Overturff said.

"We were out celebrating my husband's birthday when we came across a large, ornate Spanish-style fan lying on the sidewalk," she said. "There was nobody nearby who might have dropped it, and no clue how it had gotten there. I picked it up, opened it, and swirled it around a bit — and suddenly I had a vision of six female dancers turning and swirling with Spanish fans in an array of colors. That became my concept for the new scene."

*The Nutcracker* will open with a special pre-Thanksgiving performance November 20 at the Iowa Western Arts Center, followed by performances December 3 and 4 at the Orpheum.

*Momentum*, Ballet Nebraska's award-winning mixed repertory program, will round out the season in April 2017. Topping the bill, Overturff said, will be *Bournonville Divertissements*, a compilation of selections by 19th-century master choreographer August Bournonville, staged for Ballet Nebraska by former New York City Ballet principal dancer Nilas Martins. Ballet Nebraska is presenting the work in conjunction with Joslyn Art Museum in celebration of its European collection, she said.

"Bournonville was hugely influential," Overturff said. "He developed an aesthetic of ballet that was completely his own, one that emphasized natural grace, buoyant jumps, and light, exuberant footwork. It's challenging but rewarding to dance, and absolutely charming to watch."

Performances of *Momentum* will be April 1 at Joslyn Art Museum, and April 8 at the Iowa Western Arts Center.

Information about all three productions is available at [balletnebraska.org/performances](http://balletnebraska.org/performances).

Ballet Nebraska is the region's professional dance company. Season Seven is presented with major support from the Iowa West Foundation, the Fred and Eve Simon Charitable Foundation, and the Richard Brooke Foundation, with additional support from Douglas County, the Nebraska Arts Council, and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment.

# Ballet

NEBRASKA

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

### GUEST CHOREOGRAPHER BRINGS BOURNONVILLE'S WORLD TO LIFE

Guest choreographer Nilas Martins may be new to Omaha, but he'll be on familiar territory when he arrives August 15th to begin staging Ballet Nebraska's production of *Bournonville Divertissements*.

Martins was born in Denmark and began his dance training at the Royal Danish Ballet School — just like August Bournonville, the 19th-century master choreographer whose works are featured in *Bournonville Divertissements*.

And when the New York City Ballet presented *Bournonville Divertissements* as part of its 2015 Spring Gala, it was Nilas Martins who was chosen to stage it. Reviewing the event, New York Times critic Alastair Macauley wrote: "...Bournonville's ideas remain fresh and modern in these dances; and the program shows how today's performers are challenged, focused and refreshed by them."

"*Bournonville Divertissements* will be Ballet Nebraska's first work in the Bournonville style, so I wanted to make sure we would be learning from a real expert," artistic director Erika Overturff said. "It's hard to imagine anyone better equipped than Nilas Martins to bring Bournonville's world to life for us."

Ballet Nebraska will present *Bournonville Divertissements* as the featured work on its spring 2017 *Momentum* program, on Saturday, April 1, at Joslyn Art Museum, and Saturday, April 8, at the Iowa Western Arts Center.

Created for the New York City Ballet in 1977, *Bournonville Divertissements* is a tribute to the choreography, style, and spirit of 19th-century master choreographer August Bournonville [1805-1879] of the Royal Danish Ballet. NYCB's artistic director George Balanchine [1904-1983] was a great admirer of Bournonville's choreography. In 1977 he asked master teacher Stanley Williams, a former Royal Danish Ballet principal dancer, to create the ballet, which combines excerpts from some of Bournonville's most-loved ballets created from 1842 to 1858.

Nilas Martins was born in Copenhagen, and his early dance training began at age seven at Royal Danish Ballet School. As a student he performed with Royal Danish Ballet in such works as John Neumeier's *Romeo and Juliet*; August Bournonville's *Konservatoriet*, *A Folk Tale*, and *Napoli*; and Glen Tetley's *Firebird*.

Martins is the son of New York City Ballet's ballet master in chief, Peter Martins, and Lise la Cour, formerly of Royal Danish Ballet. In 1984, Martins moved to New York to enroll at the School of American Ballet (SAB), the official school of New York City Ballet. At SAB's annual Spring Workshop performances, he danced in George Balanchine's *Cortège Hongrois* and *Who Cares?*, Jerome Robbins' *The Concert*, and Bournonville's *Konservatoriet*. In June 1986, Martins became an apprentice with New York City Ballet, and was promoted a few months later to the company's corps de ballet. In 1991, he was promoted to soloist, and again two years later to the rank of principal dancer, retiring in 2010 after a long career.

Since his retirement from the stage, Martins has worked extensively as a guest teacher and choreographer for dance companies, universities, and festivals around the world.

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[**NOTE TO EDITORS:** For interview requests or to schedule photo/video coverage of Ballet Nebraska's rehearsals with Nilas Martins, contact Erika Overturff (402-541-6946) or Vivi DiMarco (630-401-6073).]

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

August 1, 2016

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

**SUMMARY: BALLET NEBRASKA SEASON SEVEN SUMMARY**

**I. Season opener: *Swan Lake***

**What:** Ballet Nebraska's production of *Swan Lake*, a ballet that is consistently cited by critics as one of the greatest of the Imperial Russian era, and a benchmark for companies dedicated to classical excellence.

**When:** Saturday, October 22, 7:30 pm

**Where:** Omaha's Orpheum Theater

**Details:** The ballet's signature roles – Odette, the regal yet vulnerable Swan Queen, and Odile, the malevolently seductive Black Swan who schemes against her – have become symbols of ballet in popular culture. They are the central figures in an epic drama that pits love and hope against evil and treachery.

**Erika's take:** "*Swan Lake* is a landmark of classical ballet. The emotive musical score by Tchaikovsky is one of my all-time favorites, and the corps of graceful swans moving in unison is breathtaking. We're looking forward to taking our place in the history of this iconic work."

**II. Holiday classic: *The Nutcracker***

**What:** Ballet Nebraska's lively, entertaining version of the classic holiday ballet

**When/Where:** Saturday, November 20, 2 pm, at the Iowa Western Arts Center, Council Bluffs; Saturday, December 3, 2 and 7:30 pm, and Sunday, December 4, 2 pm, at Omaha's Orpheum Theater

**Details:** Its visual splendor, charming story line, and lively variety make *The Nutcracker* an enduring family favorite.

**Erika's take:** "*The Nutcracker* is a ballet that both newcomers and experts can enjoy, with a charming story told through beautiful dancing in a wide range of classical styles. This year's Spanish dance will feature all-new choreography and costumes, with sweeping turns, swirling fabrics, dazzling colors, and flashing fans."

**III. Season finale: *Momentum***

**What:** Ballet Nebraska's annual mixed-repertory program of ballets in a wide range of styles.

**When/Where:** Saturday, April 1, 7:30 pm, at Joslyn Art Museum; Saturday, April 8, 7:30 pm, at the Iowa Western Arts Center, Council Bluffs

**Details:** *Momentum*, Ballet Nebraska's award-winning "mixed-repertory" program, showcases the artistic range and choreographic variety of ballet as a captivating art form. Heading this season's program will be *Bournonville Divertissements*, a sparkling compilation of selections by 19th-century Danish master choreographer August Bournonville, staged for Ballet Nebraska by former New York City Ballet principal dancer Nilas Martins. Presented in conjunction with Joslyn Art Museum in celebration of its European collection, the ballet showcases Bournonville's sparkling beats and exuberant footwork.

**Erika's take:** "This ballet will be an ideal introduction to Bournonville's charming and distinctive style. We're lucky to have a real expert, Nilas Martins, to stage it for us."

**BALLET NEBRASKA'S SEASON SEVEN COMPANY ARTISTS**

**Erika Overturff**

*Founder and Artistic Director*



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, created an all-new production of *Peter and the Wolf* with the Omaha Symphony, 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*, *Cleopatra*, and *Go West!* 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 recipient of the Midlands Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Awards, honoring area entrepreneurs, executives, and professionals.

# Ballet

NEBRASKA

## Matthew Carter

*Ballet Master*



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 original 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 seventh season as ballet master.

## Artists

### Erin Alarcón



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 to 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 title roles in *Giselle*, *Alice in Wonderland*, and as Sugar Plum Fairy in Erika Overturff's *The Nutcracker*. She was featured in Mikhail Fokine's *The Dying Swan*, the Black Swan *pas de deux* from *Swan Lake*, and as Fee in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Erin recently choreographed the ballet *One in Three*, which was featured in *Momentum* to rave reviews. She also serves as Ballet Nebraska's operations manager and teaches classes and workshops throughout the state. This is Erin's seventh season with the company.

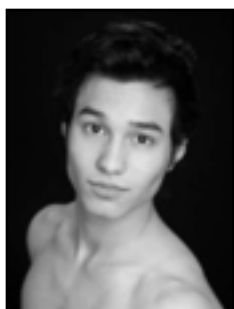
### Ryan Christopher



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

### Marco Clemente



Marco Clemente graduated from the Ruth Page School of Dance in Chicago, Illinois under the direction of Larry Long and Dolores Lipinski-Long. He has performed in numerous productions with the Civic Ballet of Chicago under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Long, including productions of *Napoli* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which he danced the role of Puck. Marco has performed with Dayton Ballet and Minnesota Ballet in works such as the *Harlequinade* *pas de deux*, and as Goro in *Madame Butterfly*. This is Marco's first season with Ballet Nebraska.

# Ballet

NEBRASKA

## Vivi DiMarco



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 danced, directed, and choreographed for University Ballet. She graduated with honors from the University of Chicago with a B.S. in chemistry. Vivi was a trainee at The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, performing in trainee productions of *Paquita* and Gerald Arpino's *Birthday Variations*.

With Ballet Nebraska, Vivi has danced as Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*, the lead in *Paquita*, and featured roles in *Alice in Wonderland*, *Les Odalisques*, George Balanchine's *Valse Fantaisie*, and many roles in *Momentum*. She also serves as Ballet Nebraska's marketing coordinator. Vivi returns for her fifth season with Ballet Nebraska.

## Katherine Eppink



Katherine Eppink is a graduate of the University of Utah where she earned a B.F.A. 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*, *On My Mother's Side*, *Cleopatra*, *One in Three*, and *Go West!* Katherine returns to Ballet Nebraska for her third season.

## Claire Goodwillie



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. Claire danced as an apprentice with Omaha Theater Ballet. With Ballet Nebraska, Claire has danced the title role in *Cleopatra*, Rat Queen 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*, *Go West!*, and George Balanchine's *Valse Fantaisie*.

She has also performed with Opera Omaha and Omaha Symphony. Claire returns for her seventh season with the company.

# Ballet

NEBRASKA

## **Bret Samson**



Originally from Wisconsin, Bret Samson began her dance training at Lake Shore Dance with Amy Aichele and Gwen Agee in Saukville, and Melissa Anderson and Rafael Delgado in Milwaukee, later continuing to dance at Steps on Broadway in New York City. She has danced with Milwaukee Ballet II, Madison Ballet and Omaha Theater Ballet. Bret has performed in works by noted choreographers including 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*, *Cleopatra*, and many works in *Momentum*. Bret has also performed with Opera Omaha and Omaha Symphony. This is Bret's seventh season with the company.

## **Kelsey Schwenker**



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, Brooklyn 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*, *Cleopatra*, *Go West!*, and George Balanchine's *Valse Fantaisie*. She is rehearsal director for Repertory Ensemble, the company's youth performance group. Kelsey returns for her seventh season with the company.

## **Anna Swenson**



Anna Swenson began her classical ballet training at Ballet Arts Academy 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*, *Cleopatra*, *On My Mother's Side*, *Go West!*, and many roles in *Momentum*. Anna returns for her fourth season with Ballet Nebraska.



# Ballet

NEBRASKA

## Katie van der Mars



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*, *Cleopatra*, *Go West!* and many works in Ballet Nebraska's mixed-repertory production *Momentum*. Katie returns for her fifth season at Ballet Nebraska.

## Sasha York



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!*, *Paquita*, Charles Weidman's *On My Mother's Side*, and Erika Overturff's *Go West!*. He previously danced for two seasons at Omaha Theater Ballet and is a featured guest artist in ballet productions throughout the United States. Sasha returns for his seventh season with the company.

# Ballet

NEBRASKA

## Ensemble Artists

### 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*. With Ballet Nebraska, Rebecca has performed in *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, *Paquita*, and *Cleopatra*. This is Rebecca's third season with Ballet Nebraska.

### Jake Godek



Originally from Keller, TX, 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, TX performing the 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. With Ballet Nebraska, Jake has performed featured roles in *Cleopatra*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Go West!* This is Jake's second season with Ballet Nebraska.

### Alyssa Grimsley



Alyssa Grimsley 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 B.F.A. 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*, *On My Mother's Side*, and *Go West!* Alyssa returns for her third season with Ballet Nebraska.

### Amaris Sharratt

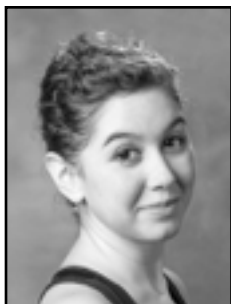


Amaris Sharratt began her training at Ballet Arts in Tucson, Arizona under the direction of Mary-Beth Cabana. She spent summers training on full scholarship at Pacific Northwest Ballet, Houston Ballet, and Ballet Tucson. As a Marshall Thurber Scholarship recipient at Burklyn Ballet Theater, Amaris performed 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. Her repertoire includes *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Amahl And The Night Visitors*, *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, *Cinderella* and other classical and contemporary works. At Ballet Nebraska, Amaris has performed in *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, *Paquita*, *Cleopatra*, and *Go West!* Amaris returns for her third season with Ballet Nebraska.

# Ballet

NEBRASKA

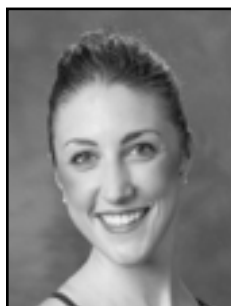
## Chloé Watson



Chloé Watson graduated *cum laude* from Purchase College Conservatory of Dance at State University of New York (S.U.N.Y.) with a B.F.A. 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*. At Ballet Nebraska, Chloé has performed in *Giselle*, *Snow White*, *The Nutcracker*, *Paquita*, *Cleopatra*, *Go West!* and many works in *Momentum*. She presented her original work, *Temporary Dwelling*, as part of Ballet Nebraska's *New Works* program. Chloé returns for her fourth season with Ballet Nebraska.

## Apprentices

### Katherine Boatright



Hometown: Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Training & Experience: B.A. in dance performance with a minor in arts administration at Mercyhurst University, Osage Ballet, Ballet Concerto

Summer Programs: Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre

### Alexandra Hoffman



Hometown: Cleveland, Ohio

Training & Experience: Louisville Ballet trainee, Cleveland San Jose Ballet School

Summer Programs: Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, Nashville Ballet, and Louisville Ballet

### Kogan Murphy



Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

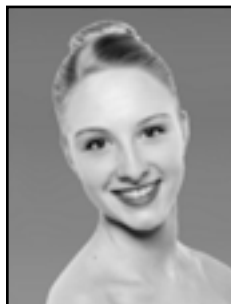
Training & Experience: Ballet Theatre of Indiana, Joffrey Ballet trainee, Judith Svalander School of Ballet, Miss Illinois talent scholarship

Summer Programs: Joffrey Ballet

# Ballet

NEBRASKA

## **Rachel Smith**

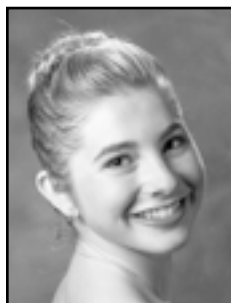


Hometown: Plymouth, Massachusetts

Training & Experience: Nashville Ballet trainee, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre graduate program, Boston Ballet School

Summer Programs: Walnut Hill School of the Arts, Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, Miami City Ballet, Houston Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Nashville Ballet

## **Whitney Walsh**



Hometown: Westlake Village, California

Training & Experience: Joffrey Ballet trainee, California Dance Theatre, Pacific Festival Ballet

Summer Programs: Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Houston Ballet, Kirov Academy of Ballet

## ***Trainees***

### **Hannah Birdwell**

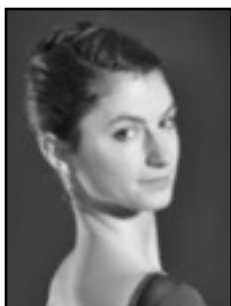


Hometown: Omaha, Nebraska

Training & Experience: Ballet Nebraska II, Motion41 Dance

Summer Programs: Joffrey Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, Motion41 Dance, Omaha Theater Ballet

### **Nora Carr**



Hometown: Burnt Hills, New York

Training & Experience: Akjun Ballet Theatre, B.F.A. in ballet from the University of Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music, Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet

Summer Programs: American Ballet Theatre, Miami City Ballet, Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet

### **Julie Zukaitis**



Hometown: Omaha, NE

Training & Experience: B.F.A. in dance from the University of Arizona, Omaha Academy of Ballet

Summer Programs: Ballet Austin, American Ballet Theater, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Hubbard Street