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ROBERT HILL, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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# OKLAHOMA CITY BALLET

## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Robert Mills

## *Rehearsal Directors*

Ryan Jolicoeur-Nye    Miki Kawamura Khalfan

## *Principal Dancers*

Courtney Connor Jones    DaYoung Jung

## *Soloist Dancers*

Nikolas Gaifullin    Alejandro González    Autumn Klein  
Mayu Odaka    Benjamin Tucker

## *Corps de Ballet Dancers*

Ryland Acree, Kara Troester Blythe, Mickayla Carr, Daniel Cooke,  
Randolph Fernandez, Joseph Hetzer, Nicholas Keeperman,  
Jameson Keating, Gabrielle Mengden, Allison Ramoran,  
Paige Russell, Alexandra Schooling, Mayim Stiller,  
Erik Thordal-Christensen, Zane Winders

## *Apprentices*

Oslaniel Castillo, Elena Damiani, James Klump, Kaileah Long,  
Grace Manuel, Henrique Neumann, Carlie Preskitt

## *OKCB II*

Amelia Aroneo, Chloe Beckinsale, Samantha Efaw, Savannah Lee, Maura Moody,  
Savannah Payne, Leah Reiter, Caitlin Rogers, Anna Tateda, Flannery Werner

## *Trainees*

Nicole Bak, Caterina Brown, Eva Chronert,  
Freestone Dopp, Morgan Dunham, Samantha Dunham,  
Jacy Fletcher, Stephanie Frase, Katie Kelley, Dietrich Klawonn,  
Anya Matejczyk, Michael O'Neill, Abby Quinton, Cheyanne Rowland,  
Bella Saclolo, Tristan Thompson, Sarah Beth Wriston

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# OKLAHOMA CITY BALLET

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Jo Lynne Jones

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**Teaching Artists** Macaira Pinto, Erica Portell, Amber Robin, James Williams

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**Stage Manager** Courtney DiBello

**Resident Lighting Designer** Aaron Mooney

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**Company Pianists** Karen Bentley, Clement Braden, Miho Fisher

**Company Physician** Dr. Megan Meier

**Company Physical Therapist** Dr. Emily Love, Turning Pointe Physical Therapy

**Company Chiropractor** Dr. Mila Mohsenzadeh, Fit Spa

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**Performance Photography** Diana Bittle, Jana Carson, Bill Crouch, Kate Luber

**Videographers** Liquid Media, Scissortail Media

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Racheal Nye

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**Studio Company Manager** Amanda Herd-Popejoy

**School Administrative Associate** Kaitlin Alter

**School Coordinator** Emma Capen

**School Receptionist** Quincy Allen, Morgan Dunham, Brannon Tallant

## INSTRUCTORS

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Kaitlin Alter, Victoria Bearden, Joshua Brooksher, Natasha Brooksher, Morgan Dunham, Alejandro González, Amanda Herd-Popejoy, Joseph Hetzer, Chloe Jensen, Ryan Jolicoeur-Nye, Miki Kawamura Khalfan, Racheal Nye, Macaira Pinto, Erica Portell, Madeleine Purcell, Jacob Sparso, Bruce Steivel, James Williams

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Architect: Allford Hall Monaghan Morris

# ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY



## ROBERT MILLS

Since being named Artistic Director of Oklahoma City Ballet in 2008, Robert Mills has established himself as a prominent member of the Oklahoma arts scene and in the process has brought the company national recognition as one of the fastest growing ballet companies in the United States.

Born in Gary, Indiana and raised just outside of Chicago, Robert had access to world class ballet training at an early age. In Indiana he trained with Natalie Mayoch-Kolosci before moving on to study with some of Kolosci's mentors in Chicago including Richard Ellis, Christine DuBoulay, Larry Long, and Anna Paskevka. He completed his training at the School of the

Philadelphia Ballet, and at the Joffrey Ballet School in New York City. He then enjoyed a 14-year professional performing career dancing with numerous companies across the United States including Oklahoma City Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, Philadelphia Ballet, among others.

Throughout Mills' tenure with Oklahoma City Ballet, patrons have enjoyed seeing the extraordinary advancements made in the scope and quality of the company's work on stage. Keeping a focus on education and community engagement, the organization can boast dramatically increased enrollment in its Yvonne Chouteau School under Mills' guidance plus the addition of numerous community engagement programs geared towards broadening OKC Ballet's reach in the community.

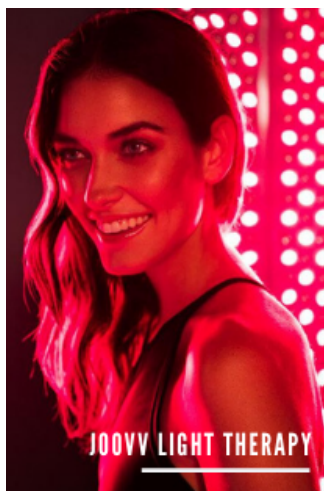
A prolific choreographer, Robert has created 12 new works during his time at Oklahoma City Ballet. His work has been seen across the United States, and in 2017 he was selected to take part in the National Choreographers Initiative in Southern California, an honor bestowed to only four American choreographers per year.

Reporting on Robert's time with OKC Ballet, *The Oklahoman* newspaper wrote; "During Mills' ten years of artistic leadership of OKC Ballet, dance lovers in Oklahoma have had the pleasure of seeing an all-but-failed ballet company grow into a vibrant, passionate, powerful group of performers." In 2018, Robert was presented with a Governor's Arts Award from the state of Oklahoma for community service.

Prior to joining Oklahoma City Ballet as Artistic Director, Robert spent three years as Artistic Director of Ballet Nouveau Colorado in Denver. Of his time in Colorado, *The Denver Post* wrote, "Mills was instrumental in putting it on the map...Mills is now an artistic director responsible for one of Colorado's biggest dance success stories." Ballet Nouveau Colorado has since divided into two organizations. The performing company is now known as Wonderbound and the school became Colorado Conservatory of Dance.

Mr. Mills is also a sought-after dance educator, drawing from over 25 years of teaching experience. He teaches classical ballet in the Yvonne Chouteau School and oversees the School Director and faculty. He has taught at numerous companies, schools and summer programs across the world.





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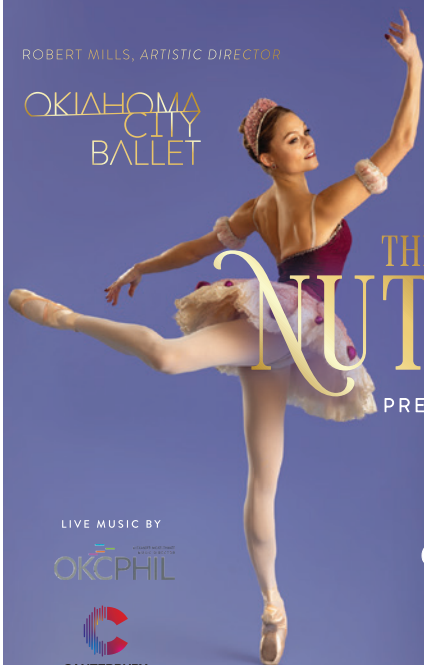
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ROBERT MILLS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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Photo Valerie Sebestyen with @mimscarr @alejandrogonzalez

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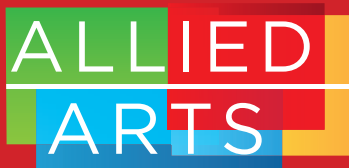


Photo by Jana Carson

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# ALICE

*(in wonderland)*

## SCENARIO, CHOREOGRAPHY, AND DIRECTION

Septime Webre

### MUSIC COMPOSER

Matthew Pierce

### LIGHTING DESIGN

Clifton Taylor

### COSTUME DESIGN

Liz Vandal

### STAGER

Johanna Wilt

### SCENERY DESIGN

James Kronzer

### PUPPETRY DESIGN

Eric Van Wyk

### FLYING EFFECTS

Flying by Foy

### MAKE-UP/WIGS

Brawna Gfeller

### COSTUME MANAGER

Claire Kroeger

### REHEARSALS ASSISTANTS

Miki Kawamura Khalfan  
Ryan Jolicoeur-Nye

### LIGHTING SUPERVISOR

Aaron Mooney

### STAGE MANAGER

Courtney Dibello

### ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Halle Benson  
Gabi Trevino-Bandy

## WITH THE OKLAHOMA CITY PHILHARMONIC

### MUSIC DIRECTOR

Alexander Mickelthwate

### CONDUCTOR

Matthew Pierce

### ORIGINAL PRODUCTION PREMIERE

April 12th, 2012 by the Washington Ballet  
at the Kennedy Center's Eisenhower Theater, Washington D.C.

This performance is made possible by Devon Energy  
and the Collaborative Orchestra Services Endowment Fund.

# ACT I

## PROLOGUE

Alice daydreams as her family swirls around her chaotically. She is mesmerized by the mysterious and quirky Lewis Carroll, a family friend, who takes Alice on a boat ride and picnic in the country.

### ALICE

DaYoung Jung

### MOTHER

Courtney Connor Jones (10/22&10/24)  
Autumn Klein (10/23)

### FATHER

Benjamin Tucker

### TWIN SISTERS

Mickayla Carr, Alexandra Schooling

### GRANDFATHER

Daniel Cooke

### GRANDMOTHER

Alison Ramoran

### BUTLER

Alejandro González

### LEWIS CARROLL

Joseph Hetzer

### GUYS IN WHITE

Ryland Acree, Oslaniel Castillo,  
Randolph Fernandez, Nick Keeperman,  
Dietrich Klawonn, James Klump,  
Henrique Neumann, Michael O'Neill,  
Mayim Stiller, Erik Thordal-Christensen

## DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE

During the picnic, Alice drifts off to sleep while listening to a story of a little girl's adventures in a wonderland. A White Rabbit hops by, quickly leaps into a rabbit hole and Alice follows, falling for what seems like miles. Alice lands with a thud in a hallway. She drinks a potion and grows quite tall; she fans herself and shrinks quite small.

When Alice eats some cake and returns to normal size, she can no longer fit through the tiny door.

### WHITE RABBIT

Alejandro González

### LARGE DOORS

Ryland Acree, Oslaniel Castillo,  
Nick Keeperman, James Klump,  
Henrique Neumann, Mayim Stiller,  
Erik Thordal-Christensen

### SMALL DOORS

Grace Beasley (10/24), Maya Bryant,  
Sloane Henry, Nurah Hurrey,  
Olivia Nguyen, Kailyn Richter,  
Rishika Shah (10/22&10/23)

### ALICE'S LEGS

Caitlin Rogers

### KEY

Bella Saclolo

### QUEEN OF HEARTS

Courtney Connor Jones (10/22&10/24)  
Autumn Klein (10/23)

## POOL OF TEARS AND THE CAUCUS RACE

Frightened and confused, Alice cries a pool of tears. The Dormouse swims by and befriends Alice. Then a Dodo Bird, an Eaglet and a flock of Flamingos plop into the pool. The Dodo Bird decides the best way to dry everyone is to dance a Caucus Race.

### DORMOUSE

Alison Ramoran

### DODO BIRD

Nikolas Gaifullin

### EAGLET

Mayu Odaka

### FLAMINGOS

Kara Troester Blythe, Elena Damiani,  
Samantha Efaw, Savannah Lee,  
Grace Manuel, Gabrielle Mengden,  
Maura Moody, Savannah Payne,

Carlie Preskitt, Caitlin Rogers,  
Paige Russell, Alexandra Schooling

### **BABY FLAMINGOS**

Eloise Bethel, Ava Old Crow, Amelie Nye,  
Ana Sampedro, Sophia Sorroco,  
Harper Wackenheim, Alice Zhang

### **FOUR FLAMINGOS**

Kara Troester Blythe, Grace Manuel,  
Gabrielle Mengden, Alexandra Schooling

## **PIG AND PEPPER**

Alice then meets a Fish and a Frog,  
footmen delivering an invitation to the  
Duchess, who is agitated because the  
Cook has put too much pepper into  
the soup. Alice sees Duchess' babies  
suddenly turn into pigs!

### **FISH**

Randolph Fernandez

### **FROG**

Zane Winders

### **DUCHESS**

Mayim Stiller

### **COOK**

Alejandro González

### **PIG & PEPPER**

Ryland Acree, Oslaniel Castillo,  
Jameson Keating, James Klump

### **PIGLETS**

Jaiden Baker, Ines Elliot, Addilyn Gilbert,  
Jade Henderson, Azalan Henderson,  
Adelynn Kobyluk

## **THE CHESHIRE CAT, ADVICE FROM A CATERPILLAR, THE MAD HATTER'S TEA PARTY**

Later, Alice meets a Cheshire Cat, who  
appears and disappears, and a Caterpillar  
who smokes a hookah pipe and transforms  
into a butterfly. Next, Alice stumbles into  
a chaotic tea party with the Mad Hatter,  
the March Hare and the Dormouse.

### **CHESHIRE CAT**

Benjamin Tucker

### **CATERPILLAR**

Autumn Klein

### **GUYS IN WHITE**

Ryland Acree, Oslaniel Castillo,  
Randolph Fernandez, Nick Keeperman,  
Dietrich Klawonn, James Klump,  
Henrique Neumann, Michael O'Neill,  
Mayim Stiller, Erik Thordal-Christensen

### **MAD HATTER**

Joseph Hetzer

### **MARCH HARE**

Daniel Cooke

### **DORMOUSE**

Alison Ramoran

### **GERBER DAISIES**

Grace Beasley, Raven Bighorn,  
Berry Carson (10/24),  
Sloane Henry,  
Elizabeth Killian-Keup (10/22&10/23),  
Zella Martin, Skylar Moriera,  
Briana Wernke, Rhys Williams

## **INTERMISSION**

## **ACT II**

### **QUEEN'S GARDEN PARTY AND CROQUET GAME**

Meanwhile, card gardeners accidentally  
planted white roses in the Queen's red rose  
garden. Fearing her wrath, they paint the  
roses red. The Queen invites Alice to play a  
game of croquet using Flamingo mallets and  
Hedgehogs as croquet balls. Blaming the  
Hedgehogs for losing the match, the Queen  
proclaims, 'off with their heads'. Alice saves  
the Hedgehogs and the angry Queen chases  
her into the forest.

### **QUEEN OF HEARTS**

Courtney Connor Jones (10/22&10/24)  
Autumn Klein (10/23)

## **KING OF HEARTS**

Benjamin Tucker

## **QUEEN'S HENCHMAN**

Daniel Cooke, Randolph Fernandez,  
Erik Thordal-Christensen, Zane Winders

## **JOKER**

Nikolas Gaifullin

## **ROSES**

Kara Troester Blythe, Mickayla Carr,  
Alexandra Schooling

## **PAINTING THE ROSES RED**

Ryland Acree, Daniel Cooke,  
Nicholas Keeperman, James Klump

## **THE CARDS**

Elena Damiani, Kaileah Long,  
Gabrielle Mengden, Maura Moody,  
Alison Ramoran, Leah Reiter,  
Paige Russell, Anna Tateda

Ryland Acree, Oslaniel Castillo,  
Daniel Cooke, Jameson Keating,  
Nicholas Keeperman, James Klump,  
Henrique Neumann, Mayim Stiller,  
Erik Thordal-Christensen

## **JUNIOR CARDS**

Caterina Brown, Morgan Dunham,  
Samantha Dunham, Stephanie Frase,  
Bella Saclolo, Anabelle Terrada,  
Lilly Quinton, Moira Kate Werner

Julien DeJear (10/22&10/23)  
William Poole (10/24)

## **CARD GUARDS**

Grace Beasley, Raven Bighorn,  
Maya Bryant, Quimby Chapell,  
Evelyn DeGreve, Ines Elliot,

Sloane Henry, Zella Martin,  
Olivia Nguyen, Audrey Nolen  
London Roberdes, Rhys Williams

## **FLAMINGO MALLETS**

Savannah Lee, Charlie Preskitt,  
Flannery Werner

## **HEDGEHOGS**

Henry Byrne, Isaac Nye,  
Harper Wackenheim

## **TWEEDLE DUM AND TWEEDLE DEE AND THE JABBERWOCK**

In the forest, Alice happens upon a Rocking-Horse-Fly, a Bread-and-Butterfly and beautiful Snap-Dragon-Flies. Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum playfully argue as they pass by. Alice and her friends are suddenly threatened by the ultimate danger: the Queen's Jabberwock. To protect her new friends, Alice slays the beast.

## **TWEEDLE DEE & TWEEDLE DUM**

Randolph Fernandez, Zane Winders

## **THE TRIAL AND HOME AGAIN**

Back at the Queen's palace, Alice is arrested and put on trial for her crime. Utter confusion breaks out in the court as the Queen shouts, 'off with her head'. When Alice realizes the silliness of the Queen and her court, they fall like a house of cards. She awakens from her dream and finds herself at home.

## **FULL CAST**

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# ARTISTS BIOGRAPHY



Photo by: Tony Brown

## **MATTHEW PIERCE** *Conductor*

Composer/Violinist Matthew Pierce is celebrated for his new classical scores commissioned by major American ballet companies. He has written for Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, BalletMet, Cincinnati Ballet, Colorado Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, New York City Ballet, Houston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, and the Washington Ballet. Night, an orchestral score set to a Chagall-inspired dreamscape ballet, has been seen at the Opera Garnier in Paris, Covent Garden in London, and City Center in New York. *ALICE (in wonderland)*, with choreography by Septime Webre, has been produced by 12 companies across the United States and the world travelling to Hong Kong and Taipei, Taiwan, and Perth, Australia in 2019.

*The Washington Post* called his score for *ALICE*, “The cherry on top: Pierce’s visionary result, a shimmering landscape that weaves together bits of our own world — Asian, Middle Eastern, pop riffs, jazz — with a contemporary edge and a spirit of discovery. And, yes, wonder.”



## **CLIFTON TAYLOR** *Lighting Designer*

Clifton Taylor is a lighting designer for Broadway: *Frozen*; *Jay Johnson: The Two and Only*; and *Hot Feet*. Off-Broadway credits include several productions for City Center Encores as well as several commercial plays and musicals including *Freud’s Last Session*, *Last Easter*, *Endgame*, and *Anne of Green Gables*. In addition to his work in New York, Mr. Taylor has created lighting, projection and scenic designs for opera and theater companies in Europe, Asia, Australia, and South America. His designs for dance have been commissioned for the repertoires of Alvin Ailey, Cedar Lake, Martha Graham, ABT, Washington, San Francisco, Rio de Janeiro, London’s Rambert Ballet companies among many others. More information can be found at <http://www.designcurve.com>.



# ARTISTS BIOGRAPHY



## **LIZ VANDAL** *Costume Designer*

Liz Vandal began her illustrious career in 1988 as a self-taught fashion designer, bringing her creativity and originality to dance, circus, film, and mega-events. She soon began collaborating with renowned choreographers and dance companies around the world, working with the likes of Marie Chouinard, Kevin O'Day, Margie Gillis, Paris Opera, and the Hong Kong Ballet.

As a specialist in costume design for extreme movements, Vandal also designed flamboyant and masterful costumes for Cirque du Soleil's productions of *OVO*, *Viaggio*,

*Sonor*, *Cosmos*, and *Excentick*.

Vandal explores multiple domains in show business, from producing costumes for The Backstreet Boys' *Black 'n Blue Tour*, to working with multi-national IGT in creating Avatar costumes which were approved by Jon Landau and 20th Century Fox. After collaborating in many dance films and productions, Liz designed clothing for the feature film *The Lathe of Heaven* (Philip Haas) and Quebec's *La Turbulence des Fluides* (Manon Briand).

As a design and innovation consultant, Liz offers services to French multinational company Oxylane (Decathlon) in the development of new and avant-garde sportswear. One of her greatest career achievements was the creation of 3,000 costumes for the closing ceremony of the Baku 2015 European Games in Azerbaijan.

Vandal's on-going 20 year long collaboration with Artistic Director Septime Webre continues to unfold with the new productions of *The Wizard of Oz* (Kansas City Ballet), *Peter Pan*, and *ALICE (in wonderland)* (Hong Kong Ballet). Vandal won the Award of Best Costume Design at the Hong Kong Dance Awards, and was also nominated at Les Benois de la Danse.

# ARTISTS BIOGRAPHY



## **SEPTIME WEBRE** *Choreographer*

Septime Webre is an internationally recognised ballet director, choreographer, educator, and advocate. He joined Hong Kong Ballet as its Artistic Director in July 2017 after 17 years as Artistic Director of The Washington Ballet in Washington D.C., from 1999-2016. Previously he served as Artistic Director of the American Repertory Ballet, based in Princeton, New Jersey, from 1993-1999. In addition, Webre has served as the Artistic Director of Halcyon, a Washington DC-based foundation, launching an annual international Festival for Creativity in Washington D.C. in June 2018.

During Webre's tenure at The Washington Ballet, the institution's budget grew by 500%, and it enjoyed unprecedented advances in the scope and quality of its work on stage, in the size and reach of its professional school, and in the development of several far-reaching community engagement programs, which he founded. Webre launched an array of artistic initiatives including *The American Experience*, which developed great works of literature into full-length ballets, including *The Great Gatsby* and Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, among others.

As a choreographer, Webre's works appear in the repertoires of ballet companies throughout North America, including Pacific Northwest Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Colorado Ballet, Ballet West, Atlanta Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Ballet Austin, Ballet Memphis, Milwaukee Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, Ballet Concierto de Puerto Rico, and many others, and he has worked frequently in theatre as well as opera. As a dancer, Webre was featured in solo and principal roles from the classical repertoire as well as in contemporary works by choreographers such as Twyla Tharp, Paul Taylor, and Merce Cunningham. He has served on the juries of a number of international ballet competitions, including those in Varna, Bulgaria, Istanbul, Cape Town, New York, Seoul, and elsewhere. He has served on the board of Dance/USA and his work has received numerous honors, grants, and awards. He holds a degree in History/Pre-Law from the University of Texas at Austin, and is the seventh son in a large, boisterous, Cuban-American family.

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Anthony Stoops

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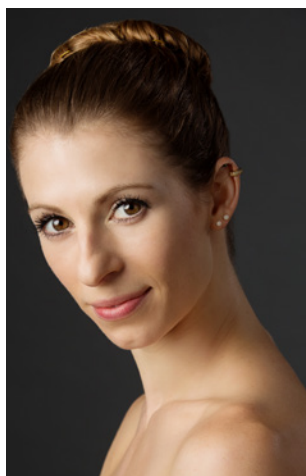
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## PRINCIPAL ARTISTS



### COURTNEY CONNOR JONES

Hometown: Huntington Beach, CA

Joined the Company in 2017

**Sponsored by: Mari Cook Medley**

Courtney Connor Jones, from Charlotte, North Carolina, trained at the North Carolina Dance Theatre and Charlotte City Ballet before graduating from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

Connor Jones danced with Cincinnati Ballet for 11 seasons, and spent a summer in Russia where she performed in *Giselle*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Swan Lake*. Throughout her career, she has performed feature roles including Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*, The Chosen One in Adam Hougland's *Rite of Spring*, The Eaglet in Septime Webre's *ALICE (in wonderland)*, and Jumping Girl in George Balanchine's *Who Cares?*

Since joining Oklahoma City Ballet as a principal in 2017, Connor Jones has performed in Robert Mills' *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *The Means to Fly*, as well as in Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort*, Helen Pickett's *Petal*, and Cayetano Soto's *Adam*.

Connor Jones and her husband and former dancer Sam Jones have a young daughter, Gwyneth and a newborn son, Felix. She also creates custom jewelry and educates others on healthy eating and lifestyle habits in her spare time.



### DAYOUNG JUNG

Hometown: Gyeongsang, South Korea

Joined the Company in 2012

**Sponsored by: Susan E. Brackett and Gregg Wadley**

DaYoung Jung, from South Korea, trained at Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet Academy. She graduated with honors with a specialist degree in Ballet Pedagogy, and was a semifinalist in the Serge Lifar International Ballet Competition held in Donetsk, Ukraine in 2006.

Jung joined Oklahoma City Ballet in 2012, was promoted to soloist in 2014, and to principal in 2017. Her repertoire with Oklahoma City Ballet includes Robert Mills' *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Firebird*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Little Mermaid*. She has performed the title roles in *Giselle*, Jacob Sparso's *Cinderella*, Septime Webre's *ALICE (in wonderland)*, and August Bournonville's *La Sylphide* and performed lead roles in Toni Pimble's *Mowgli – The Jungle Book Ballet*, Paul Vasterling's *Peter Pan*, and Michael Pink's *Dracula*.

Jung has been featured in George Balanchine's *Rubies and Serenade*, Twyla Tharp's *Nine Sinatra Songs*, Robert Joffrey's *Pas des Déesses*, Ma Cong's *Forgotten Memories*, Sarah Tallman's *If These Walls Could Talk*, Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort*, and Cayetano Soto's *Adam*.

## SOLOISTS



### NIKOLAS GAIFULLIN

Hometown: Sarasota, Florida | Joined the Company in 2021

Nikolas Gaifullin is originally from Sarasota, Florida. He began his training at the age of 7 with his parents, Stephanie Murrish and Daniil Gaifullin.

Gaifullin joined Oklahoma City Ballet as a soloist in 2021. His repertoire includes works by Johan Kobborg, Yuri Possokhov, Ma Cong, Max Petrov, Ross Freddie Ray, Jiří Kylián, Ricardo Amarante, Tara Lee, Dwight Rhoden, Bruce Wells, Viktor Plotnikov, Ryan Jolicoeur-Nye, Kiyon Ross, Anthony Krutzkamp, John McFall, and Norbert De La Cruz III. Favorite roles include Tybalt in *Romeo & Juliet*, James in *La Sylphide*, Drosselmier in *The Nutcracker*, Prince Siegfried in *Swan Lake*, and Basilio in *Don Quixote*.

Gaifullin has competed and won awards in Youth America Grand Prix and The World Ballet Competition. He attended Carreno Festival 2012, and has studied with Ethan Brown of American Ballet Theatre, Sergiu Stefancshi of Canada's National Ballet School, and Anna Marie Holmes at Jacobs Pillow. In the summer of 2019, he participated in the Italy tour of Ross Freddie Ray's *Fraudulent Smile* with Polunin Ink, and performed the role of Tybalt in Johan Kobborg's *Romeo & Juliet* in Arena di Verona.

### ALEJANDRO GONZÁLEZ

Hometown: Caracas, Venezuela | Joined the Company in 2017

**Sponsored by: Susan E. Brackett and Gregg Wadley**



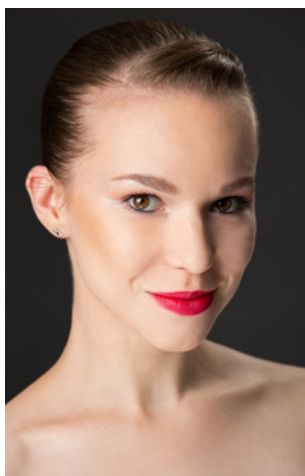
Alejandro González, from Caracas, Venezuela, began his training at the Gustavo Franklin School followed by Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy. While with Houston Ballet, he performed in John Neumeier's *Yondering*, and in Ben Stevenson's *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*. He also danced in Stanton Welch's *Long and Winding Road*, *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, and *Brigade*.

González began with Oklahoma City Ballet in 2017 as a Summer Intensive student, then he was asked to join the studio company for the 2017/18 season. He was offered an apprenticeship in 2018, promoted to corps de ballet in 2019, and was named soloist in 2021.

His repertoire includes works by Robert Mills, August Bournonville, Jiří Kylián, Helen Pickett, Septime Webre, Cayetano Soto, and Michael Pink. González's favorite roles include Bell Boy in Michael Pink's *Dracula*, Nutcracker Prince in Robert Mills' *The Nutcracker*, and Conrad in *Le Corsaire pas de deux*.

González was awarded Gold Medalist in 2016 at CIBC (Concurso Internacional de Ballet Clasico), Gold Medalist in 2020 at MIBC (Miami International Ballet Competition), and featured in *Pointe Magazine's* "2020 Stars of the Corps".

## SOLOISTS



### AUTUMN KLEIN

Hometown: Lincoln, NE | Joined the Company in 2012

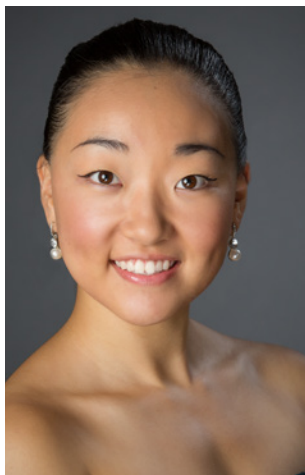
**Sponsored by: Curtis Teague and Loretta Simonet**

Autumn Klein trained at Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy then became a member of Houston Ballet II before joining Texas Ballet Theatre. During this time she won several awards, including first place at the Youth America Grand Prix in Denver, Colorado.

Klein joined Oklahoma City Ballet in 2012 and was promoted to soloist in 2016. Her repertoire with the company includes featured roles in Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort*, Helen Pickett's *Petal*, Margo Sappington's *Cobras in the Moonlight*, Amy Seiwert's *Dear Miss Cline*, Twyla Tharp's *Nine Sinatra Songs*, Nacho Duato's *Without Words*, George Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*, and Robert Mills' *Pushing Pennies*, *Our Private Rooms*, *The Means to Fly*, and *A Little Peace*. She has also created roles in works by Yui Sato, Matthew Neenan, Brian Enos, Sarah Tallman, Carrie Ruth Trumbo, and Penny Saunders.

Additionally, Klein has performed lead roles that include the Cowgirl in Agnes de Mille's *Rodeo*, Russian Girl in George Balanchine's *Serenade*, Wendy in Paul Vasterling's *Peter Pan*, *Le Corsaire* Grand Pas, Sugar Plum Fairy in Mills' *The Nutcracker*, and Lucy in Michael Pink's *Dracula*.

Outside her dance experience, she double majored in biochemistry and genetics at Texas A&M University and received presidential and congressional medals for volunteer service. Klein was awarded by NBC's World of Dance for a dance film she created and she was featured on The Ellen Show for another. She would like to thank her husband, family, and three kitties for their continual support.



### MAYU ODAKA

Hometown: Los Angeles, California

Joined the Company in 2015

Mayu Odaka, from Los Angeles, trained at the Lauridsen Ballet Center in Torrance, California, where she danced in the pre-professional company Ballet California. She was offered an apprenticeship with Oklahoma City Ballet after participating in the 2015 Summer Intensive and was promoted to corps de ballet in 2017, then later soloist in 2019.

Since joining Oklahoma City Ballet, her repertoire includes works by Helen Pickett, Septime Webre, Paul Vasterling, Agnes de Mille, Dennis Spaight, Robyn Pasternack, Ryan Jolicoeur-Nye, and Amanda Herd-Popejoy. Favorite roles include Lucy in Michael Pink's *Dracula*, Lucille Grahn in Robert Joffrey's *Pas des Déesses*, Clara and Sugarplum Fairy in Robert Mills' *The Nutcracker* and Ariel in Robert Mills' *The Little Mermaid*. She has also performed feature roles that include Firebird in Robert Mills' *The Firebird*, The White Cat in Robert Mills' *The Sleeping Beauty* and demi-soloist roles in both George Balanchine's *Serenade* and *The Four Temperaments*.

# SOLOISTS



## BENJAMIN TUCKER

Hometown: Ewart, Michigan | Joined the Company in 2021

Benjamin Tucker, originally from Ewart, Michigan, trained with Grand Valley State University and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. In 2009, he joined Richmond Ballet as an apprentice, where he earned the Malcolm Burn Award from the Kip Kephart Foundation.

Tucker went on to become an accomplished dancer, choreographer, and teacher. He danced with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet during their European Tour performing in several principal roles, and joined Ballet Tucson in 2011 as a principal dancer. There he performed a range of ballets including Antony Tudor's *Continuo*, Agnes de Mille's *Three Virgins and a Devil*, *Raymonda*, and *Carmen*.

He then joined Nevada Ballet Theatre (NBT) in 2014 where he performed principal and soloist roles in ballets such as *Giselle*, James Canfield's *Romeo & Juliet*, Jorden Morris' *Peter Pan*, Paul Taylor's *Company B*, Matthew Neenan's world premiere *Until December*, Cynthia Gregory's *Swan Lake*, Septime Webre's *ALICE (in wonderland)*, and NBT's production of James Canfield's *The Nutcracker*. During his time at NBT, he has also danced in George Balanchine's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Serenade*, *Who Cares?*, *Western Symphony*, and *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*.

In the summers, Tucker has performed as part of the National Choreographers Initiative (NCI) in Irvine, CA, which promotes the creation and production of original work.

In 2017, he was commissioned to create a short dance film for Stolen Angels Inc. The film was designed to bring awareness to human trafficking and victims of domestic abuse and was shown at conventions internationally. His choreographic credits include a new work for NBT's Studio Series and a full company work for their annual fundraiser, *Black and White Ball*. He has choreographed multiple works for NBT's collaboration with Cirque du Soleil, *A Choreographers' Showcase*. In addition, he has created works on Ballet Tucson's school and 2nd company.

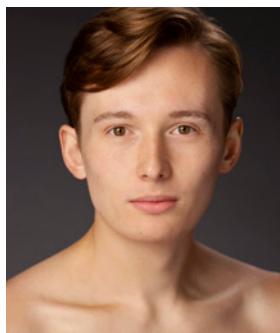
Tucker has taught for Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Spokane Youth Ballet, Ballet Tucson, and NBT's affiliated Academy

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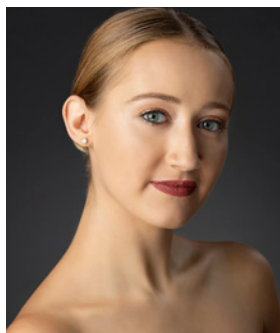
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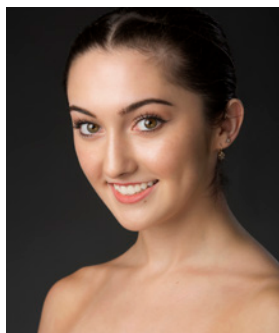
Hometown: Floyd, Virginia  
Joined the Company in 2021



**KARA TROESTER BLYTHE**

Hometown: Oklahoma City,  
Oklahoma  
Joined the Company in 2017

**Sponsored by:**  
Michelle and Gary Brooks



**MICKAYLA CARR**

Hometown: Arlington, TX  
Joined the Company in 2016



**DANIEL COOKE**

Hometown: Washington, D.C.  
Joined the Company in 2020



**RANDOLPH FERNANDEZ**

Hometown: Boston, MA  
Joined the Company in 2017

**Sponsored by:**  
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**JOSEPH HETZER**

Hometown: Palos Verdes, California  
Joined the Company in 2019



**NICHOLAS KEEPERMAN**

Hometown: Wilmington, Illinois  
Joined the company in 2019

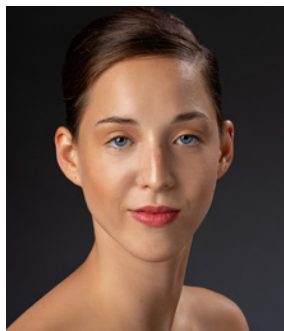


**JAMESON KEATING**

Hometown: Santa Barbara, California  
Joined the Company in 2021

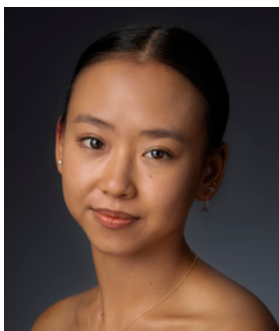


# CORPS DE BALLET



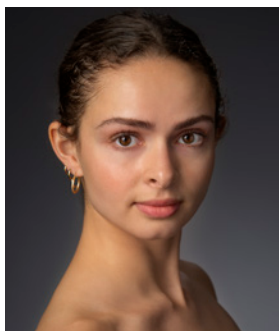
**GABRIELLE MENGDEN**

Hometown: Houston, Texas  
Joined the company in 2019



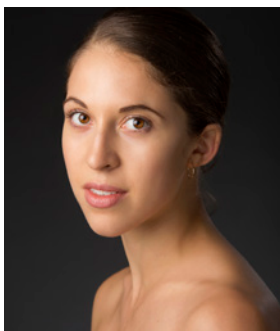
**ALISON RAMORAN**

Hometown: Torrance, California  
Joined the Company in 2020



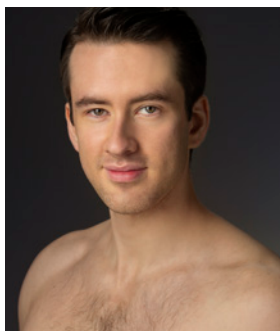
**PAIGE RUSSELL**

Hometown: Silver Spring, Maryland  
Joined the Company in 2020



**ALEXANDRA SCHOOLING**

Hometown: Lancaster, Pennsylvania  
Joined the Company in 2016



**MAYIM STILLER**

Hometown: Seattle, Washington  
Joined the Company in 2020



**ERIK  
THORDAL-CHRISTENSEN**

Hometown: Copenhagen, Denmark  
Joined the Company in 2018

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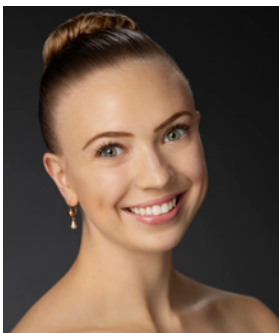
Hometown: Levelland, Texas  
Joined the Company in 2020

# APPRENTICES



**OSLANIEL CASTILLO**

Hometown: Havana, Cuba  
Joined the Company in 2021



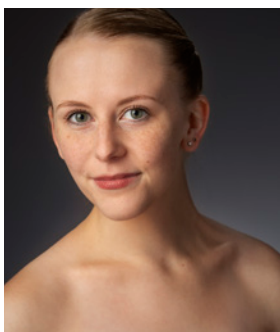
**ELENA DAMIANI**

Hometown: Westfield, Indiana  
Joined the Company in 2021



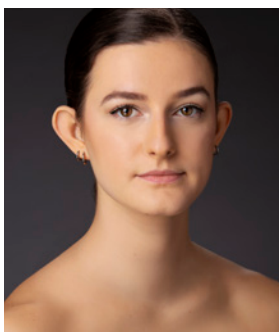
**JAMES KLUMP**

Hometown: Lake Charles, Louisiana  
Joined the Company in 2021



**KAILEAH LONG**

Hometown: Broomfield, Colorado  
Joined the Company in 2020



**GRACE MANUEL**

Hometown: New Orleans, Louisiana  
Joined the Company in 2021

**Sponsored by: Lisa Brown**

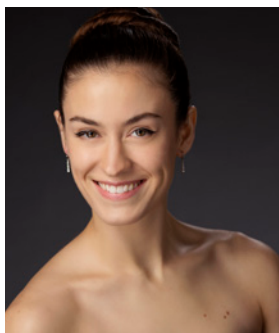


**HENRIQUE NEUMANN**

Hometown: Santo Ângelo, Brazil  
Joined the Company in 2021

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**CARLIE PRESKITT**

Hometown: Denver, Colorado  
Joined the Company in 2021

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Oklahoma City Ballet's Amy Potter dancing the *The Dying Swan* at the 2016 Green Box Arts Festival in Green Mountain Falls, CO. [greenboxarts.org](http://greenboxarts.org) - Photo credit: Tom Kimmell Photography





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