# BALLETARKANSAS BEAUTY IN ACTION MICHAEL FOTHERGILL, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

## 22|23 GRATITUDE REPORT





### Thank You from Leadership

As we come to the close of an extraordinary year, we are filled with immense gratitude and excitement to share with you the remarkable achievements of Ballet Arkansas's 22l23 season. Much has been accomplished in the process of advancing the organization's mission. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the unwavering support and generosity of our valued donors, community partners, volunteers—and you!

The public's belief in our mission is the cornerstone of Ballet Arkansas's success. We are pleased to share that last season's programs and performances accounted for an unprecedented surge in audience attendance— 50,000 +, the highest in the organization's history. On stage, in the classroom, and throughout communities across the state, patrons from all 50 states and more than 60 countries experienced the power and beauty of Ballet Arkansas. As a result, the season was the most financially successful on record. Today, Ballet Arkansas is ranked among the top 100 largest ballet companies in America and has received accolades for its rapid growth from numerous national publications, including Pointe Magazine.

Last August, following a multi-year hiatus, Ballet Arkansas reintroduced its year-round enrolled education programs for children and adults, providing aspiring dancers from all backgrounds with access to world-class training in a nurturing professional environment. Nearly 200 students of all ages are welcomed into Ballet Arkansas's downtown headquarters each week, taught by an expert faculty consisting of the company's professional dancers and artistic staff. And last year, more than 400 community dancers shared the stage with the company as members of our community casts.

As we look forward to our exciting 45th-anniversary season, Ballet Arkansas is determined to continue to accelerate its momentum, building upon last year's achievements to create even more memorable experiences for our patrons.

On behalf of our board, staff, and dancers, we wish to thank you for your support of Ballet Arkansas. We eagerly look forward to the adventures that lie ahead and the wonderful moments we will share together.



Michael Fothergill Executive and Artistic Director michael@balletarkansas.org



Catherine Fothergill
Associate Artistic Director
catherine@balletarkansas.org

### From the Board President

Il am thrilled to extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for the unwavering support you have shown to our beloved organization. As President of the Ballet Arkansas Board of Directors, I am honored to express our deepest appreciation for the generous donations, enthusiastic event attendance, and the enrollment of aspiring dancers in our ballet classes. Your contributions have been instrumental in fueling our remarkable growth over the past year.

Ballet Arkansas has achieved incredible milestones, and we owe this success to the collective efforts of our dedicated community. Together, we have transformed our humble beginnings into a nationally ranked dance company and a locally renowned dance school here in Arkansas. Your commitment to the arts and passion for ballet have propelled us to new heights, and we are poised for an even brighter future.

Having our own world-class dance company and school in Arkansas is of immense importance. It not only enriches the cultural landscape of our state but also provides countless opportunities for artists and students to develop their talents right here at home. Through your support, we have been able to nurture young talent, foster a vibrant arts community, and bring the beauty of ballet to audiences of all ages.

Your continued dedication to Ballet Arkansas directly impacts the quality of life in our state. The arts are a cornerstone of a thriving community, and your contributions have created an environment where creativity and artistic expression flourish. You have helped build bridges of understanding and fostered a sense of unity through the shared experience of dance.

Together, we are shaping a future where the arts thrive, and the impact of ballet resonates throughout Arkansas and beyond. We are humbled by your generosity and look forward to celebrating many more accomplishments together in the future.

Dr. Ann Patel President of the Board president@balletarkansas.org



Pictured: Board President, Dr. Ann Patel with Company Artists Meredith Loy, Lauren Yordanich, and Kerridwyn Schanck at *Tango Rojo*, Ballet Arkansas's Turning Pointe Gala 2023

## BOARD & STAFF

### **OFFICERS**

Dr. Ann Patel, President Alan Bagley, Vice President Dr. Andy Terry, Treasurer

Megan Hall, Secretary

#### **DIRECTORS**

Eliese Freeman-Crumley, NWA Liaison

Amber Bagley, Corporate Counsel

Amanda O'Neal

Robert O'Neal

Justin Bank

Dr. Amy Galdamez

Chris Johnson, Chair - Building Fund

**Ross Owyoung** 

Dr. Julie Robinson

Suzanne Babbie, Artistic Liaison

Rebecca Dwyer-Coop, CFRE, Chair - Development

Elizabeth Michael

**Angela Shirey** 

Erin Russell

### **ADVISORS**

Dr. Ahmad Brown

Hr. Charles Moulton

Stacy Wilson

Betty Brinkley Harrison

Jana Beard

Patricia Farnsworth

Rebecca Miles, Ph.D

Dr. Danny Fletcher

Angela Shirey

### **STAFF**

Michael Fothergill, Executive and Artistic Director

Catherine Fothergill, Associate Artistic Director

Colin J. Neel, Production Manager

Meredith Loy, Education Coordinator

Stephanie Ong, Costume Director













































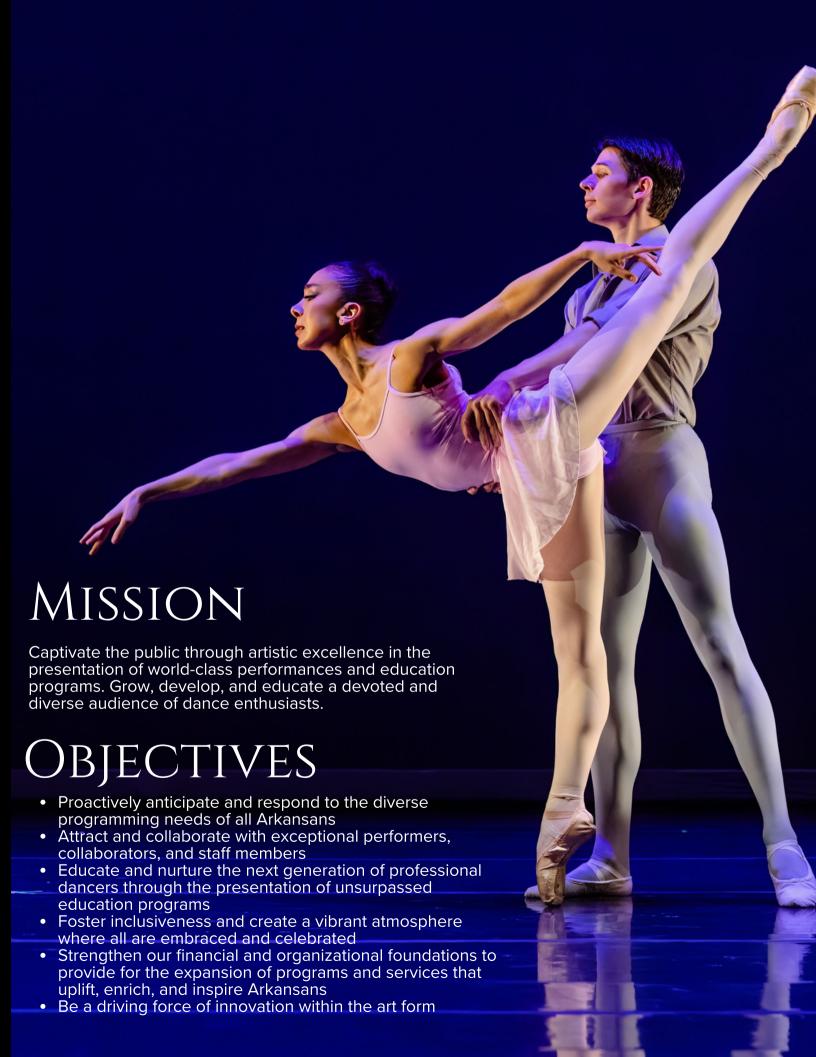


## COMPANY ARTISTS

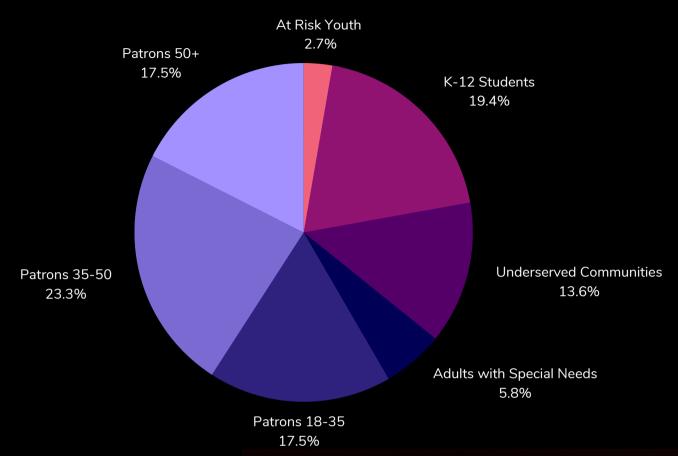


Top Row: Aldrin Vendt, Kerridwyn Schanck, Keith Newman, Andrew Parson, Leah Norwine, David Cummings Second Row (seated): Celeste Lopez-Keranen, Deanna Stanton, Brittany Harano, Matthew Larson-Arziari First Row (floor): Lauren Yordanich, Andrew Przybylowicz, Sage Feldges, Meredith Loy, Layla Terrell

Learn More <u>HERE</u>



## PROGRAM REACH

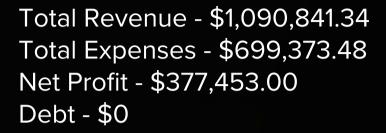


7 Wards of Little Rock 4 Wards of North Little Rock 53 Arkansas Counties 50 US States 62 Countries

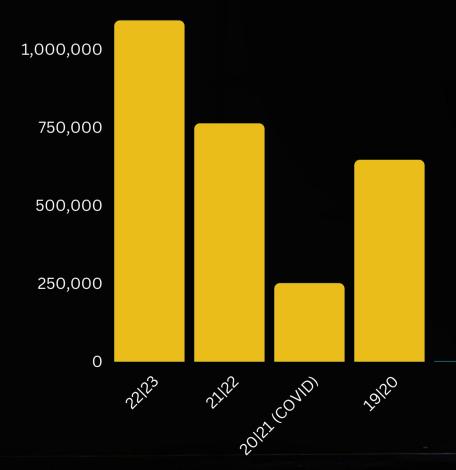


## FINANCIALS

July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023







## MAIN STAGE PRODUCTIONS



**Dracula**UA-PTC CHARTS, October 2022



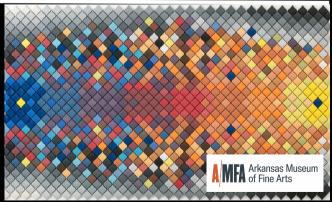
Nutcracker Spectacular
Robinson Performance Hall, December 2022



The Sleeping Beauty
UA-PTC CHARTS, February 2023



Modern Masters
UA-PTC CHARTS, April 2023



**New Works**Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts, May 2023

## SEASON MILESTONES



## FUSING ART & TECHNOLOGY



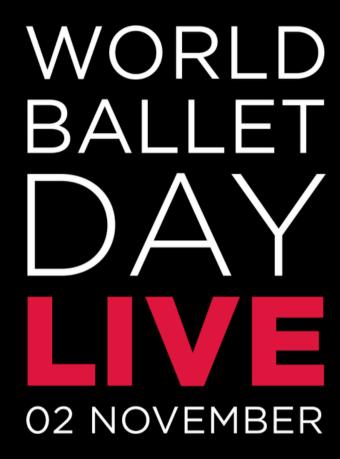
Pictured: Company Artists taking their final bow at the completion of Ballet Arkansas's CHARTS run of Dracula

Ballet Arkansas's multimedia-infused production of Dracula made waves across the Natural State last October. Performances were presented at the Fayetteville Public Library Event Center and UA-Pulaski Tech's Center for Humanities and Arts, to full houses and rave reviews. Broadway World's Theresa Bertram attended one of the company's North Little Rock performances and stated, "I have never experienced a show quite like what Ballet Arkansas brought to the CHARTS stage. The combination of the multimedia use, the music, the dancing, and the extras throughout the evening made for a fabulous Halloween celebration that will be remembered for a long time." The international publication later awarded Ballet Arkansas's Dracula "Best Multimedia Performance of 2022" for its innovative use of technology, immersive special effects, and choreography.

### Read the Review HERE



## International Recognition



World Ballet Day is an international celebration of dance presented by Covent Garden and the Royal Ballet. For one day only, the world's top ballet companies are invited to stream company classes and rehearsals, providing the public with an intimate, behind-the-scenes experience. Programs from selected companies are streamed freely by Covent Garden across six continents to millions of fans. Ballet Arkansas was one of only 24 companies from the Americas featured on World Ballet Day in 2022, a testament to the quality of its artists and programming.

Learn More HERE

## DRIVING TOURISM & ECONOMIC GROWTH



Pictured: Company Artist Lauren Yordanich as the Sugar Plum Fairy in Act II of The Nutcracker Spectacular. Photo courtesy of Matthew Sewell Photography

The Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau ranked Ballet Arkansas's annual production of The Nutcracker Spectacular with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra as Little Rock's 3rd largest tourism-producing event of 2022. The beloved production is Arkansas's largest and longest-running holiday production, serving nearly 10,000 attendees over the course of a single weekend and featuring a cast and crew of nearly 400. Patrons from every county in Arkansas and more than 30 US states attended the production, breaking box office records and accounting for nearly \$2M in revenue for local businesses.



## COMMITMENT TO DIVERSE DANCEMAKERS



Pictured: Company Artists Layla Terrell, Sage Feldges, David Cummings, Matthew Larson-Arziari, and Leah Norwine, in Simon Kuban's world premiere set to Schubert's "Death and the Maiden." Photo Courtesy of Matthew Sewell Photography.

Presented by the Stella Boyle Smith Trust, Ballet Arkansas's Modern Masters with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra was hailed as the region's most diverse dance program. Featuring Gerald Arpino's "Reflections" alongside four contemporary world premieres by four diverse dancemakers, Modern Masters placed Ballet Arkansas on the map for its commitment to inclusive programming and the quality of its repertory. Premieres by Yury Yanowsky, Yoshito Sakuraba, Yuka Oba-Muschiana, and Simon Kuban (pictured above) captivated attendees and showcased the versatility of Arkansas's own world-class ballet company.



### RETURN TO AMFA



Pictured: Company Artists in a performance of David Cumming's world premiere for New Works, presented at the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts.

Following a multi-year hiatus, Ballet Arkansas returned to the newly reimagined Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts with the presentation of its New Works concert in the museum's "Glass Box" - the very space in which Ballet Arkansas was founded more than four decades ago. The one-of-a-kind series featured 5 world premiere works created by the company's professional dancers, inspired by 5 works from the museum's permanent collection. New Works was the first dance program presented at the museum following its grand reopening and the first since Ballet Arkansas's naming as a Partner Company in Residence of the museum. The concert's unique cross-pollination of art mediums, and its engaging artistic talkbacks garnered national attention from dance and visual arts fans alike.



## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY TIES



Pictured: Members of the Community Cast of The Sleeping Beauty, presented at UA-PTC CHARTS in February of 2023.

As part of the 22l23 season, Ballet Arkansas provided nearly 400 children and adults with professional performance opportunities within its productions of The Nutcracker Spectacular and The Sleeping Beauty. These experiences engage the community while providing experiential opportunities for aspiring dancers to share the stage with the company artists of Ballet Arkansas. As part of its 45th-anniversary season, Ballet Arkansas will present three productions that feature a community cast - Wonderland: Alice's Epic Adventure, The 45th Anniversary Nutcracker Spectacular, and Swan Lake.

### Learn More HERE

## POINTE + EDITORIAL

## POINTE

As part of its new Pointe+ subscription service, Pointe Magazine, a Dancemedia publication, published a feature on Ballet Arkansas in the spring of 2023 entitled, "With Steady Growth, Ballet Arkansas Is Making Its Presence Known in Little Rock and Beyond." The article, written by Steve Sucato, cited the organization's rapid growth under the leadership of Directors Michael and Catherine Fothergill, and its ambitious plans for the future. Following the release of the editorial, Ballet Arkansas received more than 200 audition applications - increasing the total number of audition applications received to 1,212, the largest in the organization's history.

### Read the Editorial HERE

1,212

Dancers from the United States and more than 60 countries auditioned for a single position with Ballet Arkansas in the spring of 2023.

## CELEBRATION OF RESILIENCE



Pictured: Company Artists Aldrin Vendt and Lauren Hill

A series of tornadoes ravaged the city of Little Rock in the spring of 2023, a day prior to the organization's scheduled Tango Rojo themed Turning Pointe Gala, an annual fundraiser in support of Ballet Arkansas's education programs and performances. In the wake of destruction and in the absence of critical infrastructure, Ballet Arkansas rebranded the theme of the event to a celebration of the city's resilience. Hundreds attended, suffering various levels of losses as a result of the supercell storm system. In response, the state's ballet company lifted the spirits of guests by presenting a series of intimate performances and heartfelt speeches. The event was a true testament to the healing power of the arts and Ballet Arkansas's commitment to the community it serves.



### ALL HANDS ON DECK

# Ballet Arkansas' 'Nutcracker' holiday tradition takes a village

SEAN CLANCY
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

You know the old proverb about how it takes a village to raise a child? Well, it also takes one to put on "The Nutcracker."

More than 400 cast and crew are involved in Ballet Arkansas' "The Nutcracker Spectacular," the largest and longest-running holiday show in Arkansas, which will be presented Friday-Dec. 11 at Robinson Center in Little Rock. Among that number is a small army of volunteers whose time and talents are crucial to not just "The Nutcracker" but for all of Ballet Arkansas' productions



Pictured: Volunteer Services Manager, Katie Parson, and Volunteer Lead, Vikki Harris, as featured in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette's "High Profile" section

252 incredible volunteers donated more than 1,995 hours to Ballet Arkansas during the 22|23 season - the highest number to date. In addition, Volunteer Services Manager, Katie Parson, and Volunteer Lead, Vikki Harris, were featured in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette's "High Profile" section for their dedication to Ballet Arkansas. Thank you to all the volunteers who donated their time and talents to Ballet Arkansas last season. Their efforts played a monumental role in the organization's success.

### 22|23 Season Volunteers

100+ hours | Vikki Harris

40+ hours | Dayna Abraham, Amanda Baker

30+ hours | Heather Vaughn, January Johnson, Sandy Miller, Jodee Stotts

20+ hours | Amy Galdamez, Carla Larry-Watson, Ann Patel, Eliese Freeman-Crumley, Jan Butenschoen, Johnnie Huffstutlar, LeeAnn Hackley, Lesley Roberts, Melodie Britt, Nikki Parnell, Sarah Beth Lawson, Madison Robinson

10+ hours | Julie Robinson, Alicia Sullivan, Amy Morledge, Ashley Beazley, Aybars Hacioglu, Brittany Boyette, Brittney Renfro, Brittany Smith, Christa Williams, Emily Johnson, Emily Ward, Isabella Hancock, Jacey Harris, Jasmine Burns, Jay Parrish, Jeffrey Grynwald, Lisa Johnson, Louina Gonzalez, Maureen Griffin, Melanie Hammock, Molly Looney, Paige MacDonald, Pam Chatham, Rachel Young, Sarah Chun, Sarah Hutchinson, Shannon McMath, Tenecia Carroll, Zhen Wu

## THE WORLD IS A STAGE



In the spring of 2023, Ballet Arkansas was awarded funds from the John & Robyn Horn Foundation for the purchase of the region's only professionally sprung portable dance stage. Durable and designed to resist the elements, the John & Robyn Horn Stage will enable any surface, leveled or unleveled, to become a world-class performance venue for Ballet Arkansas. Thanks to the generous support of the John & Robyn Horn Foundation, Ballet Arkansas will increase its presence in communities throughout the state that lack access to dance programming and activate city spaces in new ways that contribute to the quality of life of residents.

## BALLET ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR DANCE



Pictured: School students at the barre in a Level 2/3 class taught by Company Artist, Keith Newman.

In August of 2022, Ballet Arkansas launched a series of enrolled classes for children and adults at its state-of-the-art downtown headquarters. Today, Ballet Arkansas is one of the top-rated dance schools in the state, offering classes of all disciplines to children and adults in a welcoming professional environment. School classes are taught by an expert faculty of current and former professional dancers and are designed to safely advance each student's technical and artistic abilities in a nurturing environment. Its comprehensive syllabus responds to the physical, cognitive, and emotional development and wellbeing of each student and introduces various dance styles to ensure a broad understanding of dance in all its forms.



## FACULTY



Education Coordinator

Ballet 2/3

Pre-Pointe/Pointe 2/3

Ballet 2

Broadway Jazz 2

Meredith Loy



Celeste Lopez-Keranen Ballet + Pointe 3/4 Ballet + Pointe/Variations 5



Aldrin Vendt Adult Ballet Teen Beginner Ballet Ballet 5



Sage Feldges Creative Movement Pre-Ballet Jazz + Contemporary 1 Ballet 1 Pointe 5



Brittany Harano Adult Ballet



Kerridwyn Schanck Ballet 3/4 Contemporary 3/4



Keith Newman Ballet 2/3 Ballet 5 Pre-Pointe/Pointe 2/3 Adult Ballet

## K-12 EDUCATION PROGRAMS



# SERVING 10,000 + STUDENTS

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS



#### Unbound

Students unlock their creativity and explore the foundations of movement through immersive dance instruction and guided improvisation, learning valuable tools of self-expression and collaboration.



### **Dance Discovery**

Interactive lecture demonstrations engage students through dance performances that tell stories and tie into school curriculum. Students see themes come to life through the athleticism and artistry of dance.



### Stem Exploration

Approaching STEM curriculum from a kinesthetic perspective, students gain knowledge of STEM principles through the use of their bodies.



### Master Classes

Students take personalized, multi-disciplinary dance classes from the professional dancers of Ballet Arkansas, virtually or in-person, learning the fundamentals of dance technique and choreography.



### **Virtual Field Trips**

Digital broadcasts transport students into Ballet Arkansas's state-of-the-art studio for behind-the-scenes rehearsals and artistic conversations with the company's 15 professional dancers. Students see the creative process unfold from rehearsal to performance and learn about exciting careers in the performing arts.



### **Student Matinee Performances**

Student Matinee performances are designed to provide enriching artistic experiences to young audiences. Performances are held at 10:30 am to align with school hours and are accompanied by an engaging and educational Study Guide.

### EDUCATION PARTNERS

**Bailey Homeschool** 

**Baker Elementary** 

**Barber Homeschool** 

**Bruce Academy Homeschool** 

Christ Little Rock Lutheran School

Christ Little Rock School

Classical Conversations

Living Water Elementary

College Station Elementary

Comm. Central Academy Homeschool Group

Dixon-Benton Homeschool

**Eckart & Smith Homeschool** 

El Dorado School District

Ferren Homeschool

Forest Park Elementary

**Guy Perkins Elementary** 

Harmony Grove Junior High and High School

Homeschool REC

Jackson Homeschool and Brassell Homeschool

Jefferson Elementary 4th Grade

Kids Unlimited

Land Homeschool

Parkview Arts/Science Magnet High School

Langston Elementary Leadership Academy

Thurman Homeschool

Lawrence Homeschool

Little Rock Central High School

Wakefield Elementary

Lively Homeschool

LR Southwest High

Manzanares Homeschool

Maumelle/Mills High School

**McDermott Elementary** 

White Hall High School

Morrilton High School

Natural State Homeschoolers

**Newton Homeschool** 

Hot Springs High School

North Little Rock High School

Parkview High School

Episcopal Collegial School

Pulaski Academy

Northwest Environmental Studies Academy

Owsley Homeschool

Miramontes Homeschool

Patel Homeschool

Pine Forest Elementary

Rogers Homeschool

White Homeschool

Glasgow Academy/Gilmore Academy

Stabenow Homeschool

**Hussey Homeschool Academy** 

Dixon Benton Homeschool

The Anthony School

Thomas Homeschool

Thurman homeschool

UCP of Arkansas

UCP of Arkansas NLR

United Cerebral Palsy- LR

Vitality Pleasant Hills

Law Homeschool Academy

Withrow Homeschool

Rash Homeschool

Rogers Homeschool

Stabenow Homeschool

**Taylor Homeschool** 

TEACH TEXARKANA HOMESCHOOL

Ryland Homeschool

CAHE (Cabot Area Home Education)

Marshall High School

Grice Homeschool

Middaugh Homeschool

Renfro Homeschool

Land Homeschool

**Roberts Elementary** 

Anthony School





ANNIVERSARY SEASON

## PRODUCTIONS



Wonderland: Alice's Epic Adventure - October A bold reimagining of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll, this multimedia infused production will feature dynamic projection and 360 sound, elaborate costumes and sets, and more!



45th Anniversary Nutcracker Spectacular - December

The Nutcracker Spectacular is the largest and longest running holiday production in Arkansas, featuring live music by the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and a cast and crew of nearly 400.



Swan Lake - February

Set to Tchaikovsky's magical score, Ballet Arkansas will present a vibrant production of Marius Petipa's timeless classic featuring stunning costumes and sets, and a community cast of children and adults.



Capital City Bash - Turning Pointe Gala - March The 45th Anniversary Turning Pointe Gala is the organization's premiere annual fundraiser supporting its artists, programming, and community outreach and education initiatives



Bravo - May

Presented by the Stella Boyle Smith Trust, Bravo features an eclectic array of celebrated works of classical and contemporary dance presented with live music by esteemed musicians. This concert is the highlight of the 23l24 season.



Snow White - May

throughout the state.

Designed for young children and their families, this interactive performance features guided participation, vivid multimedia projection, storytelling, and singing. The Mother's Day performance will feature themed sweets in the lobby, photo opportunities, and flowers.

## SPECIAL EVENTS



### Live @ the Plaza - September

Rescheduled to the fall due to inclement weather in the spring of 2023, North Little Rock Tourism presents Live at the Plaza, a popular series of FREE mixed repertory performances that make use of the plaza's architectural features and that premieres classical excerpts and cutting-edge works.



### Encore: Season Opening Reception - September

The 45th Anniversary Season Opening Reception is a celebration of the organization's artists and programming. Attendees will mingle with the company's board, artistic staff, and dancers and preview world premiere choreography from Wonderland: Alice's Epic Adventure, and excerpts from season productions. Guests will be the first to learn about updates to the organization's beloved holiday classic, The Nutcracker Spectacular and enjoy wine, passed hors d'oeuvres, and a small auction.



### Down the Rabbit Hole Tea - October

Guests will join Alice, the Mad Hatter, the White Rabbit, and additional costumed characters for a Wonderland-themed tea filled with fancy and frills. Attendees will experience a suite from Wonderland: Alice's Epic Adventure and will have opportunities to take photos with the cast of characters and purchase themed merchandise. Seats are limited and tickets will go quickly. \*A second tea may be added on October 15.



### Land of the Sweets Nutcracker Tea - December

The Land of the Sweets Nutcracker Tea is one of Little Rock's most anticipated holiday events. Guests will be transported to the "Land of the Sweets" where they'll enjoy teatime, activities, a storybook reading, and an exclusive performance from Clara, the Sugar Plum Fairy, and characters from the 45th Anniversary Nutcracker Spectacular. Perfect for families, the Nutcracker Tea is a magical experience unlike any other. \*Tickets typically sell out the same day they are put on sale.

## YOU'RE THE REASON FOR OUR SUCCESS!

As the curtains close on Ballet Arkansas's landmark 22/23 season, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who played a pivotal role in making it a resounding success. Your unwavering support and dedication have breathed life into our artistic endeavors and allowed us to showcase the beauty of Ballet Arkansas programming to communities across Arkansas.

To our Sponsors, your generous contributions have enabled us to bring world-class performances to the stage and reach a wider audience. Your belief in our mission has been instrumental in driving our passion forward, and we are incredibly thankful for your continued partnership.

To our Donors, your belief in the power of the arts has been the backbone of our accomplishments. Your contributions, both big and small, have made a profound impact on our ability to nurture talent, create captivating productions, and foster a love for dance in our community.

To our Volunteers, you are the heart and soul of Ballet Arkansas. Your selfless dedication and hard work behind the scenes have ensured that every performance ran smoothly, and your enthusiasm has been infectious, inspiring us all to give our best.

Together, you have made the 22/23 season one to remember, filled with breathtaking artistry, inspiring moments, and unforgettable experiences. Your support has not only made a difference in the lives of our dancers but has also enriched the lives of everyone who has had the privilege of attending our performances or participating in our education programs.

With your continued backing, we look forward to an even brighter future, filled with new artistic endeavors and profound connections with our community. Once again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being the driving force behind Ballet Arkansas' success.

Michael Fothergill
Executive and Artistic Director

Michael Fothergill

### LEARN MORE

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