

BALLET ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR DANCE

EN AVANT



2026 Summer Intensive Students

Quote of the Month :

"The body says what words cannot." - Martha Graham



NEWS OF NOTE

On Saturday, May 15, 2027, we're planning a very special anniversary celebration at the Robinson Center (celebrating the 10-year anniversary of its reopening) Unlike a traditional recital or costume showcase, BA SFD students will take part in a true ballet production on one of Arkansas's premier stages as we celebrate 5 years of artistic excellence, education, and community.

On the Rise - Student Spotlight

**MOIRA
MACDONALD**

Moira is no stranger to Ballet Arkansas. Not only is she a student in the school for dance, but she is also a teaching assistant, Community Cast member, and a YAGP team member. Make a new friend and say "Hello" to Moira when you see her around the studios!



EN POINTE - COMPANY UPDATES



RE:MIX is taking shape! Choreographer Christian Denice completed an original work with the Company Artists of Ballet Arkansas in late August, and this week, Gabrielle Lamb is in Little Rock creating her new work with the company. Both world premieres will take the stage alongside works by Penny Saunders and Executive & Artistic Director Michael Fothergill as part of RE:MIX, a dynamic program of contemporary dance featuring live music by the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra paired with electronic music. Learn more and purchase tickets at balletarkansas.org/tickets.

MILESTONE A DECADE IN THE MAKING: MICHAEL & CATHERINE FOTHERGILL CELEBRATE 10 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP AT BALLET ARKANSAS



Ballet Arkansas celebrates Michael and Catherine Fothergill's 10th season of transformative leadership - a decade that has reshaped the organization and expanded what professional dance can mean in Arkansas. During their tenure, BA has eliminated organizational debt, quadrupled its annual budget, expanded its professional company and facilities, created a series of full-length productions, commissioned more than 30 celebrated choreographers, and co-founded the Ballet Arkansas School for Dance. From ambitious new productions and live music to touring, education, and community partnerships, their leadership has built a company of increasing national stature while remaining distinctly connected to the community it serves.

Putting Your Best Foot Forward...

**MICHAEL
FOTHERGILL**

Putting your best foot forward is about consistency - showing up each class with focus, discipline, and respect for the craft. Take the minutia seriously; the smallest details, repeated with intention, are what ultimately define the artist.



EN POINTE - COMPANY UPDATES



More than 300 auditions took place for Ballet Arkansas' 26/27 Community Cast productions of *The Nutcracker Spectacular*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Don Quixote*! We are thrilled by the tremendous response from dancers and families across our community and look forward to bringing these three spectacular productions to the Robinson Center and Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts. From cherished traditions to exciting new productions, community performers will once again share the stage with Ballet Arkansas' professional Company Artists throughout the season.

A NEW PARTNERSHIP: BALLET ARKANSAS AND OAKLAWN HOT SPRINGS



Ballet Arkansas brings the magic of the holidays to Hot Springs with *The Nutcracker Suite* at Oaklawn, November 28–29! Presented in Oaklawn's 1,500-seat Event Center, this special production brings the beauty, fantasy, and timeless tradition of *The Nutcracker* to a new stage and audience. The weekend also features Storytime with Sugar Plum & Friends, an interactive family experience with storytime, cast photos, and holiday treats. Learn more and get your tickets at <https://oaklawn.com/entertainment/>



Mississippi Here we Come!

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

Ballet Arkansas is hitting the road! This season, the company will tour *The Sleeping Beauty* to Jackson, Mississippi, performing at historic Thalia Mara Hall, home of the USA International Ballet Competition - in partnership with Belhaven University's Dance Department. Beloved former BA Summer Intensive faculty member Ravenna Tucker Wagnon, former Principal Dancer with The Royal Ballet and Birmingham Royal Ballet, will join the production team to stage elements of this timeless classic, making this exciting expansion of Ballet Arkansas' touring footprint even more special. Stay tuned for details!



POINTE OF VIEW

More classes = more opportunities for progress! Adding an extra ballet class each week gives dancers more opportunities to practice, apply corrections, and build muscle memory. Not only does it shape technique, it also allows dancers to refine their artistry and develop musicality. Consider adding a second or third ballet class to your dancer's weekly schedule and give them even more opportunities to grow. One class builds skills. Multiple classes build momentum!

~Anna Gutierrez, Education and Outreach Coordinator

FROM THE WINGS

A Roaring Affair, October 24:

An evening of glitz, glamour, and Gatsby. A complete social experience and that pairs world-class dance with cocktails, live jazz, exceptional cuisine, and a post-performance speakeasy inspired by the decadence of the 1920s. Sponsored by Colonial Wines & Spirits, season sponsor.

The Great Gatsby, October 23-25:

Step into the dazzling world of the Jazz Age, where champagne flows and secrets shimmer beneath the surface. The Great Gatsby draws audiences into a world where every celebration hides a deeper longing, and where the pursuit of the unattainable can ultimately lead to dangerous outcomes.

Get tickets for both, here! <https://www.balletarkansas.org/tickets>



GET YOUR TICKETS FOR GATSBY!!



MEET THE FACULTY

Ms. McKenna began her ballet training at age 3 in Reston, Virginia. Her training includes The Rock School for Dance Education, San Francisco Ballet School, The Washington Ballet, and the Grand Rapids Ballet. She has also had the opportunity to train internationally at The Bolshoi Ballet Academy and The Royal Ballet School. We bet you didn't know that McKenna's favorite ballet steps are tendus and partnered pirouettes, and she is currently working towards a degree in chemistry!

"I love teaching for Ballet Arkansas SFD because my students inspire me every single day. Every student I've met through the SFD has opened my eyes to a new perspective or way of thinking. Also, the kindness in all of my students is incredibly admirable."

REMINDERS:

NO CLASS: OCTOBER 20-25
OCT 26-31: WEAR HALLOWEEN COSTUMES
HAPPY HALLOWEEN!