

2020 *Nutcracker*

March 6-7, 2021



Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company
Shari True, Artistic Director

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the
Magic
was worth the wait...



JENNIFER SCHULTZ

photography

LINCOLN MIDWEST BALLET COMPANY



Artistic Director Shari True
presents

The Nutcracker

Music by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Saturday, March 6, 2021

2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

&

Sunday, March 7, 2021

1 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Technical Director: Daniel Anderson, Stratum Productions

Stage Manager: Melanie Rudy

Assistant Stage Managers: Eric Himmelberger, Kayci Johnston

Stage Crew: Jamie Stephens, Paul Watson, Jaylin Wiese

Props Coordinator: Tonia O'Hare

Head Costumer and Costume Builder: Maralee Maldavs

Hair & Makeup Designer & Assistant Costumer: Donna Himmelberger

Assistant to the Costumer: Emily Maldavs

Lighting Designer: John Himmelberger

Sound Technician: Marlan Hohnstein

Rehearsal Assistants: Betsy Andersen, Ashley Rutt

Executive Director: Kelly Duncan

Due to Covid-19 guidelines, we regret that drinking fountains and refreshment booths are not open. Restrooms are available as needed.

Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company

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LMBC MISSION

The Mission of the Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company is to promote excellence in the art of ballet through performances, education, and community outreach.

LMBC extends our appreciation to all of the area dance studios. The success of *The Nutcracker* depends upon your passion for dance and the support and guidance you provide to the talented youth of our community.

LMBC thanks the following individuals who gave their time and skills to staff our first aid site:

Stacey Bergantzel, RN · Carrie Dell, MD · Linsey Haden, DO
Sahra Niazi, MD · Kurt Schmeckpeper, PA · Kenton Sullivan, MD

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The History of the Nutcracker Ballet

2020 marks 128 years since the first Nutcracker performance.

In 1890, A. Vsevolozhsky, director of Imperial Theatres in Russia, planned *The Nutcracker* as a repeat of the collaboration that had created the huge 1890 success, *Sleeping Beauty*. The collaborations included himself, Tchaikovsky, and chief choreographer of the Imperial Theatres, M.I. Petipa. Petipa presented Tchaikovsky with a very detailed libretto, specifying not only the types of music and nature of the characters but also the tempos, the numbers of bars for actions, and even the pieces of music from which he wanted Tchaikovsky to borrow melodies. Petipa took the story, not directly from Hoffman's *The Nutcracker* and *The King of the Mice*, but from a French version of the tale written by Alexander Dumas Pere, *The Nutcracker of Nuremberg*.

From the beginning, Petipa intended to cast children in the ballet. In Act I, he originally asked for children to perform a series of national dances. Soon after Tchaikovsky received the libretto, Petipa told him to move these dances to Act II and to use professional adults. This change allowed both the choreographer and the composer much more freedom.

In June 1891, Tchaikovsky ordered from Paris the newly invented celesta to use in *The Nutcracker*. "Have it sent directly to St. Petersburg...but no one there must know about it. I am afraid others might hear of it and make use of the effect before I could. I expect the instrument will make a tremendous sensation." Tchaikovsky used the celesta to follow Petipa's instructions that the Sugar Plum Fairy's music must sound like the sprays of a fountain.

In spring 1892, Tchaikovsky premiered *The Nutcracker Ballet Suite*, an eight-part concert version of the ballet music. At least six times, the audience demanded immediate encores of specific music selections. Because of the Suite's instant success, the score was published even before the ballet premiered.

In September, rehearsals began for *The Nutcracker* at the Maryinsky Theatre. (Later, the theatre and company were renamed the Kirov in honor of a hero of the Communist revolution; in the post-Communist era, they have returned to their original name.) Due to illness, Petipa withdrew as choreographer and was replaced by Lev Ivanov. Generally, Ivanov is credited with the choreography. Newspapers began referring to the beauty of the costumes and sets.

On December 17, *The Nutcracker* premiered to mixed reviews, some worrying that its lush orchestration made the ballet music unsuitable for dancing. Agrippina Vaganova, the famous Russian ballet teacher, said "Connoisseurs of ballet purposely took seats in the upper tier to admire the beautiful patterns [of the] waltz of the Snowflakes" performed by sixty dancers.

The History of the Nutcracker Ballet

The Nutcracker probably faded from the Maryinsky repertory with Ivanov's death in 1901 but was revived in 1909 by N. Sergeyev, a student at the time of the premiere. His notes about the choreography and the production are the documentary link to the original ballet. In 1934, he used these resources to help produce in London the first complete *Nutcracker* outside of Russia.

In 1919, the Bolshoi produced Moscow's first *Nutcracker*. The little girl Masha was played by an adult ballerina who performed the Sugar Plum Fairy pas de deux with the Nutcracker, who was transformed into a prince and took the dances originally given to the Sugar Plum Fairy's Cavalier.

Americans first saw *The Nutcracker* in 1940, when Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo presented an abbreviated version. In 1944, San Francisco Ballet staged a full production directed by William Christensen. In 1954, George Balanchine brought authentic experience to his productions for New York City Ballet. In Russia, he had been a student at the Maryinsky School, where he advanced from toy soldier to Prince. He was coached by dancers from the original production, especially Pavel Gerdt, the original Cavalier/Prince.

Since mid-century, *The Nutcracker* has become as much a part of America's Christmas season as Santa. Composers, choreographers, and designers continually play with the original. Duke Ellington jazzed up the score to become *The Nutcracker Sweetly*. Maurice Sendak and Pacific Northwest Ballet collaborated on a stylishly psychological exploration, a version that has become widely known through *Nutcracker: The Motion Picture*. Mark Morris' *The Hard Nut* created a satiric, gender-bending story moved to 1950s U.S.A.

The Lincoln Community Playhouse produced a *Nutcracker* for several years, as did other regional groups. In 1985, to establish a locally-produced *Nutcracker*, cast mainly with local dancers, Shari True and five others formed Ballet Midwest. Several years later, Ballet Midwest and Lincoln City Ballet joined to form Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company which is now producing its 36th *Nutcracker*. LMBC joins New York City Ballet and Colorado Ballet in creating a traditional *Nutcracker* with live symphonic music, classic dance style, lush sets, and costumes suggesting a romantic yesterday.

Bibliography

Balanchine and Mason, Brinson and Crisp, Brown, *Dance Magazine*, Newman, Strutte, Terry, Warrack, Volkov and Wiley.

Researched by Susan Steinegger

The Nutcracker Story

Act 1

Drosselmeier's Workshop

In his workshop one foggy Christmas Eve, Drosselmeier places the finishing touches on his beautifully crafted Nutcracker doll. This is a special gift for Clara, his goddaughter. It will be the crucial part of the magical evening he's preparing for her.

A Snowy Street

Excited guests scurry along wintery streets to the Stahlbaum's Christmas celebration. Drosselmeier shuffles through the snow, delivering his beloved gift.

The Stahlbaum Ballroom

The Stahlbaums welcome their guests with cheery toasts. Soon the party is filled with food, dancing, and gifts. The exciting night fills Clara with wonder. As the children settle down, Drosselmeier entertains the guests. He delights them with a puppet show and amazes them with his magic, life-sized, dancing dolls. Drosselmeier then gives Clara his most special gift, the Nutcracker doll. Full of delight, Clara dances with it until Fritz grabs the doll. The children's struggle breaks the Nutcracker. Drosselmeier bandages the doll and returns it to Clara. A grand procession concludes the party. The Stahlbaums bid their guest farewell then retire upstairs. But Clara creeps back down, searching for her Nutcracker. Not wanting her party to end, she falls asleep on the sofa with the doll in her arms.

The Ballroom Battle

As Clara dreams, her mind whirls with memories of the evening. Then she's frightened when mice sneak in. The clock strikes midnight. Appearing as an owl atop the clock, Drosselmeier puts a spell on the house. Clara sees the living room change and the Christmas tree grow larger and larger. The mice take her doll. Drosselmeier brings Clara a magic bed to keep her safe as she twirls in and out of her dream. In march brigades of soldiers followed by mice and the Mouse King. Drosselmeier's magic transforms the small doll into a powerful soldier who leads the battle to protect Clara. But he falls from the Mouse King's powerful stab.

The Snowy Edges of the Forest

The battle fades leaving Clara alone with the Nutcracker. Her tears and enduring love bring him another transformation; he becomes a handsome Prince. As snow begins to fall, the Snow King and Queen lead the couple through a swirling storm of dancing flakes and into an enchanted forest where a magic swan carries Clara and the Prince off to the Land of Sweets.

**As the stage is reset for Act II, there will be a brief pause.
Please remain in your seat and maintain social distancing.**

Act II

The Palace

Clara and the Nutcracker Prince fly over the heavens to the Land of Sweets. The Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier greet them and introduce dancers from many lands. The dancers entertain the couple and bring them gifts. Fiery Spain brings chocolates; Arabian gives the alluring steam of coffee; China offers tea; Marzipans bring the song of reed pipes; Russians powerfully display their traditional Trepak dance; Mother Ginger cavorts with her tumbling Bon Bons. The Dew Drop Fairy enchants the couple with the swirling Waltz of the Flowers. Finally, the entertainment culminates with the elegant, noble dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy and the Cavalier.

The Awakening

As the entertainment subsides, Clara's dream ends, and the Land of Sweets fades away. Clara awakens back in her home. With her, we are left to wonder whether her journey was only a dream or was somehow true. The growing-up Clara, and all who believe, know that wonders happen for those who open their hearts to them.



Shari True Artistic Director

Shari True founded Ballet Midwest in 1985, which then merged with Lincoln City Ballet in 1992. The new company was renamed Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company —LMBC—and True stayed on as artistic director. Offering high-quality artistic and educational opportunities for young dancers is a passion for True. Under her direction, the Company has provided educational outreach programs such as the annual LMBC Summer Camp and Backstage at the Ballet.

Now in her 36th year as artistic director, True continues to be a driving creative force, continually bringing new staging, choreography, superior costumes and special effects to *The Nutcracker*. Elements True has brought to the ballet include a magical spinning bed, a lighting effect that allows the audience to experience snow, and Clara and the Nutcracker Prince flying in a giant swan that is pulled by large hoists rented just for the production. Prior to LMBC, True's *Nutcracker* experience included dancing in Ballet Omaha's production of *The Nutcracker* for five years and as assistant choreographer of the Lincoln Community Playhouse's productions of *The Nutcracker* in 1982 and 1983.

True also directs LMBC's biennial spring ballet productions, which have included *Coppelia*, *Sleeping Beauty*, Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, *Snow White* and *Cinderella*. All LMBC productions and camps allow young dancers the opportunity to work with professional guest artists, who are brought to Lincoln from around the country.

True is a graduate of the University of Nebraska—Lincoln, with degrees in elementary education and dance. She was a member of Orchesis Dance (ensemble), UNL Flag and Dance Corps, and the Nebraska Dance Ensemble in Classical Ballet. Her professional dance experience includes being on staff of the Ballet West Summer Dance Camp in Colorado and the St. Louis Ballet. True has taught master ballet classes in Denver, Dallas and Kansas City. In 1980 she started her own dance academy in Lincoln, now called True Dance & Co., providing instruction in classical ballet, jazz, pointe and tap to many Lincoln area youth. Her traveling competition team has won many awards and her choreography for them has garnered "Best Choreography" honors.

True's artistic achievements include writing and choreography for *The Crystal Slippers*, an original ballet that premiered in Lincoln and was also performed by the Chamberlain Ballet Company in Dallas, Texas. She also choreographed *Carmina Burana* for Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra in 2002. Lincoln audiences have also seen her choreography in Pinewood Bowl productions of *Hello, Dolly!* and *Carousel*.

In 1985 she danced with Academy West, Rolland DuPree, and taught for Act III Studio in West Hollywood, California. A proud moment for True was appearing in Universal Studio's movie *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar* in a speaking part as the dance teacher.

In 1999, True was presented with the Lincoln Arts Council's Helen Haggie Award for outstanding artistic achievement.

Kelly Duncan

Executive Director



This is Kelly Duncan's fourth season as Executive Director of Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company. She previously served on the LMBC Board of Directors, and as an officer of Lincoln Midwest Ballet Guild. Her love of *The Nutcracker* was sparked by her daughter, who was in the production for nine years. She is instrumental in managing the LMBC business office, writing grant proposals, and assisting the LMBC Board of Directors. She communicates directly with the dancers and the community, and performs a myriad of other tasks. Duncan has a degree in Business Administration and a Juris Doctorate from UNL College of Law. After graduation, she practiced law as the Associate General Counsel of Bankers Life, now Ameritas. She was active in the homeschool community for many years, and presently serves as a pianist at her church and an Area Advisor for Bible Study Fellowship. Duncan believes that *The Nutcracker* is one of Lincoln's greatest treasures, and is honored to be part of a team of talented people who bring it to the Lied stage every year.



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2020 Artistic Staff

Betsy Andersen · Rehearsal Assistant

Betsy began dancing at age three, training in ballet, pointe, tap, jazz, lyrical, and contemporary. She danced with Lincoln City Ballet and Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company, performing for more than 20 years in *The Nutcracker*. As a rehearsal assistant, Betsy has worked with Nutcracker dancers for 15 years. She was an advanced ballet student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, training under the direction of Dr. Lisa Fuscillo. She danced with the Omaha Modern Dance Collective, and continued her ballet training in Omaha with the late Mary Waugh-Taylor. She was a member of Lincoln Contemporary Dance Project. Betsy has a BSBA from UNL in Human Resource Management with minors in History and Dance, and she attended graduate school at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. She has taught dance in Lincoln and Omaha for over 20 years.

Daniel Anderson · Technical Director

Daniel has nearly ten years of experience in the entertainment industry. He has helped design and produce dozens of productions, corporate events, and special events in his time in the industry. He is excited for the opportunity to do technical direction for *The Nutcracker* and to work with the wonderful team of people in the Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company.

Eric Himmelberger · Assistant Stage Manager

Eric received his undergraduate education from Nebraska Wesleyan University and graduate education from University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He has worked regularly as a stagehand since 2014.

Donna Himmelberger · Hair & Make up Designer/Assistant Costumer

Donna Himmelberger has been working in the costume design field for nearly 40 years. In the more than 25 years she has lived in Lincoln, she has worked at the Lincoln Community Playhouse, freelanced with LMBC, Universal Dance Studio, the Mahoney State Park Melodramas, the Fremont Dinner Train Melodramas, the Nebraska Shakespeare Company, and the Omaha Community Theatre. Himmelberger was the department costume designer at Nebraska Wesleyan University for seven years before becoming an adjunct instructor in the communications department. She is currently at Doane College, where she is the theatre department costume designer.



2020 Artistic Staff

John Himmelberger · Lighting Designer

John Himmelberger has been the Lighting Designer for *The Nutcracker* since 1996. John has designed lighting for many Lincoln area performing arts organizations including Lincoln City Ballet, the Dance Institute, Universal Dance Academy, Lincoln Community Playhouse, Flatwater Shakespeare Company, Nebraska Repertory Theatre, UNL Opera, Doane University Theatre Department, and the Lied Center for Performing Arts, where he is the staff Lighting and Production Specialist. Recent area productions include *Mary Poppins*, *Circle Mirror Transformation*, *Snow White*, *Assassins*, *Heart of Robin Hood* and *The Seagull*.

Kayci Johnston · Assistant Stage Manager

Kayci is excited to join the cast and crew of *The Nutcracker* with Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company for the second year! She is a 4th year stage management student at the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Recent/Favorite credits include *Hair* and *Pippin* with the Nebraska Repertory Theatre and *Dry Land* with Theatrix. She is also currently working on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Nebraska Repertory Theatre.

Emily Maldavs · Assistant to the Costumer

Emily Maldavs is a senior Conservation Biology major at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln. She is excited to officially be a part of the costume department for *The Nutcracker* this year, after participating as a dancer for ten years. Her past roles include Clara in 2012, and Snow Queen in 2011 and 2013, among many others. Emily studied at Point Park University in the Conservatory of Performing Arts, and performed in multiple productions before returning to teach for Piccoli Dance Theatre in Lincoln.

Maralee Maldavs · Head Costumer and Costume Builder

Maralee has been designing and creating costumes for theater and dance productions for more than 15 years. She currently works with several local dance studios, creating award-winning costumes for competition pieces as well as recital pieces. She has also worked with Lincoln's Pinewood Bowl, The Lincoln Community Playhouse and The Stage Theater in Hickman. Maralee is the owner of JEM Creations, LLC, and this is her tenth year working with *The Nutcracker*.

2020 Artistic Staff

Melanie Rudy · Stage Manager

Melanie has been involved in the technical aspects of theatre for over 25 years. She has worked for the Lied Center for Performing Arts in numerous capacities for 20 plus years, including different roles backstage on *The Nutcracker*. Melanie has also worked with other dance studios as the production coordinator and/or stage manager. She is excited to be working with the Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company's production of *The Nutcracker*.

Ashley Rutt · Rehearsal Assistant

Ashley is a native of Lincoln where she grew up dancing in *The Nutcracker*, performing roles such as Snow Queen, Spain, and Clara. Ashley attended the University of Nebraska for one year where she was a member of the Scarlets Dance Team. She transferred to Oklahoma City University, and received her Bachelors and Masters degrees in Dance Performance and Teaching. While in Oklahoma, she taught and choreographed for numerous dance studios throughout the state. She also was involved with judging and teaching for Dance Masters of America Dance Convention. At Oklahoma City University, she was a member of the American Spirit Dance Company, touring with the company and serving as their representative. Post graduation, Ashley spent eight months dancing and traveling with Carnival Cruise Lines as a dancer in their production shows. Ashley has spent the past six years teaching dance in Lincoln and Omaha, as well as being an adjunct professor of dance at Creighton University.

LINCOLN COMMUNITY

F O U N D A T I O N

Pace Woods
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2020 Nutcracker Cast

Act I

Herr Drosselmeier: Benjamin Chandler

Elves: Amy Andersen, Cora Johnson, Blythe Meranda, Lydia Pearce, Caroline Schwartz, Mia Vasa

Clara - Saturday: Maggie Oulianova

Clara - Sunday: Abigail Hovendick

Fritz: Phoenix Decker

Dr. Stahlbaum: Vladimir Oulianov

Mrs. Stahlbaum: Ashley Rutt

Big Party Girls: Ayla Brosman, Grace Fry, Hayley Marshall, Olivia McCurley, Teagan Smith, Kiptara Thomas

Big Party Boys: Gavin Kennedy, Jack Perry, Alex Ronhovde, Brendan Tatum, Jaden Unlu, Kyren Watson

Little Party Girls - Saturday: Livia Bonnie, Nora Davis, Morgan Foged, Mila Shulthies

Little Party Girls - Sunday: Gianna Bonta, Khataya Briones, Laila Cardenas, Evie Olivera

Party Women: Kelley Peterson, Tyne Thorson

Party Man: Dale Miller

First Maid: Brooke Oliver

Maids: Sydney Vanderheiden, Clara Wolfe

Harlequin Doll - Saturday: Elizabeth Friend

Harlequin Doll - Sunday: Lena Lankas

Harlequin Doll: Wyatt Payne

Columbine Doll - Saturday: Jaeden Johnson

Columbine Doll - Sunday: Josie Fillmore

Jester Doll: Whitney Tomes

Nutcracker Prince: Hunter Solomon

Mouse King: Kobe Brown

Big Mice: Addison Alderman, Tenley Bauman, Emily Hinze, Sophia Jackson, Annabelle Kennedy, Ruby Lichtenfeld, Jamey Schutte, Stella Stanley, Charis Waite, Freya Winders

Little Mice: Aria Breunig, Olivia Carpenter, Brooklyn Glasser, Aubrey Lockard, Lanah Ronhovde, Claire Shanahan, McKenna Svoboda, Ella Unlu

Soldiers: Isabella Brown, Kyli McNaught, Sophie Ramsey, Ada Rawlings, Marisa Schmeckpeper, Preslie Spurling, Claire Sypal, Liliana Tejada, Clara Thorson, Twila Weber

Snow Queen: Corabelle Kennedy

Snow King: Journey Wilkes-Davis

Snow Princesses: Ariana Cunningham, Josie Fillmore, Lena Lankas, Whitney Tomes

Snow Corps: Tierny Blankenhorn, Lauren Coniglio, Elizabeth Friend, Grace Fry, Jaeden Johnson, Phoebe Kolb, Lilly Michel, Olivia McCurley, Brooke Oliver, Ansley Sothan, Sydney Vanderheiden, Clara Wolfe



2020 Nutcracker Cast

Act II

Sugar Plum Fairy: Jessica McCann

Cavalier: Yoshiaki Nakano

Celestial Fairies: Lily Hartley, Ava Kupke, Grace Troyer, Hailey Vincent

Angels - Saturday: Everlee Cheney, Stella Duval, Mia Ecton, Raegan Grell, Harper Hamik, Addilynn Knudsen, Harriet Kulwicki, Faye Meranda, Lydia Nuttleman, Paige Thorson

Angels - Sunday: Sydney Alderman, Viola Baker, Ayana Bartek, Thalia Butzke, Miley Cartwright, Lucy Glathar, Raegan Grell, Hannah McCullough, Gigi Schnabel, Ava Wiegert

Sugar and Spice: Reese Dell, Emma Ecton, Shelby Klein, Maggie Jo McGovern, Allyson Pape, Cate Rawlings

Spain: Lena Lankas

Spanish Background: Stella Amstuz, Reagan Brentlinger, Camree Craft, Sophia Fox, Hannah Rutt, Rilynn Whitney

Arabian Queen: Corabelle Kennedy

Arabian: Journy Wilkes-Davis

Arabian Background: Camina Dredge, Dot Francisco, Ruby Francisco, Brenna Harris, Emma Hershberger, Ada Rawlings

China: Ariana Cunningham, Phoebe Kolb, Sydney Vanderheiden

Chinese Lanterns: Magdalen Driewer, Taryn Harrah, Avari Korsmo, Lauren Love, Sophie Tomes, Liliana Ware

Marzipan: Wyatt Payne, Whitney Tomes, Clara Wolfe

Russian: Tierny Blankenhorn, Kobe Brown, Phoenix Decker, Brooke Oliver, Ansley Sothan, Kyren Watson

Russian Background: Eloise Carter, Scarlett Coleman, Emilie Hunt, Kennedy Johnson, Maddy Kotik, Zoe Smith

Bon Bon - Saturday: Annalise Aldag, Ruby Arnold, Lauren Dieken, Ruby Francisco, Treyton Mayfield, Khloe Mroz, Breyer Perry, Katherine Satorie, Isabelle Tesch, Laci Worick

Bon Bon - Sunday: Annalise Aldag, Ruby Arnold, Lauren Dieken, Ruby Francisco, Treyton Mayfield, Khloe Mroz, Madeline Paup, Breyer Perry, Ella Runyan, Isabelle Tesch

Mother Ginger: Jessica Broadfoot

Dew Drop: Jaeden Johnson

Demi Dews: Josie Fillmore, Elizabeth Friend

Flower Corps: Helen Brozovic, Lauren Coniglio, Brynley Cooper, Taryn Harrah, Lauren Love, Lilly Michel, Julia Radu, Ivamarie Volf

Garland Children: Ellie Anderson, Rory Bergantzel, Emilyn Changstrom, Adelyn Haden, Morgan Hilton, Calla Kupke, Sarah Manzitto, Ainsley Perry, Molly Silfer, Chloe Voog

2020 Guest Artists



Kobe Brown · Mouse King, Russian

Kobe started dance at age three, and has had a passion for dance since then. From 2014-2019, Kobe competed as a clogger in both the National Clogging and Hoedown Championships (NCHC) and the Clogging Championship of America (CCA) circuits where he now holds nine national champion awards. In 2018, he was awarded the National Cheer Association (NCA)

All-American Cheer and received Top All-American Cheer during his senior year. Kobe performed in the 2018 and 2019 LMBC Nutcracker productions, and is honored to be appearing again this year.



Ben Chandler · Drosselmeier

This is Ben's 25th year performing in *The Nutcracker*. Getting his start in 1996 as a Party Parent and Arabian Dancer, Ben has performed nine roles over the many years including Russian, Arabian, Spain, Mouse King, Snow King, Harlequin, Battle Nutcracker and Party Parent. He enjoyed the part of Russian, using his gymnastic abilities to excite the audience with

his jumps, flips and energy. This being his twelfth year as Drosselmeier, he enjoys the acting aspect and working with the kids and Clara to bring an exciting and beautiful party scene to life year after year.

Ben lives in Omaha with his seven-year-old son Beau and his beagle Chica. He owns and runs Chandler Handyman Service. They were recently voted 2019 Best Handyman Business in Omaha by *Omaha World Herald* readers. Ben wishes all the dancers an amazing 2020 performance and "God bless" to everyone.



Jessica McCann · Sugar Plum Fairy

Jessica McCann, of Los Angeles, California, joined Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre in 2015. Her past training includes a year with Alonzo King's LINES Ballet in San Francisco and American Ballet Theatre in New York, before joining PBT's Pre-Professional Program in 2013. In her first year with the company, McCann was chosen for Pointe Magazine's top 10 "Stars of the

Corps" for 2016. Since joining she has performed in many featured roles. Her highlights include, Principal Couple in George Balanchine's *Rubies*; the lead in William Forsythe's *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated*; Blue Bird Pas de Deux, Diamond Variation, and the Fairy of Abundance and Canary Fairy in Terrence S. Orr'

2020 Guest Artists

The Sleeping Beauty; Pas de Trois and Cygnets in Orr's *Swan Lake*; Peasant Pas de Deux and Zulma demi soloist in Orr's *Giselle*; Anita in *West Side Story Suite* and the First Girl in *Fancy Free* by Jerome Robbins; Dwight Rhoden's *Ava Maria*; and the Sugar Plum Fairy, Marie, Arabian and Snow Queen in Terrence Orr's *The Nutcracker*.

Other memorable performances include Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort*, *Sechs Tänze* and *Sinfonietta*; the soloist in Kyle Abraham's *The Quiet Dance*; *Spring Waters Pas de Deux*; The Cook in Derek Deane's *Alice in Wonderland*; a Harlot in Derek Deane's *Romeo and Juliet*; and an Odalisque in *Le Corsaire*. McCann has also performed in George Balanchine's *Allegro Brillante*, *Divertimento No.15* and *Western Symphony*; Antony Tudor's *Jardin Aux Lilas*; Mark Morris' *Sandpaper Ballet*; Ben Stevenson's *Dracula*; as well as PBT's *La Bayadère*, and Lew Christensen's *Beauty and The Beast*.

For its 2017-2018 main-stage season, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre commissioned McCann to choreograph a new work, *the silver line*, which made its world premiere in March 2018. She also created *Amoeba*, a new work for Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School's Graduate Program that premiered at their end-of-year showcase in 2019.

McCann has done guesting outside of the U.S. in Japan and Bermuda, where she has both danced and choreographed. She was also asked to judge the World Dream Ballet Competition in Osaka, Japan in 2018.



Yoshiaki Nakano · Cavalier

Yoshiaki Nakano, a native of Osaka Japan, joined Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre in 2010 and was promoted to principal in 2014. He received his early training at the Elite Ballet Studio in Osaka, Japan, and went on to train at San Francisco Ballet School and in PBT School's Graduate Program. Yoshiaki won the gold medal at the 2013 Beijing International Ballet and Choreography Competition in China and the silver medal at the 2010 World Ballet Competition in Orlando, Florida. In 2014, *Dance Magazine* named Nakano among its top 25 Dancers to Watch.

Yoshiaki has performed the roles of Prince Siegfried in *Swan Lake*, Basilio in *Don Quixote*, Albrecht in *Giselle*, Prince Desiré and Blue Bird in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Solor and The Golden Idol in *La Bayadère*, Conrad and Ali in *Le Corsaire*, Romeo and Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, the Nephew and Sugar Plum Cavalier in *The Nutcracker*, the White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland*, and Tony in Jerome Robbins' *West Side Story Suite*. He also has performed featured roles in Balanchine's *Agon*, *Divertimento No.15*, *Rubies*, and *Western Symphony*; Twyla Tharp's *In The Upper Room*

2020 Guest Artists

and *Nine Sinatra Songs*; Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort* and *Sinfonietta*; William Forsythe's *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated*; and Jerome Robbins' *In the Night*. PBT commissioned Nakano to choreograph two new works — *A Fellow Feeling* and *Infusion* — for its 2015-2016 and 2017-2018 mainstage seasons. He has also created works for PBT school Point Park University and Tetsuya Kumakawa's *Gala in Tokyo*.

Each summer, Nakano returns to Osaka, Japan, to choreograph and perform in the World Dream Gala in partnership with his mother's Elite Ballet Studio, where he grew up dancing.

He also teaches performs and choreographs in several companies and studios in Japan.



Wyatt Payne · Harlequin Doll, Marzipan

Originally from Wichita, KS, Wyatt Payne earned a BFA in ballet performance from Friends University. He also trained with the Rogers Ballet, the Next Generation Ballet summer program, and the Oklahoma City Ballet.

His repertory roles include Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; the Nutcracker Prince, Russian, and Arabian in American Midwest Ballet's production of *The Nutcracker*, and additional roles in *The Wizard of Oz*, *Death and the Maiden*, *Appalachian Song*, *Bricolage*, and *Habaneras*.

This year marks his fourth season performing with the American Midwest Ballet.



Hunter Solomon · Nutcracker Prince

Hunter Solomon started dance training at age seven at Steps of Faith dance studio and Studio South Performing Arts Center with Heather Driggers in Brunswick, Georgia. He started serious ballet training at 16 at Madeleine Walker Coastal Ballet under the direction of Gaye Baxley and Ann Inglis.

After graduation, he joined Atlanta Ballet's conservatory program under the direction of John McFall and Sharon Story where he studied with teachers such as Armando Luna, Martha Goodman, Abigail Gamino for two years. The following summer he attended Milwaukee Ballet's summer intensive where he accepted a position in the second company under Rolando Yanes for two years. He enjoyed his time there with teachers such as Dennis Malinkine, Tatiana Malinkine, Mireille Favarel, and Karl VanRobenau. There he had the opportunity to perform in ballets choreographed and directed by Michael Pink such as *The Nutcracker*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Dracula*, as well as Bruce Well's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

2020 Guest Artists

Hunter's favorite role is "Waltz Boy" in George Balanchine's *Serenade* which he performed with Milwaukee Ballet II. He just finished his first season dancing with Boulder Ballet performing roles such as Nutcracker Prince and a role in Paul Taylor's *AIRS*.



Journey Wilkes-Davis · Snow King, Arabian

Born in Fort Hood, TX, Journey Wilkes-Davis began his training at age fourteen under Shannon Greenberg and Dagoberto Nieves in Savannah, GA. During this time, he attended the Boston Ballet summer dance program on full scholarship. Afterwards, he joined the Signature dance ensemble in Rocky Mount, NC and continued his training under Cindy Mancini and Joseph Carow. In 2008, Journey joined the Columbia Classical Ballet under the direction of Radenko Pavlovich. In 2010, Journey moved to the Columbia City Ballet under the direction of William Starrett where he was promoted to Principal Dancer in 2012.

While in Columbia, SC, Journey has danced roles in Mark Diamond's *A Streetcar Named Desire*; Paul Taylor's *Company B*; Balanchine's *Serenade*; *Donizetti Variations*; *Walpurgisnacht Ballet*; *Scotch Symphony*; *Allegro Brillante*; *Western Symphony*; *Emeralds*; *Stars and Stripes Forever*; *Who Cares*; Lila York's *Celts*; Lynn Taylor Corbett's *Great Galloping Gottschalk*; Rick McCullough's *Tryptych* and *Rite of Spring*; as well as classics such as *Majisimo*; *Satanella*; Albrecht in *Giselle*; Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*; Prince Desire in *The Sleeping Beauty*; and Snow King, Arabian, and a Sugarplum Cavalier in *The Nutcracker*.

Journey has been a guest artist with Anne Brodie's Carolina Ballet, Hilton Head Dance Theatre, Coastal Ballet USA, Charleston City Ballet, Greensboro Ballet, USC Dance Company, and Montgomery Ballet where he has performed in such productions as *Giselle*, *Don Quixote*, *Sylvia*, and *Les Patineurs*. Journey was a competitor in the first Boston International Ballet Competition in 2011 and attended the 2014 Jackson USA IBC as a non-competing partner.

In 2016, Journey co-directed, choreographed, and danced in the H.E.R.O. Dance Benefit which partnered with Columbia Music Festival Association to bring professional dancers together for an evening of dance to support and honor our nation's military. In 2016, Journey was awarded the South Carolina Art's Commission Fellowship for Dance Performance. He was invited to dance with the Suzanne Farrell Ballet for their 2016 Season at the John F. Kennedy Center where the company performed Balanchine's rarely seen *Gounod Symphony*. In 2017, he joined the American Repertory Ballet in New Jersey, where he performed in Kirk Peterson's *Carmen*, *Tears of the Moon*, Gerald Arpino's *Sea Shadow*, Paul Taylor's *Airs*, Septime Webre's *Fluctuating Hemlines*, and Douglas Martin's *Rite of Spring*. Journey is excited to join the Alabama Ballet for their upcoming 2020/2021 season.

2020 Company Dancers



Tierny Blankenhorn · Snow Corps, Russian

Tierny is a junior at Lincoln East High School where she has been on honor roll for the past three years, and has lettered in academics. This is her second year as a member of the Lincoln East Apollonaire dance team, with which she enjoys dancing during the halftimes of football and basketball games as well as traveling to Minnesota and Florida for competitions. When Tierny is not dancing, she

is volunteering with her church, and spending time with her youth group every Wednesday night. In her limited free time, she enjoys spending time with her family and her friends. This is Tierny's eighth year appearing in *The Nutcracker*. Her prior roles were Angel, Little Party Girl, Garland, Big Party Girl, Maid, Snow Corps, and Flower Corps.



Helen Brozovic · Flower Corps

Helen is a freshman at Lincoln High School in the pre-IB program. She has been dancing since a young age, and studies ballet, pointe, and jazz. Last year, she competed at YAGP Kansas City with her studio's ballet ensemble. Helen is performing in her fourth year of *The Nutcracker*. Her previous roles include Garland Child, Russian Background, and Chinese Lantern. Outside of dance,

Helen runs junior varsity cross country for her school's team, and plays in both her school orchestra and the Lincoln Youth Symphony.



Jade Buseman · Company

Jade is a sophomore at Papillion-LaVista High School where she is an honors student. She is making her first appearance in LMBC's production of *The Nutcracker*. She is a member of her studio's pre-professional ballet trainee program, and has been accepted into summer dance programs at Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and Atlanta Ballet. She has also attended Regional Dance America for the last

four years in Phoenix, Wisconsin, Lawrence, and Indianapolis.

2020 Company Dancers



Lauren Coniglio · Snow Corps, Flower Corps

Lauren, 14, is a straight A freshman at Lincoln East High School. This year, she will participate in her fifth year of LMBC's *The Nutcracker*. Her past roles include Angel, Little Mouse, Big Party Girl, and Chinese Lantern. She has been dancing since the age of three, and is currently taking classes in classical ballet, pointe, contemporary (lyrical and modern),

jazz, leaps and turns, and hip hop. Lauren has been in her studio's selective repertory group for four years, participating in the Christmas Nativity show, Starry Nights, the recital opener, and many other special opportunities. She also had the privilege of dancing with the Manhattan Dance Project, and taking classes with instructors Michael Vernon, Tony Vitale, Bill Hotaling and Kameron Bink. Outside of dance, Lauren enjoys participating in her school's show choir group, and hanging out with her friends and little sister, as well as reading, writing, and listening to music.



Brynley Cooper · Flower Corps

Brynley, 14, is a freshman high honor roll student at Lincoln Lutheran High School. She is a member of the Blue Angels dance team. She has been dancing since she was three years old, and is trained in ballet, pointe, tap, lyrical, jazz, contemporary, hip hop, ballroom, modern, and musical theater. This is her seventh appearance in *The Nutcracker*. Her previous roles include Little Mouse,

Sugar and Spice, Garland Child, Russian Background, and Spanish Background. She has enjoyed dancing in multiple summer intensives with many talented choreographers, including Jay Jay Dixonbey, Curtis Sprung, Randi and Hefa, Hailey Hoffman, and Karine Plantadit. She has also modeled and performed for the Paper Ballet art project. A highlight of her dance experience was competing in the Youth American Grand Prix with her ballet team, and being selected for the finals in New York City. Outside of dance, Brynley enjoys spending time with her family and friends, hiking, shopping, and other school and church activities.

2020 Company Dancers



Ariana Cunningham · Snow Princess, China
Ariana is a 14-year-old eighth grader at Norris Middle School in Firth, Nebraska. Ariana's love and dedication for dance began at the age of three, training in ballet, tap, pointe, jazz, lyrical, modern, and contemporary. This will be her fourth year performing in *The Nutcracker*. Her previous roles were Elf, and Big Party Girl. In February of 2020, she attended the Kansas City Youth America

Grand Prix Semi-Finals. Her group ensemble received a personal invitation to compete in New York at the YAGP Finals. Her contemporary solo finished in the top 25. She is preparing for the 2021 YAGP Semi-Finals in Kansas City. In addition to YAGP, she is a current member of her company's competitive dance team. She has competed in all dance genres, and has won several honors and scholarships. She also auditioned with the Burklyn Ballet Company, and was accepted into their summer intermediate ballet program.



Josie Fillmore · Columbine (Sunday), Demi Dew, Snow Princess

Josie is a senior attending James Madison High with a 4.0 GPA. Josie started dancing over 15 years ago at the age of two. She is trained in classical ballet, pointe, lyrical, jazz, tap, and hip hop. Josie will be attending college in the fall, and plans to continue her dance education. This is Josie's fifth year as a teacher assistant.

Josie has attended the LMBC Summer Intensive for eight years. She has been part of her studio dance team for over seven years, winning several awards. In October of 2018, Josie attended Arizona Jazz Dance Showcase where she won a scholarship to Perry-Mansfield summer program. In February of 2019, she attended the Youth American Grand Prix in Kansas City, where she performed a classical ballet variation and a contemporary solo. This will be Josie's eighth year performing in *The Nutcracker*. Her previous roles were Peppermint, Garland Child, Chinese Lantern, Big Party Girl, Flower Corps, Snow Corps, Maid, Russia, China, and Snow Princess. When Josie is not dancing, she is TikToking, running around with friends, and living her best life!

2020 Company Dancers



Elizabeth Friend · Harlequin Doll (Saturday), Snow Corps, Demi Dew
Elizabeth is a junior at Lincoln Christian High School where she is an honor student, and member of the National Honor Society. She is making her seventh appearance in LMBC's production of *The Nutcracker*, previously dancing the roles of Garland Child, Russian Background, Big Party Girl, Snow Corps, Flower Corps, and Marzipan Girl. She is a member of her studio's pre-professional ballet trainee program, and has been accepted into summer dance programs at Ballet Chicago, North Carolina School of the Arts, Burklyn Ballet, and Joffrey Chicago. She has attended summer intensives at Kansas City Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, and most recently, Ballet West in Salt Lake City, where she was invited to attend its year round program.



Abigail Hovendick · Clara (Sunday)
Abigail is a senior at Milford High School where she is active in band, flag team, journalism, and dance team. This year, she is a dance team co-captain. Abigail has been dancing since she was five years old, training in classical ballet, pointe, lyrical, jazz, tap, contemporary, musical theatre, and modern. She is a member of her studio's competition, and YAGP teams. She has danced classical and contemporary solos at the Youth American Grand Prix in Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, and Denver. Abigail has enjoyed her experiences in summer intensives with Kansas City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and Nebraska Dance Camp (Omaha Academy of Ballet). She is in the pre-professional program at her studio, and hopes to venture into the professional ballet world post-high school. Over the last two years, Abigail has studied Imperial Classical Ballet, and has passed and received distinction in all of her exams. This year she is teaching and assisting other kids' ballet. When she is not in a studio, Abigail spends most of her free time with her friends and family.

2020 Company Dancers



Karmi Jay · Company

Karmi Jay is 15 years old, and a ninth grader at Lincoln East High School where she is a member of the Apollonaire dance team. Her prior castings in *The Nutcracker* include Russian Lead, Snow Corps, Big Party Girl, Angel Lead, Chinese Lantern, Little Party Girl, and Chocolatier. Karmi also performed the role of Sneezzy in the 2017 LMBC spring show, *Snow White*. Karmi is currently a Prodigy with Artistic Dance Exchange Convention on scholarship. She has competed at the Youth American Grand Prix for two years. Karmi portrayed the characters of Clara from *The Nutcracker* and the Blue Fairy from *Pinocchio* as a part of The Paper Ballet art project. She has attended the Idaho Dance Arts Alliance Summer Camp for three summers on scholarship, and the LMBC summer camp five times. Karmi has been dancing since the age of three, and is now in her tenth season competing with her studio team. Individual accomplishments include numerous regional and national titles, the Young Artist Award at Mark of Excellence, as well as multiple scholarships to many conventions and camps. Outside of dance, Karmi enjoys spending time with friends and family, is active within her church, and enjoys playing with her three Pomeranians; Plié', Jazz and Tapper.



Jaeden Johnson · Dew Drop, Columbine (Saturday), Snow Corps

Jaeden Johnson is 17 years old, and a senior at Omaha North High Magnet School where she is a member of National Honor Society, and a review writer for the school newspaper. Jaeden has trained at her studio in Omaha since the age of five. She has received additional training and merit scholarships at the summer intensives of Kansas City Ballet, Oklahoma City Ballet, and Dance Theatre of Harlem. She also attended The Washington Ballet summer intensive where she was interviewed and photographed for an article featured in the January 2020 issue of *Dance Magazine*. Jaeden was featured in numerous lead roles in Omaha Dance Project presented by the Omaha Academy of Ballet. She most recently performed the lead roles of Fairy Doll, Esmeralda, and was also featured in numerous contemporary works by guest choreographers.

2020 Company Dancers



Corabelle Kennedy · Snow Queen, Arabian Queen
Cora receives dance training in Omaha where she resides. She attended the summer program at Pacific Northwest Ballet, and won full summer scholarships to Milwaukee Ballet and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. Cora is a member of Heartland Youth Ballet, the performing arm of Heartland Conservatory of Dance, which is an honor company with Regional Dance America. While in HYB, she has danced

the title role of Cinderella, the Omaha Symphony's Christmas with the Symphony, and the Family Series. During a recent RDA Festival, she was awarded full scholarships to Brenau University, Dean College, Palm Beach Atlantic University, Alma and Southern Illinois. During RDA Festivals, Cora performed principal roles in pieces by international choreographer Altin Naska, former Paul Taylor principal dancer James Samson, and former Cincinnati Ballet and Milwaukee Ballet dancer Nicole Cisler. Cora is a junior at the University of Nebraska Online High School. She is working to graduate early, and then take advantage of one of the two early acceptance and scholarship offers she received from both The University of Oklahoma and Butler University. She has aspired to become a professional ballet dancer since the day she started taking ballet.



Phoebe Kolb · Snow Corps, China

Phoebe is a senior at Milford High School where she maintains a 4.0 GPA, and is an honor roll student. She is involved in dance team, student council, band, jazz band, show choir, musical, one act play, Key Club, FCA, quiz bowl, and art club. She has been dancing for 13 years, during which she has studied ballet, pointe, jazz, lyrical, contemporary, modern, and musical theatre. Phoebe has

been a member of her studio's competition team for seven years. She previously competed in the Youth of America Grand Prix in Las Vegas, and will attend the Kansas City competition this upcoming spring. Beyond dance, Phoebe enjoys playing piano and marimba and participating in church activities, including being a part of the worship team. She is her sixth appearance in *The Nutcracker*. Previous roles have included Snow Corps, Flower Corps, Maid, Soldier, and Arabian Background.

2020 Company Dancers



Lena Lenkas · Snow Princess, Spain,
Harlequin (Sunday)

Lena has been dancing with Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company for almost ten years, and has participated in many Nutcrackers and summer camps. Lena continues her dance training at her studio, and is a member of Lincoln East Apollonaire dance team. She also is involved with Young Life, G.O.L.D. and multiple East High

extracurricular activities. Lena maintains a 4.0+ GPA.



Lilly Michel · Snow Corps, Flower Corps
Lilly, 15, is a sophomore honor roll student at Waverly High School. She is in her second year as a member of the Waverly High School dance team. Lilly has been dancing since the age of seven, studying various styles of dance, including ballet, pointe, jazz, tap, hip hop, contemporary, lyrical, and musical theatre. She has been in competitive dance for nine years. She has

traveled for dance conventions, competitions and intensives, and has been recognized and received scholarships from Velocity, NUVO and In10sity. Her most recent honor was accepting the ballet scholarship at NUVO in October. She has had the opportunity to compete and experience classes taught by a variety of talented choreographers, as well as attending the Get On Pointe series through LMBC. This is Lilly's fifth year performing in *The Nutcracker*, previously dancing the roles of Garland Child, Spanish Background and Flower Corps.



Brooke Oliver · 1st Maid, Russian, Snow Corps
Brooke, 17, is a senior at Waverly High School. This is Brooke's fourth year participating in *The Nutcracker*; previously dancing the roles of Maid, Snow Corp, Flower Corp, and Chinese Lantern. She has been dancing since the age of three, training in ballet, pointe, tap, jazz, lyrical, improv and contemporary. She is a teacher's assistant at her home studio, and has been competing

with them for nine years. This summer, Brooke attended multiple virtual dance

2020 Company Dancers

intensives, including the Muse Network Experience. After graduation, Brooke plans to further her dance career by attending Chapman University in Los Angeles. Outside of dance, Brooke enjoys spending time with friends, family and two puppies.



Maggie Oulianova · Clara (Saturday)

Maggie has been part of the *The Nutcracker* for almost ten years, and has danced with LMBC ever since she can remember. She is currently a junior at Lincoln East High School where she is a member of the Apollonaire dance team. When she is not at school, she is usually dancing with the competitive team at her dance studio. Maggie has participated in many dance camps, conventions, and competitions that have led to some amazing opportunities and scholarships. She has trained at intensives such as Ballet Austin in Texas, and danced with Muse Effect Dance Company in Los Angeles. She dedicates her performance this year to her late mother, Karina.



Julia Radu · Flower Corps

Julia Radu, 15, is a straight-A student at Lincoln East High School. She is on the Apollonaires dance team at Lincoln East. This is her fifth year in *The Nutcracker*. Her previous roles have included Elf, Russian Background, and Chinese Lantern. She has been dancing since she was three years old. She takes classes in pointe, ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, contemporary, and leaps and turns. She is also in her studio's repertory group. She has attended the Jump dance convention with artists such as Mark Meisner, Nika Kljun, Colby Shinn, and many more. She has danced with the Manhattan Dance Project. Outside of dance, Julia loves to hang out with friends and focus on school..

2020 Company Dancers



Aliyah Soliz · Company

Aliyah, 14, is a ninth grade honor roll student at Lincoln Southwest High School where she is a member of the Emeralds dance team. Dancing since the age of three, Aliyah has competed at numerous dance competitions and received various awards and scholarships. She has also competed at Youth American Grand Prix. Over the past few years, Aliyah has had the opportunity to participate in summer intensive programs with Joffrey Ballet School, LMBC, and various master classes including American Ballet Theatre. When not dancing, Aliyah is involved with Teens Influencing Equity club at her high school, and loves spending time with her friends and family. This year marks the seventh year performing in *The Nutcracker* with previous roles as Little Mouse, Angel, Garland Child, Big Party Girl, and Flower Corps. She has also had the opportunity to perform in LMBC's production of *Snow White* as a Forest Animal.



Ansley Sothan · Snow Corps, Russian

Ansley, 16, is a junior at Lincoln Southeast High School where she maintains a 4.0+ average. She is a returning member of the Shirettes dance team, varsity golf team (LPS Championship 1st place, Districts 2nd, State 7th place). She is also a member of the varsity tennis team, Health Occupations Students of America Leadership Cadre, Young Life, and Launch Leadership. Last year, Ansley was selected to participate in Youth Leadership Lincoln. This year, she was nominated to be a part of Lincoln GOLD. Ansley continues to study French, Spanish and Chinese, while also volunteering for the Red Cross, writing for the *Chronicle* in the young writers club, and assisting in dance classes at her studio. She began her dance career before she was two. She has competed in all genres of dance while on her studio's competition team, winning many awards and scholarships. In 2012, she was Rainbow's Dancer of the Year, and she traveled to Las Vegas to nationals with her first solo. Ansley's love of ballet motivated her to audition for several summer ballet intensives. She has attended Ballet Austin, Cincinnati Ballet, and Orlando Ballet. Ansley competed in Youth American Grand Prix for three years performing Cupid, Blue Bird, and Paquita

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solos in Kansas City and Chicago. Ansley's past Nutcracker roles include Peppermint, Elf, Garland Child, Angel Lead, Big Party Girl, Snow Corps, Chinese Lantern, China, and Demi Dew.



Whitney Tomes · Snow Princess, Jester, Marzipan Whitney, 15, is a sophomore at Pius X High School where she maintains a 4.0 GPA. She is a member of several student activities including the Ambassador Leadership Team, Student Council, National Honor Society, and the Pius Thunderette dance team. This will be Whitney's seventh appearance in *The Nutcracker*. Past roles include Angel, Crown Angel, Little Party Girl, Angel Lead, Big

Party Girl, Snow Corps, and Russian. In the 2017 LMBC production of *Snow White*, Whitney played the role of Bashful. She has been a part of her studio's ballet productions, accepted to multiple ballet intensives via an audition process, and participated in several summer ballet programs. Whitney is looking forward to competing a variation in the Youth American Grand Prix ballet competition this winter. She is currently in her ninth year competing competitively with her studio's team. Under the direction of her studio, she has traveled nationwide, received numerous awards, titles, and scholarships. Whitney has achieved the top scholarships in all three Break the Floor conventions, and cannot wait to travel again for pre-professional contemporary dance opportunities.



Grace Troyer · Celestial Fairy

Grace, 14, is an eighth grade honor roll student at Pound Middle School. This will mark her sixth year dancing in *The Nutcracker*. Past roles include Little Mouse, Garland Child, Little Party Girl and Big Party girl. In addition, Grace has been part of the Paper Ballet for the last two years, and enjoys sharing her passion for dance through their photos. Grace has

been dancing since she was five years old, and is currently taking jazz, lyrical, pointe, and tap. Grace has been part of her studio's repertory group for three years, and performed in their production of *Mary Poppins* this past summer. When she is not dancing, Grace plays the cello in her school orchestra, plays

2020 Company Dancers

softball, and volunteers at her church. Grace also enjoys skateboarding, drawing, choreographing new dances, and spending time with her family, friends, and dog.



Sydney Vanderheiden · China, Maid, Snow Corps
Sydney, 17, is a senior honor roll student at Springfield Platteview High where she is a member of the Trojan dance team. Sydney has been dancing since age six. She has been a soloist with American Midwest Ballet Junior Company for two years, and was an apprentice with Ballet Nebraska Junior Company. As a soloist, she performed the lead role of The Sylph in *La Sylphide*. She

was awarded the Nebraska Young Artists Award for dance as a junior. She has performed in American Midwest Ballet's productions of *Snow White*, *Giselle*, *Wizard of Oz*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and seven years of *The Nutcracker*. She has also performed in *The Tales of Beatrix Potter*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Coppelia*. Sydney has attended summer intensives at Oklahoma University and University of Utah. Sydney is planning to attend college next fall, majoring in Ballet and Forensic Psychology.



Ivamarie Volf · Flower Corps

Iva is a 15-year-old sophomore at Norris High School where she is an honor student. This is her second year as a member of the Norris show choir, and the Sapphires dance team. This year, she is in the 68th Street Singers. Iva started dancing at the age of two, and has been a member of her studio's competition dance team for over five years, winning scholarships for both tap and ballet.

In February of 2019, she competed at the Youth American Grand Prix in Las Vegas. Iva has been a part of her studio's pre-professional ballet program for several years. This is Iva's seventh year in *The Nutcracker* with past roles including Sugar & Spice, Big Mouse, Arabian Background, Chinese Lantern, and Flower Corps. She was also cast in LMBC's *Snow White*. Iva is involved in many activities including being Wilber Czech Princess and lead soloist for Hope Venture's *A Night for Hope*, Girl Scouts, Scouts BSA, Norris golf team, Nebraska state representative for Be Strong anti-bullying organization, and church.

2020 Company Dancers



Ali Weber · Company

Ali, 14, is a freshman at Lincoln Southwest High School where she is an honor roll student, and a member of the Emeralds dance team. This is Ali's sixth year as a cast member of *The Nutcracker*. Her past roles include Little Mouse, Garland Child, Chinese Lantern, and Flower Corps. Ali has also performed in LMBC's productions of *Snow White*. She has been dancing since the age of three, and has been a part of her studio's competitive teams for eight years. Ali trains in all forms of dance including jazz, lyrical, contemporary, ballet, and pointe. When not dancing, Ali enjoys activities with her family and friends, and also spending time at the lake.



Clara Wolfe · Marzipan, Maid, Snow Corps

Clara, 15, is a freshman at Lincoln East High School where she is a member of the Apollonaire dance team. Her love for dance began at the age of eight. She studies ballet, jazz, hip hop, and contemporary, and is a member of the studio's repertory group. She has participated in the Manhattan Dance Project workshop for the past four years. This is her fifth year dancing in *The Nutcracker*. Prior roles include Little Mouse, Soldier, Spanish Background, Flower Corps, and Snow Corps. When she is not in the dance studio, she loves wakesurfing, wakeboarding, spending time at the lake, cooking, listening to music, and making memories with family and friends.

The Lincoln Midwest Ballet Guild congratulates

Kelley Peterson

on 10 years of performances!

2020 Apprentice Dancers



Ayla Brosman · Big Party Girl

Ayla, 13, is an eighth-grade straight-A honors student at Schoo Middle School. This is her sixth appearance in the Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company's production of *The Nutcracker*. Past roles include Big Party Girl, Little Party Girl, and Angel. In February 2020, Ayla participated in the Youth America Grand Prix as a classical variation soloist and ensemble member for her studio. The ensemble received an invitation to attend the YAGP New York finals. This past summer, Ayla was accepted to train with Ballet Austin, Tulsa Ballet (with scholarship), Kansas City Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet (with scholarship), Charlotte Ballet, Nashville Ballet, Sarasota Ballet, and a few others, but unfortunately, was not able to attend due to the current pandemic. When not dancing, Ayla is an active participant in her school's orchestra, and was recently selected into the Junior Youth Orchestra with Lincoln Public Schools.



Phoenix Decker · Fritz, Russian

Phoenix Decker is a 13-year-old straight-A student at Scott Middle School. This year will mark his fourth appearance in *The Nutcracker*, including his third year as Fritz and past role of Little Party Boy. Phoenix started dancing at age seven, and now competes with the national team for his studio in all dance genres. He has won several breakout artist scholarships and awards. He will compete this year in the Youth America Grand Prix in ballet. When not dancing, Phoenix sings in his school choir, plays violin, and enjoys running, biking, and hanging out with his brother and friends.



Magdalen Drierew · Chinese Lantern

Magdalen Drierew, 13, is an eighth grader at St. Peter's Catholic School. She is a straight-A honor roll student, and participates in Student Council. She started dancing at age seven. She is currently taking pointe, ballet, tap, jazz, contemporary, lyrical, and hip hop. She is also a part of Repertory, her studio's selective group. Magdalen has danced in *Starry Nights*, a fundraiser for People's City Mission, for two years. This is her second time dancing in *The Nutcracker*. Last year, she had the role of Russian background.

2020 Apprentice Dancers



Grace Fry · Big Party Girl, Snow Corps
Grace, 13, is a seventh grader at Lincoln Lutheran Middle School where she is a straight-A student. Grace's second home is at her dance studio, where she spends most of her free time. She dances on her studio's national competition team, traveling all over, including Orlando for the National Dance Awards. Grace is also competing in the YAGP ballet competition for the third year. Ballet is her first love, and she received an invitation to train with the Kansas City Ballet Day-School program.



Taryn Harrah · Chinese Lantern, Flower Corps
Taryn, 13, is an eighth-grade honor roll student at Moore Middle School. She has been dancing since the age of four, and has been a member of her studio's competitive dance team for the last eight years. She performs and attends workshops at various dance conventions. She has received several awards and scholarships, including an Evolving Artist Ballet Scholarship from Velocity, which included six weeks of training and acceptance to perform in Las Vegas for the finale show. She also auditioned at The Rock School for Dance Education in Kansas City, awarding her the opportunity to attend a week-long ballet training program in Philadelphia. Taryn has also performed in the LMBC's ballet production of *Snow White*. Her prior roles in *The Nutcracker* include Angel, Crown Angel, Little Party Girl, and Big Party Girl. Outside of dance, Taryn loves spending time with friends and family.



Lily Hartley · Celestial Fairy
Lily Hartley is 12 years old, and studies dance in Omaha. She is a member of Heartland Youth Ballet, an honor company of Regional Dance America. She has attended RDA for classes and workshops, and this year is old enough to perform at their Festival and will dance international choreographer Altin Naska's *Russian Dance*. Through HYB, she has performed with the Omaha Symphony in their Christmas production and their *Cinderella Family Concert*, in which she played one of the Seven Dwarfs – Doc.

2020 Apprentice Dancers



Avari Korsmo · Chinese Lantern

Avari Korsmo, 13, is an eighth grader at Lincoln Christian School. She started dancing at age five. She has attended multiple dance camps and intensives including JUMP and Manhattan Dance Project. She performed with her dance studio at the Cornhusker State Games in 2017. She has danced in *Starry Nights*, a fundraiser for the People's City Mission, for two years. Avari is currently taking pointe,

ballet, tap, jazz, contemporary, lyrical, and she is also in her studio's invitation-only repertory program. This will mark her sixth appearance in *The Nutcracker* with past roles including Angel, Sugar and Spice, Garland Child, and Russian Background.



Ava Kupke · Celestial Fairy

Ava, 13, is an eighth-grade honor roll student at Waverly Middle School. She is performing in her fourth year of *The Nutcracker*. Her previous roles include Big Mouse, Garland Child, and Chinese Lantern. Ava started dance at the age of seven, and has been dancing competitively for the past six years. Last February, Ava had the opportunity to compete at the Youth America Grand Prix ballet

competition in Kansas City, where she was a soloist and ensemble member. She is currently training to compete at YAGP again this winter. Ava was accepted into Tulsa Ballet's 2020 Senior Summer Intensive. When not dancing, Ava plays competitive softball, is active in her church's youth program, and enjoys spending time with her family and friends.



Lauren Love · Chinese Lantern, Flower Corps

Lauren, 13, is a 4.0 student at St. Michael Catholic School. Her love for dance began at the age of three. For the last seven years, she has competed in all genres with her studio's competition team, earning numerous scholarships. Last year, she competed at the Youth American Grand Prix in Kansas City with an ensemble that earned an invitation to perform in New York City. Prior roles in *The Nutcracker* include Big Mouse, Garland Child, and Russian Background.

2020 Apprentice Dancers



Hayley Marshall · Big Party Girl

Hayley, 12, is a sixth grader at Scott Middle School. Hayley has danced competitively since age six, winning outstanding honors. She is recognized consistently for her dancing in solo overalls and top scholarship awards. This summer, she was named a Top 33 Junior Best Dancer at the National Dance Awards. Hayley is also currently training for the prestigious Youth American Grand Prix where she will be performing both a classical ballet variation and a contemporary solo. This year marks her fourth appearance in the LMBC's production of *The Nutcracker*. Past roles include Little Mouse, Elf, and Little Party Girl. Outside of dance, Hayley loves crafts and spending time with family and friends.



Olivia McCurley · Big Party Girl, Snow Corps
Olivia is an eighth grade student at Prairie Hill Learning Center. She is a competing soloist on her studio's dance team. Olivia enjoys swimming, skiing, snowboarding, running, tumbling, and dancing. Olivia has performed in *The Nutcracker* as an Angel, a Big Mouse, and Garland Child. This is her second time appearing as a Big Party Girl.



Teagan Smith · Big Party Girl

Teagan Smith, 12, is a seventh-grade student at Irving Middle School. She has been dancing since the age of four, and has been a member of her studio's competitive dance team, competing in out-of-state competitions for five years. These competitions have included every genre of dance. She has received multiple scholarships and awards, including NUVO Breakout Artist, Runner-Up at NUVO Dance Convention, 24/7 Dance Convention, and Jump Dance Convention. This year marks her fifth year dancing in *The Nutcracker*, with roles as Angel, Mouse, Elf and Little Party Girl. Outside of her passion for dance, she enjoys playing the violin in her school orchestra, singing in choir, participating in her church activities and gathering with family and friends.

2020 Apprentice Dancers



Kiptara Thomas · Big Party Girl

Kiptara is an eighth-grade student at Lux Middle School, who participates in the differentiated program. She started dancing at the age of three, and quickly fell in love with all forms of dance, especially ballet. She has attended out of state dance conventions, earning many awards and scholarships, while competing in various styles of dance with solos and group pieces. The last few summers,

Kiptara has attended ballet intensives with The Rock School in Philadelphia and American Ballet Theatre's summer intensive. She is on the competition team at her dance studio for the Youth American Grand Prix and for traditional competitions. This year marks her sixth year dancing in *The Nutcracker*.



Sophie Tomes · Chinese Lantern

Sophie, 13, is a seventh-grade straight-A honor roll student at St. Peter's School. She participates in MathCounts, lectures at Mass, and assists with the younger students in school. This is her fifth appearance in *The Nutcracker*.

Past roles include Angel for two years, Big Mouse, and Angel Lead. She has been very fortunate to be a part of her studio's ballet productions. She has been accepted to

multiple ballet intensives, and participated in several summer ballet programs.

Sophie is looking forward to the new experience of competing in a group ensemble at the YAGP ballet competition this winter. She is currently in her sixth year competing competitively with her studio's team. Under the direction of her studio, she travels nationwide competing as a soloist and group member. She has been fortunate to win multiple scholarships and awards.



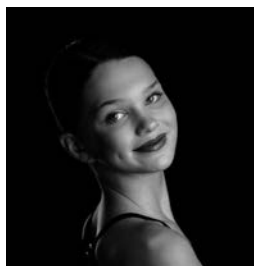
Hailey Vincent · Celestial Fairy

Hailey Vincent is 12 years old and is homeschooled. She studies dance in Omaha. She is a member of Heartland Youth Ballet, an honor company of Regional Dance America. She has attended RDA for classes and workshops, and this year is old enough to perform at their festival.

She will dance international choreographer Altin Naska's *Russian Dance*. Through HYB, she has performed with the

Omaha Symphony, and has performed in many productions including *Madeline* as Nona.

2020 Apprentice Dancers



Liliana Ware · Chinese Lantern

This is Liliana's third appearance in *The Nutcracker*, previously performing as Sugar & Spice and Spanish Background. Liliana is an eighth grader at Scott Middle School. Besides ballet, Liliana is a student of jazz, lyrical, contemporary, tap, and repertory. She also plays piano and swims, but a part of her brain is continuously committed to choreographing dances.



Kyren Watson · Big Party Boy, Russian

Kyren began dancing in 2016 at the age of ten, after falling in love with ballet while watching a performance of *The Nutcracker*. He dances at a local studio, focusing primarily on classical ballet. Kyren is currently in eighth grade, and aspires to be a professional ballet dancer in the future.

2020 Understudy Roles

Tierny Blankenhorn · China

Ayla Brosman · Demi Dew,
Snow Corps

Helen Brozovic · Snow Corps

Ariana Cunningham · Arabian Queen

Magdalen Driewer · Flower Corps

Josie Fillmore · Dew Drop

Elizabeth Friend · Snow Princess

Grace Fry · Russian

Taryn Harrah · Snow Corps

Phoebe Kolb · Russian

Avari Korsmo · Flower Corps

Lauren Love · Big Party Girl,
Snow Corps

Olivia McCurley · China

Ada Rawlings · Chinese Lantern

Teagan Smith · Celestial Fairy

Ansley Sothan · Marzipan

Kiptara Thomas · Snow Corps, China

Sophie Tomes · Flower Corps

Whitney Tomes · Spain

Grace Troyer · Chinese Lantern,
Flower Corps

Liliana Ware · Flower Corps

Clara Wolfe · Snow Princess

Backstage at the Ballet



Backstage at the Ballet is an artists-in-residency program sponsored by the Lincoln Midwest Ballet Guild. Backstage at the Ballet was a vision of our artistic director, Shari True, to give children hands-on opportunities to experience ballet in a fun learning environment. This year, artists from Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company were furloughed from working directly with students. We look forward to next year when our staff will be able to teach students about costuming, make-up, and choreography.

Backstage at the Ballet has reached thousands of students at numerous Lincoln area schools including: Beattie, Belmont, Brownell, Calvert, Campbell, Clinton, Eastridge, Elliott, Everett, Fredstrom, Hawthorne, Hill, Holmes, Humann, Huntington, Kahoa, Kloefkorn, Lakeview, Maxey, Meadowlane, Morley, Pershing, Prescott, Pyrtle, Randolph, Riley, Rousseau, Saratoga, Sheridan, West Lincoln, Zeman, and Eagle District #145 Elementary.

Lyle Johnson Award

As first president of our predecessor organization, Ballet Midwest, Lyle Johnson was committed to building an arts organization that was of the highest caliber and he worked persistently for its goals. This award was established by the Lincoln Midwest Ballet Company in 1995 in his memory, and recognizes an individual or organization for similar outstanding support of the ballet company. The award is not given on an annual basis. This year we wish to remember and recognize our past recipients:

Alice Abel, Kathleen Allen, Bryan LGH Medical Center, Lana Brennan, Joan Chopp, Ron Colin, Susan Chowning-Ricketts, Tom Curtright, Michael Dowd, Debby Erickson, Richard Evans, Donna and John Himmelberger, Jim Lauerman, the Lied Center for the Performing Arts, Angie Muhleisen, the Nebraska Symphony Chamber Orchestra and its conductor Dr. Herbert Dregalla, Jr., Burton Schernikau, Susan Steinegger, Jim Stuart, Shari Styskal, Molly Thomas, Shari True, Ann Watson, and Renee Yost.

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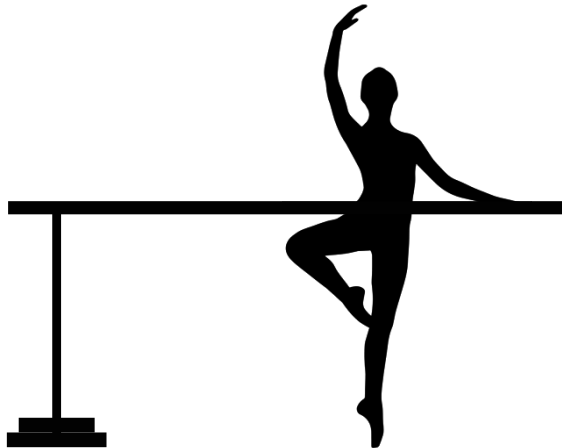
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