

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 11, 2017 Contact: Erika Overturff, (402) 541-6946 Full-resolution photos available at this link



Stylistic variety is a hallmark of the Momentum program. Full-resolution photos

NEW WORKS JOIN VINTAGE AND MODERN CLASSICS AT BALLET NEBRASKA'S 'MOMENTUM'

OMAHA – The dance styles of 19th century master Marius Petipa and Broadway icon Bob Fosse seldom appear on the same stage, let alone the same program. But that kind of combination is the whole point of *Momentum*, Ballet Nebraska's annual mixed-repertory production, artistic director Erika Overturff said.

With performances Friday, October 20, at 7:30 pm at Joslyn Art Museum, and Sunday, October 22, at 2 pm at the Iowa Western Arts Center, *Momentum* "is a wonderful way to open our eighth season of professional dance," Overturff said. "It gives audiences the unique opportunity to see brand new works, a classical showpiece, and the work of an iconic Broadway legend, Bob Fosse, all on the same program!"

For *In the Style of Bob Fosse,* Overturff said, Ballet Nebraska went to two of the world's foremost experts on Fosse's style and work: Ann Reinking, a stage and film star in her own right, and performer/ choreographer Gary Chryst. The two worked intensively with Ballet Nebraska's dancers both to create the piece and to hone the fine points of Fosse's signature style; "It's incredibly fun and yet very detailed," Overturff said. "Learning all the nuances from Ann and Gary was an amazing experience."

Nineteenth-century classicism reached its peak brilliance in Petipa's *The Sleeping Beauty*, represented on this program by its famous *Blue Bird & Princess Florine* pas de deux (a short dance for a couple), Overturff said. "For dancers, performing *Blue Bird* is a career highlight," she said. "Tchaikovsky's music is inspiring, and the choreography is a masterful combination of charm and technical brilliance."

(more)

Ballet N E B R A S K A

Two newly-created works on the program are Overturff's *Appalachian Song* and company artist Erin Alarcón's *Bricolage*.

Overturff said her goal with *Appalachian Song* was to explore the heritage of the Appalachian region as told through its music – "to weave together life's struggles and celebrations through stories of love, humor, heartache, loss and perseverance," she said. Another influence, she said, was Joslyn Art Museum's current exhibition *Travels with Brian Floca*, which features Floca's illustrations from the book *Ballet for Martha*, about the creation of Martha Graham's classic modern-dance work *Appalachian Spring*.

Alarcón's *Bricolage* (from a visual-art term for a work made from found materials) is a ballet inspired by the sounds and spirit of its music, Overturff said: a style known as *jazz manouche* or "gypsy jazz," popularized by guitarist Jean "Django" Reinhardt in the "hot clubs" of 1930s France.

Rounding out the program will be another musically-inspired work: *Caprice,* created by Ballet Nebraska ballet master Matthew Carter. Since its 2005 premiere it has been seen on several venues including the opening celebration for the Holland Performing Arts Center, Overturff said. Set to a score by Antonio Vivaldi, the neoclassical-style choreography aims to capture the music's energy and natural, open qualities, she said.

Short videos by Omaha filmmaker Lance Glenn will introduce several of the works, Overturff said. "These video introductions provide background and context, and have been popular with audiences whenever we've done them," she said. "They'll help make *Momentum* an even more memorable experience."

Performances of *Momentum* will be at 7:30 pm Friday, October 20th, at Joslyn Art Museum, and 2 pm Sunday, October 22nd, at the Iowa Western Arts Center in Council Bluffs. Tickets for the Joslyn performance are available from Ticket Omaha (402-345-0606, or online at ticketomaha.com.) Tickets for the Arts Center performance are available from the Arts Center box office (712-388-7140, or online at artscenter.iwcc.edu.) More information is available from balletnebraska.org.

Ballet Nebraska is the region's professional dance company. The season is presented with support from premiere benefactors the Iowa West Foundation, the Fred and Eve Simon Charitable Foundation, the Richard Brooke Foundation, and Douglas County; season sponsor Omaha Steaks; and additional support from Cindy and Scott Heider, the Sherwood Foundation, the Nebraska Arts Council, and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION

October 11, 2017 Contact: Erika Overturff (Artistic Director & CEO), 402-541-6946

QUICK GUIDE TO BALLET NEBRASKA'S MOMENTUM

What:	As Ballet Nebraska's annual mixed-repertory program, <i>Momentum</i> brings audiences a sparkling collection of short ballets in a variety of styles.
When:	Friday, October 20, at 7:30 pm at Joslyn Art Museum; Sunday, October 22, at 2 pm at the Iowa Western Arts Center.
Tickets:	Joslyn performance: Ticket Omaha: www.ticketomaha.com ; 402-345-0606; box office, 13th & Douglas. Iowa Western Arts Center performance: Arts Center box office, artscenter.iwcc.edu or 712-388-7140.
Sponsors:	Premier Benefactors - Iowa West Foundation, the Fred and Eve Simon Charitable Foundation, the Richard Brooke Foundation, and Douglas County Season Sponsor - Omaha Steaks Additional Support - Cindy and Scott Heider, the Sherwood Foundation, the Nebraska Arts Council, and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment
Highlight:	Ann Reinking, Bob Fosse's longtime muse and collaborator, and Gary Chryst, who has staged his works worldwide, came to Omaha earlier this season to set <i>In the Style of Bob Fosse</i> especially for us. Fosse, a winner of a record eight Tony Awards [™] for choreography, created an iconic style that set new standards for theater dance. The Ballet Nebraska dancers' sizzling performance of Fosse's distinctive movement vocabulary highlights their versatility as artists and the wide range of dance as a form of artistic expression.
Erika's take:	"I love how <i>Momentum</i> transports us. In one evening you can visit the "hot clubs" of 1930s France, explore the mountains of Appalachia, take flight with a fairytale

princess, and experience the electrifying theatrical energy of Broadway."



GUEST CHOREOGRAPHERS

Ann Reinking



During her career Ms. Reinking has been nominated for a Tony Award in four different categories: Best Actress in a Musical (*Good Time Charley*), Best Supporting Actress in a Musical (*Dancin'*), Best Choreography for a Musical (*Chicago*, the revival) and Best Director of a Musical (*Fosse*). Her choreography, 'in the style Bob Fosse', won her the Tony for Best Choreography, as well as the Drama Desk, Outer Critic Circle, Astaire and New York Drama Critics awards. Reinking performed on Broadway in *Cabaret, Coco, Pippin, A Chorus Line, Chicago* (both the original and the revival), *Sweet Charity* and *Fosse* (Lawrence Olivier Award). For her performance in *Over Here*, she received the Theatre World, Clarence Derwent and Outer Critic Circle awards. Her movie credits are *Movie Movie, All That Jazz, Annie* and *Micki and Maude*. She has choreographed for American Ballet Theater, Ballet Hispanico, Joffrey Ballet Chicago, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Williamstown Theater Festival, Seattle Spectrum Dance Theater, Kansas City Ballet, ABC-TV, the Encore Series At City Center, Signature Theater, Off Broadway, The Goodman Theater Chicago and Thodos Dance Chicago.

Reinking also produced the award winning documentaries *Two Worlds One Planet* (about high functioning autism) and *In My Hands* (about Marfan Syndrome). She is the recipient of the National Broadway Theater Arts Award, the Drama League Award for Distinguished Achievement, the Musical Hall Of Fame Award, Dance Magazine Award, the Dance Library of Israel/Distinguished Artist Award, School of American Ballet Artistic Achievement Award, the National Arts Club for Service to the Arts Award, and The Governor's Award - Ambassador of the Arts for the State of Florida and an Honorary Doctorate from Florida State University. "Without the scholarships from The Ford Foundation, The Robert Joffrey Ballet, the gifts of my teachers and wonderful directors and choreographers the struggle would probably have killed me!! I am forever in your debt. Thank you!"

Gary Chryst



Gary Chryst staged *Chicago* choreography worldwide; staged *Petrouchka* for Mariinsky Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, National Ballet of Canada; Jerome Robbins' *NY Export: Opus Jazz* for the Juilliard School; assisted Ann Reinking in a new production of the Kander and Ebb musical, *The Visit*; choreographed a new American production of *South Pacific, Nijinsky*; co-choreographer of a new production of *West Side Story* in Brazil. Mr. Chryst has extensive ballet and Broadway performing credits including the Joffrey Ballet, Nederlans Dans Theatre 3, American Ballet Theatre, *Guys and Dolls*, Bob Fosse's *Dancin'* and *A Chorus Line*; guest performances with Twyla Tharp, David Parsons, Lar Lubovitch, Eliot Feld, Jose Limon, Nureyev and Friends among others. In 2013, Jiri Kylian choreographed a work featuring Mr. Chryst, *East Shadow*, which is touring throughout the world.



BALLET NEBRASKA'S SEASON EIGHT ARTISTS

Erika Overturff

Artistic Director & CEO Artist Sponsor: Anne Thorne Weaver



Erika Overturff is the founder of Ballet Nebraska, the region's professional ballet company. Under her leadership as artistic director and CEO, Ballet Nebraska enriches the area through an exciting array of professional dance performances and a strong commitment to cultural education and community outreach programming. Erika began her training in Iowa at the Academy of Ballet, studying at summer programs including North Carolina School of the Arts, American Ballet Theatre, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, and the Kirov Academy. Following early high school graduation as valedictorian, Erika earned her B.F.A. in ballet performance and teaching from the University of Utah, which she attended on a full scholarship. She graduated *cum laude* in just three years and was

chosen outstanding senior by the ballet department faculty.

Erika went on to dance with Montgomery Ballet, Alabama Ballet, and Omaha Theater Ballet. She has performed principal and soloist roles in a wide range of classical and contemporary repertoire. Audiences have enjoyed Erika's performances in roles such as Eileen in *Swing, Swing, Swing!*, Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* Lucy in *Dracula*, Snow Queen and Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker,* Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland,* and Myrtha in *Giselle*. Erika has also been a faculty member and guest teacher for schools around the United States.

As a choreographer, Erika has received critical praise for her work. She served as répétitrice for Montgomery Ballet and resident choreographer for Omaha Theater Ballet. She has worked on several collaborations with Opera Omaha, created an all-new production of *Peter and the Wolf* with the Omaha Symphony, and regularly creates new works for Ballet Nebraska. As part of the company's ongoing collaboration with Joslyn Art Museum for *Momentum*, Erika has choreographed original ballets inspired by museum artwork or exhibitions, including *Connemara, Cleopatra,* and *Go West!* Other featured works include *Tropico, Party Animals, The Diner,* and *Ella.* Erika also created Ballet Nebraska's lively and entertaining version of the holiday favorite *The Nutcracker,* which has premiered to enthusiastic audiences both at home and on tour. For her vision and achievements, Erika was named a recipient of Midlands Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Awards, honoring area entrepreneurs, executives, and professionals.



Matthew Carter

Ballet Master

Artist Sponsor: Union Pacific Foundation



Matthew Carter began his training in Pennsylvania with Sharon Filone at the Lake Erie Ballet School and Sandra Barnett at Little's Dance Studio. He went on to study on full scholarship at North Carolina School of the Arts, Miami City Ballet School, and the Chautauqua Festival Dancers. Matthew has danced professionally with Ohio Ballet, Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, Lake Erie Ballet, and Omaha Theater Ballet. He has performed numerous leading roles within the classical repertoire, including Prince Desire in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Franz in *Coppélia*, and Mercutio in *Romeo & Juliet*, as well as in works by George Balanchine, Merce Cunningham, Donald Byrd, Heinz Poll, Laura Dean,

Luis Montero, and many others. He has also performed as a guest artist with Hawaii Ballet Theatre, Neglia Ballet Artists, and Ballet Tucson.

Area audiences have enjoyed Matthew in roles such as Prince Siegfried in *Swan Lake*, Albrecht in *Giselle*, Cavalier in *The Nutcracker*, White Rabbit in Kennet Oberly's *Alice In Wonderland*, the Asp in Erika Overturff's *Cleopatra*, and Puck in Oscar Antunez's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Also a choreographer, he has premiered original works with numerous schools and professional companies, including *Bacchanale Variations, Signs of Life, Sadako, Poseidon, Transcription* and *Swan Lake* for Ballet Nebraska. Matthew is the co-director of Motion41 Dance in Omaha and continues to serve as a guest teacher for schools throughout the country. Matthew is a founding member of Ballet Nebraska and returns for his eighth season as ballet master.



Artists

Erin Alarcón

Artist Sponsor: Deborah & Clyde Overturff



Hometown: Hackettstown, New Jersey

Training & Experience: B.A. in dance from Mercyhurst University, *magna cum laude;* New Jersey School of Dance Arts; summer programs at Eglevsky Ballet and Joffrey Ballet; professional performances with SoMar Dance Works and Ballet Concert; guest artist with Iowa Dance Theater

Featured Repertory: Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker;* Odette in *Swan Lake;* title roles in *Giselle* and *Alice in Wonderland;* featured roles in *Tropico, Party Animals, The*

Diner, DanceSport, and Ella.

Additional Highlights: choreographed One in Three, featured in Momentum to rave reviews; eighth season with Ballet Nebraska; founding company member.

Rebecca Brenner



Hometown: Columbus, Ohio

Training & Experience: B.F.A. in dance from University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music; Columbus City Ballet School, merit scholarship at Orlando Ballet School; summer program at American Ballet Theater; member of Rochester City Ballet

Featured Repertory: Little Swan and Neapolitan variation in Swan Lake; roles in Giselle, The Nutcracker, Paquita, Cleopatra, and Go West!

Additional Highlights: participated in Youth American Grand Prix New York City finals;

fourth season with Ballet Nebraska.

Ryan Christopher



Hometown: Golden, Colorado

Training & Experience: International Youth Ballet School and Performing Arts Conservatory of Texas; professional dancer with Ballet Ariel and Boulder Ballet; guest artist throughout Colorado and around the United States

Featured Repertory: soloist in *Paquita; pas de trois* in *Swan Lake; pas de six* in *Giselle;* Snow King and Cavalier in *The Nutcracker;* featured roles in *On My Mother's Side* and *Go West!*

Additional Highlights: former baseball and football athlete; professional costume and prop designer; fifth season with Ballet Nebraska



Katherine Eppink

Artist Sponsor: Herb & Carole Dewey



Hometown: Des Moines, Iowa

Training & Experience: B.F.A. in ballet from the University of Utah and scholarship member of Utah Ballet; Iowa Ballet Academy; guest artist at Iowa Dance Theatre; summer programs at Pacific Northwest Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Joffrey Ballet on full scholarship, Ballet West, Nashville Ballet and Ballet Met

Featured Repertory: Spanish and Ballerina Doll in *The Nutcracker;* soloist in *Bournonville Divertissements;* featured roles in *Go West!* and *Ella*

Additional Highlights: performed two world premieres in Seoul, South Korea; fourth season with Ballet Nebraska

Claire Goodwillie



Hometown: Omaha, Nebraska

Training & Experience: Omaha Theater Ballet School of Dance; summer programs at Pacific Northwest Ballet and Ballet Austin; apprentice with Omaha Theater Ballet

Featured Repertory: title role in *Cleopatra*; Rat Queen in *The Nutcracker*; Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; featured roles in *Sadako*, *Party Animals*, *Giselle*, *The Diner*, and *Go West*!

Additional Highlights: eighth season with Ballet Nebraska; founding company member.

Alyssa Grimsley



Hometown: Fort Smith, Arkansas

Training & Experience: B.F.A. in ballet performance from the University of Oklahoma, summa cum laude; Western Arkansas Ballet; summer programs at Joffrey Midwest, Ballet Austin, Tulsa Ballet, and Cincinnati Ballet

Featured Repertory: Big Swan in *Swan Lake*, Spanish in *The Nutcracker*; roles in *Giselle*, *Paquita*, *Go West*!, and *Ella*

Additional Highlights: toured with Oklahoma Festival Ballet to Eisenstadt, Austria and

with Burklyn Ballet Theatre to Edinburgh, Scotland; fourth season with Ballet Nebraska



Alexandra Hoffman



Hometown: Cleveland, Ohio

Training & Experience: Ana Lobe of Cleveland San Jose Ballet; summer programs at Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, Nashville Ballet, and Louisville Ballet; trainee with Louisville Ballet

Featured Repertory: Ballerina Doll and Spanish in *The Nutcracker;* Little Swan in *Swan Lake;* roles in *Cleopatra, Go West!, Bournonville Divertissements,* and *Transcription*

Additional Highlight: third season with Ballet Nebraska

Wyatt Payne



Bret Samson

Hometown: Wichita, Kansas

Training & Experience: B.F.A in ballet performance from Friends University; Rogers Ballet; summer programs at Next Generation Ballet and Oklahoma City Ballet

Featured Repertory: Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream;* Snow King in *The Nutcracker;* pas de deux from Don Quixote, Le Corsaire, and The Firebird

Additional Highlight: first season with Ballet Nebraska



Hometown: Saukville, Wisconsin

Training & *Experience*: Lake Shore Dance; Steps on Broadway; performed with Milwaukee Ballet II, Madison Ballet, and Omaha Theater Ballet

Featured Repertory: Arabian Princess and Chinese soloist in *The Nutcracker*; soloist in Mikhail Fokine's *The Dying Swan*; featured roles in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Sadako*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Giselle*, and *Ella*

Additional Highlights: eighth season with Ballet Nebraska; founding company member

Kelsey Schwenker



Hometown: Boulder, Colorado

Training & Experience: B.F.A. in ballet from the University of Oklahoma, summa cum laude; Ballet Nouveau Colorado; summer programs at Kansas City Ballet, Burklyn Ballet Theatre, Boulder Jazz Dance Workshop, and Paul Taylor Dance Company

Featured Repertory: lead roles in Alice in Wonderland, Poseidon, and Flower Festival Pas de Deux; Dew Drop Fairy and Snow Queen in The Nutcracker; featured roles in Giselle, The Diner, Go West!, Swan Lake, and DanceSport

Additional Highlights: rehearsal director for Repertory Ensemble, the company's youth performance group; eighth season with Ballet Nebraska; founding company member

Ballet N E B R A S K A

Amaris Sharratt



Hometown: Tucson, Arizona

Training & Experience: Ballet Arts; summer programs at Pacific Northwest Ballet, Houston Ballet, and Ballet Tucson on full scholarship; performed with Milwaukee Ballet II, Houston Ballet, Nevada Ballet Theater, Ballet Tucson, Earthen Vessels, and Hopestone Dance Company

Featured Repertory: roles in Giselle, The Nutcracker, Paquita, Cleopatra, Go West!, Swan Lake, and Ella

Additional Highlights: performed in Edinburgh, Scotland as a scholarship recipient at Burklyn Ballet Theater; fourth season with Ballet Nebraska

Anders Southerland



Hometown: Seattle, Washington

Training & Experience: trained under teachers Peter Boal, Bruce Wells, and Le Yin of Pacific Northwest Ballet; member of Houston Ballet II and Milwaukee Ballet II

Featured Repertory: wide assortment of *corps de ballet* and character roles in main company productions and lead roles in second company repertoire

Additional Highlights: selected to train with Pacific Northwest Ballet at age eight through a public outreach program; first season with Ballet Nebraska

Anna Swenson



Hometown: Spokane, Washington

Training & Experience: Ballet Arts Academy; trainee program at school of Alberta Ballet; summer programs at Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Joffrey Ballet's Jazz and Contemporary program, and School of Alberta Ballet

Featured Repertory: Arabian Princess in *The Nutcracker;* Big Swan in *Swan Lake;* soloist in *Blackbird*; roles in *Party Animals, Giselle, Cleopatra, Go West!,* and *Ella*

Additional Highlight: fifth season with Ballet Nebraska



Katie van der Mars



Hometown: Corvallis, Oregon

Training & Experience: B.F.A. in ballet performance from the University of Utah and member of Utah Ballet; Corvallis Academy of Ballet; summer programs at Atlanta Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and Ballet West

Featured Repertory: lead in George Balanchine's *Valse Fantaisie;* French soloist and Snow Queen in *The Nutcracker;* soloist in *Les Odalisque, Swan Lake,* and *Bournonville Divertissements;* featured roles in *Party Animals, Giselle, The Diner!, Go West!,* and *Ella*

Additional Highlight: sixth season with Ballet Nebraska

Chloé Watson

Artist Sponsor: Herb & Carole Dewey



Hometown: Dallas, Texas

Training & Experience: B.F.A. in dance performance from the Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College, State University of New York, *cum laude;* Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, high dance honors; Dallas Ballet Center; private study with Kim Abel; Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance on scholarship; studied under former Paris Opéra Ballet *étoiles* in Paris and under members of Compañia Nacional de Danza in Madrid

Featured Repertory: roles in Snow White, The Nutcracker, Giselle, Paquita, Cleopatra, Go West!, Swan Lake, and Ella

Additional Highlights: performed in George Balanchine's Serenade at Jacob's Pillow; presented her original works *Temporary Dwelling* in Ballet Nebraska's New Works program and *Ophelia* on tour with Ballet Vero Beach; fifth season with Ballet Nebraska

Sasha York

Artist Sponsor: Omaha World-Herald



Hometown: Chelyabinsk, Russia

Training & Experience: Paavola School of Dance; pre-professional program at Pittsburgh Ballet Theater; member of Omaha Theater Ballet

Featured Repertory: title role in Dracula; Marc Antony in Cleopatra; Snow King and Russian soloist in The Nutcracker; Rothbart in Swan Lake; lead roles in *Swing Swing Swing*, *Paquita, DanceSport, Call it Off, On My Mother's Side,* and *Go West*!

Additional Highlights: featured guest artist in ballet productions throughout the United

States; eighth season with Ballet Nebraska; founding company member



Apprentices

Nora Carr

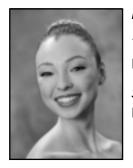


Hometown: Burnt Hills, New York

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

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

Elena Carter

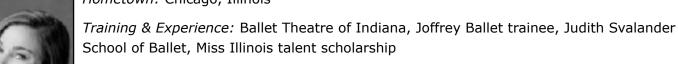


Hometown: Seattle, Washington

Training & Experience: B.F.A in dance from the University of Arizona; Pacific Northwest Ballet School

Summer Programs: Pacific Northwest Ballet, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, Perry Mansfield, Ballet Austin, Los Angeles Ballet, and Ballet Chicago

Kogan Murphy



Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

School of Ballet, Miss Illinois talent scholarship Summer Programs: Joffrey Ballet

Rachel Smith



Hometown: Plymouth, Massachusetts

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

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



Whitney Walsh



Hometown: Westlake Village, California

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

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

Trainees

Emily Eisel



Hometown: Fairfax, Virginia *Training & Experience:* Fairfax Ballet; Motion41 Dance, Ballet Nebraska II; Ballet Chicago Studio Company

Summer Programs: Motion41 Dance and Ballet Chicago

Katerina Schweitzer



Hometown: Vero Beach, Florida

Training & Experience: Space Coast Ballet Academy; Kirova Ballet Academy; private training by Heidi Khursandi; Gelsey Kirkland Ballet Academy Graduate; apprentice with Gelsey Kirkland Ballet

Summer Programs: American Ballet Theatre, Joffrey Ballet, Kirova Ballet Academy of Miami, Ballet Vero Beach, and Gelsey Kirkland Academy

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