

AMERICAN  
MIDWEST  
**Ballet**

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*Going Solo will bring viewers a collection of solo works created by American Midwest Ballet dancers in collaboration with documentary filmmaker Lance Glenn.*

**GOING SOLO: AMERICAN MIDWEST BALLET'S INNOVATIVE SERIES  
BRINGS FRESH DANCE WORKS TO VIEWERS' SCREENS**

OMAHA — American Midwest Ballet [AMB] today launched *Going Solo*, a groundbreaking initiative incorporating the company's professional dancers, a documentary filmmaker, and the creation of an online video series.

"The public health situation is a challenge for everyone," said Erika Overturff, AMB's founder and artistic director. "With *Going Solo*, we're turning it into an opportunity for our dancers to showcase their creativity and individuality, and for our viewers to experience dance works in an exciting new way. We think we've designed one of the most innovative virtual dance programs in the country."

Overturff said four distinctive features make *Going Solo* stand out:

- Every dancer in the company will participate: as a performer, as a choreographer, or by studying and interpreting an existing work.
- AMB will provide studio space, coaching, and mentorship.
- Selected dancers will collaborate with filmmaker Lance Glenn to produce an individualized visual interpretation of their works, along with behind-the-scenes insights.
- Audiences can interact with *Going Solo* through a series of virtual "talkback" sessions in which the artists will provide background on their works and respond to questions and comments submitted by viewers.

*Going Solo* will open October 2 with the online premiere of Glenn's feature-length 2012 film *It Starts with a Step* – a behind-the-scenes documentary tracing the founding of the new dance company that later became American Midwest Ballet. "The film is an inspiring story about people working together to overcome challenges," Overturff said. "And October 2 is ten years to the day since our debut performance that is depicted in the film. It seemed like the perfect way to open the *Going Solo* series."

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From there, Overturff said, *Going Solo* will continue with new episodes released every few weeks – with each episode containing the premiere of a short film based on a dancer’s work. As they become available, the episodes will be published for viewing on AMB’s website and social media channels, she said.

Two AMB dancers already working on *Going Solo* projects said they are excited about the program. Claire Goodwillie admitted that she is nervous about her first chance to choreograph on a professional dancer, but is looking forward to the chance to broaden her horizons.

“I’ve wanted to create a piece that was related to Greek mythology for many years,” she said. “Not only are the stories exciting and full of emotion, it’s incredible how long they’ve survived. I have chosen to create a solo for a female dancer based on the myth of Pandora’s Box.

“I was attracted to this particular story because, unfortunately, the idea of one terrible thing after another being released into the world felt appropriate for the times in which we’re living. While there are different endings to this legend, I’ve chosen to end it on a hopeful note, as a reminder that we must always hold onto hope.”

Erin Alarcón said she was inspired both by her experiences as a new mother of a son (Rory, now almost two) and by her interest in creating a unique visual experience that would not be possible in a theater.

“Awhile back, when I was up late rocking Rory back to sleep, I jotted down some words that came to mind,” Erin Alarcón said. “I’d like to use this as a jumping-off point on a piece about motherhood. My idea is to work with Lance to make a short film that goes between me performing a solo on the stage and me dancing and rehearsing it with Rory in the studio and outdoor locations.

“My hope is to pay tribute to the way that becoming a parent changes you and shapes you into someone better, despite the challenges that come with it. Your children are the reason you push harder for the things you love so you can be an example for them.”

That type of personal engagement was an important goal for *Going Solo*, Overturff said. “Our theater performances are on hold until 2021, and our company classes are being taught virtually,” she said. “It’s a huge change from the dancer’s routine that most of us have been following since we were children.

“I wanted to create an exciting challenge to motivate our artists and keep them focused. Fortunately, we have our beautiful studios in the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center, and we’ve developed protocols so individual dancers can work safely in them. Lance, our filmmaker, is also AMB’s production manager and has a tremendous understanding of translating dance to film. All the pieces are in place to create something that’s genuinely innovative and rewarding.”

*Going Solo* is the centerpiece of AMB Interactive, a new platform on the company’s website that collects its online resources for the community, Overturff said. “Along with *Going Solo*, AMB Interactive will be the hub for our dance-at-home classes, our Dancer Memories and other videos, and our upcoming library of online assets for educators. As part of our commitment to the community, we’re making these resources available to everyone, free of charge.”

And after AMB is able to resume performing in theaters, Overturff said, the *Going Solo* series may even take on a second life. “I’m expecting some really special works from our dancers,” she said, “and it would be wonderful to see some of them performed live on our stage.”

For more information about *Going Solo*, AMB Interactive, and American Midwest Ballet’s other programs and activities, visit [amballet.org](http://amballet.org).

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*American Midwest Ballet is the region's resident professional dance company, bringing work beyond words to audiences in Nebraska, Iowa, and beyond. Performing at home and on tour, its mission is to provide cultural enrichment through dance programs of the highest quality: breathtaking performances, inspiring education, and uplifting community engagement.*

*AMB's programming is presented with the generous support of premier benefactors the Iowa West Foundation, the Fred and Eve Simon Charitable Foundation, and the Holland Foundation; season sponsors Omaha Steaks and Douglas County; major support from the Heider Family Foundation, the Nebraska Arts Council, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, the Peter Kiewit Foundation, the Sherwood Foundation, and Herb and Carole Dewey; as well as additional support from individual sponsors and donors.*

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