

AMERICAN
MIDWEST
Ballet

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Wesley Houston, Marketing Manager • wesley@amballet.org

(712) 890-5590

Download print-quality photos [here](#).

View Season 12 company bios [here](#).

The company will be rehearsing onstage in costume beginning Saturday, February 19. Please contact Wesley if you'd like to arrange interviews or send a photographer or video crew to a rehearsal.

Momentum

Saturday, February 26, at 7:30 pm & Sunday, February 27 at 2 pm

Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center, Council Bluffs

Ticket information: amballet.org/tickets

MOMENTUM HIGHLIGHTS THE EXPRESSIVE RANGE OF DANCE



At left, Erin Alarcón shows off one of the classical tutu that will be used in Fredrick Davis' Tchaikovsky Suite; at right, Kelanie Murphy, Kogan Murphy and Jessica Lopes model some of the 1920s-style dresses created for Erika Overturff's The Bee's Knees. [More photos...](#)

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If you're looking for a broad selection of dance artistry in a compact package, American Midwest Ballet's upcoming program, *Momentum*, may be just your ticket, said Erika Overturff, the company's founder, artistic director, and CEO

"*Momentum* is a mixed-repertory program," said Overturff. "Instead of a single full-length work – like *The Nutcracker* – it's a collection of several shorter, individual ballets in a variety of distinctive styles.

"There is something for everyone, from the first-time viewer to the most avid ballet fan."

Here is a look at each section of the *Momentum* program:

TCHAIKOVSKY SUITE: FAMILIAR MUSIC EVOKES A NEW VISION

It was the depths of the pandemic, and [Fredrick Davis](#) was at home watching a movie when he heard familiar music in the soundtrack: Piotr Tchaikovsky's 1880 work *The Year 1812 Solemn Overture, op. 49*, better known to audiences as the *1812 Overture*. In that moment, he said, he saw the *Overture* in a new way.

"I heard the music, and I could see bodies moving, dancing to the music," he said.

That moment of vision became the inspiration for Davis' new ballet, *Tchaikovsky Suite*, which will premiere on the *Momentum* program. The new work is a large-scale, 15-minute ballet in the classical style, its cast of sixteen dancers costumed in tutus for the women and tunics for the men.

Davis, who has joined AMB as a dancer as well as a choreographer, credited his fellow company members with helping make *Tchaikovsky Suite* a success.

"The dancers here are wonderful to work with – the technique is great, the artistry is great," he said. "They're a company of unison; they work together. So anything I put on them – it's going to work. It works in its own way: the movement, the choreography, and the dancers. They give it the value and commitment to making the steps work that makes the choreography really thrive."

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GOING SOLO GOES LIVE – INCLUDING LIVE MUSIC

Also in *Momentum*, dancers will stage the live-performance premieres – two with live musical accompaniment – of several works originally created for last year’s *Going Solo* series of dance films. Going live with a work they first danced for film makes it a different experience, dancers said.

“As dancers, we aren’t used to getting a re-do or second chance, as you can do in a film,” said Alexandra Hoffman, performer of Michel Fokine’s *The Dying Swan*. “However, there is nothing like performing to a live audience! The excitement and adrenaline right before going onstage is what makes performing so thrilling.”

For *Momentum*, Hoffman’s performance of *The Dying Swan* – which Fokine created in 1905 for iconic ballerina Anna Pavlova to music by Camille Saint-Saëns – will be accompanied by cellist Sam Pierce-Ruhland (Assistant Principal Cello, Omaha Symphony) and pianist Jen Novak Haar.

Haar also will accompany dancer Alyssa Grimsley in her self-choreographed solo *Solace*, set to a Sergei Rachmaninoff adaptation of Franz Schubert’s *Serenade*.

Other works from the film series on the Momentum program are Erika Overturff’s *Trains*; guest choreographer Frank Chaves’s *If Only*; guest choreographer Ray Mercer’s *Ghost Light*; and *The Trumpet Solo*, choreographed by Bob Fosse and staged for AMB by Broadway stars Ann Reinking and Dylis Croman.

THE BEE’S KNEES: “NOW IT’S A WHOLE HIVE!”

When Erika Overturff completed her *Going Solo* film *The Bee’s Knees* – a tribute to the Roaring ’20s in collaboration with Joslyn Art Museum – she knew the era still had more unexplored potential.

“I knew *Momentum* would be the perfect opportunity to expand *The Bee’s Knees* into a full ballet that combines the carefree spirit of the ’20s with the energy of a live theater performance,” she said.

“The bee’s knees” – a Prohibition-era catchphrase meaning “the best” – evokes an era filled with freshness and optimism, when people were excited about new ways to speak, dress, travel, and be entertained, Overturff said.

The spirit of the time, she said, inspired her to create a ballet filled with flappers and sheiks [their male equivalent], bathing beauties, and speakeasy patrons, in thirteen sections set to music that either was popular in the 1920s or reflects ’20s inspirations.

Every dancer in the company has a role, Overturff said: “It’s not just one bee anymore – now it’s a whole hive!”

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American Midwest Ballet will present *Momentum* at 7:30 pm Saturday, February 26, and 2pm Sunday, February 27, at the Hoff Family Arts & Culture Center in Council Bluffs. Ticket prices range from \$25 to \$65. Ticket information is available at amballet.org/tickets.

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 Season 12 is presented with the generous support of premier benefactors the Holland Foundation, the Fred and Eve Simon Charitable Foundation, and the Iowa West Foundation; season sponsors Omaha Steaks, Cindy and Scott Heider, the Peter Kiewit Foundation, and Douglas County; and major support from the Nebraska Arts Council, the Nebraska Cultural Endowment, and the Sherwood Foundation.

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