

# AMERICAN MIDWEST *Ballet*

## ARTISTIC STAFF

Erika Overturff, Artistic Director & CEO  
Matthew Lovegood, Ballet Master

## ARTISTS

Erin Alarcón, Rebecca Brenner, Nora Carr, Ryan Christopher, Katherine Eppink,  
Claire Goodwillie, Alyssa Grimsley, Alexandra Hoffman, Matthew Lovegood,  
Cameron Miller, Kogan Murphy, Erika Overturff, Wyatt Payne, Bret Samson,  
Katerina Schweitzer, Kelsey Schwenker, Amaris Sharratt, Rachel Smith,  
Anders Southerland, Anna Swenson, Katie van der Mars, Whitney Walsh, Sasha York

*Apprentices:* Elena Carter, Kelanie Murphy

*Trainees:* Remmi Hartmann, Madeline Koesters

Costume Designer . . . . . Deborah Overturff  
Costume Assistant . . . . . Wendy Linville  
Dance Administrator . . . . . Jolie Koesters  
Development Director . . . . . Sarah Maloney  
Executive Assistant . . . . . Shanna Zordell  
Marketing Coordinator . . . . . Kelsey Schwenker  
Operations Manager . . . . . Erin Alarcón  
Pianist . . . . . Irene Van Dyk  
Production Assistant . . . . . Hannah Clark  
Production Manager . . . . . Lance Glenn  
Repertory Ensemble Coordinator . . . . . Kelsey Schwenker  
Teachers . . . . . Judith Leppek, Angela Rodriguez,  
Halle Schulman  
Visual Media Designer . . . . . Jim Williams

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# momentum

October 19, 2018: Joslyn Art Museum

October 21, 2018: Iowa Western Arts Center

Costume Design ..... Deborah Overturff  
Lighting Design ..... Bill Van Deest, Carol Wisner  
Production Manager ..... Lance Glenn  
Stage Manager ..... Jessie Curry  
Wardrobe ..... Deborah Overturff, Shanna Zordell,  
Wendy Linville, Amy Voogd,  
Hannah Clark, Rebecca Brenner,  
Barb Wilwerding, Emily Voogd,  
Mona Schlautman  
Crew ..... Hannah Clark, Rachel Jamison,  
Jason Shannon, Emily Voogd

Introductory Films by Lance Glenn

## ***Connemara***

Choreography ..... Erika Overturff  
Music ..... Michael Nyman

*Claire Goodwillie, Matthew Lovegood, Cameron Miller, Kogan Murphy,  
Kelsey Schwenker, Bret Samson, Rachel Smith, Anna Swenson, Whitney Walsh*

*Connemara was created during American Midwest Ballet's first season, beginning the company's longstanding partnership with Joslyn Art Museum. Connemara (Rock Pool) by artist May Stevens was selected by public vote to become the springboard for a new ballet. The dance was inspired by the painting's beautiful colors and the playful notion of flowing water.*

## ***French Songs***

Choreography ..... Matthew Lovegood  
Music ..... Joseph Canteloube, selections from  
"Chants d'Auvergne"

*Amaris Sharratt and Ryan Christopher*

*with Alyssa Grimsley  
and Rebecca Brenner, Nora Carr, Kelanie Murphy, Katerina Schweitzer*

*The Auvergne, a region in France, is known for its rugged landscape, unique dialect, and catalog of folksongs. Joseph Canteloube took these native tunes of various subjects and orchestrated them into a suite of short, classical pieces. While French Songs does not follow the literal translation of these poems, they provide a romantic backdrop for this ballet that celebrates love, longing, and courtship.*

## ***At Last***

Choreography ..... Frank Chaves  
Music ..... Harry Warren & Mack Gordon,  
performed by Etta James

*Katherine Eppink and Cameron Miller*

*Set to the iconic song sung by the incomparable Etta James, At Last expresses the playful and ebullient flirtations found in a new love.*

## ***Death and the Maiden***

Choreography ..... Mariana Oliveira  
Music ..... Franz Schubert, String Quartet No. 14  
in D minor, *Death and the Maiden*  
Costumes ..... courtesy Joffrey Ballet  
Video Image ..... Philip Davis

*Alexandra Hoffman and Anders Southerland*

*with Brian Bennett\*, Nora Carr, Elena Carter, Ryan Christopher, Alyssa Grimsley,  
Alexandra Hoffman, Matthew Lovegood, Cameron Miller, Wyatt Payne,  
Anders Southerland, Katerina Schweitzer, Rachel Smith, Anna Swenson, Sasha York*

*\*appears courtesy of Joffrey Ballet*

*The following poem inspired Franz Schubert to compose his piece Death and the Maiden and subsequently inspired Mariana Oliveira to create this ballet.*

*The Maiden:    Pass me by! Oh, pass me by!  
                      Go, fierce man of bones!  
                      I am still young! Go, rather,  
                      And do not touch me.*

*Death:            Give me your hand, you beautiful and tender form!  
                      I am a friend, and come not to punish.  
                      Be of good cheer! I am not fierce,  
                      Softly shall you sleep in my arms!*

*- Matthias Claudius*

*Death and The Maiden was commissioned by the Joffrey Academy of Dance,  
Official School of The Joffrey Ballet, and premiered on March 5, 2016 in Chicago, IL.*

INTERMISSION

## ***Group Therapy***

Choreography ..... Harrison McEldowney  
Music ..... Various Artists

*Alexandra Hoffman & Cameron Miller*

*Bret Samson & Wyatt Payne*

*Katerina Schweitzer & Anders Southerland*

*Katie van der Mars & Matthew Lovegood*

*Group Therapy offers a glimpse into the lives of four couples during a group therapy session.*

## ***Rhapsody In Blue***

Choreography ..... Erika Overturff  
Music ..... George Gershwin

*Ryan Christopher, Katherine Eppink, Claire Goodwillie, Alyssa Grimsley, Alexandra Hoffman, Matthew Lovegood, Wyatt Payne, Bret Samson, Kelsey Schwenker, Anders Southerland, Anna Swenson, Katie van der Mars*

*The dancers personify the musical notes of George Gershwin's iconic composition.*

## **GUEST CHOREOGRAPHERS**

### **Mariana Oliveira**



Originally from Brazil, Mariana Oliveira studied at the Royal Academy of Dance in London, and was a trainee dancer at the National Dance Company of Wales. At the age of 19 she was invited to perform with the Cuban Classical Ballet of Miami. In 2009 she founded The Union Project Dance Company. She has been commissioned to create new works for the Richmond Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, New York City Ballet Choreographic Institute, Dayton Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, Joffrey Ballet Academy, National Choreographers Initiative, Ballet Arkansas, and A&A Ballet. Mariana is a recipient of the NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts Fellowship, as well as the Kansas City University Choreographic Fellowship. Her works have also been presented at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and for 2 consecutive years she has been a finalist of the McCallum Theatre Choreography Festival. Mariana taught at the Bolshoi Ballet School in Brazil (the only Bolshoi School outside Russia) for the dancers of the Youth Company.

## Frank Chaves



Guest choreographer Frank Chaves credits his early experience as a musician combined with his Cuban heritage for the musicality and passion of his work. Collaborating with dancers and utilizing a unique creative process, he produces highly musical, emotionally gripping dances that are his passion and hallmark.

As a performer, Chaves has danced with Ballet Concerto of Miami, New York's Ballet Hispanico and Giordano Dance Chicago. He also spent six years with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago where he worked with choreographers such as Twyla Tharp, Margo Sappington, Daniel Ezralow, Lynne Taylor-Corbett, David Parsons and Lou Conte. In 2000, he received a Ruth Page Dance Achievement Award for Mission. He was also recognized with a 2008 Choo-San Goh Award for Choreography from the Choo-San Goh & H. Robert Magee Foundation for his work, *Tuscan Rift*. Chaves was also named "Chicagoan of Year in Dance" by The Chicago Tribune in 2014.

After 23 years as Artistic Director of River North Dance Chicago, Chaves officially retired in December 2015, after having produced more than 20 original works for the company. Although Chaves has dealt with a degenerative spinal cord disease which has no known cause and no known cure, he says "it has been quite the journey — of all things, a dancer and choreographer losing his physicality; however, the one thing this disease cannot take away is my imagination."

Chaves continues to choreograph by creating new works and finding new homes for his existing body of work.

## Harrison McEldowney



American choreographer Harrison McEldowney is renowned for his comic and witty creative style. His original work *Swing, Swing, Swing!* marked the debut performance of American Midwest Ballet (formerly Ballet Nebraska) in October 2010.

He has worked with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, River North Dance Chicago, Civic Ballet of Chicago, Ballet Met, Ballet Arkansas, The Big Muddy Dance Company, Louisville Ballet and Chicago Shakespeare Repertory, among many others.

He is known for his theatrical work, for the Summer Olympics Closing Ceremonies (Barcelona), and for Carnegie Hall's *Give My Regards to Broadway: A Salute to 125 Years of Musical Theater*. He choreographed the 35th Anniversary Tour of *American Bandstand* and choreographed and directed the Australian tour of *More Dirty Dancing*.

McEldowney contributed choreography to the films *Road to Perdition*, *Children on Their Birthdays*, and the independent film *Vanilla City*. He also worked with Sammy Davis Jr., Van Johnson, Chita Rivera, Dorothy Lamour, Carol Channing, Debbie Reynolds, and rap artists Salt 'n Pepa.