



ciballet
CENTRAL ILLINOIS BALLET
Rebekah von Rathonyi, Artistic Director

DRACULA
DANCE ON THE DARK SIDE

FILMED IN THE BLACKBOX THEATER
AT CENTRAL ILLINOIS BALLET
OCTOBER 2020



ILLINOIS
ARTS
COUNCIL
AGENCY

Synopsis

(Alexander Kingma as Dracula)

Transylvania, 1400s - Vladimir is a prince in Transylvania, newly married to Elisabeta and heading off to fight in the Turkish Invasion. While her husband is away at war, Elisabeta receives a fraudulent letter from Vladimir's enemies bearing news of Vladimir's death in battle. Shortly after the arrival of the letter, Vladimir returns home to find his new wife dead on the floor from grief-stricken suicide. His heart floods with guilt as he renounces God and allows himself to be convinced by the village witch, Gabriella, to drink a mysterious potion. Much to his dismay, the poison places a blood curse on him and turns him into Dracula.

With his new identity as a vampire, Dracula goes on a rampage of finding victims. One important victim is Mrs. Dr. Van Helsing, who kills her husband once she becomes a vampire. In despair, she dedicates her life to finding a cure for vampirism and fights her urges to kill other humans. She becomes a Sanitarium doctor in hopes to help other helpless people and holds her resentment for Dracula for years.

London, 1897—Jonathan Harker, a young accountant, is summoned to Count Dracula's Castle to care for his estate and financials. Jonathan's fiancée, Mina, bids him a dis-tressed farewell on this arduous journey by granting him tokens of her love: a Bible and her picture. With these in hand, Jonathan pays a visit to his predecessor at the Castle, Renfield, in search of advice on the financials. Renfield is a strange little man whose account of horrific stories of Transylvania landed him a spot as a sanitarium resident under the care of vampiristic Dr. Van Helsing. Upon the visit, Dr. Van Helsing grants Renfield release from the sanitarium to accompany Jonathan on his journey. Together, Jonathan and Renfield travel to the distant land of Transylvania but are stalled by the village gypsies who vehemently warn them not to go. They know all too well of the evils that lay inside the castle.

Dracula's Castle— Warnings Jonathan has received thus far result in a reluctant entrance upon arrival at Dracula's Castle. After a few terrifying moments, Jonathan is greeted by Dracula, who offers drinks and food in perfect hospitality. In response to inquiries of his journey and whether he would be missed in London, Jonathan proudly presents his picture of Mina to Dracula and explains they are to be married as soon as he returns. Dracula is shocked with the realization that Jonathan's Mina has an uncanny resemblance to his lost love Elisabeta. Believing Mina to be Elisabeta reincarnated, Dracula bids Jonathan goodnight, escorts him to his living quarters, and leaves him to ponder over the strange environment.

Far from rest yet very tired, Jonathan leaves his room to search for the cause of several strange noises he hears around the castle. Out of the dark halls of Dracula's castle, three inhumanly beautiful women appear to entrance Jonathan. These are Dracula's Vampire Brides: angry and hungry vic-

tims of Dracula's past. In spite, they attempt to kill Jonathan as food, but Dracula stops the brides before it is too late; Jonathan is his to deal with. As Dracula begins attacking Jonathan, Renfield comes to the rescue and they both flee from the castle. The pair sets off for London and are unknowingly followed by Dracula.

Engagement Party— Mina's best friend, Lucy, holds a party in honor of Jonathan's return to London. Much to the dismay of the guests, Renfield crashes into the party just as Lucy is making a toast to Jonathan and Mina. Renfield frantically attempts to warn the guests that Dracula is on his way, but Lucy shoves him out and dances to lighten the mood. Sure enough, Dracula arrives shortly after Renfield attempted to warn the guests. Taken with Lucy, he dances with her and walks her to the gardens.

While Lucy is away, Jonathan worries about Renfield's behaviors. Even amidst the worrying, he remembers to make his official marriage proposal to Mina in front of all the guests. Excited, Mina runs around to show her friends the ring, but Lucy is not there. Lucy soon returns to the party raving like a lunatic. Dr. Van Helsing leaves with Jonathan to attend to Lucy's illness, while the rest of the party guests uneasily disperse.

Alone in the garden, Mina meets Dracula for the first time in the gardens. Though anxious, Mina is not afraid, and allows Dracula to console her. He tells her a sad tale of a couple who lost one another, and the story feels familiar to Mina. For Dracula, this solidifies his belief that Mina is truly Elisabeta reincarnated.

Lucy's Vampire Transformation— Lucy is visited by Dr. Van Helsing, Jonathan, Arthur, and Mina. Strange markings on her neck and wrist cause the four to wonder whether Lucy has fallen victim to Dracula's evil. Though they place garlic and the Crucifix around her bed as a precaution, Lucy attacks them and manages to escape her room as Dracula steps in to protect her.

The men chase after Lucy, leaving Dracula and Mina alone once again. Mina's succumbing to her feelings for him cause Dracula to lose control and bite Mina. Upon returning, Jonathan realizes Mina is not herself and runs to find Van Helsing while Mina helplessly transforms into a vampire. Van Helsing fends off an attack with a seal wafer of sacramental bread, though this is only a temporary fix. Van Helsing realizes the only way for the curse to be broken is to kill Dracula.

The Crypt - Van Helsing and Jonathan recruit villagers to help fight Dracula and his vampires. Though Dracula is the target, Mina pleads for his life by arguing he is a broken and misled man, not a monster. Van Helsing and Jonathan drive a stake through Dracula's heart as Mina runs to Dracula's side, praying for his forgiveness. Dracula, realizing his mistakes, begs Mina for forgiveness while he is on his deathbed. As Dracula passes, the curses on Van Helsing, Renfield, Mina, and all of Dracula's victims are lifted.

Finally, at peace, Dracula can pass on and finally join his beloved Elisabeta in the afterlife.

Synopsis

(Jessie Williams as Dracula)

Transylvania, 1400s - Vladimir is a prince in Transylvania, newly married to Elisabeta and heading off to fight in the Turkish Invasion. While her husband is away at war, Elisabeta receives a letter from Vladimir's enemies bearing news of Vladimir's death in battle. Her heart floods with rage as she renounces God, murders her priest, and allows herself to be convinced by the village witch, Gabriele, to drink a mysterious potion. Much to her dismay, the poison places a blood curse on her and turns her into Dracula.

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London, 1897—Jonathan Harker, a young accountant, is summoned to Countess Dracula's Castle to care for the estate and financials. Jonathan's fiancée, Mina, bids him a distressed farewell on this arduous journey by granting him tokens of her love: a Bible and her picture. With these in hand, Jonathan pays a visit to his predecessor at the Castle, Renfield, in search of advice on the financials. Renfield is a strange little man whose account of horrific stories of Transylvania landed him a spot as a sanitarium resident under the care of vampiristic Dr. Van Helsing. Upon the visit, Dr. Van Helsing grants Renfield release from the sanitarium to accompany Jonathan on his journey. Together, Jonathan and Renfield travel to the distant land of Transylvania but are stalled by the village gypsies who vehemently warn them not to go. They know all too well of the evils that lay inside the castle.

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Far from rest yet very tired, Jonathan leaves his room to search for the cause of several strange noises he hears around the castle. Out of the dark halls of Dracula's castle, three inhumanly beautiful women appear to entrance Jonathan. These are Dracula's Vampire Brides: angry and hungry victims of Dracula's past. In spite, they attempt to kill Jonathan as food, but Dracula stops the vampires before it is too late; Jonathan is hers to deal with. As Dracula begins attacking Jonathan for wandering into the forbidden area of the castle, Renfield comes to the rescue and they both flee from the castle. The pair sets off for London and are unknowingly followed by Dracula.

Engagement Party—Mina's best friend, Lucy, holds a party in honor of Jona-

than's return to London. Much to the dismay of the guests, Renfield crashes into the party just as Lucy is making a toast to Jonathan and Mina. Renfield frantically attempts to warn the guests that Dracula is on her way, but Lucy shoves him out and dances to lighten the mood. Sure enough, Dracula arrives shortly after Renfield attempted to warn the guests. Lucy, taken with the beauty and mystery of the rich new guest, decides to entertain and befriend her through dancing and conversation. Dracula asks Lucy if she is engaged, she responds no, however introduces her to Mina, who in turn tells Dracula her beau is Jonathan. Mina asks Dracula if she is engaged, painfully, Dracula turns from her telling her he is dead. Dracula, amused by Lucy, asks her to show her the gardens, and they playfully leave the party.

While Lucy is away, Jonathan worries about Renfield's behaviors. Even amidst the worrying, he remembers to make his official marriage proposal to Mina in front of all the guests. Excited, Mina runs around to show her friends the ring, but Lucy is not there. Lucy soon returns to the party raving like a lunatic. Dr. Van Helsing leaves with Quincey to attend to Lucy's illness, while the rest of the party guests uneasily disperse.

Alone in the garden, Jonathan notices Dracula and believes he has seen her before. Lifting her veil, his nightmare becomes reality. Dracula pleads with him, telling him a sad tale of a couple who lost one another, and the story feels familiar to Jonathan. For Dracula, this solidifies her belief that Jonathan is truly Vladimir reincarnated. Mina enters the gardens looking for Jonathan and finds them in a loving embrace. Jonathan promises he does not love Dracula and assures Mina she is the only one. Mina, knowing the pain of losing a loved one, feels sorry for Dracula and attempts to befriend her. Dracula, angry Jonathan chose Mina over her, leaves the gardens enraged.

Lucy's Vampire Transformation—Lucy is visited by Dr. Van Helsing, Jonathan, Quincey, and Mina. Strange markings on her neck and wrist cause the four to wonder whether Lucy has fallen victim to Dracula's evil. Though they place garlic and the Crucifix around her bed as a precaution, Lucy attacks them and manages to escape her room as Dracula steps in to protect her.

The men chase after Lucy, leaving Mina alone once again. Mina very torn and confused, prays for Dracula, and eventually falls asleep. Dracula still angry, visits Mina unable to understand what it is that makes Jonathan want to marry her. Mina wakes as Jonathan returns disheartened. She tries to help console him and the two dance a beautiful pas de deux. Later, Dracula, unable to control her rage, bites Mina for revenge. Jonathan realizes Mina is not herself and runs to find Dr. Van Helsing while Mina helplessly transforms into a vampire. Dr. Van Helsing fends off an attack with a seal wafer of sacramental bread, though this is only a temporary fix. Van Helsing realizes the only way for the curse to be broken is to kill Dracula.

The Crypt - Van Helsing and Jonathan recruit villagers to help fight Dracula and his vampires. Though Dracula is the target, Mina pleads for her life by arguing she is a broken and misled woman, not a monster. Van Helsing and Jonathan drive a stake through Dracula's heart as Mina runs to Dracula's side, praying for her forgiveness. Dracula, realizing her mistakes, begs Mina and Jonathan for forgiveness while she is on her deathbed. As Dracula passes, the curses on Van Helsing, Renfield, Mina, and all of Dracula's victims are lifted.

Finally at peace, Dracula is able to pass on and join her beloved Vladimir in the afterlife.



Nutcracker

December 3-6

Available on
Vimeo
December 10



This program is partially supported by a
grant from the Illinois Arts
Council Agency



What Do People Think of ExplorePeoria.com?



Amanda Hartley recommends ExplorePeoria.
March 7 at 7:22 PM · 🌐

I totally recommend ExplorePeoria 😊. Amazing 😊



Alicia Calvillo recommends ExplorePeoria.
December 28, 2018 · 🌐

love explore peoria! always offering great giveaways! recently won tickets to Disney on ice! the show was incredible 🍷🍷



Amy Summer reviewed ExplorePeoria — ⭐️
July 11, 2018 · 🌐

Great newsletter always tells me everything that is happening around Peoria. They always have great contests too!



Jamie Alcorn Quinn reviewed ExplorePeoria — ⭐️
December 9, 2017 · 🌐

Love ExplorePeoria to keep me in the entertainment loop! Very nice contests and offers! Thank you for the Globetrotter tickets!



Missy Herridge recommends ExplorePeoria.
November 10, 2018 · 🌐

Great site! You should try it.



Amy Hawn reviewed ExplorePeoria — ⭐️
August 24, 2018 · 🌐

This a a great way to find out what's going on around town!



Ruth Marie Tinkham recommends ExplorePeoria.
September 30, 2018 · 🌐

This site is awesome, the people are great.



Michelle O'Neal reviewed ExplorePeoria — ⭐️
June 23, 2017 · 🌐

Explore Peoria ROCKS!! I love that now I won't miss events going on in Peoria! I won 4 tickets to Olde English Faire! THANK YOU!!

Find Out For Yourself Why Our Fans Give Us 5 Star Reviews!

explore **PEORIA**.com

Dracula

Music by Selected Composers

Choreography and Staging by Rebekah von Rathonyi

Opening Dracula's Castle

Van Helsing and Dracula

Jonathan's Study

Sanitorium

Sanitorium

Renfield

Gypsies

Dracula's Solo

Jonathan Enters Dracula's Castle

Vampires

Renfield Rescues Jonathan

Garden Engagement Party

Lucy's Bedroom

Mina's Solo

Dracula and Mina Pas de Deux

Mina and Dracula

Mina Turns

Menfolk

The Crypt

Dracula Cast

Featuring Alexander Kingma as Dracula

Dracula - Alexander Kingma

Mina - Hannah Ray

Gabriele the Witch - Susanna Earnest

Priest - Shane McGraw

Jonathan Harker - Richard Smith

Lucy - Kaylie Bullock

Dr. Van Helsing - Anna Grace Brown

Mr. Van Helsing - Gregory Etzel

Renfield - Eva Molina

Sanitorium Residents - Jessie Williams, Maya de Leon, Marie Ritchard, Kaylie Bullock, Madison McGrath, Kinsey Ganson, Ava Modine, Ellie Faw, Natasha Cushman

Nadia - Ellie Faw

Mala - Natasha Cushman

Gypsies - Kinsey Ganson, Andrew Bogdanowicz, Thomas Earnest, Amber Sanders, Riley Bair, Lainey Amborski, Hannah Shafer, Rorie Smith, Ava Modine

Gypsy Children - Selah Filzen Etzel, Alana Cox, Daisy Gullett

Vampire Brides - Jessie Williams, Maya de Leon, Marie Ritchard

Engagement Party:

Lucy's Friends

Felicity - Ellie Faw

Evie - Natasha Cushman

Victoria - Kinsey Ganson

Suitors

Arthur Homewood - Shane McGraw

John Seaward - Gregory Etzel

Maids - Riley Bair, Krisanna Amborski

Garden Party Children - Althea Walton, Milana Ankrum, Miriam Monteen, Tyus Cushman

Crypt:

Townspeople - Amber Sanders, Riley Bair, Natasha Cushman, Ellie Faw, Lainey Amborski, Hannah Shafer, Kinsey Ganson, Isabella Weeks, Bethany Dreeste, Emmilyn Amborski, Jaci Amborski, Madalin Filzen Etzel, Ava Modine

Crypt Vampire Brides - Jessie Williams, Maya de Leon, Marie Ritchard, Ellie Faw

Dracula Cast

Featuring Jessie Williams as Dracula

Dracula - Jessie Williams

Mina - Maya de Leon

Gabriele the Witch - Susanna Earnest

Priest - Shane McGraw

Jonathan Harker - Alexander Kingma

Lucy - Hannah Ray

Dr. Van Helsing - Kaylie Bullock

Mr. Van Helsing - Gregory Etzel

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Sanatorium Residents - Anna Grace Brown, Marie Ritchard, Madison McGrath, Hannah Ray, Ellie Faw, Natasha Cushman, Kinsey Ganson, Ava Modine

Nadia - Bethany Dreste

Mala - Isabella Weeks

Gypsies - Kinsey Ganson, Jaci Amborski, Emmilyn Amborski, Andrew Bogdanowicz, Thomas Earnest, Paige Bair, Krisanna Amborski, Madalin Filzen Etzel

Gypsy Children - Althea Walton, Milana Ankrum, Miriam Monteen, Tyus Cushman

Vampire Brides - Anna Grace Brown, Marie Ritchard, Madison McGrath

Engagement Party:

Lucy's Friends

Felicity - Ellie Faw

Evie - Natasha Cushman

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Suitors

Arthur Homewood - Shane McGraw

Quincey Morris - Richard Smith

John Seaward - Gregory Etzel

Maids - Riley Bair, Krisanna Amborski

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Townspeople--Amber Sanders, Riley Bair, Natasha Cushman, Ellie Faw, Lainey Amborski, Hannah Shafer, Kinsey Ganson, Isabella Weeks, Bethany Dreste, Emmilyn Amborski, Jaci Amborski, Madalin Filzen Etzel, Ava Modine

Crypt Vampire Brides-- Anna Grace Brown, Marie Ritchard, Madison McGrath, Ellie Faw

Company Biographies

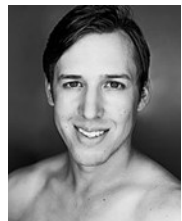
Rebekah von Rathonyi, Artistic Director



A native of Rochester, New York, Ms. von Rathonyi, her husband Joshua, and their children, have called Peoria home for over thirteen years. She began her dance training at the age of 8 with the Botsford/Orcutt School of Dance, the sister school to the American Ballet Theater, under the direction of Mikhail Baryshnikov. She studied under Luba Guleava and Maria Moglivesky, both graduates of the Kirov Ballet and Bolshoi Ballet. After her initial training, she studied ballet at the Draper Center for Dance Education, school to the Rochester City Ballet, under Timothy Draper and Sally Steppnes. As a young dancer, she received full scholarships to National Ballet School in Toronto Canada, Pittsburgh Ballet School, Harid Conservatory and Boston Ballet School. At fourteen years of age, Ms. von Rathonyi joined Compania Nacional de Danz  in Mexico City under the direction of Fernando Alonzo, husband to renowned Cuban ballerina, Alicia Alonzo. In 1994, she was accepted into the year-round apprentice/trainee program at The Rock School of the Pennsylvania Ballet, where she performed in several of George Balanchine's ballets. Returning to New York, Ms. von Rathonyi joined Rochester City Ballet as a principal dancer performing numerous principal roles in *Nutcracker*, *Cinderella*, *Don Quixote*, *Firebird*, and *Gaite Parisian*. At this time, Artistic Director Timothy Draper suggested she start teaching ballet, thus began her extensive teaching career. Before coming to Peoria, Ms. Von Rathonyi served as Acting Artistic Director to the Flower City Ballet for two years. She then served as the Academy Director to the Peoria Ballet for almost ten years and as Interim Artistic Director for two years, where she raised the caliber of the Academy by instituting a pre-professional training program for the aspiring dancer and instituted a full class syllabus and curriculum for all levels of ballet. Ms. Von Rathonyi's full bio is available at www.ciballet.com.

Joshua Gullett, President

Joshua began his early ballet training with BalletMet on full scholarship under the watchful eye of Yoko Ichino and David Nixon. He continued with BalletMet for eight years in the pre-professional program performing in the company's productions of *The Nutcracker*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Giselle*. In BalletMet's student showcase, Mr. Gullett was featured as Daniel in Alvin Ailey's "Daniel". He spent his summers on full scholarship with many prestigious schools including Virginia School of the Arts, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, and Chautauqua with the North Carolina Dance Theater. In 2002, Mr. Gullett was accepted into Pittsburgh Ballet Theaters Graduate program where he studied and trained under Artistic Director Terrance Orr and Ballet Mistress Marianna Tcherkassky. He enjoyed working with the company as well as performing in many of their productions including *The Nutcracker* and *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. Joshua joined Peoria Ballet Company in 2004 dancing many soloist and principal roles such as Johnathan Harker in *Dracula*, Snow King in *The Nutcracker*, the principal male role in George Balanchine's *Valse Fantasie*, and his favorite, Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*. He served as a faculty member in the school teaching Boys Intermediate Ballet, Ballet levels 4/5/6, and pas de deux for pre-professional students. In the past, he served as a guest artist with the



Company Biographies, con't

USA Ballet. Joshua and his wife Rebekah have been dancing together for eight years and served as guest artists for the Flower City Ballet's yearly production of *The Nutcracker* for several years.

Hannah, Principal Artist



Hannah is from Barrington, IL where she trained with the Barrington Dance Academy. She also spent summers with Milwaukee Ballet, River North Dance Chicago, and Thodos Dance Chicago. She graduated summa cum laude from Point Park University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in dance. While at Point Park, Hannah performed works by Peter Merz, Ernest Tolentino, Kiesha Lalama, and Nicholas Petrov's *Romeo and Juliet*. In 2015, Hannah qualified as a finalist in the Youth American Grand Prix competing in New York and placed in the top

12. Previously, Hannah has danced professionally with MERZTANZ Contemporary Ballet Company under Peter Merz and Convergence Ballet under Jennifer Cafarella. Since joining CIB, Hannah has danced roles including Christine in *Phantom of the Opera*, The title role in *Cinderella*, Lucy in *Dracula*, Sugar Plum Fairy, Clara, and Snow Queen in *The Nutcracker*, Juliet; Friend in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the title role in *The Firebird*. This is Hannah's fifth season with Central Illinois Ballet.

Alexander Kingma, Principal Artist

Alexander began his training in Lafayette, IN at the age of 17 with the Lafayette Ballet Company under the direction of Sandra Peticolas and Lisa Douglas. He continued his studies at Ball State University in Muncie, IN, where he graduated with a B.S. in Dance Performance.

While at Ball State, Alexander was able to work with guest artists such as Stephanie Martinez, Kristopher Estes-Brown, Alex Springer and Xan Burley. He has also attended summer intensive programs at



the American Dance Center in Overland Park, KS, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Summer Dance Company in Wilmington, NC, and the American Academy of Ballet at SUNY Purchase. Upon graduating, Alexander began his professional career with Louisville Ballet under the artistic direction of Robert Curran. Some of his favorite roles include Adam Hougland's *Cold Virtues*, Spanish Chocolate and Russian Caviar in Val Caniparoli's *The Brown-Forman Nutcracker*, and as a soloist in Andrea Schermoly's *Fractured* and Mikelle Bruzina's *Gloria*. Alexander then danced for two seasons with Ballet Quad Cities under the artistic direction of Courtney Lyon, where he was given the opportunity to dance roles such as the Nutcracker Prince and Cavalier in Courtney Lyon's *The Nutcracker*, the Red Queen in Lyon's *Alice in Wonderland*, and the title role in Lyon's *Billy the Kid*. He was also featured in Deanna Carter's *Dracula* and *Newsflash*, Lynn Kathryn Bowman's *Delicatessen*, and also appeared in dances such as Carter's *Ash to Glass*, Lyon's *Bolero*, and Margaret King's *Rodeo*. Alexander is absolutely thrilled to be joining Central Illinois Ballet as a principal artist for his third season!

Company Biographies, con't

Kaylie Bullock, Principal Artist



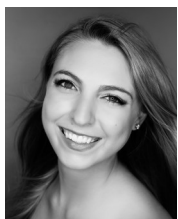
Kaylie Bullock received her early training at Kansas Dance Academy under the direction of Diane Gans and Lisa Long. She attended the the School of Classical and Contemporary Dance at Texas Christian University on scholarship, graduating with honors. Ms. Bullock went on to dance professionally with Common Thread Contemporary, Storling Dance Theater and Ad Deum Dance Company before joining Central Illinois Ballet in 2016. During her career she has had the privilege to dance numerous contemporary works, a few of her favorites include Mona Enna-Storling's full-length *Underground*, Jennifer Medina's *Cognitive Dissonance*, and Randall Flynn's *Inspirito*. While at Central Illinois Ballet she has been featured as La Carlotta in the *Phantom of the Opera*, both Reinfield and Dr. Van Helsing in *Dracula*, Enchantress in *Beauty and the Beast*, and Lead Harlot in *Romeo and Juliet* and numerous roles in the *Nutcracker*. She is thrilled to be in her fifth season with Central Illinois Ballet.

Jessie Williams, Soloist

Jessie Williams, a graduate of Butler University with a BFA in Dance Performance, was born and raised in Suwanee, Georgia. She began her training at The Northeast Atlanta Ballet under the direction of Jennifer Gordon. When she was 17 she accepted a position at The Next Generation Ballet in Tampa, Florida under the direction of Peter Stark for the 2012—2013 season. While at Butler, Jessie was given the opportunity to perform corps, soloist, and principal roles in full length ballets including *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, *Giselle*, *Cinderella*, and *The Four Temperaments*. During her last two years at Butler she performed and was an assistant choreographer in *Streamlines* Indianapolis, a multimillion dollar project combining science with the arts to promote and inform the community about the waterways of Indianapolis created by Cynthia Pratt. During the summer of 2016 she brought two of her choreographic works to tour and be performed in Eastern Europe. She had two contemporary works Premiered in the National Opera House in Warsaw, Poland and then were later carried across countries to be performed in Prague, Krakow, and Poznan. Jessie's favorite roles include Mona in *Giselle*, Phlegmatic in Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*, and Sugarplum Fairy in Central Illinois Ballet's production of *The Nutcracker*. This is Jessie's fourth season with Central Illinois Ballet and is thrilled to be taking the role of Academy Director spring of 2020. She teaches Ballet, Pointe, Jazz, Contemporary and Modern Dance to all levels along with running rehearsals and setting choreography.



Anna Grace Brown, Soloist



Anna Grace began her dance training at a young age in central Indiana. Her growth as a pre-professional artist was strengthened under the direction of Frank and Jane-Hachiya Weiner, So Yon Nam, Gregory Glade Hancock, and Oybek Tashpulatov. Her training, also, included multiple summer programs with Richmond Ballet, Texas Ballet Theater, and BalletMet. One of Anna Grace's highlighted achieve

Company Biographies, con't

ments from high school was her top twelve award in Youth America Grand Prix's Senior Classical Category. Upon her senior year, she accepted an apprenticeship from Stirling and Sabrina Matheson, Artistic Directors of Ballet Theatre of Indiana. After graduation, she continued her career as a trainee with BalletMet under the direction of Dmitri Suslov. As a trainee, she had the privilege to appear in professional productions such as David Nixon's *Dracula*, Michael Pink's *Peter Pan*, Trey McIntyre's *Wild Sweet Love*, Gerard Charles' *The Nutcracker*, and culminating in her role as The Queen in Edwaard Liang's world premiere of *Sleeping Beauty*. Throughout her two seasons in Columbus, she was featured in multiple community art, photography, and outreach collaborations. Additionally, she assisted with the launch of Kids Dance Outreach in Indianapolis. Ms. Brown has enjoyed dancing Central Illinois Ballet roles such as, a Vampire Bride in *Dracula* and Antonella in *Cinderella*. This is Anna Grace's fourth season with Central Illinois Ballet.

Richard Smith, Male Artist

Mr. Smith began his early dance instruction in elementary school where he trained extensively in tap for four years. During this time he performed in many Nutcrackers, which helped develop his passion for the Performing Arts as well as music. After graduating from High school, he was accepted into Valparaiso University located in Indiana. After a hiatus from dance and a year away from home, he returned to Peoria and began his classical ballet education in late spring of 2012.

He trained with Cornerstone Academy for Performing Arts for several years, during which he appeared in *Dracula*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Alice in Wonderland*. Mr. Smith has performed Cavalier as a guest artist at Flower City Ballet in Rochester, NY, as well as for other companies. He has also participated in several community theater shows in the Peoria area, including *Billy Elliott*, *Brigadoon*, and *Memphis*. He is excited to be dancing again with Central Illinois Ballet.



Madison McGrath, Female Artist

Madison McGrath trained at a very small ballet school in Monmouth IL. In 2012 she performed with Cornerstone Academy's first *Nutcracker*. Soon after she started training at Cornerstone. Madison is pleased to be dancing alongside 2020 CIB company.



Maya de Leon, Female Artist

Maya de Leon is a Filipino-American dancer who began her training at the age of 4 at Greater Lansing Academy of Dance and Greater Lansing Ballet Company under the direction of Barbara Banasikowski Smith. As a student, she received scholarships to many summer intensives including the National Choreography Intensive, Colorado Conservatory of Dance, and Alma College Summer Dance. In 2014, she was selected to perform with Regional Dance America at the International Ballet Competition in Jackson, Mississippi. Maya continued her dance training at Point Park University where she graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2019. At Point Park, Maya had the pleasure of being cast in pieces by Jae Man Joo, Matthew Powell,



Company Biographies, con't

Helen Simoneau, Christopher Wheeldon, and Edwaard Liang among others. She began her professional career at the age of 19 touring Michigan with Third Coast Dance Company and has since danced with Ballet Quad Cities. Maya is a certified Youth Protection Advocate in Dance and is excited to see dance taking strides toward wellness and inclusion. She feels incredibly blessed to start her first year at Central Illinois Ballet for the 2020/2021 season!

Marie Ritschard, Female Artist



Marie Ritschard, born in Wiesbaden, Germany, grew up in eleven countries and states as she travelled with her Air Force family. She began her training in England and continued at Montgomery Ballet, Misawa Unique Ballet, Pasadena Dance Theatre, and Dayton Ballet among others. She moved to Indiana to study Dance Pedagogy and Pre-Physical Therapy at Butler University. After graduating, she danced with the Louisville Ballet Studio Company, where she had the opportunity to perform some of her all time favorite roles in Val Caniparoli's *Nutcracker*, Balanchine's *Serenade*, and Ronald Hynd's *Merry Widow*. Marie is now thrilled to be joining Central Illinois Ballet for her first season!

Taylor Walper, Female Artist

Taylor Walper graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Performance in 2019. She studied under Susan Shields at George Mason University and under Judith Chitwood at Northern Illinois University. She began her dance studies in 2000 with pre-professional training from 2007-2016 at Peoria Ballet under the direction of Eric Yetter, Rebekah Von Rathonyi, Servy Gallardo, and Ian Poulis. Taylor also supplemented her training by attending summer intensives at Alonzo King LINES Ballet, Ballet Magnificat (Costa Rica), Bates Dance Festival, Grand Rapids Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance, Perry Mansfield Performing Arts School, River North Dance Chicago, and the Suzanne Farrell Workshop for Young Dancers at Florida State University. Taylor has long had an interest in dance pedagogy. She began as a teacher's assistant in 2010 and started teaching independently in 2014. In 2016, she co-developed the curriculum for Peoria Ballet's Creative Movement through Pre-Ballet (age 3-6) classes and served as a rehearsal director/assistant for the annual production of *The Nutcracker*. As a Freshman honors student at George Mason University, Taylor was selected as a university-wide finalist for the Schwartzstein Award for her research on dance student retention and dropout trends. She was able to continue her dance pedagogy research throughout her collegiate studies. While attending the Bates Dance Festival Intensive, Taylor took classes in dance pedagogy and worked with other teachers and studio owners. She attended the 2018 and 2019 Self-Employment in the Arts conferences in Chicago where she networked with many successful art professionals from around the country. In August of 2019, Taylor moved to Florida to complete an internship with the Walt Disney World company. There she was able to learn from choreographers and other entertainment leaders throughout the company.



Company Trainees

Ellie Faw

Eva Molina

Natasha Cushman

Cornerstone Academy for Performing Arts/ Central Illinois Ballet Annual Fund

Contributions to the Annual Fund allow the continued growth of Central Illinois Ballet and gives Cornerstone Academy the opportunity to continue to provide excellent dance education to its students. Though our financial needs are supported by CIB ticket sales and academy tuition dollars, these forms of income only cover half the amount it takes to put on a production. We truly rely on the generous support of our donors to fund our dancers and fulfill our mission to educate all students regardless of financial status.

Sponsorships are renewed annually and are available at many levels:

Diamond Level (\$5000 and up)

Ruby Level (\$1,000—\$4,999)

Emerald Level (\$50—\$999)

All sponsorships are tax deductible. Sponsorship benefits can be found on our website www.ciballet.com

For more information or to make contributions, please contact:

Laurel Filzen Etzel

Phone: 309-713-1985

E-mail: info@cornerstoneballetpeoria.com

2020-2021 Season Donors

Ruby Level: Jones Brothers Jewelers, Bolden-Williams and Associates, Inc, Mike and Tammy Smith, Per Lamont and Joann Okey, Anton Bommersbach, David Stotz and George Traylor, Susan Ball-Kell, Jeffery L Hartman

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Dracula Production Staff

Artistic Director and Choreographer - Rebekah von Rathonyi

Costume Designer - Rebekah von Rathonyi

Wardrobe Mistress - Andrea Faw

Set and Props Design - Rebekah von Rathonyi, Joshua Gullett, Tracey Frugoli

Set Crew - Richard Smith, Greg Etzel, David Shafer, Tammy Smith, William

Ankrum, Erik Monteen, Amy Sanders, Jenn Bair

Lighting Designer/Director - Jacob Winslow/Richard Smith

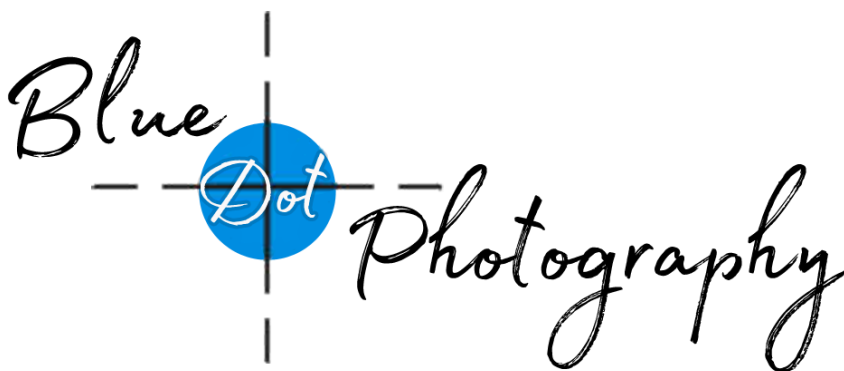
Lighting Assistants - Taylor Walper

Professional Photographer - Cecilia Cushman, Blue Dot Photography

Professional Videographer - Frank Blain, Pro Video Productions

Program Design - Tammy Smith

**Central Illinois Ballet would like to
thank Blue Dot Photography for our
official Dracula 2020 photos!!**



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Instructors - Rebekah von Rathonyi, Josh Gullett, Jessie Williams, Taylor
Walper, Alex Kingma, Pat White, Don Coven, Susanna Earnest

Central Illinois Ballet History

Founded in 2015 by Rebekah von Rathonyi, Central Illinois Ballet (CIB) is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization partially supported by donor funding and private and public grants. CIB emerged from its school, the Cornerstone Academy for Performing Arts, which was established in January 2012 in the historic Cornerstone building of downtown Peoria with four instructors and six students. A few months later, in April of 2012, Rebekah von Rathonyi and Jennifer Reiter Hand joined the ranks as the school's Artistic Director and Academy Director. The organization began outreach and lecture demonstrations taking dance, music, and singing into the area's nursing homes, schools, libraries, and Veterans' posts. The school launched its first main stage production of "Alice in Wonderland," a narrated storybook ballet for children of all ages, in August of 2012. Recognizing that the greater Central Illinois community needed a professional dance company and school that would positively contribute to the standard of living, the performing ensemble was formed. After Cornerstone Academy staged their first production of The Nutcracker at the Orpheum Theater in Galesburg, IL, the demand for more professional main stage productions quickly increased. After two highly successful seasons, the Board of Directors and Artistic staff formally separated the performance company from the Academy by founding the Central Illinois Ballet in January, 2015.

Cornerstone Academy for Performing Arts Mission and Vision

We strive to provide education and opportunities regardless of age, race, gender, or socioeconomic status. We also believe in creating strong relationships with other art based businesses in order to improve the artistic community in Peoria. Registration is open year round and scholarship applications are available upon request.