

En Pointe

A Newsletter from **ballet**
excel ohio
Formerly the Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet



The Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation

Ohio Arts Council

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The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation

A Letter from our Artistic Director:

Mia Klinger

Dear BXO Friends and Family,

We began our 2013-2014 season with an official name change to Ballet Excel Ohio, which was just the tip of the iceberg for the exciting season to come. We opened the season with our annual "Masquerade" Gala on October 19, 2013 at Quaker Station in downtown Akron. Our spring performances brought a collaboration with Akron Symphony Orchestra, Akron Symphony Shakespeare Players, the Summit Choral Society Children's Choir, all staged by Craig Joseph, for the performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream", which took place on March 8, 2014 at E.J. Thomas Hall. Last but not least, we had an amazing end to our season with the world premiere of "Beauty and the Beast", choreographed by Tom Gold, and the modern ballet "Cliques", choreographed by Tom Smith, March 15 & 16, 2014 at the beautiful Akron Civic Theatre.

A "Midsummer Night's Dream" was Erich Yetter's first work for Ballet Excel Ohio. It's fast and furious choreography was fun, yet challenging, for the dancers and the magical costumes and lively music brought smiles to the faces of all who saw this wonderful collaboration.

"Cliques", choreographed by our hometown favorite, Tom Smith, is an energetic modern ballet based on interactions and conflicts between two groups of girls. This modern piece brought a new aspect of movement for our dancers and allowed them to show a new side of BXO to our audiences.

Our dancers were also blessed with adding a new work to our repertoire. With its charming adventures, the world premiere of "Beauty and the Beast" gave us the opportunity to showcase the many talents of our dancers with virtuoso performances. Tom Gold once again set new heights not only for our dancers, but also designed costumes that truly "changed" before your eyes.

We are fortunate to be able to continue the vision of our Founding Artistic Director, my mother, Nan Klinger. Through your generous gifts and continued support we are able to keep this dream alive.

My heartfelt thanks for your continued support,

Mia Klinger

BXO year in review

February 18, 2014

Ballet Excel On Tour
"Beauty and the Beast"
Wooster Schools;
Wooster, Ohio

February 28, 2014

Ballet Excel On Tour
"Three Genres of Dance"
Crestwood School;
Mantua, Ohio

March 8, 2014

"A Midsummer Night's Dream"
With the Akron Symphony
Orchestra
EJ Thomas Hall; U of Akron

March 15 & 16, 2014

"Beauty and the Beast"
"Cliques" and ROAD®
performance
Akron Civic Theatre

A Letter from ROAD® Artistic Consultant

Thecla Harris

Reach Out and Dance,® ROAD®, is in its 16th year reaching students in the Cuyahoga Falls, Akron and Wooster school systems. Ballet Excel Ohio's outreach program headed in an exciting new direction last year adding a comprehensive musical theater curriculum to its programming. Using dance teachers and pianists in each classroom, ROAD® reaches 500 kids weekly and has reached over 16,000 since it was founded in 1997.

Our teachers visit each school once per week to teach dance, voice and drama to our students. In addition to the obvious performance benefits, the ROAD® curriculum imparts the value of team work, self-discipline and increased self-esteem.

This year, we taught the students the music of George and Ira Gershwin. At the end of our 15 week curriculum our classes performed for their peers and parents.

ROAD® strives for the best in each child artistically, physically and mentally, while teaching that hard work and dedication can lead to success in the dance classroom, the school classroom, and beyond. We are excited to be the driving force in musical theater education in North-eastern Ohio!

Thank you for your continued support, Thecla Harris

Our Second Annual Fundraiser: A Masquerade Gala

*O*ur second annual fundraiser, Masquerade Gala, was a roaring success. This year we raised approximately \$10,000 for the ballet company and our outreach programs. Dancing after dinner and the live auction made the evening lots of fun! Among the items auctioned: a hybrid mountain bike, OSU vs. Michigan Football Tickets, a signed Big Ten Coaches Football and autographed NYCB pointe shoes. The big announcement of the evening was the unveiling of our new name and logo. Coupled with the first showing of our promotional video, it was a turning point for our company as Miss Mia announced the new name and expressed her enthusiasm as we move forward into a new chapter for our ballet company.



Adding sparkle to our season...

Eric Yetter rushes into the studio on a blustery, winter, Saturday morning, black bag in his left hand, a cold whoosh of outside air trailing behind him. He teaches class every Saturday to higher level dancers at the studio and was asked to choreograph two excerpts of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Ballet Excel Ohio. This collaboration with the Akron Symphony Orchestra was performed at EJ Thomas Hall, March 8, 2014 at 7:30pm. I sat down with him to discuss his inspiration, his creative process and had the wonderful opportunity to get a bit of a "Balanchine class" while chatting with him.

Yetter created a wonderful experience for the arts audience, bringing the fairies of the forest to life in quick, complex choreography that reflects the Balanchine ballet it is based on and the Mendelsohn movements it is set to. George Balanchine is a very big influence on Yetter's career and the piece he created for this BXO performance. He [Balanchine] was one of the "most brilliant choreographers of our time" and had an appreciation for the audience's point of view, "he [Balanchine] NEVER forgot the audience". Yetter has not forgotten the audience either, from the dance itself, to the costuming; all of these elements combine to make the "experience" of watching dance. The dancers had dramatic makeup, purple and blue shimmery eyes with crystals applied around the eye to complete the look. "I like to use sparkles in my costuming and makeup." Balanchine used his friend, and longtime collaborator Barbara Karinska, an accomplished Russian couturier designing in Paris, to create the costumes for his ballets. "[Karinska's] costumes were always full of shimmer and sparkle." For *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the shimmer and sparkle helps to "set the mood and the scene of this magical forest with all these fairies coming out of the woods."

He considers the dancers when creating his piece and the fact that they are "young dancers which may even work better in this instance because fairies are timeless, forever young, ideas which are expressed through quick movements, and fluttering about the stage. They are innocent and magical, like children." This is not the first time Yetter has set *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. When he was in Peoria, IL he set the entire Balanchine ballet. "[Balanchine] presents Act 3; gorgeous choreography, breathtaking patterns and lightning quick combinations and a pas de deux that is one of his best works. The two principals of his [Balanchine's] company perform a pas de deux that is some of the most gorgeous choreography, ever created," in Yetter's opinion. "They have no names, they are not [Shakespeare] characters, they are just two people in blue, gorgeous blue costumes, and they dance to this gorgeous music, Mendelsohn's string violin sonata, and your jaw [drops]. You totally forget that it is 10:30 – 11:00 at night and you've been just sitting there, [Balanchine] suddenly transports you. He takes you to his realm of the art of ballet... To me it's what Balanchine always does, he just draws you in and then he just gives it to you. He really comes through no matter what he does."

His enthusiasm for Balanchine and his Midsummer piece is captivating, as he gushes about the art of ballet and performance, George Balanchine, and the opportunity to bring something he finds so captivating to life on stage with BXO dancers. When Miss Mia received the call for BXO to dance with the Akron Symphony it was an opportunity that she couldn't refuse. Yetter created a visual experience that certainly did not disappoint.



Upcoming Events

August 5-10, 2014

Choreography with Tom Gold for the world premiere of his short ballet for the upcoming 2014-2015 season.

August 22-24, 2014

Laszlo Berdo casting and choreography for Snow White.

October 10, 2014

Honorary Chairs: Gayle and David Noble



SAVE THE DATE

for our 3rd Annual Auction Gala on

Friday evening

OCTOBER 10, 2014

6:30 PM

Lake Forest Country Club

100 Lake Forest Drive

HUDSON, OHIO

www.balletexcelohio.org

End Notes...

Summer Study...

We would like to recognize those dancers that will be continuing their dance education at summer intensive programs around the world:

Joni Allen*

Houston Ballet; Houston, TX

Hannah Anderson*

Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet;
Carlisle, PA

Noelle Boyages*

Miami City Ballet; Miami Beach, FL

Marissa Common

Cleveland School of Dance;
Cleveland, OH

Llyona Lallement*

Ecole du Ballet de Paris
France

Carolyn Lott

Ballet Met; Columbus, OH

Wade Mesecar

Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet
Carlisle, PA

Scotto Hamed-Ramos*

Houston Ballet; Houston, TX

Nyah Malone*

Houston Ballet, Houston, TX

* Denotes scholarship recipients



Congratulations to the 2013-2014

apprentices who were welcomed as full company members at our end of the season banquet:

Jade Blankenship

Caroline Jung

Danielle Castle

Hannah Lux

Sophia Colford

Madeline Gallagher*

Elizabeth Coughlin

Jackson Gallagher*

Vivian Gray

Noelle Malone

Brighton Hughes

* not pictured



And we welcome a new apprentice class:

Emma Doucet

Jocelyn Oh

Maia Ferry

Audrey Oplinger

Max Haslinger

Noelle Smurawa

Makenna Johnson

Maggie Stone

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