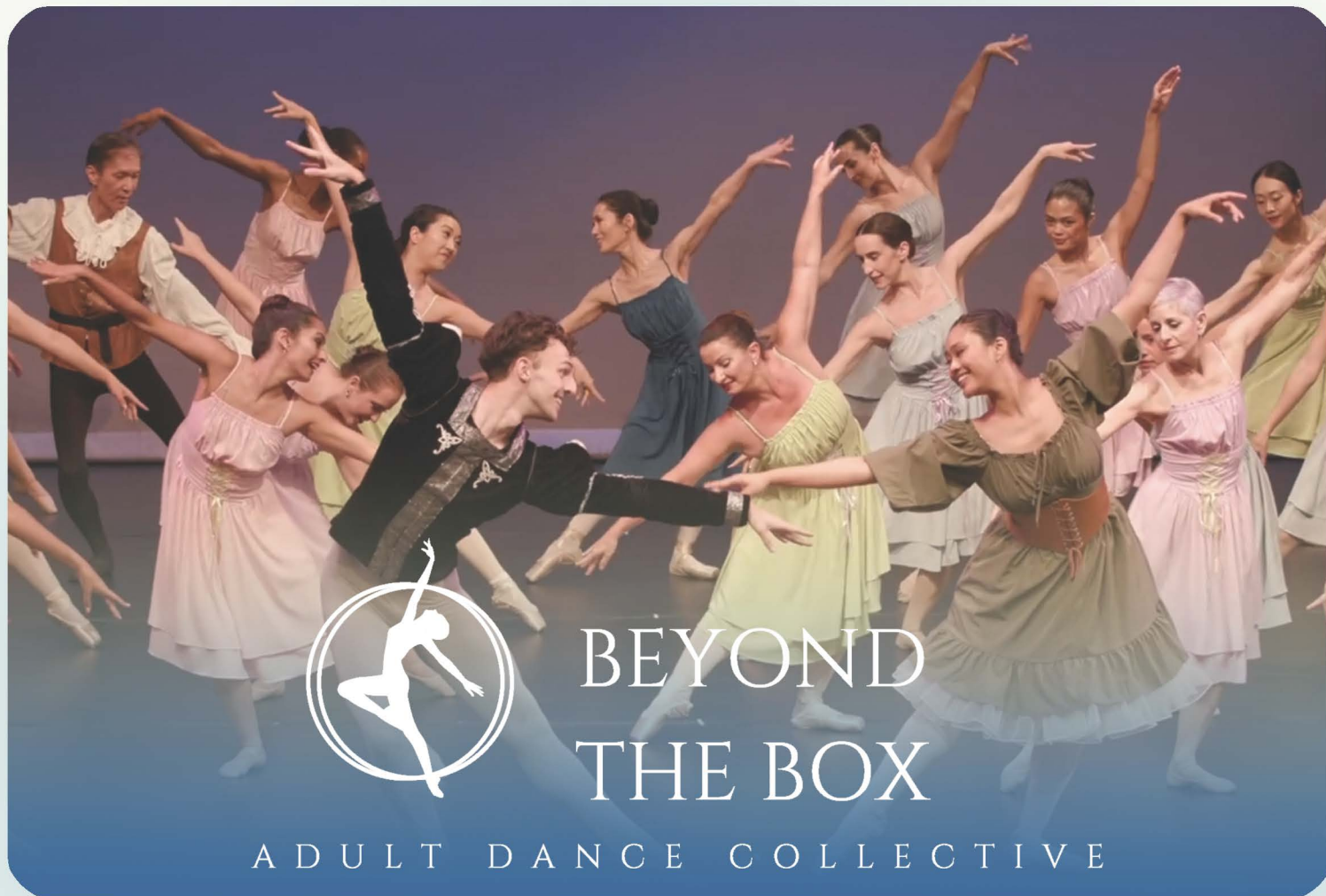




WESTSIDE
SCHOOL of BALLET
presents



BEYOND
THE BOX

ADULT DANCE COLLECTIVE

SUMMER SHOWCASE 2026

FOUNDED BY REBECCA WITJAS

THE ELI & EDYTHE BROAD STAGE

SANTA MONICA, CA • AUGUST 1, 2026

2:30 P.M. & 5:30 P.M.

SUMMER SHOWCASE 2026

Executive Director & Owner Allegra Clegg
Artistic Director Adrian Blake Mitchell
Executive Director Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein
Artistic Coordinator Sven Toorvald
Production Committee Pauline Cheng, Mary Jo Frazier
Addie Van Gessel, Leslie Wallis
WSB Finance Faye Smith
Costume Director Liz Kok
Costume Team Jamie Haley, Elisa Hamed, Melissa Taw
Rehearsal Photographer..... Pam Loh
Digital Program..... Alexandra Del Rosario



BEYOND THE BOX

ADULT DANCE COLLECTIVE

Beyond the Box Adult Dance Collective is an intergenerational community of dancers united by a shared love of dance and a deep commitment to its future. As active participants in Westside's adult program, the collective celebrates the joy of movement while supporting the youth academy that nurtures tomorrow's stars. We help provide a stable foundation for Westside Ballet's continued growth and artistic achievement through our presence in the studio and at performances, fundraising efforts, mentorship and volunteering. In addition to the summer showcase, Beyond the Box supports its members' creative development with company classes and an annual choreography workshop open to dancers of all levels. Our community is a space for connection and self-expression, and proves a passion for dance is not limited by experience or age.

Our sincere thanks to Brie Larson, whose generosity helped bring this performance to life.



Westside School of Ballet is Los Angeles' oldest and most successful public ballet school, founded in 1967 by New York City Ballet's Yvonne Mounsey, and co-founder Rosemary Valaire, Royal Ballet soloist. The school has offered adult ballet classes for over 50 years, catering to dancers of all levels, from beginners starting their dance journey to professionals refining their technique.

SUMMER SHOWCASE 2026 | PROGRAM

Waltz of the Hours from “Coppélia,” Act III

Arranged by **Aimée Gaudio**

Music “Coppélia: Waltz of the Hours” by Léo Delibes

Cast

Antonina Anselmo Erica Barry Kelsey Bauman Natalie Ford Brown Jennifer Bulger Kiva Dawson
Alexandra Del Rosario Sofia Esquivel Annabella Ferraiuolo Amanda Renee Knox Tatianna Lamperti
Gigi Laurita Christine Lee Kristi Marinelli Cindy McManus Nicole Shipman Julia Wu

Choreographer’s note: *Coppélia* premiered on May 25, 1870 at the Théâtre Impérial l’Opéra in Paris with comedy, courtship and dazzling virtuosity. In Act III, “Waltz of the Hours” celebrates themes of love and community. To honor the occasion, a series of dances are performed representing the golden hours of the day. This suite is set to the melodic, sparkling score by composer Léo Delibes. A true gem of the classical ballet repertory.

Echoes of Infinity

Choreographed by **Chasen Greenwood**

Music “Andøya” by RØRE, “Balder” by Power-Haus and Christian Reindl, “The Writer” by Built By Titan and RØRE

Cast

Marisa Beresford Onyx Black Mara Conway Darlene Dirstine Shannon Erdmann Lydia Fabre
Bari Grossman Aileen Hui Nicole Huynh Rose Knight Jaelyn Lytle Maddy Paull
Maria Pena Rebecca Rainhart Lily Shih Skye Smith Emily Von Urff

Free

Choreographed by **Sven Toorvald**

Music “Free (Kpop Demon Hunters)” by Brooklyn Duo

Cast

Alexis Aguila Onyx Black Sofia Esquivel Annabella Ferraiuolo Mary Jo Frazier Eli Galezz
Yael Hartstein Monica Klimczak Nicole Shipman Alysia Vanitzian Addie Van Gessel Aihui Wang

Choreographer’s note: *Braving walls of silence.*

Souvenir de Florence

Choreographed by **Dani Savka**

Music “Souvenir de Florence: Allegro con Spirito” by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Cast

Nnenna Anyiwo Callie Bonne Meghan Chaudhary Mara Conway
Alexandra Del Rosario Darlene Dirstine Mikkari Eaddy Chandler Eldridge Mimi Gu
Hadiza Hinish Sira Hotsinpiller Rose Knight Tatianna Lamperti
Gigi Laurita Christine Lee Pam Loh Laila Madni Maria Pena Lily Shih

Choreographer’s note: *A Neo classical ballet utilizing pretty and elaborate movements that demonstrate the spirited music.*

**** Cast subject to change ****

Broken Lines

Choreographed by **Aihui Wang**

Music Excerpts from "Shadow Journal" by Max Richter

Cast

Angela Check Chandler Eldridge Kayla Knight
Hiromi Levy Erin Lewis Kristi Marinelli

Choreographer's note: A reflection of the conflicts, chaos, and uncertainty of the contemporary world, exploring the tension between arrogance and helplessness both internally and externally. The choreography blends classical and contemporary elements as part of an exploration of my evolving movement vocabulary.

Keep Shining

Choreographed by **Jeni Jones**

Music "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me" by Oleta Adams

Cast

Nancy Adzentoivich Sheila Ahorian Onyx Black Mikkari Eaddy Lydia Fabre
Mary Jo Frazier Eli Galezz Kathy Gordon Heather Kahler Monica Klimczak
Sydney LeResche Maddy Paull Victoria Roth O'Neal Addie Van Gessel Aihui Wang Julia Wu

Choreographer's note: An uplifting, classical, lyrical Jazz piece inspired by my beautiful mentors Hama & Francis J. Roach of Luigi Jazz Center and intended to celebrate our collective lifelong commitment to all arts and to uncovering our authentic selves through the shared art and joy of Jazz dance. Luigi once said: "To dance, put your hand on your heart and listen to the sound of your soul."

Before Nightfall

Choreographed by **Natalia Velarde**

Music "Godzilla-1.0, Godzilla Suite II" by Naoki Sato

Cast

Raven King Daniel Grzelak

Ravens Alexis Aguila Nnenna Anyiwo Marisa Beresford Callie Bonne
Helene Bouboulis Jennifer Bulger Mikkari Eaddy Bari Grossman Mimi Gu Aileen Hui
Nicole Huynh Amanda Renee Knox Christine Lee Sydney LeResche Hiromi Levy Erin Lewis Nan Lin
Pam Loh Laila Madni Tanya Nobal Rebecca Rainhart Skye Smith

Choreographer's note: A shadow sweeps across the sky, With glossy wings and watchful eye. / A creature cloaked in midnight's veil, Whose silent presence tells a tale. / It whispers secrets to the breeze, Through restless boughs and weathered trees. / An ageless voice, a silent flight, It reigns where dusk surrenders light —/ The watchful monarch of the gloam, Raven, keeper of the unknown.

Nature as Catalyst

Choreographed by **Addie Van Gessel**

Music "Birds on the Wires" by Jarbas Agnelli

Cast

Nancy Adzentoivich Shannon Erdmann Sofia Esquivel Kayla Knight

Choreographer's note: This piece is an ode to Nature as the ultimate inspiration for artistic endeavors as it follows the journey of creativity from a photo, which inspired the music, to the development of this dance.

**** Cast subject to change ****

Swing Time

Choreographed by **Sadie Black**

Music “Minnie The Moochers Wedding Day” by Bernard Berkhout

Cast

Helene Bouboulis Meghan Chaudhary Angela Check Jason Douglas
Chandler Eldridge Mimi Gu Cole Kaller Monica Klimczak Nan Lin
Hillary McCarthy Tanya Nobal Rebecca Rainhart Aihui Wang Emerson Wong

Choreographer’s note: *Just like it sounds, an energetic and playful ballet celebrating the style and historic vibes inside a 1940s Swing club.*

Crescendo

Choreographed by **Nancy Paradis**

Music “Crescendo” by The Piano Guys

Cast

Kelsey Bauman Natalie Ford Brown Jennifer Bulger Kiva Dawson Lydia Fabre
Yael Hartstein Amanda Renee Knox Tatianna Lamperti Sydney LeResche Hiromi Levy Pam Loh
Jaelyn Lytle Laila Madni Maddy Paull Maria Pena Alexandra Rodriguez Makiko Yamamori

Choreographer’s note: *A piece that combines classical ballet with contemporary, neoclassical lines, and athletic, angular sharpness. I love blending these different styles to shape movement that comes from something deeper than technique. My truest wish, both for the dancers and for myself, is to inspire. To move from within, to create moments that feel personal, energizing, and new, and then carry that energy outward to the audience.*

“Crescendo” is built to invite you into that experience. We hope you feel the work not just as choreography, but as a spark- something that reminds you of what it feels like to be alive in music and in motion. Thank you for being here.

La Belle Époque

Choreographed by **Damien Diaz & Liz Wasynczuk** | Painting by Valerie Kalmenson

Music “Dernière Danse” by Indila, “Gaité Parisienne (Excerpts): VIII. Cancan” by Jacques Offenbach, Leonard Bernstein

Cast

Bride Nnenna Anyiwo **Groom** Jason Douglas **Latin lover** Zane Tahvildaran-Jesswein
Society women Mary Jo Frazier Alysia Vanitzian **Lovers** Rony Baseman Alexandra Rodriguez
Cigarette girl Gigi Laurita **Balloon girl** Angela Check **Flower girl** Antonina Anselmo
Vendor Angharad Fitzgerald **Waiters** Eli Galezz Damien Diaz **Mime** Dani Savka
Bridesmaids Alexis Aguila Sheila Ahorian Christina Gregory Kayla Knight Jaelyn Lytle Kristi Marinelli
Cancan dancers Marisa Beresford Callie Bonne Mara Conway Alexandra Del Rosario Annabella Ferraiuolo
Monica Klimczak Rose Knight Nan Lin Tanya Nobal Aihui Wang

Choreographers’ note: *In a popular Parisienne market square in springtime, love is in the air. Lovers rendezvous and everyday market dwellers curiously catch each other's gaze. We see a vibrant cast of characters whose paths will cross in unexpected ways. Some flirtatiously, some audaciously. Mostly, intriguingly. A dashing Latin lover disturbs the peace, turning the heads of society ladies, a beautiful bride and her jealous groom. An onslaught of Cancan girls takes over, luring male prospects to join in their debaucherous joie de vivre. The cast reveals this once-in-a-lifetime Belle Époque happening in a multilayered Cancan, dancing with everyone and anyone who has two legs and a beating heart. Still, the question remains: Who will end up with whom?*

**** Cast subject to change ****

SUMMER SHOWCASE 2026 | PRODUCTION



Addie Van Gessel *◇

Producer

Addie is a retired marketing and advertising professional whose love for dance began in her youth. After moving to Los Angeles in 1994, Addie enrolled at Westside and started studying ballet seriously as an adult student. She has been a member of the WSB adult community since. "Dancing 3-5 times a week has kept my spirits high, skills improving and brought me lifetime friendships that I'm blessed to have." Addie and her husband are also the proud owners of three popular local bars: Hinano Cafe, Tavern on Main SM and the newly reopened Circle Bar.



Pauline Cheng

Producer

Pauline is a project manager in corporate real estate, responsible for managing interior construction projects for a major studio. She started ballet as an adult at Westside with Aimée Gaudio's intro classes and has never looked back! She continues to take classes from a variety of teachers at the studio at different levels and is in awe of the level of instruction available (as well as the talented pianists who provide the musical inspiration for us in every class)! She has also found an amazing community of adult dancers who inspire her in every class. Pauline participated in previous Showcases, learning a lot about the performance aspect of ballet that helps her in class every week. She transitioned to volunteering with the Costume Committee last year.



Pam Loh ◇

Rehearsal Photographer

Pam is an elopement photographer by day, a recreational dancer by night, and musical theater enthusiast by day and night! She started ballet at age four, took several years off for college and found her way back to it in 2019. She now trains at four different studios around L.A. Pam loves being around dancers and aspires to grow her photography business in the dance/theater world!



Mary Jo Frazier ◇

Producer

Mary Jo is a retired dentist, mother, grandmother and Santa Monica resident. She attended a ballet studio in Kansas for two years as a child, but pursued piano instead. At age 40, Mary Jo saw dance as a way to express emotions, working on classical ballet technique in sync with the framework of music. The Westside community became a haven for connecting with old friends, making new ones and expanding her technique under dedicated teachers. She was recognized by the WSB Board as one of the first adult liasons. The adult community's success has since allowed the collective to move to a professional stage: the Broad. "Thank you all for your love and support. See you at the barre, The Mayor."



Leslie Wallis

Producer

Leslie started ballet at age four in L.A., training in Cecchetti, later studying under Margaret Hills and Stanley Holden, and attending the Royal Ballet School. She then danced a season with the Maryland Ballet before going to college. She also danced in Germany, where she met her opera singer husband. Leslie is now an employment lawyer, a mindfulness facilitator and "Nana" to two amazing grandchildren — one currently a student at Westside. She has taught ballet over the years, even substituting for Margaret Hills at Westside! Leslie is not performing in this showcase due to injury but hopes to dance soon! Whether rehearsing, performing or producing, Leslie finds the showcase to be a joyous creative process of improving, creating and supporting a community that expresses itself through dance. "I am so fortunate to be part of this amazing project."



Alexandra Del Rosario ◇

Digital Program

Alexandra is an entertainment reporter. She trained with her three siblings at the Marat Daukayev School of Ballet. She started taking classes at Westside in 2023. Alexandra enjoys cooking, struggling with video games, tending to houseplants and pampering a bulldog named Henrietta.

***Choreographer ◇ Performer**



SUMMER SHOWCASE 2026
CHOREOGRAPHERS



Sadie Black, "Swing Time"

Sadie is a freelance ballerina, choreographer and teacher from and based in Los Angeles. She has performed with Los Angeles Ballet, Barak Ballet, Luminario Ballet, Raiford Rogers Modern Ballet and The Realm Company. Sadie has also produced projects for Freaks With Lines and created new works for LA Grooves.

She trained with Riverside Ballet Arts, Ballet Pacifica, Houston Ballet Academy, and the School of American Ballet. Before her freelance career, Sadie was a company dancer with Texas Ballet Theater, Columbia City Ballet and Los Angeles Ballet. Running parallel to her performing career is her passion for teaching ballet and yoga. She is on the faculty at

Westside School of Ballet the The SIX Compound.

Sadie has also coached and choreographed for students competing at Youth America Grand Prix and several other dance competitions. Her ballets "Ra" and "Swing Time" were both invited to perform at the YAGP Finals in NYC.



Damien Diaz, "La Belle Époque" ♦

Damien studied classical ballet on scholarship at the Miami Ballet, North Carolina School of the Arts, Alabama School of Fine Arts, Houston Ballet School and the School of American Ballet.

He danced corps de ballet with the Zürich Ballet of Switzerland and soloist and principal roles with the Leipzig Ballet in Germany, Dance Theatre of Vienna and the Ballet Trockadero de Monte Carlo in New York City. As a guest artist, Damien has performed with the San Francisco Ballet, Dallas Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, Tokyo Ballet, Clair Obscur Dance Company and the Luminario Ballet of Los Angeles. He has created works

for the California Riverside Ballet, Viktorion-Eckstein Productions in Berlin, "The Silence is Broken" at the Saban Theatre, the Luminario Ballet and North Coast Dance in Eureka.

He has been a ballet instructor for Edge Performing Arts Center, Burbank Dance Academy, Riverside Ballet Arts and open adult ballet classes at the Hollywood Dance Center. Damien appreciates and enjoys teaching the best of American, English, Russian, Danish and French techniques to help dancers of all levels achieve a well-rounded ability which is essential in the ballet world today.



Aimée Gaudio, "Waltz of the Hours"

Aimée began her formal ballet training at age 10 at the Westside School of Ballet under the direction of Yvonne Mounsey and Rosemary Valaire. She trained with the Boston Ballet, Pennsylvania-Milwaukee Ballet and the Hartford Ballet.

As an alumna she performed in numerous productions; such as "The Nutcracker," "Giselle," "Serenade," "Classical Symphony," "Sleeping Beauty" and "Coppélia." Aimée teaches technique classes to the junior and senior levels as well as adult classes and is part of the summer faculty.

Aimée has taught at Crossroads Elementary School as well as Loyola Marymount University. She is also a private pilates instructor and has worked with physical therapy recovery for dancers and athletes. Aimée attended the Teacher Training seminar at the Pacific Northwest Ballet School. In addition to continuing her education in classical ballet and pointe work, she also learned about nutrition and injury prevention for young dancers.



Chasen Greenwood, “Echoes of Infinity”

Newly director and choreographer of The Realm Company, Chasen has produced several sold out performances around California. Most recent work since the company launched includes “Billy Night” at Paramount Studios — a movie directed by Alec Roth featuring Al Pacino and Charlie Heaton — and “En Avant” for Neutrogena Studios.

Chasen has worked with artists such as Lady Gaga’s choreographer Richy Jackson and director Neal Brennan for an Xbox Super Bowl commercial. He was recognized by Dance Magazine as “one to watch” and completed a nationwide tour as soloist with State Street Ballet. He was also awarded “Best Young Choreographer” at Regional America Southwest.

Chasen began his career performing with LeAnn Rimes and touring nationally for “Casper: The Musical” with Broadway legend Chita Rivera. He trained on full scholarship with Pacific Northwest Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, Houston Ballet and Ballet Austin. Chasen performed in the West Coast premiere of “Newsies,” as well as on the East Coast.



Jeni Jones, “Keep Shining”

Jeni first danced on stage 30 years ago with the Joffrey Ballet at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and Segerstrom Center for the Arts. She danced on scholarship at Defore Dance Center in the 1990s, where she began her Luigi-style Jazz Dance training with Hama and simultaneously joined the modern, Giordano-style company Jazz Spectrum under the direction of Christine Baltes.

She studied Fosse and Theatre Jazz in Florida at the Broadway Theatre Project with Ann Reinking, Joel Grey and Tommy Tune. Jeni earned her B.A. from Fordham University and her M.F.A. from CalArts, while

continuing to train at notable N.Y. and L.A. institutions with legendary Jazz dance educators. She has also studied modern styles such as Graham and Horton, which she often incorporates into her work. Her students have gone on to star on Broadway and in films. Jeni has performed on stages of all sizes, in various mediums, taught master classes and presented work dance concerts including Masters of Movement at the Broad Stage, Jazz Dance Conference West and the Arizona Dance Festival.

Jeni is also an award-winning filmmaker, NAACP Award- winning theatre director, actor, martial artist, and MC. She is currently on faculty at Westside Ballet and at Hama Dance Center, where she assists Hama. She is thrilled to bring her thoughtful, heartfelt Jazz Dance class to dancers around the globe.



Nancy Paradis, “Crescendo”

Nancy began her career on the East Coast performing with the Washington Ballet, Richmond Ballet and Louisville Ballet. As a principal and soloist, she danced roles ranging from classical, neo-classical and modern ballets.

She has taught as adjunct professor at UC Irvine, Loyola Marymount University and currently Moorpark College, where she prepares dancers for a commercial career in the performing arts. She's an instructor, choreographer and co-producer of concerts. She also mentors young artists by collaborating with the music, theater and film departments. In

Fall 2021, she returned to Richmond Ballet to choreograph a new work/world premier.

Nancy is artistic director of her company LA Dance Moves, a unique dance, music, art and media company. She is now extending her company into the dance and music community to give opportunity to more talented artists. By collaborating composers and musicians with dance and art, she reaches new audiences and creates beautiful works of the human spirit through film, concert and media works.



Dani Savka, “Souvenir de Florence” ◇

Dani grew up training at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater and the Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet under Marcia Dale Weary. She has since danced professionally as a freelancer in L.A. and choreographed for Ballet California. She is also experienced in cinematography and acting for stage and film.

Additionally, Dani works as an executive assistant to a philanthropist in the Beverly Hills area and is very involved in non-profit work. Dani holds a bachelor's degree in classical dance from Point Park University. In 2021, she was invited to choreograph for Westside's adult showcase. She is thrilled to be in her fifth year as a showcase choreographer.



Sven Toorvald, “Free”

Sven is an alumnus of Westside Ballet who has danced with Houston Ballet and Hubbard Street Dance Company. He regularly performs in Westside Ballet's production of “The Nutcracker.”

Sven is also an alumnus of AFI, the American Film Institute. His highly-regarded documentary, “The Ballerina Interviews,” premiered on PBS in November 2003. Sven teaches primarily the adult level as well as the introductory pas de deux class for the children's upper division.



Natalia Velarde, “Before Nightfall”

Born and raised in Bolivia, Natalia began her dance education at age four with Mónica Camacho and Irina Yakimova at Summa – Artis Escuela de Ballet Clásico y Contemporáneo in the city of La Paz. She continued her training at the French academy Franco-Boliviano where she earned an International Baccalaureate.

At 18, Natalia moved to the United States to study dance at Goucher College where she graduated with honors with a B.A. in dance and a concentration in arts administration. While there, she studied and performed with many guest artists and choreographers, including Brian

Reeder (ABT), Christopher Fleming (NYCB), Jessica Lang and Thaddeus Weidman Davis. She was also chosen as a soloist for the reconstruction of Michel Fokine's “Niana's Maiddens” by the Fokine State Archive.

After graduation, Natalia joined the Washington Ballet as an apprentice and Deep Vision Dance Company – a thriving modern dance company located in Baltimore. She became a member of the National Ballet Company under the direction and support of Pamela Moore where she performed for seven seasons; first as a company dancer and then as a soloist.

Natalia later worked as the coordinator for the Koresh School of Dance in Philadelphia and as a program assistant for the Dancers' Group in San Francisco. As a freelancer and guest artist, she has performed in Philadelphia, New York, Virginia, London, Marseille, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

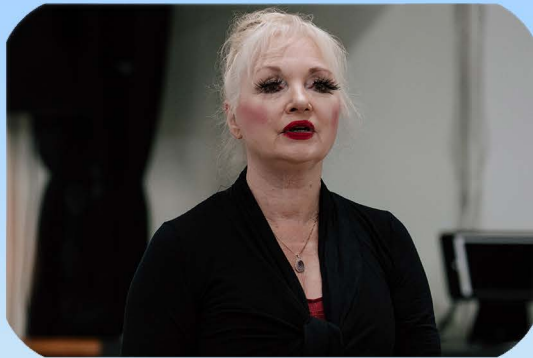
Natalia holds the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) Teacher Accreditation in Cecchetti Technique Grade I thru Advanced. She serves as faculty member at the Debbie Allen Dance Academy and Westside School of Ballet, and is currently a GYROTONIC® Apprentice.



Aihui Wang, “Broken Lines” ◇

Aihui discovered her passion for ballet as an adult and has been training in classical ballet for the past five years. She has since found a love for choreography as a way tell stories through movement. She debuted her choreography at last year’s showcase and is excited to return this year as both a choreographer and performer. Her work blends classical ballet with contemporary movement as she explores her evolving artistic voice. She values the collaboration of choreography and hopes to create works that help dancers discover their beauty, individuality and emotional expression while inviting audiences to find their own connections and

interpretations. Aihui is a teacher and a graduate student in biochemistry at UCLA. She loves exploring cities and nature, searching for great ice cream shops and recently started learning how to play the drums!



Liz Wasynczuk, “La Belle Époque”

Liz began her early training at the Hartford Ballet School in Connecticut. She then moved to California and trained 10 years with the former Ebsen School of Ballet in Pacific Palisades. She also trained in the summer at the Rosella Hightower Dance School in Cannes, France. She pursued a teaching career and became co-director with Vilma Ebsen, presenting performances for children through adults.

As a member of Westside Ballet’s faculty for over 20 years, Liz teaches the Pre-Ballet, Ballet I and Ballet II students in accordance with the syllabus of Yvonne Mounsey, director and founder of Westside Ballet. Liz presents new ballets for the young students each year for their annual performances.

Liz is co-director of Westside Ballet’s Wardrobe Department and has costumed performances for the past 20 years.



Zane Tahvildaran- Jesswein Guest Artist, “La Belle Époque”

Zane is a company member at Ballet San Antonio and a Westside alumnus. He grew up in Santa Monica and trained under Martine Harley, Francine Kessler Lavac, Johnny Zhong, Seth Belliston; and guest artists including Patricia

Neary, Robert Fairchild and Tiler Peck. Zane attended several summer and fall intensives with American Ballet Theatre and has performed in China as part of Santa Monica College’s Global Motion Dance Company.

He also trained at the official school of Utah Metropolitan Ballet and graduated from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts with a degree in dance. While at NYU and with the Second Avenue Dance Company, he performed in José Limón’s “Missa Brevis” and Laja Field’s “Votes 4 Mars.” He is an avid fan of Animanga. He also enjoys film, a wide range of music genres and all forms of dance.



Rony Baseman Guest Artist, “La Belle Époque”

Rony is a dancer with Los Angeles Ballet. He honed his craft at renowned institutions, including Miami City Ballet School, Kirova Ballet Miami and ABT JKO School. He graduated from the latter in 2022. He earned full merit

scholarships at each school, including the Agnes Varis Scholarship at ABT JKO.

He further refined his skills through intensive training programs at ABT New York Summer Intensive and Sarasota Cuban Ballet Summer Intensive. He has performed with the Washington Ballet Company in roles in “Such Sweet Thunder,” “Serenade,” “Theme and Variations” and “Sleeping Beauty.” In 2024, he joined OBII and performed in “Romeo and Juliet,” “Peter Pan” as a lost boy and Lead of the Hunt in “Giselle.” He also teaches Boys and Adult classes at Westside.

A black and white photograph of a dance studio. In the foreground, a woman with her hair in a bun and wearing a headband stands in profile, looking to the left. She is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt tied at the waist over a dark skirt. To her left, another woman stands in profile, also looking left, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and dark leggings. In the background, two more women are visible, standing and looking in the same direction. On the right side of the frame, the profile of a woman's face is partially visible, looking towards the center. The text "SUMMER SHOWCASE 2026" and "CAST" is overlaid in the center of the image.

SUMMER SHOWCASE 2026
CAST

SUMMER SHOWCASE 2026 | CAST



Nancy Adzentoivich is an aerial and exotic dance instructor; formerly an advertising and marketing executive. She began studying pole and aerial dance at age 50 and is the creator of GenX Pole Arts, a traveling program that introduces the dance forms to women in their 40s and above. A

mother of three, Nancy started her formal dance training at Santa Monica College, studying contemporary dance. She has also trained in heels and chair dance.



Alexis Aguila works as an administrator for UCLA Health. She began taking ballet classes at Westside two and a half years ago. She enjoys listening to Baroque classical music.



Sheila Ahorian is an engineer. Her dance background includes ballet, tap, jazz, salsa and hip-hop. She enjoys hiking and trying new things.



Antonina Anselmo is a nursing student. She trained in classical ballet from age three to 16 and returned to ballet a year ago after a break. She speaks Russian and loves small dogs.



Nnenna Anyiwo works in human resources. She started ballet nine years ago and began training at Westside in 2021. This is her fourth year dancing in the showcase.



Erica Barry is a talent agent with more than 15 years of ballet experience. She has performed as a dancer at both Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm.



Kelsey Bauman is a cardiothoracic nurse and fertility procedure nurse. Her first ballet classes were in high school in Virginia. Her love for the classical ballets inspired her to return to ballet almost 20 years later after discovering L.A.'s adult ballet community. Last year, Kelsey performed the showcase pregnant with her son. She is excited for him to be in the audience this year, so long as he has had his nap.



Marisa Beresford is an architectural designer. She has danced ballet since she was three, only occasionally breaking to deal with injury. She also has plenty of training in modern, contemporary and jazz. Marisa and one of her friends from Westside hiked Half Dome last year!



Onyx Black is self-employed and recently returned to ballet, which she studied off-and-on for the last 15 years. Her strong suit is modern contemporary but her dance background also includes pole/aerial dance, twerk and many more styles. Onyx loves to garden and has five cats.



Callie Bonne practiced ballet and jazz in middle and high school, and participated in competitive color guard through college. She has been a student at Westside Ballet for two and a half years. Finance is her 9 to 5, but being a cat mom is her 5 to 9.

SUMMER SHOWCASE 2026 | CAST



Helene Bouboulis is retired and an intermediate level dancer in Westside's adult ballet program. She is 70.



Natalie Ford Brown is an artist who grew up training at Westside for 10 years. She also trained extensively in hip-hop, West African, jazz, reggaeton and more. Natalie has had her own band for over a decade.



Jennifer Bulger is a clinical psychologist with more than 30 years of experience in ballet, modern and jazz. She is also a dressage rider and competitor.



Meghan Chaudhary works in product management and began dancing at age eight, studying Odissi, a form of classical Indian dance. She recently began her ballet journey, taking classes as an adult. Meghan moved to Los Angeles last summer and never wants to leave!



Angela Check is excited to be returning for her third year with Westside Ballet Academy. She has performed in several jazz and contemporary pieces and also appeared in the Broadway musical "The Drowsy Chaperone." She also enjoys studying tap dance and continues to expand her training in multiple dance styles. Outside the studio, Angela works in casting for the film industry and provides consulting services to entertainment professionals. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, spending time with her dog Bailey, and sharing her love of the performing arts.



Mara traveled to Egypt last year!

Mara Conway works as a senior art director at an advertising agency. She learned ballet in a pre-professional setting until she was 18. Since college, Mara danced on-and-off but has missed it so much she started taking James Ady's Sunday morning adult classes. She has been loving it. Mara



Kiva Dawson is a special education paraeducator. She trained at Westside under Yvonne Mounsey, Rosemary Valaire and Caprice Walker, and earned a scholarship to Pennsylvania Ballet's summer and trainee programs. For 26 years, Kiva pursued a variety of commercial dance opportunities across L.A. and New York. She has performed under "Grease" choreographer Patricia Birch for the San Francisco Symphony's "A Jazz Symphony." Kiva has also danced with Sven Toorvald in Westside Ballet's "The Nutcracker." She is a dance history nerd and a forever student who has a knack for cleaning and perosnal organization. "I am a huge supporter of people coming together to create community and I am grateful that the team behind WSB continues to thrive!"



Darlene Dirstine is a physical therapist and retired professional dancer. She danced ballet, contemporary and modern in New York and taught at the Ailey School for a decade. Beyond dance, Darlene loves the beach, cooking and hiking.



Jason Douglas is a college professor. He grew up dancing jazz and hip-hop, and performed musical theater in high school. He has been practicing ballroom for the last three years and ballet for the last six months. He loves to read and play games of all kinds, and has two perfect cats.

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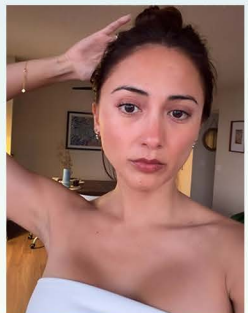
Mikkari Eaddy works as a data analyst. She has been dancing on-and-off since childhood. After a hiatus, she returned to dance in her sophomore year of high school. Mikkari primarily trained at Cal Poly SLO, where she danced multiple days a week and participated in up to two performances a year. She credits her time in college for much of her growth as a dancer and says it's why she continues to dance. Mikkari loves the movies and is a dedicated AMC A-Lister.



Chandler Eldridge is a Student Affairs Officer for a master's program at UCLA. She's been dancing for over 10 years. She began her training in Orange County and continued her studies while a student at UCLA. She is the owner of a 5-year-old rescue dog named Finley and loves to bake, especially bread.



Shannon Erdmann works full-time in finance and is a mother of two. She received her training at San Francisco Ballet.



Sofia Esquivel is a chief of staff for an IT company and immersed herself in dance after college. She has since danced through multiple pairs of pointe shoes and performed en pointe for a theater show three years ago. She is bilingual and, unlike 99% of people, enjoys going to the dentist.



Lydia Fabre works as an accountant and started dancing as soon as she could walk. She is primarily experienced in Haitian Folkloric dance and ballet. She took a long break mid-college and returned to dance almost three

years ago. She loves visiting her family in New York and enjoys re-watching old shows.



Annabella Ferraiuolo is an event coordinator who channels her dance and performing arts background in ballet, music and theater for work. She coordinates events for an inclusive and large scale non-profit performing arts venue. She has been dancing since age two, training in ballet from age seven to 18 and growing her studies in college to include modern and contemporary. Annabella's mother was her first dance teacher.



Angharad Fitzgerald works as a photographer. She started dancing at age five, training in contemporary and tap for 10 years. She began studying ballet at Westside four years ago and progressed to pointe work after her first year. Angharad is originally from Northern Ireland and recently graduated from CalArts with a BFA in photography and media.



Eli Galez is a student. His dance background includes Santa Monica College's ballet program, a background in Latin rhythms and some jazz and contemporary. He enjoys playing beach volleyball and is also a photographer and actor.



Kathy Gordon is an actress. She has studied dance for more than 50 years. Professionally known as Mary Kathleen Gordon, Kathy has acted in TV and in film for over the last 40 years. She moved to NYC in the '80s with dreams of being on Broadway, but decided that the beaches of California and the biz in L.A. were much more inviting. She's never given up her love of dancing, having studied in L.A. with Denise Leitner, Michele Assaf, Cinderella Che, Bill Goodson and now the wonderful Jeni Jones. "A day without the joy of dancing is like a day without breathing!"

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Christina Gregory works as a compliance analyst at a financial firm. She danced occasionally during her youth and began training at Westside in 2023. She has grown more consistent, focusing on beginning level classes and pointe work. She studied theater at LMU and has performed in theater productions across Los Angeles, most recently in "The Woman in Black." Christina performed the title role en pointe.



Bari Grossman is a CX Manager at Liquid IV and has been training at Westside since December 2022 — she has never looked back! She is originally from New Jersey, and moved to Los Angeles from Brooklyn nine years ago. After a 15-year hiatus, Bari returned to ballet in 2022 and has had the absolute best experience at Westside. This will be her fourth showcase. "I couldn't be more excited to participate. The showcase is one of the highlights of my year, and I'm looking forward to sharing my love of ballet with our friends and families!"



Daniel Grzelak is a sales manager for a software company. He trained with Rose and Charles Flachs at the Massachusetts Academy of Ballet and John White and Margarita de Saá at the Pennsylvania Academy of Ballet. He danced professionally with Colorado Ballet from 2012 to 2013. Daniel returned to ballet after more than a decade away, taking classes at Westside and performing in the summer showcase.



Mimi Gu works as a dog groomer. She began her ballet training in 2019. This is her fourth time performing in the Westside adult showcase.



Yael Hartstein is a real estate lawyer who has been dancing at Westside Ballet for eight years. She recently started playing the accordion.



Hadiza Hinish is an actor and pilates instructor with her own private practice in Hollywood. She began her ballet journey as an adult two years ago. She also studies Balinese mask movement and Yat Malmgren.



Sira Hotsinpiller works as a data analytics engineer for the University of California. She started ballet two and a half years ago at Santa Monica College and has been loving it. She also teaches yoga and computer science classes at SMC. She started at Westside last year. Sira has also practiced yoga for 20 years and is 500 hours-certified at Yoga Works.



Aileen Hui is a research scientist. She trained at a Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) school and was a company dancer at the Pasadena Dance Theatre.



Nicole Huynh is a partner and data product marketing lead for Data Cloud at Google Cloud. She danced in Georgia Ballet's pre-professional/apprentice program during her youth. She stopped dancing for many years but returned to ballet two years ago and has worked to get back en pointe. She runs a viral dog Instagram page, is a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) in her spare time and is fluent in sign language.

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Heather Kahler is an animation color designer who has worked on animated series and features. She has enjoyed dancing since her youth, including when she trained in jazz and ballet at Westside. Heather, also a West L.A. local and mother of two amazing kids, enjoys swimming, running, soaking up the sun, making people laugh and smile. She also loves gardening, even if it doesn't love her back. She returned to Westside multiple times over the years, most recently after her mother's passing. "I wanted to use my body and honor her because she no longer could use hers. After my first week of initially going to San Diego to care for her, I came to class. On a Tuesday. To honor her and myself."



Cole Kaller is a musical theater student at New York University and a singer-songwriter. He has been dancing in shows for years and takes ballet classes at school. He loves using dance to tell stories and express raw and powerful emotion. He credits his agility and jumps to childhood gymnastics and playing sports throughout high school. Cole's favorite band is the Indigo Girls. In sixth grade he ran a pillow and blankets company called Kaller Kozy. He also loves making funny iMovie videos and has posted some on YouTube.



Monica Klimczak started ballet at age four at Long Beach Ballet. She trained there until she was 10 then moved to the Dance Company, where she learned jazz and lyrical. She also danced in college at USC and has been at Westside for nearly 10 years. Monica is beyond thankful for the Westside community. The teachers have fueled her passion for dance and have been much more than instructors — they've been mentors, cheerleaders, and constant sources of wisdom. She's also thankful for the pianists in class who inspire her deeply. Of course, Westside wouldn't feel like her second home without the amazing front desk staff, whose warm smiles and kindness brighten her day everytime she walks through the door (which is pretty much every day).



Kayla Knight is an administrative assistant and receptionist for a dance studio. She started dancing at age 18 about two years ago and studied ballet at Moorpark College. She also has experience in pointe, modern, jazz, heels and contemporary. The tattoo on Kayla's back is of herself and her twin sister.



Rose Knight works in the film industry and has trained in ballet, jazz, heels and precision jazz. She performed at Madison Square Garden with her collegiate dance team for the NCAA, trained with the Radio City Rockettes through high school and college, and still loves to take classes when she's not working. She is also a huge WWE fan. "I've heard it's good to have a well rounded palate."



Amanda Renee Knox is a filmmaker. She studied dance under Patsy and Vicky Swayze at the Swayze School of Dance in Houston. She also trained under Debbie Allen and continued her studies at Houston Ballet, primarily training with Priscilla Nathan Murphy. In 1997 she moved to Washington D.C. and practiced at Dance Space, where she assisted with its youth program. She participated at American Dance Festival and performed for both Ron Brown and Heidi Latsky. In New York, she also trained with Jackie Villamil, Simon Dow and Bella Malinka Dall. Amanda also studied Williamson Technique at Actors Movement Studio and is an avid equestrian.



Tatianna Lamperti works in finance for Lionsgate Entertainment and has been dancing since age four. She was encouraged by her grandmother, a former principal dancer at the opera house in Sweden. Tatianna practiced ballet and contemporary through high school and competed at Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP). She attended summer intensives and workshops at Joffrey Ballet, Ballet West, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, San Francisco Ballet and more. She stopped dancing during the pandemic and now returns to ballet for fun! Tatianna,

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a former competitive skier, grew up in Lake Tahoe and enjoys a variety of outdoor activities. She graduated from LMU and has lived in L.A. for about five years.



Gigi Laurita is an executive assistant working in fashion. She danced until age 13, but returned to dance last year after almost a decade. She participated in last year's showcase. Gigi loves anything and everything creative, from filmmaking to dancing.



Christine Lee works in digital content. She has over 30 years of ballet experience, including performances of "The Nutcracker" during her youth and pointe work. Christine was once a DJ, appeared on a JEOPARDY! promo and also bakes her own bread.



choreographing for tap and finds the musicality of the style really interesting. She returned to ballet a few years ago when she started classes at Westside. Sydney is a big reader. While she's a big fan of contemporary fiction, she's trying to read more classics. To balance this out, she is also a huge reality TV junkie.



Hiromi Levy is a ballet pianist. She has participated in Westside Ballet's Adult Showcase several times and previously performed with the Boulder Ballet. Outside of dance she enjoys cooking, reading, sudoku, yoga, watching movies and having a fun time with friends.



Erin Lewis is a financier and has been a student at Westside Ballet for over three years. Outside of spreadsheets and numbers, Erin loves expressing herself through fashion and ballet.



Nan Lin is a biotechnologist. She began ballet as an adult at St. Louis' Center of Creative Arts. After moving to L.A. in 2015, she started classes at Westside Ballet and Preston Li's Academy of Dance. Nan feels very fortunate to participate in excellent training for adult ballet. A book worm who

never thought her name would be associated with the words "performing arts," Nan has danced on stage several times – all thanks to the guidance, support and inspiration from the faculty and fellow dancers. Dance helps her discover herself and gives her strength and joy.



Jaelyn Lytle works as a school counselor for the Los Angeles Unified School District. She began dancing at age three, learning ballet, tap, hip-hop, lyrical and jazz. After stepping away from dance as an adult, she re-discovered her passion a few years ago when she enrolled in Westside, where she

began focusing on ballet and improving her technique. From her childhood through college, Jaelyn also worked as a background actor on numerous television shows and movies. "It was an incredible experience, with every day bringing excitement and something different on set."



Laila Madni is a psychologist. She started dancing at Westside Ballet at age four then pivoted to competitive rhythmic gymnastics. At age 12, Laila returned to Westside and continued ballet until she started college at USC. She danced in the USC Chamber Ballet Company for four years, and served as co-director

one of those years. After graduate school, she returned to ballet and has continued training in Westside Ballet's adult program. Laila is also a fine artist specializing in drawing and painting.

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Kristi Marinelli is a homemaker. She danced from age five to 19 and returned to dance in September. Though she practiced a variety of styles in her youth, ballet was her favorite. She feels fortunate to have experienced YAGP for fun as a teenager. Kristi enjoys sewing, reading and spending time with Einstein, her 6-year-old corgi.



Hillary McCarthy works as a 3D animator and has been dancing since childhood. She began dancing at age nine, inspired by a nanny who had been a professional dancer.



Sindy McManus teaches beginning adult ballet and is a wedding dance choreographer. She took ballet lessons as a child and has a bachelor's degree in dance, with an emphasis in ballet. She has danced in jazz and ballet performances and participated in ballroom shows and competitions. She is training to teach social dances (waltz, foxtrot, Viennese, etc.). Sindy won first

place in her first ever ballroom competition, when she and her partner performed a Viennese Waltz as Harley Quinn and the Joker.



Tanya Nobal is a software engineer and has been dancing for about 17 years. She studied a variety of styles growing up including ballet, jazz, tap and Bollywood. Though she stopped dancing in college, Tanya resumed three years ago focusing on ballet and Latin/ballroom. Tanya two has

perfect cats and enjoys drawing, printmaking, and crocheting.



Maddy Paull is a data engineer at a progressive political data company. She has been dancing nearly her entire life, mainly practicing ballet, modern, and contemporary/lyrical. She grew up at an RAD studio in West L.A. and continued taking classes and performing in college. She has been enjoying adult classes and has taken up any performance opportunities through adult programs. "I'm excited to be on a stage again!" Maddy is an avid fan of the Dodgers, national parks and the New York Times crossword.



Maria Pena is a travel agent. She has primarily danced ballet for over 50 years. She attended Walnut Hill Performing Arts High School and studied dance at CalArts. She has performed with local contemporary ballet and modern companies. She loves to travel.



Rebecca Rainhart is an electrical engineer. She danced from age four through high school, training at the Russell School in Virginia. Upon graduating college, she moved to L.A. for work and found Westside in her search for a new dance community. Rebecca loves to hike: she has summited three 14ers and plans to summit three more this summer! She also likes to knit and crochet in her free time.



Alexandra Rodriguez works as an advancement specialist and dance teacher. She has been dancing for more than 20 years. Alexandra trained in Vaganova and is certified by the Bolshoi. She was born and raised in Bolivia.



Victoria Roth O'Neal is a graduate student and has been dancing on-and-off for 30 years. She is the author of the children's book "Eva and the Impossible Tin Can Telephone."

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Lily Shih teaches English and Mandarin to middle school students. She moved to Venice in 2021 and found Westside School of Ballet. She has been at Westside since then and this is her fourth year performing in the Adult Showcase. Lily has learned from many incredible dance teachers and

appreciates the opportunity to work and dance with other dancers.



Nicole Shipman is a professional photographer who has been dancing since she was a teenager. She was on her middle school dance team and in musical theatre productions. She began dancing at Westside in 2018 and was also a burlesque performer for four years. Nicole, whose

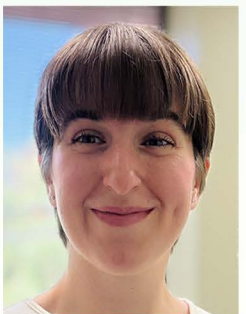
parents trained thoroughbred race horses, grew up around horses and often did her homework in the barn!



Skye Smith is a full-time college student studying film production. She has been at Westside for 14 years and has learned ballet, jazz, tap and contemporary. She is an incoming junior and has played the violin for 10 years and the guitar for two years.



Alysia Vanitizian has danced ballet for multiple years. She also performs Armenian dance.



Emily Von Urff is a master's student studying acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine. She also runs a social media and marketing company for healthcare providers. She spent her whole life wanting to dance but thought she had picked her sports in this life and that it was too late to try anything

new! She made a New Year's resolution in 2025 to try at least one ballet class. More than a year later, she is taking classes five days a week! "Dance is the best decision I've ever made for myself!" Emily also runs a ballet Instagram account with her best friend, Kristi, who is also in the showcase!



Emerson Wong is an engineer. Emerson is new to ballet but started in ballroom dancing. He has performed on stage many times, including last year's showcase. During the day, he is a rocket scientist working on NASA's Artemis and Boeing's Starliner.



Julia Wu is a marketing operations program manager at Amazon Studios. She has been dancing on-and-off since age three and returned to dance after moving to L.A. four years ago. The first concert she ever attended was for Hannah Montana.



Makiko Yamamori is a business owner and does investing. She danced modern ballet from age three to seven and has been a student at Westside Ballet for a year.

SCENES FROM SUMMER SHOWCASE 2025



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