



# Ballet Theatre of Maryland

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**Contact:** Nicole Kelsch

**Phone:** (410) 224-5644

**Email:** [Nicole.Kelsch@balletmaryland.org](mailto:Nicole.Kelsch@balletmaryland.org)

## **BALLET THEATRE OF MARYLAND UNVEILS NEW LOGO DESIGN AT GALA EVENT**

*Their 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala gave Annapolis's resident ballet company an opportunity to perform live and share what the logo means for the future*

**ANNAPOLIS, MD (August 26, 2022)** – On Thursday night, Artistic Director Nicole Kelsch shared Ballet Theatre of Maryland's new logo at a gala celebrating their 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. The event, held at Prism Annapolis, also featured a silent auction, a raffle, and live performances from company artists.

The new logo was created by Lauren Martinez, BTM's Digital Content and Marketing Coordinator who is also a principal dancer in the company. Presenting a cohesive brand to the public with the logo helps make the general community more aware of the company while also supporting Kelsch's vision for BTM.

Says Kelsch, "The most impactful ballet companies are ones that are deeply knitted into the fabric of their community. When residents of the area hear 'BTM,' our goal is for them to think of us. The new logo represents this association with our public, as well marking the exciting time the company is entering. Over the next few years, I envision BTM's growth to include presenting a diverse repertoire of classical and contemporary works as well as many more works by outside choreographers."

This commitment to expanding the repertoire is evidenced not only by the upcoming world premiere from celebrated choreographer Keith Lee in *Les Sylphides and Other Works* (October 7-9), but also by the choice of programming for the gala performance: the joyful work *Mudita*, choreographed by principal dancer Lindsey Bell in 2021; an untitled contemporary solo by soloist dancer Michael West Jr.; *Rhapsody*, choreographed by Kelsch this year; and the classic White Swan Pas de Deux from Petipa's *Swan Lake*. These works demonstrate the growing diversity and excellence that audience members can expect from the company's programming.

The 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary season will open with the VIP event *Ballet in the Garden* at Hammond Harwood House (September 18), followed by mainstage productions *Les Sylphides and Other*

*Works* (October 7-9), *The Nutcracker* (December 10-18), *Momentum* (February 24-25), and *Don Quixote* (April 28-29) at Maryland Hall. To learn more, visit [balletmaryland.org](http://balletmaryland.org).

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**Ballet Theatre of Maryland**, founded in 1978, is designated as Maryland's premier professional ballet company and conservatory and has a long history performing at venues throughout the state. The company is comprised of 23 professional dancers, 15 apprentices, and 17 trainees. Professional faculty members of the Conservatory of Dance are current in their field, most with degrees or certifications in dance education. The conservatory offers a full curriculum of classes in ballet, jazz, modern, tap, partnering, and conditioning while providing students with professional performance opportunities. For more information about BTM, please visit [www.balletmaryland.org](http://www.balletmaryland.org) or call (410) 224-5654.

**Nicole Kelsch** received her early training from Peter and Kristin Degnan at Ballet Northeast in Pennsylvania. She also received training from Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, Ballet Austin, Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts, and Princeton Ballet. Nicole graduated from Point Park University in Pittsburgh, receiving her Bachelor of Arts in Ballet Performance in three years. Upon graduation, she danced professionally with Columbia City Ballet, Atlanta Festival Ballet, and Connecticut Ballet.

In 2006, Nicole joined The Ballet Theatre of Maryland as an apprentice under the direction of Dianna Cuatto. She was promoted to Principal Dancer in 2008 and throughout her career was featured as Clara and The Snow Queen in *The Nutcracker*, Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*, the Firebird in *The Firebird*, Swanhilda in *Coppelia*, Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, as a Principal in Antony Tudor's *Continuo*, the Principal Couple in *Italian Symphonette*, Titania and Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Magdalena in *An American Southwest Carmen*, Cinderella in *Cinderella*, Guinevere in *Excalibur*, Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Pearl in *The Little Mermaid*, and has performed the *Don Quixote Pas de Deux*.

In 2008, after having served on the faculty for two years, Nicole became the School Principal for The Ballet Theatre of Maryland Conservatory. She was named the Ballet Mistress for the company in 2015. Nicole retired from performing in March 2020 and became the Artistic Director in July 2020. She successfully led the company through a full 2020-2021 performing season at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, staging performances of Edward Stewart's *Dracula*, Dianna Cuatto's *The Nutcracker*, *An American Southwest Carmen*, and *The Little Mermaid*.

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