Alumni & Student News

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Hunter Finnegan joins the Tulsa Ballet for the 2014-15 Season

Photo Courtesy of the Tulsa Ballet August 15, 2014 - We are pleased to announce Hunter Finnegan has joined the Tulsa Ballet for the 2014-15 season. Hunter just graduated from the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater's School in May of 2014. Before joining the PBT School, Hunter trained at CFB for many years where he won the silver medal at the World Ballet Competition in 2010 and was featured in many roles in CFB productions. Read the article from Tulsa Ballet Kailey Withee joins the Ballet Arizona for the 2014-15 Season Kailey Withee taking a class at Central Florida Ballet.August 1, 2014 - We are pleased to announce, Academy Graduate: Kailey Withee, has joined Ballet Arizona for the 2014-15 season!

Sasha de Sola featured in "DANCING WITH NUREYEV" July 16, 2014 - Past CFB Student, Sasha de Sola, is featured in the trailer for "DANCING WITH NUREYEV". Watch the dramatic footage below and stay tuned for the full short film. Sasha de Sola featured in Ballet Zaida film June 30, 2014 - Past CFB Student, Sasha de Sola, is featured in Ballet Zaida's "Still Life"; a film created specifically for the internet. Watch the beautiful short film below. CFB Academy Student, Aurora Naatjes, featured in Gala of the Stars in Sibiu, Romania Photo by: Ovidiu Matiu, Aurora Naatjes performing Variation from Flames of Paris

March 23, 2014 - Aurora Naatjes, age 12, traveled to Sibiu, Romania to compete in the World Ballet Competition OPEN 2014. She placed 4th in the first day of qualifying rounds and was selected to compete in the finals day: WBC OPEN Excellence Award Contest. She ended her trip with a feature in the WBC OPEN's Gala of the Stars, performing her contemporary "Empire State Of Mind" and was awarded an "Honorable Mention" in the Introductory Category.

Joanna Schmidt featured by the Pointe Magazine Joanna Schmidt in class with the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Photo by Rosalie O'Connor Photography February 11, 2014 - Pointe Magazine published an article on the changing face of auditioning for professional ballet companies. Here's how to cope with the "immersive auditions" that are becoming increasingly popular: http://bit.ly/1oaJkSn Abigail Cotter joins the Colorado BalletSeptember 9, 2013 - We are please to announce Abigail Cotter has joined the Colorado Ballet's Studio Company for the 2013-14 season. Abigail in her 1st arabesque at the San Francisco Ballet School. Abigail trained at the Central Florida Ballet Academy from a very early age. She went on to win numerous awards including, the Bronze Medal in the Preparatory Category at the World Ballet Competition USA in 2008 and the Gold Medal in the Junior Contemporary Division at the Youth America Grand Prix regional in Orlando, Florida. She concluded her studies at the prestigious San Francisco Ballet School and immediately joined the Colorado Ballet. Meredith Harrill joins the State Street BalletSeptember 6, 2013 - We are please to announce Meredith Harrill has joined the State Street Ballet for the 2013-14 season. Read more on Meredith Harrill's studies at the Central Florida Ballet Academy. Joanna Schmidt Speaks to Pointe Magazine about Summer IntensivesJune/July 2013 - CFB Alumna, Joanna Schmidt, recently spoke to Pointe Magazine about Summer Intensives and also how to cope with competition among dancers. Read the Pointe Magazine article here Sasha de Sola, CFB Alumna, Promoted to Soloist at San Francisco Ballet Hansuke Yamamoto & Sasha de Sola in Balanchine’s Divertimento No. 15.

© Dave Morgan and courtesy of San Francisco Ballet. Monday, September 24, 2012 - Sasha de Sola recently had one of the greatest moments of her career with the San Francisco Ballet. During the second act of a performance on tour in London, SFB's Artistic Director, Heigl Tomasson, took the microphone to announce De Sola's promotion to Soloist! Sasha de Sola, who trained first at Southern Ballet Theater under direction of Vasile Petrutiu and then later at CFB, was featured as Maria in CFB's first and second Nutcracker productions in 2001 and 2002. She later trained at the Kirov Academy of Ballet in Washington, D.C. for two years. Upon graduating she became an apprentice with the San Francisco Ballet. Dance Review: "These dancers are, quite simply, a joy to watch. The most Mozartian performance in the Balanchine is that of Sasha De Sola, who dances as if dispensing fragments of some sublime, heart-locked secret." - The Guardian UK, September 2012

Pittsburgh Ballet Theater Hires Mount Dora Woman (Daily Commercial) Monday, May 7, 2012 - JoAnna Schmidt, 18, of Mount Dora, who started taking classes at the Central Florida Ballet Academy in Orlando when she was 7 years old, has been hired by the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre for its 2012-13 program...Read Full Article CFB Alumni, JoAnna Schmidt, Talks Life Before and After PBT March 31, 2012 - After graduating from the Central Florida Ballet Academy in 2010, JoAnna Schmidt immediately joined the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater Graduate Program on full scholarship. During her two years at PBT, she trained under the direction of Janet Popeleski, Majorie Grundvig, and Dennis Marshall and was even featured in "The Nutcracker" as a Snowflake, Flower, and Shepherdess. Recently JoAnna had one of the most exciting experiences of her life when she was offered a contract for the 2012-13 season with Pittsburgh Ballet Theater. Join us as we speak with JoAnna as she revisits her training days at Central Florida Ballet Academy and discusses her new life at Pittsburgh Ballet Theater. Read Full Article CFB Alumni, Sasha De Sola, Takes Stage in Principal RoleFebruary 27, 2012 - Sasha De Sola recently performed her first principal role with the San Francisco Ballet, one of the top ballet companies in the world. She received a great review from ArtsSF.com... Photo By: Erik Tomasson "Helgi Tomasson's classical 'Trio' on the same program displayed the sunny Sasha De Sola, stepping up from the corps de ballet. De Sola ingratiatingly radiated "This is fun" rather than "Just watch me do this next tough step" ----a refreshing change of outlook."

Sasha De Sola first performed with the Central Florida Ballet as Maria in its 2001 premiere production of "The Nutcracker". CFB Alumni, Meredith Harrill, Rehearses with "Choreographers of Color" Winner at Joffrey BalletFebruary 14, 2012 - The 2011-12 season marked the second year Meredith Harrill is training at the Joffrey Ballet and her first year as a trainee. She recently recieved the honor of performing in a contemporary piece choreographed by Ray Mercer. Mercer won the Joffrey Ballet's "Choreographers of Color" contest and created a piece for the trainees at the Joffrey Ballet. Check out the video below (M. Harrill in black turtleneck leotard). CFB Alumni, Lauren Rose, Proves Childhood Wishes Can Come TrueJanuary 26, 2012 - The kindness of a stranger got Lauren Rose off to a successful start on her University of Florida academic career. When the then-freshman boarded the bus for the first class of her first semester at

UF, Lauren Rose had no idea where she was going. She wasn’t even sure she was on the right bus. Rose was rescued when a stranger offered to take the wide-eyed gymnast newcomer to the building that her class was in. “I was very fortunate. I had no clue where I was going. I was really stressed the first day of class and I didn’t know where anything was,” Rose said. Read Full Article