

BALLET WEST'S 60th

As Ballet West celebrates its 60th Anniversary, we are mindful of the man who founded Ballet West and became a giant in the history of American ballet.

In a recent review of *Firebird*, Chris Myers said "Ballet West was founded by William Christensen, who also founded San Francisco Ballet, staged the first American production of the complete *Nutcracker*, and led The University of Utah to become the first American university with a ballet department. It's difficult to overstate his importance to the world of ballet, and it's impossible to overstate his role in helping to turn Salt Lake City from an artistic backwater into a dance mecca. It's fitting, then, that this latest production opened with a piece that reached back through Christensen's own history to the creation of modern ballet itself."

Les Roka of *The Utah Review* wrote an in-depth article celebrating Ballet West's 60 years. It is so full of amazing pictures and stories, and the travel back in history is an incredible journey for anyone who loves Ballet West and ballet in general. If you'd like to read the article [click here](#).

FEVER DREAM

Ballet West Academy is not only a training ground for dancers, but it has also become a place for choreographers to try new works on students as part of the Ballet West, artÉmotion Choreographic Workshop. This elite company experience focuses on the process of learning new works and performing in the space of just two weeks. The summer of 2022, Joshua Whitehead, long-time Ballet West dancer (recently retired) was hired by the Program Director, Allison DeBona, to create a new contemporary ballet on the students at the Choreographic Workshop.

The piece – titled *Fever Dream* – featured original music composed by Whitehead specifically for the piece. At the performance, it quickly gained a lot of buzz; everyone was talking about this professional company quality new work. Ballet West Artistic Director, Adam Sklute – who attended the student performance – was also impressed with Whitehead's choreography and invited him to set the piece on his company dancers.

This was an exciting full-circle moment for Whitehead as a former Ballet West dancer and new choreographer, the company members he danced with for many years, and for the students he originally choreographed the piece on. Many of the dancers who were part of the student performance are now part of the Profession Training Division, or Trainees. It is thrilling for them to watch the company dance the part that was choreographed on them!

You still have 2 more chances this Saturday to see *The Firebird*, *Fever Dream*, and *Starts and Stripes*. To read reviews of the latest Ballet West triple-bill entitled *Firebird* [click here](#).



Joshua Whitehead



Whitehead in rehearsal with BW dancers



Dancers of Ballet West in *Fever Dream*

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PERFORMANCES

- **Ballet West Performs – Firebird – Final 2 shows!!** At the Capitol Theatre. [Click to purchase tickets.](#)
- **Utah County Campus Performs - The Snow Maiden** – November 18, 1:30 and 5:00 at the Covey Center. [Get tickets here!](#)
- **Hip Hop Masterclass with Joshua Whitehead** – November 18, 5:00 – 6:30 at BC [Sign up Here!](#)
- **Thanksgiving Break** – November 20-26, **No classes for all campuses**, enjoy your family time!
- **Miriam Landis Masterclass** – December 2, 5:00-6:30 at BC [Click to sign up!](#)
- **Ballet West Performs – The Nutcracker** – November 28 – December 2 in Ogden at Browning Ctr.
- **Ballet West Performs – The Nutcracker** – December 8 – 27 at the Capitol Theatre [Tickets on sale now!](#)
- **Park City Campus Performs - The Nutcracker Suite** – December 9, 2 & 7 pm at The Eccles Center in Park City. [Get tickets here!](#)
- **Nutcracker Magic** – December 21, 11:00 and 4:00 at Grand America Hotel. [Purchase tickets today!](#)
- **Winter Break** – December 17-Jan 1, All Campuses – See you in 2024!

