

A *STEP* *in the* *RIGHT* *Direction*

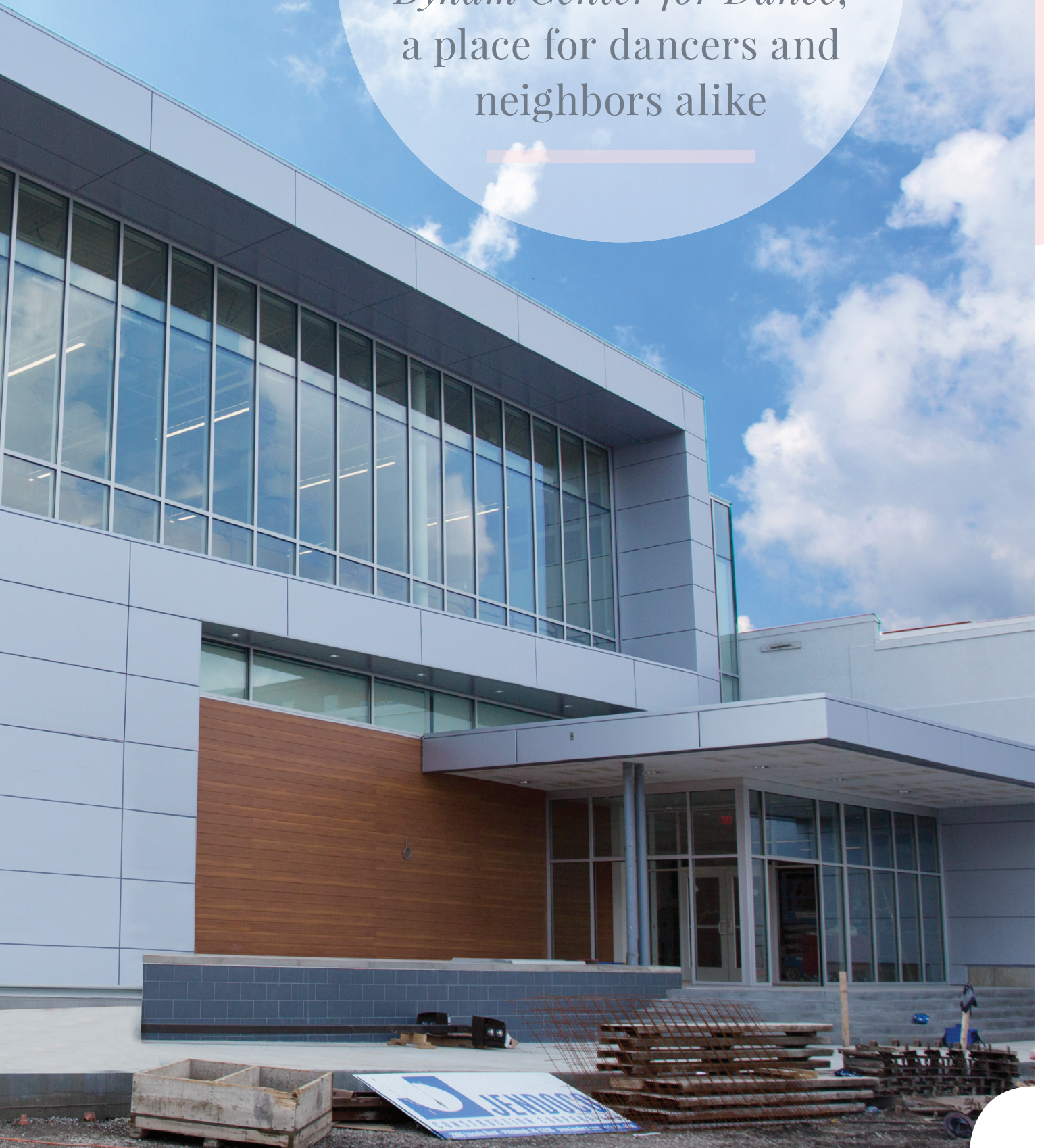
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PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL FORNATARO



PIÈCE DE RÉSISTANCE

Our team caught a glimpse of the new building during construction this past summer.

Pittsburgh Ballet
Theatre debuts the
Byham Center for Dance,
a place for dancers and
neighbors alike



School is back in session for Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre (PBT) and the future looks bright. The company is celebrating the launch of its \$6.5 million annex, Byham Center for Dance, adding two spacious dance studios, an expanded Pilates and Gyrotonic studio, new community dressing rooms, and a cross-training space. A sight to see from Liberty Avenue, the view looking out is just as radiant. Floor-to-ceiling windows outline a second-floor studio, giving dancers the opportunity to pirouette by sunset and rehearse on an accurate stage. From new productions, to blossoming education and outreach, the building's construction is symbolic of PBT's momentum in recent years. "It's a real boost," says PBT Executive Director Harris Ferris. "It elevates everything we're doing. Our audience growth has been significant and we have some great ballets lined up this year, including *Alice in Wonderland* and an all-new *Giselle*."

With offerings from pre-ballet for children, to dance cardio and conditioning classes, the new space — which broke ground last October — not only serves its spirited students and professional dancers, but active community members, too. "This is going to help put PBT on another plateau," says Artistic Director Terrence Orr. "You're going to look up and see dancers dancing;

you're going to know this is a real center for dance." Orr compares the company's rise to San Francisco Ballet's move Downtown in 1983. "It changed the whole atmosphere," he says. "It gave it a different kind of stature. All of a sudden, it was an important worldwide company. This is going to help our stature."

Over time, PBT School has seen an increase in the attendance of national and international students, such as PBT School alumni and current PBT Principal Dancers Yoshiaki Nakano of Osaka, Japan, and Amanda Cochrane of Spokane, Wash. Entering their eighth and ninth seasons, respectively, the dancers say the company's current feel mirrors a new beginning. "This is going to bring in a lot more students and opportunities to have the experiences I did," says Cochrane. Adds Nakano, "I think it's going to be motivating. I'm so excited about it."

Each season, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre manifests its vitality and rich programming to more than 70,000 patrons through 30 full-time professional dancers and over 1,000 students. Over the next three years, PBT projects a 40-percent increase in admissions across its four training divisions: Children's, Student, Pre-Professional, and Community. While just over 50 percent of its annual budget comes from ticket sales, tuitions, and an endowment, the remainder of its annual expenses is supported by contributions from individual donors, corporate partners, foundations, and government agencies to PBT's Annual Fund. Playing a large role in garnering support is the Board of Trustees. "I think it all boils down to really talented people having the tools they need to really excel," says Ferris. "Our board is very excited to really see that the concerted elective effort can bear such fruit. It just inspires them to do more." **Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre**, pbt.org.

“Pittsburgh is very unique. It's a big sports city, but everybody loves the arts. It's really incredible to be a part of that culture. ***This is my dream.***”
— Principal Dancer Amanda Cochrane



Principal Dancers
Amanda Cochrane and
Yoshiaki Nakano

Dancers like Cochrane and Nakano are inspirations for generations to come, motivating young dancers to do what they love.

“After dancing, I get emotional going on stage for the bows and hearing the applause. They loved the dance; I feel so relieved.

That's the best moment.”

— Principal Dancer Yoshiaki Nakano



Terrence Orr and Harris Ferris



LET'S DANCE



Celebrate Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's Grand Opening of the Byham Center for Dance on Sunday, **SEPTEMBER 25**, from 12-4 p.m. The free celebration will feature sample ballet and conditioning classes, performance demos, photo opportunities, food vendors, music and children's activities, tours of the costume shop, and more. "The grand opening will be a celebration of dance and the many ways that it can enrich our lives," says Ferris. "Dance is universal — whether it's for fitness, fun, self-expression, or your life's work. We want this facility to serve the community as a resource for dance-based training, fitness, and learning." The night prior, Saturday, **SEPTEMBER 24**, PBT will inaugurate the space, named in honor of Carolyn and Bill Byham, with a private reception for campaign contributors, featuring a private company performance and dedication of named spaces, including the Fleischner Family Studio, Catharine and John Ryan Studio, and Hilda and Freddie Fu Sports/Dance Conditioning Center.

“We hope guests will discover something new about dance and the many ways we can use movement to ***inspire and empower ourselves***. For alignment, expression, exercise, and coordination, ballet offers incredible benefits for the mind and body. We look forward to inviting in more dancers — whether they are just starting out, returning to it, or looking for a place to pursue it on a professional level.

— Artistic Director Terrence Orr

*Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's annex was designed by IKM Architects and constructed by Jendoco Construction Corporation.