



## Firestone Park, Akron

July 29 & 30, 2011

Dr. Margaret Carlson, *Director*

### The Company

Danielle Brickman, Ashley Cohen, Katie Gnagy, Stephanie Krise,  
Erin Conway Lewis\*, Kara Madden, Garrett Winston McCann, Brian Murphy,  
Rebecca J. Nicklos, Arthur Prettyman, Jarrod L. Sickles, Jason Wang

\*On leave of absence

### Verb C.L.I.C.Ks. Summer Trainee Program

Ryan De Alexandro, Lloyd Amir Boyd III, Kathryn Edmonds

*The Verb C.L.I.C.Ks. Program is made possible through generous funding from the Cleveland Foundation.*

#### Rehearsal Director

Richard Dickinson

#### Executive Assistant

Maura Haas

#### Lighting Design

Trad A Burns

#### Outreach and Education

Katie Gnagy

#### Development

Erin Conway Lewis

#### Lighting Assistant

Benjamin Gantose

#### Company Teachers

Richard Dickinson

#### Finance

Michelle Gregorczyk

#### Production Stage Manager

tba

Kay Eichman

Cynthia Graham

#### Marketing & PR

Dan Kilbane

#### Assistant Stage Manager

Barbee Thomas

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#### Verb Ballets thanks the following for their generous support:

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**Special thanks** to Steinway Hall, Jen and Jenée Garlando, David R. Pierce, and Barbee Thomas.

**Verb Ballets July 29 & 30 Program**

**JANIS & JOE**

*Company Premiere: 2011-2012 Season*

Choreography: Christopher Fleming

Music: Janis Joplin & Joe Cocker

Lighting Design: Ben Gantose after Trad A Burns

Costume Design: Janet Bolick

**Ryan De Alexandro, Lloyd Amir Boyd III, Danielle Brickman, Ashley Cohen,  
Kathryn Edmonds, Katie Gnagy, Stephanie Krise, Kara Madden  
Garrett Winston McCann, Brian Murphy, Rebecca J. Nicklos,  
Arthur Prettyman, Jarrod L. Sickles, Jason Wang**

*~ Intermission ~*

**SONGS WITHOUT WORDS**

*Company Premiere: 2011-2012 Season*

Choreography: Heinz Poll

*With permission by Jane Startzman and David Fisher*

Music: Felix Mendelssohn, Selections from *Songs Without Words*

Piano: David Fisher

Original Lighting: Thomas R. Skelton

Lighting Reproduction: Ben Gantose after Trad A Burns

Costume Design: A. Christina Giannini

Costume Restoration: Janet Bolick

***“He never saw another butterfly...”***

-Pavel Friedman

*Opening*

**Full Cast**

*Duet*

**Brian Murphy**

**Stephanie Krise**

*Quartet*

**Rebecca J. Nicklos**

**Arthur Prettyman**

**Kara Madden**

**Ryan De Alexandro**

*Trio*

**Katie Gnagy**

**Jason Wang**

**Danielle Brickman**

*Solo*

**Jarrod L. Sickles**

Special thanks to Steinway Hall for generously lending the keyboard.

*~ Intermission ~*

## CONTINUUM

*World Premiere: 2011-2012 Season*

Choreography: Antonio Brown

Choreography Assistant: I-Ling, Liu

Music: Remix by Antonio Brown

Lighting Design: Ben Gantose after Trad A Burns

Costume Design: Janet Bolick

**Ryan De Alexandro, Lloyd Amir Boyd, III, Danielle Brickman, Ashley Cohen,  
Kathryn Edmonds, Katie Gnagy, Stephanie Krise,  
Kara Madden, Garrett Winston McCann, Rebecca J. Nicklos,  
Arthur Prettyman, Jarrod L. Sickles, Jason Wang**

*~end~*

*Thank you for joining us this evening!*

### **Verb Ballets' Exclusive North American Representation**

#### **River City Artists Management; Linda Reznik, Booking Manager**

601 Wood Street 4th Floor | Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Office: 412.927.2873 | Cell: 412.335.5293 | Fax: 412.232.3262

**Verb Ballets**, a contemporary dance company, and its “best in class” professional dancers, under the leadership of Director Margaret Carlson, is a nationally recognized leader in performing dance works of the highest caliber; a catalyst to promote learning, nurture wellness and encourage dialogue about the dance art form. The company strives to be a thought leader in cultivating dance appreciation and support and serves to help make Northeast Ohio a national destination for the arts. Verb’s mission: ignite audience passion and participation in contemporary dance through performance, outreach programs and community engagement. Verb Ballets was named one of “25 to Watch in 2004” by *Dance Magazine*, the country’s leading news magazine covering dance, and recently the magazine bestowed more kudos on the company by naming Verb Ballets one of 5 “Great Tiny Troupes” in America. *The Plain Dealer* recently hailed Verb Ballets as “vibrant...bold...poetic... bursts of passion...” Verb Ballets gratefully acknowledges the citizens of Cuyahoga County for their support through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture. For more information about Verb Ballets please call our office in Shaker Heights, Ohio, at 216.397.3757 or visit our website at [www.verbballets.org](http://www.verbballets.org).

## Biographies

**Dr. Margaret Carlson (Director)** has international expertise in performing, teaching, choreographing, and working in a variety of settings. Dr. Carlson was an original member of the Cleveland Ballet, serving as a Principal dancer from 1972-1983. Also a member of Actors Equity, she performed in numerous musical theatre tours throughout the 1970's, including *Sweet Charity*, *Ballroom*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *Brigadoon*, *Mame*, *Hello Dolly!* and *The Merry Widow*. For many years, she choreographed for the Cleveland Opera. Dr. Carlson served as Director of the School of Dance at the University of Akron from 1985-1993. In 1993, she became Dean of the School of Dance at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, until she returned to Cleveland in 1999. She then served as the Development and Education Director for the Cleveland San Jose Ballet. She consulted both nationally and locally through her company, Carlson Consulting Group, Inc., with groups that have included The American Dance Guild, Chinese Performing Artists of America, Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, Ohio Ballet, Dancing Wheels, Ohio Youth Ballet, Ohio Conservatory of Dance, Tom and Susana Evert Dance Theatre, and White Cloud Studios. Dr. Carlson founded the American Alliance of Dance Artists and served as its first President. She has served as a Board member and officer for Kids on Broadway, DANCECleveland, the Cleveland Ballet Council, the American Dance Guild, the Council of Dance Administrators, the Hong Kong Ballet, the Hong Kong Dance Company and The Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund. She served as the secretary of the International Organization for Transition for Professional Dancers, a sub-committee of UNESCO, based in Switzerland from 1998-2006, and was Treasurer and Board member of the American Dance Guild in NYC and was its vice-president for 10 years. She is known for her work as the regisseur for the works of Ian (Ernie) Horvath. She received her doctorate from Durham University in the United Kingdom.

**Richard Dickinson (Rehearsal Director)** is the Artistic Director of Ballet Western Reserve. A former dancer with Ohio Ballet in Akron, OH, Mr. Dickinson was associated with that company since 1988. He later became ballet master and director of company touring. Mr. Dickinson has also directed Boston Ballet II and was a soloist with Boston Ballet for eight years. At age fifteen, he joined the Pasadena Dance Theatre and later was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts Emerging Choreographer Award for a work premiered by the same company. He performed in the PBS television production of "Frankie and Johnny" with the Chicago Ballet and danced principal roles in Asian, European and American tours with Rudolf Nureyev and the Boston Ballet. In addition, he has had an extensive dance career, including principal and soloist roles with Ohio Ballet, Boston Ballet, Honolulu City Ballet, various regional companies and Chamber Dance Theatre in Milwaukee, where he was Artistic Director. Mr. Dickinson has adjudicated four Regional Dance America festivals held throughout the United States. He was most recently the Artistic Director of Great Lakes Festival Ballet (Warren, OH) and has also served as Artistic Associate for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. Richard currently is a part-time lecturer at Youngstown State University, co-director of State Street Ballet's Summer Intensive (located in Santa Barbara, CA) and Artistic Director of Ballet Western Reserve. He received his Master of Fine Arts degree in Contemporary Dance from Case Western Reserve University in 2005. Mr. Dickinson has worked with Verb Ballets over the past seven seasons in some capacity or other as a dancer, choreographer, guest teacher and most recently the Rehearsal Director. This is his second season as Rehearsal Director for Verb Ballets.

**Antonio Brown (Choreographer)** a native of Cleveland, Ohio, Brown began his dance training at the Cleveland School of the Arts. He then traveled to New York City to attend The Juilliard School, from which he graduated in the spring of 2007. While there, he performed works by Jose Limon, Ohad Naharin, Jiri Kylian, Eliot Feld, Aszure Barton, Jessica Lang, and Susan Marshall. Mr. Brown joined the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company in 2007.

**Christopher Fleming (Choreographer)** As a member of the New York City Ballet, Mr. Fleming danced solo and principal roles in works by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins and Peter Martins. He also headed a group of soloists and principals from the New York City Ballet that toured Europe and performed his choreography as well as that of George Balanchine. With Mr. Balanchine's encouragement he embarked on a career as a choreographer and received a fellowship from the National Choreographic Institute. Mr. Fleming served as the Artistic Director of the Compania Colombiana de Ballet at the Teatro Colon in Bogota, Colombia from 1985 to 1990. He was named Artistic Director of Bay Ballet Theatre in Tampa, Florida in 1993. In the mid 2000's, Mr. Fleming was Co-Director of Contrast Dance Theatre based in New York City. He has served as Assistant Director and Resident Choreographer for The Rock School for Dance Education for nearly ten years. He has and continues to guest teach at many schools and companies across the country and globe. Mr. Fleming has enjoyed and is currently undertaking a freelancing choreographic and teaching career. He has recently formed BalletFleming, a small company of dancers dedicated to performing his work. He has choreographed a broad variety of works seen throughout the country and internationally including *The Who's Tommy*, *The Myth and Madness of Edgar Allan Poe*, "Janis & Joe", *Play Ball!*, and also several different installations of *The Nutcracker* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Other works of considerable note include celebrating the life and work of Anton Dvorak in the Czech Republic, The Awakening Ballet in collaboration with renowned artist Jean-Claude Gaugy, NBC television special Degas and the Dance, operatic works, feature coach and highest rated episode of MTV's MADE in 2005, along with numerous medals of accomplishment by students performing works of his in such acclaimed competitions as Youth America Grand Prix, Grand Prix du Cirque, Moscow Competition, and New York International Ballet Competition.

**Heinz Poll (Choreographer)** was born in Oberhausen, Germany, in 1926. Poll was a champion ice skater before he became a dancer. His experience on the rinks imbued him with a love of speed that he expressed in his athletic baroque ballet, *Cascade* (1985). After World War II, he studied dance at Joss's Folkwang School in Essen, began his professional career at the

Municipal Theatre in Goettingen and became a principal dancer with the Berlin State Opera Ballet. In 1951, he joined the National Ballet of Chile as a dancer, ballet master, and teacher. The company's tradition of bringing serious programs to indigenous people in remote mountain villages served as the model for Ohio Ballet's Summer Festival of free outdoor performances. In 1962, Poll joined Ballet de Jeunesse Musicales de France as ballet master. Two years later, he came to the United States as a guest artist with the Chilean company. He performed in the American Dance Festival the following summer and stayed in New York to teach at Thalia Mara's National Academy of Ballet. In Akron, he developed Ohio Ballet into one of America's most polished, respected, and widely traveled chamber dance troupes. Poll was awarded the Association of Ohio Dance Companies Award in 1983, the Cleveland Arts Prize in 1995, and the Ohio Arts Council's Governor's Award in 1999. After his retirement, he wrote his memoir and has conferred a number of his ballets to former Ohio Ballet dancers. Poll passed away in 2006.

**Trad A Burns (Lighting Designer)** Mr. Burns' career has spanned theatre, dance, and amusement parks, as well as architectural and retail lighting. Designing over 400 productions during the last two decades, his varied work has been seen around the world. His extensive credits include designs for Cincinnati Ballet, New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Houston Ballet, Spectrum Dance, Verb Ballets, New York Theatre Workshop (NYC), La Mama ETC (NYC), HERE (NYC), Classic Stage Company (NYC), The Public Theatre (NYC), Cleveland Public Theatre, Cedar Point, Valley Fair, Knott's Berry Farm, Kings Island, Walt Disney World, Disneyland, Disneyland Japan, Disney Sea, Disney Cruise Lines, Carnival Cruise Lines, Universal Studios Florida & Japan, Woodstock Ice Productions, and The Family of Charles M. Schulz. As the lighting director for the Cincinnati Ballet, Mr. Burns' designs have included works by Artistic Director Victoria Morgan, George Balanchine, Kirk Peterson, Trey McIntyre, Donald McKayle, Val Caniparoli, Donald Byrd, Darrell Moultrie, Sarah Slipper, Luca Veggetti, Viktor Kabanov, Devon Carney and Septime Webre. With NYC Ballet, Mr. Burns has been restoring the original lighting designs for most of the Balanchine Repertory. His work includes re-lighting *Serenade*, *Bugaku*, *Rubies*, *Symphony in C*, *Stars and Stripes*, *Agon*, *Allegro Brillante*, *Who Cares?*, *Brahms-Schöenberg Quartet*, *The Prodigal Son*, *Square Dance*, *Theme and Variation*, *Tschaikovsky Pas De Deux*, *Western Symphony* and *Union Jack*. This is Mr. Burns' sixth year designing for Verb Ballets.

**Benjamin Gantose (Lighting Designer)** grew up in Berea, OH and attended the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati where he studied Theatrical Design and Production with an emphasis on Lighting Design. During school and since Benjamin has been involved in both scenic and lighting design for works spanning ballet and modern dance, theatre, musical theater, opera, and theme parks. Highlights include Steel Magnolias at True North; 13 The Musical at FPAC; Joseph, Producers, Altar Boyz, at Beck Center; Don't Call Me Fat, Open Mind Firmament at Cleveland Public Theatre; Passion, Swan Lake at CCM; and various productions at Cincinnati Ballet including multiple world premieres, Cedar Point, Knott's Berry Farm, Verb Ballets, and Inlet Dance Theater.

**Barbee Thomas (Assistant Stage Manager)** has served Verb Ballets in many capacities over the years, including Executive Assistant, Assistant Stage Manager, Tour Manager, and overseeing the lobby information table. Barbee is the former national director of Standing Ovation, and has choreographed numerous national title award winning competition routines. Formerly Manager of Operations and Support Services for Summa Foundation (Summa Health System), Barbee recently joined Saint Ignatius High School as their Director of Information Systems. Barbee is also very active in the Summit Food Policy Coalition and related organizations.

**Ryan De Alexandro (Apprentice)** is dancing with Verb Ballets for the summer 2011 season under the Verb C.L.I.C.Ks. Summer Trainee Program. This is his first summer with Verb Ballets.

**Lloyd Amir Boyd III**, a native from Cleveland, Ohio, began his training at the age of 13 while attending the Cleveland School of Arts under the direction of Terence Greene. While there he danced in their ensemble, the Urban Dance Collective, which allowed him the opportunity to dance in many venues throughout the United States including The Association of Blacks in Dance Festival. He also studied dance at Alvin Ailey's Summer Intensive in New York and performed with the August Wilson Dance Ensemble in Pittsburgh, PA. Lloyd is currently attending University of North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston Salem, NC. He debuted with Verb Ballets in the spring of 2009 in "The Gathering" by Terence Greene. This is Lloyd's second summer with Verb Ballets as part of the Verb C.L.I.C.Ks. Summer Trainee Program.

**Danielle Brickman (Dancer)** was born and raised in Euclid, Ohio. She began her ballet training at the age of four at the School of Cleveland San Jose Ballet, under the direction of Dennis Nahat, performing in Cleveland San Jose Ballet's performances of *Toreador*, *Coppelia*, and *The Nutcracker*. She continued her studies with the Chautauqua Institution of New York and the Cleveland School of Dance under the direction of Gladisa Guadalupe. She performed with the Cleveland Youth Ballet dance company for four years. She danced as an apprentice for three seasons for Pointe of Departure under the direction of Raymond Rodriguez and Karen Gabay. Danielle teaches and choreographs around the Mentor area. She joined Verb in the summer of 2004.

**Ashley Cohen (Dancer)** is originally from South Florida, where she started dancing at a young age. She continued her training in Cincinnati and went on to study dance at The University of Akron, where she graduated with a BFA in dance in 2006. While at the university, Ashley was trained by members of The Martha Graham Company, the Pennsylvania Ballet, and the Jennifer Muller Company. She was in The University of Akron Dance Company for four years and also performed in the student-choreographed concerts. Ashley has had the honor to perform many great works from well-known choreographers

including Martha Graham, Heinz Poll, Hernando Cortez, and Ulysses Dove. Currently, Ashley teaches throughout the area. Ashley debuted with Verb Ballets in the summer of 2006.

**Kathryn Edmonds (Apprentice)** started ballet at the age of four, with the Christine Jones Meneer School of Dance. After moving up into Ballet Theater of Ohio she performed many lead roles including Snow Queen, and Blue Bird. Last summer Kathryn had the privilege of dancing with Verb Ballets. She performed “Tarantella”, “Wings and Airs,” and “It’s a Rap.” In the fall she will return to Ballet Memphis for her second season with the company. Last season she toured with Ballet Memphis and had roles in *The Nutcracker*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Gamon*. Kathryn is very excited to dance with Verb Ballets again this summer as part of the Verb C.L.I.C.K.s. Summer Trainee Program.

**Katie Gnagy (Dancer, Outreach and Education)** is originally from North Carolina, where she received her training at the North Carolina School of the Arts. While there, she trained and performed under the direction of Nina Danilova, Warren Conover, and Melissa Hayden. After graduating from high school, Ms. Gnagy moved to New York, and in 2005 received her bachelor’s degree in fine arts from Purchase College Conservatory of Dance. Ms. Gnagy also trained and performed with Ballet Contemporaneo de Burgos, Spain, for two summers under the leadership of Kazuko Hirabayashi. Katie debuted with Verb Ballets in the summer of 2005. She has been the Verb Ballets’ Outreach and Education Coordinator since 2007.

**Stephanie Krise (Dancer)** began her dance training at The University of Akron’s Dance Institute. She then continued her training at The North Carolina School of the Arts under Melissa Hayden and Warren Conover, and at BalletMet under Yoko Ichino. Ms. Krise has spent summers training at The North Carolina School of the Arts, BalletMet, San Francisco Ballet, Nashville Ballet, Richmond Ballet, The National Hungarian Ballet and in New York with Doug Varone and Dancers, as well as workshops with Taylor 2 and Lines Ballet. Ms. Krise has performed with BalletMet, Richmond Ballet, and The University of Akron Dance Company. She recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from The University of Akron with her B.F.A in Dance Performance. This is Stephanie’s second season with Verb Ballets.

**Erin Conway Lewis (Dancer, Development Associate)** was a competitive gymnast for eleven years before studying dance exclusively under the direction of Shelagh Dubsky. After receiving a scholarship to Ohio University, Erin earned a BFA in dance in 2002. Upon graduating she performed with Dancing Wheels and Tom & Susana Evert Dance Theatre. Erin has had the honor of performing Martha Graham’s *Appalachian Spring*, Ulysses Dove’s *Vespers*, Paul Taylor’s *Esplanade*, Heinz Poll’s *Wings and Aires* and David Parsons’ *The Envelope*. She has worked with many brilliant choreographers including Dianne McIntyre, Sean Curran, Patrick Corbin and Hernando Cortez. Erin enjoys her outreach work teaching dance in the community and schools. Erin debuted with Verb Ballets in 2003. She is currently expecting her first child and is therefore on a leave of absence as a dancer but is still very involved with the company as a choreographer and the Development Associate.

**Kara Madden (Dancer)** began her training at age five at the School of the Grand Rapids Ballet Company. She was a Junior and Senior Trainee with GRBC under the direction of Gordon Peirce Schmidt, performing in many professional productions, including *The Nutcracker*, *Cinderella*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Can-Can*. She also toured Italy and Croatia with students and professional dancers from GRBC. Her teachers included world-renowned dancers Gaiane and Akop Akopian. In 2010, Ms. Madden graduated Summa Cum Laude from Aquinas College with a double major in English and Biology. During college, she continued training at GRBC and participated in the summer intensive programs at STEPS on Broadway, Merce Cunningham, and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. Ms. Madden also performed with the Chicago Civic Ballet, directed by Larry Long, in its production of *The Nutcracker*, and is a founding member of the Grand Rapids Dance Project. This is Kara’s second season with Verb Ballets.

**Garrett Winston McCann (Dancer)** was born and raised in Akron, Ohio. He received his dance education at the University of Akron’s Dance Institute and Firestone High Schools’ Visual and Performing Arts Program. He graduated from Firestone in Spring 2010. Mr. McCann has worked with choreographers from DCDC, GroundWorks Dance Theater, Francais Patrelle, and many others. Future plans include attending The University of The Arts in Philadelphia or The University of Akron. This is Garrett’s second season with Verb Ballets.

**Brian Murphy (Dancer)** has been dancing professionally for 15 years with a number of dance companies including Nashville Ballet, Cleveland San Jose Ballet, Richmond Ballet, BalletMet, New Orleans Delta Ensemble, GroundWorks Dancetheater and Ohio Ballet. He has danced leading roles in *The Nutcracker*, *Coppelia*, *Hamlet*, *Swan Lake*, *Dracula*, *Peter Pan* and *Sleeping Beauty*. He has also enjoyed performing in works by Heinz Poll, Leslie Cook, Jennifer Muller (Muller & Co.), and Diavalo. Brian co-owns a Pilates Studio (Pilates by Murphys) in Akron, OH, with his wife Suzy. Brian is a part-time faculty member at The University of Akron and is on the faculty, and he performs with Dance Caravan in the summer months. He is very grateful to be given the opportunity to dance with Verb Ballets. Brian joined Verb Ballets in September of 2006.

**Rebecca J. Nicklos (Dancer)** only recently returned to Cleveland, after pursuing training and performance opportunities on the East Coast. Rebecca studied Vaganova and Graham techniques at the Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts in Connecticut and supplemented her degree with courses at STEPS on Broadway, the Alvin Ailey School, School of American Ballet and the Harkness Dance Center. She developed her performance skills under the mentorship, direction and coaching of dance masters Eleanor D’ Antonio, Theresa Capucilli, Kevin Martin, Victoria Mazzarelli, Alexi Tchernivchov and Doug Varone. Rebecca was honored to qualify to the final round of the NYC Youth American Grand Prix and enjoyed working and performing with the Kirov Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Ohio Dance Theatre and MOMIX Dance Theatre. In 2009, she had the amazing opportunity to perform *Fraulein Mari* with Doug Elkins and Friends as presented by DANCECleveland. She has been a

performer with MorrisonDance since 2008. In addition to performing Rebecca is currently teaching dance throughout NE Ohio area. Rebecca debuted with Verb Ballets in April, 2010. This is her second full year with the company.

**Arthur Prettyman (Dancer)** is originally from Tecumseh, Michigan. His dance training began at the age of 4, at Tecumseh Dance Studio, and later at Randazzo Dance. At 14, he was accepted into Interlochen Arts Academy, where he worked with numerous guest choreographers, and performed roles including "Sugarplum Cavalier" in *The Nutcracker* and "Lilac Cavalier" in *Sleeping Beauty*. In his fourth year, he performed Martha Graham's "Diversion of Angels." Upon graduating in 2008, Prettyman relocated to San Francisco for the LINES Ballet School Training Program. There he performed works by Robert Moses, Gregory Dawson, Keelan Whitmore, and Maurya Kerr, among others. Since finishing the program in May 2010, he has done several projects with local choreographers, including Manuelito Biag and Kara Davis. In February 2011, Prettyman and five other alumni from the LINES Ballet School participated in the Tremplin Jeunes Ballets at the Monaco Dance Forum where they performed a work set on them by Alonzo King. This is Prettyman's first season with Verb Ballets.

**Jarrold Sickles (Dancer)** started dancing at age 18, at the Ashtabula Arts Center, under the direction of Shelagh Dubsy. He then was accepted to the Academy of Cincinnati Ballet to train and learn from the company on a full scholarship. Sickles is a new dancer with Verb Ballets, returning home to Ohio after two seasons with the Montgomery Ballet in Alabama. He recently got to work with former Martha Graham dancer Adria Ferrali from Italy and dance in her original work "Vertical Cities," set to the music of Stravinsky. Sickles has also had the pleasure to work with many former professional dancers, such as Maria Caligari, Victoria Morgan, Elie Lazar, Suzanne Farrell, and John Magnus, to name a few. This is Sickles's first season with Verb Ballets.

**Jason Wang (Dancer)** is originally from Ames, IA, where he began his journey through dance as a self taught break-dancer performing and battling with B.w.B (Breakers without Borders) and "Floor Spiders Crew," to later find his love for classical ballet. At 19, he enrolled at the Robert Thomas Dancenter under the guidance of Bob and Miyoko-Kato Thomas. Wang continued his training at the University of Iowa, where he toured with Dancers In Company, performing many premier ballets by Deanna Carter, as well as Donald McKayle's renowned *Games*, and Louis Falco's *Escargot*. Upon graduation, Wang went on to perform with Cincinnati Ballet and Louisville Ballet, appearing in productions of *The Nutcracker*, *Peter Pan*, *Celts*, and *Troy Game*. Wang is very excited to begin his debut season with Verb Ballets.