

## American Ballet Companies: Overview

Ballet dancing has long been associated with European countries, particularly France and Russia. It's true that the dance form originated in Europe, but the United States is another hot spot of ballet training and performances.

In the United States, there are a number of respectable ballet academies that not only teach the art of ballet, but also produce high caliber performances. Some of the best-known American ballet companies also offer training schools, allowing more people to learn and experience ballet dancing.

Choosing the right American ballet company can be difficult. Here is a general overview to help you learn a little more about them:

### American National Ballet School and Company

Offering both ballet performances to public audiences, and qualified training to interested individuals, the American National Ballet School and Company is well known and highly respected. This company strives to facilitate and deliver high quality performances to the public, while strongly supporting students of ballet to learn and follow the discipline of the art. The American National Ballet School and Company is operated under the artistic direction of Armando Maldonado, a talented dancer who has performed and trained with some of the world's best dancers. The American National Ballet School and Company is located in Duluth, Minnesota.

### American Ballet Theatre

The American Ballet Theatre is found in the heart of America's premiere entertainment district # on Broadway in New York City. Also known as the ABT, the American Ballet Theatre performs nearly one hundred of the greatest ballets every year. Directed by Kevin McKenzie, the American Ballet Company employs the country's finest dancers in order to strongly uphold its pledge to deliver the world's finest ballet performances. They have incorporated great masterpieces of the early days with modern choreography, making this a company worthy of the accolades it receives. Those interested in learning the art and technique of ballet will find excellent training programs, offered for private and public schools.

### American Repertory Ballet

The ARB, or American Repertory Ballet, is New Jersey's leading dance company and one of the state's major arts organizations. Founded in 1954 by Audree Estey, the American Repertory Ballet is maintained by the Princeton Ballet Society. It is known throughout the USA as one of the country's largest not-for-profit dance schools. Under the direction of Artistic Director Graham Lustic and Ballet Master Bat Abbit, more the one thousand students enjoy top quality education at the ARB. An additional attribute of this company is that many of its students find placements in professional dance companies across the United States.

### New York City Ballet

Another American ballet company that receives both national and worldwide acclaim is the New York City Ballet. Resident choreographer Christopher Wheeldon is considered to be one of the world's finest choreographers. Wheeldon, and the entire company at New York City Ballet, strive to provide outstanding performances and share their talents and passions with the students. This American ballet company has created some of the country's greatest works, many of which have been staged in prestigious theatres in the United States and abroad. Under the direction of the company's greatest ballet masters, students enjoy training and encouragement in the quest for learning the art of ballet dancing.

George Balanchine, regarded as the foremost contemporary choreographer of all time, once said, "the home of classical ballet is now America." With the number of prestigious companies and schools the country has to offer, Mr. Balanchine was absolutely right.