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# ***Kansas City Ballet Announces New Community Engagement and Education Manager April Berry***

*Former principal dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater  
And nationally recognized dance educator April Berry Joins KCB*

KANSAS CITY, MO (Sept. 16, 2016) — Kansas City Ballet Artistic Director Devon Carney today announced the appointment of **April Berry** as the new Community Engagement and Education Manager. High resolution photos can be downloaded [here](#).

Carney stated, "We are quite excited about the addition of April Berry to the Kansas City Ballet and the Kansas City community. This is an especially notable achievement for Kansas City Ballet as we were able to draw one, if not the, pre-eminent dance educators in the industry to KCB. Ms. Berry has had a significant career as a performing artist and she has created significant award-winning community engagement programs in her past. The arrival of someone of this significant stature to the Kansas City Ballet and the greater Kansas City metropolitan area can only bode well for the deeper engagement within the

KC community in its appreciation and broader more in-depth education of the art form of dance and its relevance and accessibility within our complex world today.”

April Berry, dance director, master teacher, educator, and former internationally-acclaimed dancer with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, is a native New Yorker. Ms. Berry has worked closely with many of the most celebrated choreographers and dance artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. April is a certified master instructor in Dunham Technique, having successfully completed all certification requirements after extensive work with American modern dance pioneer, Dr. Katherine Dunham. Ms. Berry has danced the signature choreographies of Dunham, Lester Horton, Alvin Ailey, George Balanchine, Talley Beatty, Todd Bolender, Donald McKayle and Hans Van Manen, as well as in works by other renowned choreographers from the world of ballet, modern/contemporary, and jazz dance.

Ms. Berry’s professional dance career began in ballet and she has danced with ballet companies in the United States, Italy and Switzerland. She began her professional training in ballet at the former National Academy of Ballet and Theatre Arts in New York under the direction of Thalia Mara, and on scholarship at the Dance Theatre of Harlem under directors Arthur Mitchell and Karel Shook. Ms. Berry studied modern dance techniques and jazz dance at the Ailey School in New York, and trained in Caribbean folkloric and popular dance forms at the Escuela Nacional des Arts (National School of the Arts) in Havana, Cuba.

Ms. Berry, is a former principal dance artist with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and worked under Founding Artistic Director Alvin Ailey and Artistic Emeritus Judith Jamison. She is featured in several dance books including *Ailey Spirit: The Journey of an American Dance Company* by Robert Tracy, *Alvin Ailey: A Life in Dance* by former *The New York Times* dance critic Jennifer Dunning, and *The Black Tradition in American Dance* by African American historian Richard A. Long, among others. She is featured on Ailey Company videos, and performed on television specials including two Kennedy Center Honors Programs, has represented the Ailey Company on two Ailey season posters, and served as guest artist with several dance companies, including the La Scala Ballet in Milan, Italy.

Ms. Berry has been actively involved in the field of dance education and arts outreach since 1992. She has created award-winning community outreach programs and has presented at various dance conferences including the 2013 Dance/USA Conference in Philadelphia, two National Dance Education (NDEO) Conferences and at several International Association for Blacks in Dance (IABD) Conferences. Most recently she presented at the 2016 Colleguim for African American Dance (CADD) Conference at Duke University. She has

served as an artist-in-residence, guest lecturer, and adjunct faculty member at some of the most prestigious universities around the United States. She has written for Dance/USA's online journal *From the Green Room*, for the Society of Dance History Scholars publication, *Conversations in Dance*, and served on the boards of Ohio Dance, the Greater Columbus Arts Council in Columbus, Ohio, and as a grants panelist for the North Carolina Arts Council, the Arts and Science Council in Charlotte, NC, and most recently as a board of director on the Dance Council of North Texas in Dallas, TX.

Ms. Berry has served as Director of Education and Outreach for North Carolina Dance Theatre, (now the Charlotte Ballet) from 2006-2013, and as Director of Education and Community Programs for BalletMet Columbus, from 2001-2006. Ms. Berry was appointed Artistic Director of Dallas Black Dance Theatre in August 2014 and served in that capacity during their 38<sup>th</sup> season. Previously Ms. Berry founded and served as dance consultant for Arts 'n Community, a grass roots agency providing specialized services and resources to emerging and mid-size organizations around the U.S., dedicated to the art form dance. Ms. Berry enjoys mentoring dance artists who are eager to enhance the organizations they serve and impact the communities in which they live.

For more information about KCB's community engagement, please visit [online](#), call 816.216.5609 or email [outreach@kcballet.org](mailto:outreach@kcballet.org).

## About Kansas City Ballet

### *To make Kansas City a destination for dance*

Founded in 1957, Kansas City Ballet is a 29-member professional ballet company under the leadership of Artistic Director Devon Carney and Executive Director Jeffrey J. Bentley. The company's mission is to establish Kansas City Ballet as an indispensable asset in its community through exceptional performances, excellence in dance training and quality community education programs for all ages.

Kansas City Ballet is home to Kansas City Ballet School with an enrollment of 1800+ children and adults offering professional training for the career-minded student as well as for those simply seeking a healthy lifestyle.

Through our professional company, our second company (KCB II) and our many community educational and outreach programs, such as Reach Out and Dance (ROAD) we seek to nurture and develop our artists, audiences and students in the values inherent in the creativity, diversity and joy of dance.

Our home, the Todd Bolender Center for Dance & Creativity, in conjunction with our Resident Company status at the world-class Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, truly has positioned Kansas City as a destination for dance.

Visit [www.kcballet.org/media/releases](http://www.kcballet.org/media/releases) for more info.

## Kansas City Ballet 2016-2017 Season at a Glance

Kansas City Ballet ticket office 816.931.8993  
Single tickets for all performances including *The Nutcracker* are on sale now.  
Purchase tickets online at [www.kcballet.org](http://www.kcballet.org).

### *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

October 7-16, 2016 | Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Choreography: Bruce Wells

Music: Felix Mendelssohn with music performed by Kansas City Symphony

Fri., Oct. 7	7:30 p.m.
Sat., Oct. 8	7:30 p.m.
Sun., Oct. 9	2 p.m.
Fri., Oct. 14	7:30 p.m.
Sat., Oct. 15	7:30 p.m.
Sun., Oct. 16	2 p.m.

### *The Nutcracker*

December 3-24, 2016 | Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Choreography: Devon Carney

Music: Peter I. Tchaikovsky with music performed by Kansas City Symphony

Kansas City Ballet Artistic Director Devon Carney presents the critically-acclaimed production of this favorite holiday classic which premiered in 2015. Presented by Bank of America.

Sat., Dec. 3	2 p.m. (*) & 7:30 p.m.
Sun., Dec. 4	1 p.m. & 5 p.m.
Thur., Dec. 8	7:30 p.m.
Fri., Dec. 9	7:30 p.m.
Sat., Dec. 10	2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Sun., Dec. 11	1 p.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed., Dec. 14	7:30 p.m.
Thurs., Dec. 15	7:30 p.m.
Fri., Dec. 16	7:30 p.m.
Sat., Dec. 17	2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Sun., Dec. 18	1 p.m. & 5 p.m.
Wed., Dec. 21	7:30 p.m.
Thur., Dec. 22	2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Fri., Dec. 23	2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Sat., Dec. 24	1 p.m.

(\*) Sugar Plum Fairy Children’s Ball

### ***New Moves***

February 16-19, 2017 | Todd Bolender Center for Dance and Creativity

A unique performance event designed to search out, develop and showcase new emerging choreographers both locally, some from within Kansas City Ballet, and from the national dance scene. No subscriptions available for these performances.

Thurs., Feb. 16	7:30 p.m.
Fri., Feb. 17	7:30 p.m.
Sat., Feb. 18	2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Sun., Feb 19	2 p.m.

### ***The Sleeping Beauty***

March 31-April 9, 2017 | Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Choreography: Devon Carney after Marius Petipa

Music: Peter I. Tchaikovsky with music performed by Kansas City Symphony

Fri., March 31	7:30 p.m.
Sat., April 1	7:30 p.m.
Sun., April 2	2 p.m.
Thur. April 6	7:30 p.m.
Fri., April 7	7:30 p.m.
Sat., April 8	2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Sun., April 9	2 p.m.

### ***Director’s Choice***

May 12-21, 2017 | Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Music performed by Kansas City Symphony

<b><i>Interplay</i></b>	Choreography: Jerome Robbins	Music: Morton Gould
<b><i>The Lottery</i></b>	Choreography: Val Caniparoli	Music: Robert Moran
<b><i>Theme and Variations</i></b>	Choreography: George Balanchine	Music: Peter I. Tchaikovsky

*The Lottery* is based on Shirley Jackson’s short story by the same name and is presented by special arrangement with the children of Shirley Jackson and Literal Media

Fri., May 12	7:30 p.m.
Sat., May 13	7:30 p.m.
Sun., May 14	2 p.m.
Fri., May 19	7:30 p.m.
Sat., May 20	7:30 p.m.
Sun., May 21	2 p.m.

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