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Kansas City Ballet Announces New Kansas City Ballet School Director Oliver Till to Assume Role Effective July 1

KANSAS CITY, MO (June 10, 2024) — **Devon Carney**, artistic director of the Kansas City Ballet, announced today that **Oliver Till** has been selected as the new School Director, effective July 1, 2024. Till was most recently Head of Children’s, Adult & Adaptive Programs at the Joffrey Academy of Dance Leadership. He will succeed Grace Holmes, who left to become Director of the San Francisco Ballet School in January 2024, after nine years in the role. During Holmes’ tenure, the school experienced dramatic growth in attendance, the expansion of the school with the new South Campus at Meadowbrook, new and more inclusive programming, an elevated national reputation, and much more community awareness.

Carney stated, “I am thrilled that Mr. Till will be joining our senior leadership team as our next School Director for Kansas City Ballet. He brings a wealth of knowledge to this position and to our organization as a whole. He has had a successful career in the professional world of dance on an international scale and has a lengthy list of other compatible attributes that make him the best candidate for the position. He will bring his extensive experiences as a teacher and mentor for several dance organizations to Kansas City Ballet School. I am convinced that he will keep our highly respected dance institution headed in the right direction into the future creating a positive impact for generations of aspiring students through offering continued high quality dance education for all.”



About Oliver Till

Oliver Till trained at The Royal Ballet School and danced as a Soloist with Birmingham Royal Ballet under Sir David Bintley's directorship. Through his career, he performed diverse roles from repertoires by renowned choreographers such as Peter Wright, David Bintley, Jessica Lang, Stanton Welch, Kenneth MacMillan, Michael Corder, Frederick Ashton, and Ninette de Valois. His performances took him on tours across the UK, Europe, USA, Japan, and China.

Parallel to his ballet career, Till pursued a BA in Business with Environment and gained valuable experience interning at an investment bank in New York City. He later founded a video and distance coaching platform based in the US and gained his ABT-NTC Pre-Primary to Level 7 and Partnering certification.

He then transitioned to the role of Ballet Teacher at the Swedish National Ballet School, where he led the implementation of the ABT National Training Curriculum. As Mentor Team Leader for students aged 8 to 11, he focused on student wellbeing and transition to vocational training as well as supporting fellow teachers in their roles. As manager of the school's outreach programs, he developed support for young dancers and the school's teachers.

Returning to the US, Till joined the Joffrey Ballet as Head of Children's, Adult, and Adaptive Programs. There, he focused on curriculum development, program structure, and creating performance opportunities, aiming to enhance the student experience and support teacher development. Operationally he has driven efforts to streamline processes and effectively communicate to new and existing audiences.

Till believes in making dance accessible to everyone, regardless of age or ability, ensuring high-quality support and expertise are available to all. In the pre-professional sphere, he champions a holistic approach to nurturing young students, integrating mental and physical methods to support their development. His commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and excellence defines his vision for the future of dance education. A complete bio and headshot can be found at <https://kcballet.org/media-center/>.

Till stated, "I am honored to take the role of School Director at Kansas City Ballet. To be part of the next stage in its journey is an invigorating challenge. The work achieved by Grace Holmes has set the foundation for us to go further and with David and Devon, I look forward to what our students and the school will achieve."

Executive Director **David Gray** was thrilled with the selection. "I am so excited that Oliver will be joining us. He brings such a broad range of knowledge and experience and he's also just a really positive person. I think he will bring great energy to the School."

Media

Visit kcballet.org or kauffmancenter.org for a downloadable media kit about Kansas City Ballet and the Kauffman Center. Find high-resolution photos at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/67555847@N06/sets>.

About Kansas City Ballet

MISSION: To Inspire and Engage Through the Beauty, Power & Passion of Dance

VISION: Outstanding Dance Experiences Accessible to All

Founded in 1957, Kansas City Ballet is a professional ballet company led by Artistic Director Devon Carney and Executive Director David Gray. Kansas City Ballet is an indispensable community asset through exceptional performances, excellence in dance training, and quality community engagement and education programs for all ages. Kansas City Ballet is home to Kansas City Ballet School which, with an enrollment of more than 1,000 children and adults, offers professional training for the career-minded student as well as for those simply seeking a healthy lifestyle.

Through the professional company, second company (KCB II & Trainees), and Community Engagement and Education Department, Kansas City Ballet seeks to nurture and develop artists, audiences, and students in the values inherent in the creativity, diversity, and joy of dance. The company's home, the Todd Bolender Center for Dance and Creativity, in conjunction with our Resident Company status at the world-class Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, positions Kansas City as a destination for dance. Visit www.kcballet.org/kansas-city-ballet-press-releases/ for more info.

Kansas City Ballet's website is mobile and ticket-purchase friendly. Receive daily updates by joining the KCB Fan Page, www.facebook.com/kcballet, and following @kcballet on Twitter. Follow our blog at www.kcballet.org/blog. Watch videos at www.youtube.com/kansascityballet or <https://vimeo.com/kcballet> and on TikTok <https://www.tiktok.com/@kansascityballet> and view photos at <https://www.instagram.com/kc.ballet/>.

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