

KANSAS CITY ENTERTAINMENT

Kansas City Ballet to return to Oz with production that made world premiere here

By Dan Kelly

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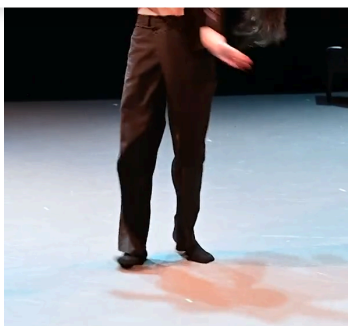
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Get an up-close look at KC Ballet's "New Moves" as choreographers and dancers premiere original works in the intimate 180-seat Frost Studio Theater at the Todd Bolender Center. The show runs from Thursday, Jan. 29, through Sunday, Feb. 1.

By Tammy Ljungblad



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Septime Webre has become one of the go-to choreographers for [the Kansas City Ballet](#).

The Ballet will feature a work by Webre, the former artistic director of the Washington Ballet, for the third consecutive season when “The Wizard of Oz” opens as the first full production on the 2026-27 schedule announced Friday.



The world premiere of Septime Webre's "The Wizard of Oz" kicked off the Kansas City Ballet's 2018-19 season and will return to the Kauffman Center during the 2026-27 season.. *File photo*

The Ballet performed Webre’s “Alice in Wonderland” in 2024-25 at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts and will present the Kansas City premiere of Webre’s “The Great Gatsby” in May as part of the ongoing 2025-26 season.

Other 2026-27 highlights will be the Shakespearean tragic romance “Romeo & Juliet,” a Family Series production of “Pinocchio” and, of course, the holiday tradition of “The Nutcracker.”



Septime Webre is the choreographer for “The Wizard of Oz,” which made its world premiere in Kansas City in 2018. *File photo*

The KC Ballet has previously staged Webre’s “The Wizard of Oz” twice, which it commissioned in conjunction with the Colorado Ballet and Royal Winnipeg Ballet. The world premiere kicked off the 2018-19 season in October 2018, and “Oz” returned to the Kauffman Center stage in May 2022.

debuted this production by Devon Carney, the Ballet's artist director, in 2017 and hasn't done it since.

The KC Ballet's three-show season package consisting of "The Wizard of Oz," "Romeo & Juliet" and the season-ending "Pulse" is now available (\$87-\$345), with "The Nutcracker," "New Moves" and "Pinocchio" as add-ons. Single tickets will go on sale at a later date. More information at kcballet.org.

Kansas City Ballet 2026-27 Season

kcballet.org

'New Dance Partners'

7:30 p.m. Sept. 18-19, JCCC Midwest Trust Center, Yardley Hall

Four local dance companies, including the KC Ballet, perform original works at this festival of contemporary and modern dance.



The Tin Man, portrayed here by Kansas City Ballet dancer Elliott Rogers, is a familiar character in "The Wizard of Oz." Kenny Johnson *Kansas City Ballet*

'The Wizard of Oz'

7:30 p.m. Oct. 16-17, 1:30 p.m. Oct. 18, 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. Oct. 23, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Oct. 24, 1:30 p.m. Oct. 25, Kauffman Center

This version of the classic Kansas-set tale made its world premiere by the KC Ballet in 2018. It was commissioned by the KC Ballet, Colorado Ballet and Royal Winnipeg Ballet and choreographed by Septime Webre.

'The Nutcracker'

2 and 7:30 p.m. Nov. 28, 1 and 5:30 p.m. Nov. 29, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Dec. 3, 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 5, 1 and 5:30 p.m. Dec. 6, 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m. Dec. 11, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 12, 1 and 5:30 p.m. Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17-18, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 19, 1 and 5:30 p.m. Dec. 20, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 22-23, 1 p.m. Dec. 24, Kauffman Center

A Kansas City holiday tradition since 1972, "The Nutcracker" features music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky with updated choreography by KC Ballet artistic director Devon Carney.



"The Nutcracker" has been a holiday staple for the Kansas City Ballet since 1972. Tammy Ljungblad *File photo*

7:30 p.m. Jan. 28, 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Jan. 29, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Jan. 30, 1 and 5:30 p.m. Jan. 31, 2027, Todd Bolender Center

Emerging choreographers come to the forefront in this showcase of new dance works in the 180-seat Frost Studio Theater.



Kansas City Ballet Dancers Aidan Duffy and Amelia Meissner perform in "A Wish of Love Was What it Was," during the dress rehearsal for "New Moves," the latest production from Kansas City Ballet on Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2026, in Kansas City. Tammy Ljungblad tjungblad@kcstar.com

'Pinocchio'

11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Feb. 19, 11 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Feb. 20, noon and 3:30 p.m. Feb. 21, 2027, Folly

The wooden puppet who dreams of becoming a real boy comes to life in an hour-long, narrated ballet that is part of Kansas City Ballet's Family Series.

'Romeo & Juliet'

7:30 p.m. March 12-13, 1:30 p.m. March 14, 7:30 p.m. March 19-20, 1:30 p.m. March 21, 2027, Kauffman Center

Shakespeare's romantic tragedy about star-crossed lovers has become one of the world's most beloved ballets, with music by Sergei Prokofiev and choreography by the KC Ballet's Carney.

This world premiere traces ballet’s past, present and future with three dance works: George Balanchine’s “The Four Temperaments,” Jerome Robbins’ “Glass Pieces” and a new work by Melissa Hough.

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Dan Kelly *The Kansas City Star* 

Dan Kelly has been covering entertainment and arts news at The Star since 2009. He previously worked at the Columbia Daily Tribune, The Miami Herald and The Louisville Courier-Journal. He also was on the University of Missouri School of Journalism faculty for six years, and he has written two books, most recently “The Girl with the Agate Eyes: The Untold Story of Mattie Howard, Kansas City’s Queen of the Underworld.”



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