



# Annual Report 2019-2020

During the 2019-2020 season, Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet (MMB) saw achievement in all three major areas of the strategic plan:

- fostering an interest in classical ballet
- mastery of dance
- maintaining financial stability

## Fostering Interest through Outreach

- "The Nutcracker" school performance, lecture and demonstration for 110 students at Camden Elementary (Madison County Title I school) held November 22
- Free "The Nutcracker" outreach performance for 254 individuals underserved by the arts and/or touched by disability (Joni & Friends, McClean Fletcher Center, Canopy, and Boys and Girls Clubs) held December 14

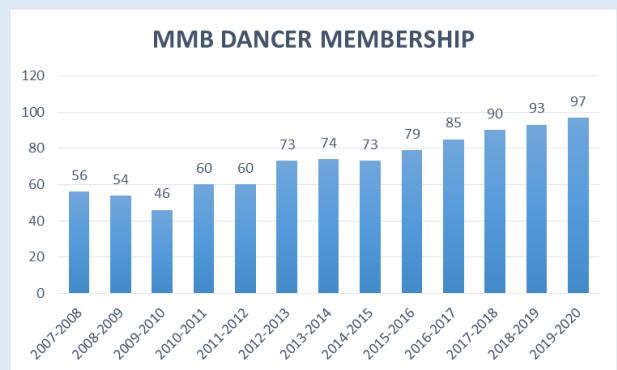


"The Nutcracker" at Camden Elementary in November 2019

MMB directors continue to pursue opportunities to foster interest in classical ballet during the COVID-19 outbreak. These include posting of [ballet activity pages](#) for download from our website, initiation of a ballet blog for company members and possible livestream of performances for the coming season.

## Fostering Interest in Classical Ballet

- 105 dancers auditioned for membership
- 97 members selected
- 33% increase in membership since 2014-15
- Sustained membership growth over 10 seasons
- 3 dancers on scholarship for 2019-20 season



## Fostering Interest through COVID-19

COVID-19 forced the cancellation of several community performances including:

- "Frozen Heart" field trip performance for 799 students, teachers and chaperons, 40% from Title I schools
- "Frozen Heart" free outreach performance for individuals underserved by the arts and/or touched by disability
- St. Andrew's Arts on the Green free performance
- University of Mississippi Medical Center Healing Arts Patient Experience Week performance



MMB senior company class during COVID-19 pandemic



MMB senior company members perform "Interrupted" during 2020 Regional Dance America adjudication

## Mastery of Dance

- 2 dancers were promoted to principal level, the highest level in the company.
- In August 2019, company dancers ranked at the junior level and higher attended a week-long intensive taught by Andrew Brader. Formerly a dancer with American Ballet Theater and Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Brader is an award-winning choreographer based in Los Angeles.
- 8 MMB dancers attended the inaugural [Regional Dance America](#)/Southeast fall workshop on September 14 at Kennesaw State University in Georgia.
- 45 non-company dancers from Mississippi Metropolitan Dance Academy joined the 97 company members in the cast of "The Nutcracker." Auditions were held September 7 with rehearsals beginning September 17.
- 3 guest artists were featured in "The Nutcracker"
  - principal guest artists Adiarys Almeida and Taras Domitro as the Sugarplum Fairy and Her Cavalier
  - Kevin Arredondo, a former MMB member who dances professionally with Marigny Opera Ballet in New Orleans, as the Snow King.
- 4 ballets and 2 solos, all by award-winning choreographers, were presented by the company during Regional Dance America/Southeast festival adjudication on February 26 at Belhaven University's performance studio. Choreographers included Charles Maple of Irvine, California, Leaia Alsup of Ruston, Louisiana, and Andrew Brader of Los Angeles. 2 ballets were chosen for performance at the festival by adjudicator Carol Anglin.
- MMB principal dancer Abby McCaughan's piece "Press" was selected for the emerging choreographers' performance, scheduled for April 30. "Press" is the second ballet choreographed by McCaughan and performed by the company that has been chosen for performance at the annual festival.
- Leaia Alsup's ballet "Interrupted" was chosen for performance at the Gala Concert on May 2. This marks the third year in a row that MMB has been recognized for gala-level performance, qualifying the company to be named an honor company, the highest level of membership in Regional Dance America/Southeast.



Adjudication performance of Abby McCaughan's "Press" featuring principal dancer Mae Correro

## Financial Stability

- New Ballet and Barre-BQ fall fundraiser ticket sales exceeded projections.
- Corporate and private donation targets were met.
- Revenue from ticket sales for the “The Nutcracker” performances and associated tea parties December 14 and 15 at Jackson Academy Performing Arts Center exceeded projections.
- For the fourth consecutive year, the Saturday and Sunday matinee performances of MMB’s “The Nutcracker” were sold out. During this same period, the Saturday evening performances have garnered attendance of 80% capacity or more.



Scenes from recent productions of "The Nutcracker"



- Although the cancellation of the spring production of "Frozen Heart" due to COVID-19 resulted in a significant loss of ticket sales, MMB has utilized opportunities such as the Small Business Association Paycheck Protection Program, the Mississippi Arts Commission CARES Act Emergency Grant Program, and donations of ticket sales refunds to ensure the company's ability to continue operations in the 2020-2021 season.
- The 2020-2021 season will bring a variety of challenges due to COVID-19. These include a projected decrease in ticket sales for live events and a potential increase in expenses related to virtual productions. Cash reserves from the 2019-2020 season will assist in maintaining the financial stability of the organization as the directors continue to creatively pursue the mission of the company.

## OUR MISSION:

To foster interest in classical ballet; to provide excellence in dance training; to offer serious dancers an opportunity to perform regularly; to provide programs of the highest artistic quality to the Metro Jackson area.

**Thank you for your support in the 2019-2020 season!**

**Mississippi Metropolitan Ballet**

A non-profit, pre-professional ballet company located at  
110 Homestead Drive  
Madison, MS 39110

[www.msmetroballet.com](http://www.msmetroballet.com)

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Principal dancer Abby McCaughan in "Alice in Wonderland"