



# *The Susquehanna Youth Ballet*

of The Collective Inc

in residence at Experimental Movement Concepts, LLC

## *About the Susquehanna Youth Ballet*



The Susquehanna Youth Ballet (SYB) of The Collective, Inc. (501c3) is a pre-professional training program and performing company under the direction of Ashley Spears. This rigorous training and performing program provides serious dance students with the opportunity to study classical and contemporary dance in a professional environment. The company is comprised of a dedicated group of young dancers ages 11 – 18, who audition each year and commit to an intense and comprehensive schedule of classes, rehearsals, and performances.

As members of The Susquehanna Youth Ballet, students are expected to work to his or her highest level. In return, the company gives dancers the opportunity to explore their full potential through various dance styles and performances. In addition to numerous festival appearances and community performances, SYB performs in the holiday favorite, *The Nutcracker*, and is featured in two annual productions at The Pullo Family Performing Arts Center in York, PA, hosted by Experimental Movement Concepts. The company also performs in informal studio presentations as well as community fundraisers, such as *Aspirations*.

The commitment of The Susquehanna Youth Ballet is to excite, enrich, and entertain its students and the surrounding communities through the art of dance.



Company Dancers: Emily Houska, Caraleigh Stifler, Emily Schmitt, Brianna Papparotto, & Madison Staub, ages 12-14



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## *Inspiring and Enriching*

The Susquehanna Youth Ballet strives to inspire and promote positive student and community enrichment. It encourages students to use dance as an artistic medium for education, self-expression, and personal development. Dancers in the youth ballet have a unique opportunity to gain invaluable life-skills. The training and performing instills tradition, self-confidence, discipline, creativity, and teamwork.

In reflection of our ongoing objective to educate and enrich as well as train, part of the company's schedule involves performing in a variety of communities and venues. The youth ballet believes that to be a versatile artist is to feel comfortable in an assortment of settings from casual to formal and suburban to urban. Dancers must be willing to go wherever the arts are a contributor to the local culture and wherever artists are able to participate in the on-going role of enhancing lives through the arts.

Participation in SYB further enriches the lives of dancers by exposing them to the joys of giving as we participate in benefit concerts and school festivals. This personal growth and accomplishment is not only of value to each individual dancer, but it is also an asset to the surrounding community.



Company Member Madison Driscoll, age 14



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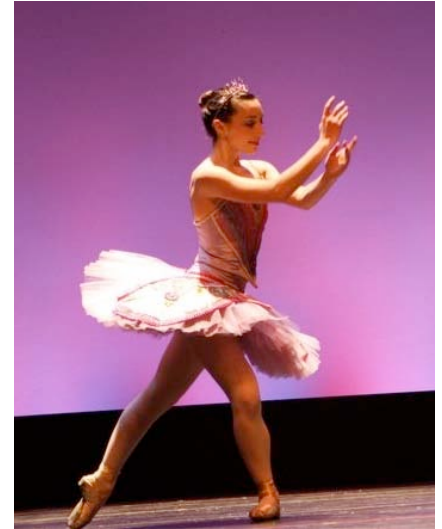
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## *Performance*

### Annual

- Holiday Celebration and Spring Concert hosted by Experimental Movement Concepts
- The Collective, Inc.'s Nutcracker Ballet
- Digiball Benefit Gala to support students of Digital Harbor High School in Baltimore City
- New Freedom Fest
- Aspirations Benefit Concert
- Family Fun Fest at Shrewsbury Elementary
- Santa's Secret Shop Holiday Festival at Southern Elementary School
- Dancing for a Common Ground Benefit Concert hosted by Common Ground Dance



Company Member Melanie Kimmel, age 17

### Other

- Open Marley
- Chocolate Festival at our Lady of Grace Middle School
- H.O.P.E. for the Holidays Benefit Concert
- New Freedom 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade
- The Pullo Center's Family Fun Fest
- Youth America Grand Prix(YAGP)



Company Members Emiline Schroder, Lyssa Wopat, & Madison Driscoll ages 16, 14, & 13



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## *Repertoire*

### Classical

**Sacajawea** : inspired by the adventures of Lewis and Clark  
Choreographed by Amber Zecker

**Fair Child Awakening**: set to celtic music  
Choreographed by Amber Zecker

**Lift Up Your Voices**: set to Holiday choral pieces including  
*Glory of the Lord* from Handel's *Messiah*, *Ave Maria*,  
and *Greensleeves*  
Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Variations**: Hungarian Dance from *Swan Lake*, *Lilac Fairy* and *Aurora* from *Sleeping Beauty*  
set by Amber Zecker based on original choreography by Marius Petipa  
*Four Swans* from *Swan Lake* set by Ashley Spears based on original  
choreography by Marius Petipa

**The Nutcracker Ballet**: the holiday favorite, choreographed by Ashley Spears w/ the  
Clowns section by Robin Snyder-Wiencek



Company Dancers: Susie & Lyssa Wopat, age 15

### Contemporary

**Bejart**: set to Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony and inspired by renowned choreographer  
Maurice Bejart; Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Jig**: inspired by Irish dance and set to *Prickly Thorn, Sweetly Worn* by The White Stripes  
Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Tribute to American Female Song Writers**: lyrical and contemporary production number  
set to the music of American female song writers; Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**New York State of Mind**: production number reflecting on the emotional and  
psychological states evoked by urban living; set to music of Goldie, Billy Joel,  
Evanescence, and Moby; Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Grand Canyon**: to *Grand Canyon* by Ani Difranco; Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Hunter**: to *Hunter* by Bjork; Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Highland Falls**: to *Summer, Highland Falls* by Billy Joel; Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Michael Jackson Medley**: set to a compilation of songs by The King of Pop;  
Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Dynamite**: to *Dynamite* by Taio Cruz; Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Lean On Me**: collaborative choreography for YAGP by Ashley Spears and Melissa Talleda

**Rockin' Robin**: group choreography for YAGP by Ashley Spears

### In the Works

**Friday Night Jams**: production piece set to popular dance music; Choreographed by Ashley Spears

**Untraveled Worlds**: set to the music of Paul Hailey and based on poetry by Alfred Lord  
Tennyson; Choreography by Melanie Kimmel (SYB student)



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## *About the Director*



**Ashley Spears** is a graduate of the Baltimore School for the Arts where her extensive ballet training was in Vaganova, Cecchetti, and Balanchine techniques. While at BSA, Ashley studied with Norma Pera, Roberto Munos, and Eddie Stewart as well as worked with guest masters such as Hinton Battle, David Grenke, and John Clifford. Ashley received further training from intensive programs and classes at renowned institutions such as The Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, The Alvin Ailey School, American Ballet Theater, The Briansky Ballet Center, Hartford Ballet, and Ballet Academy East. While at these institutions, she worked with master teachers and choreographers like Franco De Vita, David Howard, and Peggy Lyman. Aside from ballet, Ashley has also studied the modern and jazz techniques of Graham, Cunningham, Horton, Fosse, Giordano, and Limone. As a young dancer, Ms. Spears trained for and participated in graded examinations for The Royal Academy of Dance syllabus under the guidance of Patti Enoch at Towson University's Children's Dance Division. After high school, she trained as an apprentice for The Joffrey Ballet, in which she later danced corps de ballet roles such as Swan Lake, La Bayadere, and Billy the Kid. In 2002, she spent the summer at the Institute Nationale a Rouen in France—studying both French language and culture as well as dance. Ashley is a graduate of Towson University with a major in English and a minor in French and is currently pursuing a Masters in the Sciences. For the last seven years, Ashley has taught and choreographed ballet, jazz, and modern dance at schools throughout the area including The Dance Conservatory of Maryland, Towson University's Children's Dance Division, Dance Moves, The Rage Box Contemporary Dance Center, and Common Ground Dance Company. Ashley planted her roots in 2005 when she joined the staff at Experimental Movement Concepts as ballet director as well as took on the role of directing The Susquehanna Youth Ballet along with its nonprofit parent corporation, The Collective, Inc. As a teacher and company director, Ashley believes that dance teaches far more than physical skills. It teaches students how to follow through, to achieve goals, and retain commitments. It teaches the rewards of hard work and nurtures positive relationships. Most importantly, Ashley believes that dance teaches students to accept only their best and encourages them to strive to be extraordinary.