

VITACCA BALLET

2023/24 Media Kit



About

*FOUNDED IN 2020
BASED IN HOUSTON & THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS*

Vitacca Ballet (Vitacca), founded in 2020 by Kelly Ann Vitacca, is a creation-based repertoire company in the Houston area. As the pandemic brought artists home to Houston, Vitacca committed to keep artists employed and the Houston arts scene alive with project based work. This experience laid the framework for the launch of Vitacca Ballet in 2021, which now works diligently to operate a 34-week season and employ local, national, and international artists.

Vitacca Ballet Media Kit

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Vitacca Ballet

MISSION

Vitacca Ballet is driven to share dynamic contemporary ballet performances that combine beauty, intellect, and athleticism under Artistic Director Kelly Ann Vitacca. In pursuit of growth and support for the local arts community, we seek to nurture appreciative, diverse audiences by contributing entertaining, thought-provoking dance works to the Houston arts scene.

WORK

Vitacca Ballet has had the honor to work with regional and international choreographers including Tina Kay Bohnstedt, Sean Aaron Carmon, Andrea Dawn Shelley, Garrett Smith, Autumn Eckman, and Madison Hicks. Vitacca has been seen on stage within performance and outreach community events such as *The Nutcracker*, *Night at the Ballet*, *Vitacca Ballet World Premiere*, Contemporary Dance Choreography Festival, Florida, and Versatility Dance Festival, Utah. This season you can see Vitacca Ballet at the Bailindo Dance Festival, *ANDIOMO* presented by Charles Bender Performing Arts Center, Trees of Hope Gala as 2022 Entertainment Sponsor, *LAUNCH* at Match Houston, Ventana/Vitacca Ballet Austin Collaboration, and the Red Rock Dance Festival, Utah.

Vitacca is a proud recipient of the DanceSource Houston Groundwork Grant and thrilled to share its artistic energy with our 2022–23 patrons and supporters.

LEADERSHIP

Kelly Ann Vitacca, *Founder + Artistic Director*
Andrea Dawn Shelley, *Rehearsal Assistant*





Founder + Artistic Director

Kelly Ann Vitacca

Kelly Ann Vitacca is a native of Chicago, Illinois. She received her Bachelor's in Performing Arts in Dance Performance at Oklahoma City University and extended Arts Management master studies at Columbia College, Chicago. Vitacca currently choreographs and master teaches nationally while directing Vitacca Ballet and Vitacca Vocational School for Dance, Houston & Woodlands.

Ms. Vitacca's artistic achievements, arts management experience, industry networks, and dedication to advance the dance art form allowed her to pioneer Vitacca Vocational School for Dance in 2012 and Vitacca Ballet in 2020.

AWARDS + ACCOLADES

Leo's International Choreography Award

Jazz Dance World Congress (2005)

Outstanding Choreographer

Dance Chicago (2005)

Illinois Artist Fellowship Award

(2006)

Top Choreographer

Youth America Grand Prix, Houston

Outstanding School

YAGP

Outstanding School

ADCIBC

TEACHING

She served on the dance faculty at Joel Hall Dance Center, State Street Dance Studio, and the Wright College Dance Program. In addition, Vitacca spearheaded the Youth Trainee Program (YTP), offering an advanced training and performance program for emerging dancers, which supports their professional career goals and future education. Ms. Vitacca continues to choreograph and master teach nationally.

MORE DETAILS ON NEXT PAGE —>

Founder + Artistic Director

Kelly Ann Vitacca

ARTS MANAGEMENT

In 2008 Vitacca joined Houston Ballet's artistic staff as Artistic Coordinator and the Dance/USA Host Programming Committee as Chair. With the support of Dance Source Houston and fellow Committee members, Vitacca curated and produced the opening program for the Dance/USA Annual Conference, Houston Dance Inside Out in 2009. On behalf of the committee, Vitacca had the honor of receiving the official Houston Dance Day certificate from Ms. Minnette Boesel, Mayor's Assistant for Cultural Affairs.

In 2010 Vitacca was appointed Dance Houston Director of Programming where she developed the Dance Houston Spotlight Tour, Houston Youth Showcase (Jones Plaza), H-Town Get Down (Warehouse Live), and Dance Houston Youth Festival (formerly known as No Limits) (Wortham Theater). She has also served as Production Manager for the professional festival, Dance Houston, and the five-stage ROOTS Festival in Baltimore, MD. She has served as Programming Panelist for the Texas Weekend of Contemporary Dance (Miller Theater).

Vitacca also acted as the Educational Programs Liaison, supporting dance educators and filling the dance class needs within Houston Independent School District (HISD) schools and at-risk facilities.

CHOREOGRAPHY

In 2003 Vitacca founded the professional contemporary jazz company Inaside Chicago Dance and received invitations to perform her work in Dance Chicago, Espacio Cultural Metropolitano, International Choreographers Showcase (Madrid, Spain), and Duets For My Valentine, in addition to guest performances with NorthWest Ballet, Evanston Arts, and the Dance Chicago Tour. As Inaside Chicago Dance Founding Artistic Director, Vitacca conceptualized, co-choreographed, and produced the Jackson Pollock inspired evening *In the Painting*, which received the acclaim "shows technical moxie" by Chicago Tribune critic Sid Smith.

She has served as a guest choreographer for former Cedar Lake II, Forum Jazz Dance Theater, Equity Fights Aids NY Events, and Dance Houston to name a few. She has also acted as Choreographic Adjudicator for Houston Royal Academy of Fine Arts; and has been a Guest Master Teacher at the ISAS Arts Festival. Ms. Vitacca was cast as an expert ballet coach on MTV's *MADE* television series, which continues to air nationwide.

TRAINING + PERFORMANCE

Vitacca's extensive training on scholarship at Giordano Dance Chicago, Steps on Broadway, and the Kirov Ballet Training Program afforded her guest artist roles with Instruments of Movement, Cirque Rivera Dance Theatre, LA Jazz Dance Company and as lead soloist at Espacio Cultural Metropolitano (Tampico, Mexico). In 2003 Vitacca joined the national Equity, Broadway Tour of *42nd Street The Musical*. Vitacca was invited to return to complete the national tour run in 2005.



Rehearsal Assistant

Andrea Dawn Shelley

Andrea Dawn Shelley born in Miami, Florida, received her classical ballet training predominantly from Magdalena Maury and Magda G. Auñón. She studied dance at the University of South Florida under Gretchen Ward Warren and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Dance Education from Florida International University. Andrea began her professional career with Southern Ballet Theatre as a member of the corps de ballet and has since danced as a principal artist with Maximum Dance Company, Miami Contemporary Dance Company, Dominic Walsh Dance Theater, State Street Ballet and iMEE. She is the Co-Founding Director of iMEE Dance Company, est. 2009.

As a choreographer, Shelley has created original works commissioned by professional dance companies and festivals such as: iMEE, Ballet Florida, Miami Contemporary Dance Company, Dominic Walsh Dance Theater, State Street Ballet, O Dance, Ad Deum Dance Company, The Dance Gallery Festival / Level UP, palcoscenico danza, METdance, Island Moving Co., the black box INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL THEATRE & DANCE, Festival Ballet Providence, Bellingham Repertory Dance, 16th Annual Mid-Atlantic Choreographic Showcase, Houston Contemporary Dance Company & Vitacca Ballet. Her choreographic works have been presented throughout the United States, Mexico and Europe. She has participated in Residencies and created original works for dance programs such as: Sam Houston State University, Salve Regina University, Providence College, Western Kentucky University and High School of Visual & Performing Arts / Houston (PVA).

As a dance educator, Shelley has had the distinguished honor of serving as an annual preliminary panelist for the National Young Arts Foundation, Young Arts program in Choreography, Ballet & Modern in Miami, FL. She was Adjunct Ballet Faculty at Salve Regina University in Newport, RI as well as Resident Choreographer and Company Director for the University's junior company. Currently, Ms. Shelley is on Faculty at the Institute of Contemporary Dance and Senior Faculty at Vitacca Vocational School for Dance where she is also the Resident Artist Program (RAP) Director. Shelley is also in her second season with Houston Contemporary Dance Company as Ballet Mistress and Rehearsal Assistant.

2023/24 Vitacca Ballet Artists



Nikolas Darrough



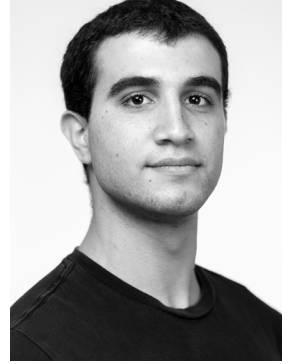
Fiona Dorr



Elissa Fonseca



Jordan Hooks



Khen Kurulkar



Maddie Medina



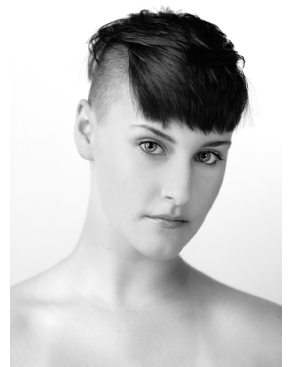
Megumi Nishimori



Joshua Ponton



Coltin Snyder



Aidan Wolf



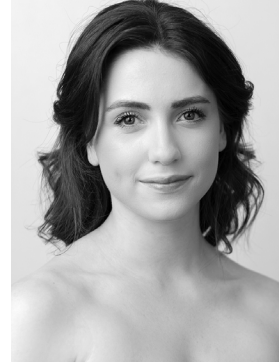
Zephaniah Casey
23/24 Apprentice



Elena Damiani
23/24 Apprentice



Ava Dempster
23/24 Apprentice



Carrington Moser
23/24 Apprentice



2023/24 Season Choreographer, Ballet Master

Tina Kay Bohnstedt

TRAINING + PERFORMANCE

Tina Bohnstedt trained at Munich's Heinz-Bosl Stiftung Ballet Academy where she won Junior Gold Medal at the German Ballet Competition and fourth place in the Moscow International Ballet Competition. She became a principal with Munich's Bavarian State Ballet. In 1992, she was recognized with the Bavarian Cultural Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts. She performed works by John Cranko, Peter Wright, John Neumeier, George Balanchine, Hans van Manen, Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, and many others. Her international tours include China, Italy, Korea, Philippines, Thailand, Colombia, Peru, Poland, Belarus, Spain, and Switzerland. In 1998, she became a guest dancer with Lawrence Pech Dance Company in San Francisco. In 1999, she joined Diablo Ballet as a principal.

TEACHING

She became Diablo Ballet Apprentice Program's director (2005) and Diablo Ballet ballet mistress (2007). She served on faculty at City Ballet San Francisco and was appointed Houston Ballet ballet master (2011). She has taught at Kirov Ballet Academy, Bavarian State Ballet, Houston Ballet Academy, Northern California Dance Conservatory, Panama Ballet, Dominic Walsh Dance Theatre, Colorado Conservatory of Dance, Atlanta Ballet and many more. From 2015-2017 she founded/directed TKB Center for Ballet and Dance in Houston. In 2018, she was appointed ballet mistress at Vitacca Vocational School for Dance, Houston. In 2020, she became the founding ballet mistress for Vitacca Ballet.

CHOREOGRAPHY

She has choreographed for Diablo Ballet and Apprentice Program, Kirov Ballet Academy, Northern California Dance Conservatory, Metropolitan Ballet Academy, Colorado Conservatory of Dance, Contra Costa Ballet, Houston Ballet II, Houston Ballet, Uptown Dance Company, Space Coast Ballet Academy, Atlanta Ballet II as well as many solos for YAGP and WBC.



2023/24 Season Choreographer

Sean Aaron Carmon

Sean Aaron Carmon joined the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 2011 and has performed major solo roles including Mikhail Baryshnikov's original role in Alvin Ailey's *Pas de Duke* and featured roles in ballets by other notable choreographers such as Wayne McGregor, Robert Battle, Aszure Barton, Johan Inger, Gustavo Ramirez Sansano and Christopher L. Huggins, to name only a few. In addition, he has been featured on *Conan*, the national TBS television talk show, *Lincoln Center at the Movies*, broadcast nationally on PBS and he was profiled in the *Huffington Post*.

As a musical theater performer, Sean has performed on Broadway in *La Cage aux Folles*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, Disney's *The Lion King* and *Kinky Boots*.

Sean's own choreographies have been performed all across the country and internationally and have been lauded as "everything and then some..." and "powerful" and "seriously flawless" by major national print and online publications such as *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *Jet Magazine*, *BroadwayBlack*, *Dance Spirit* and *Dance Magazine*. Mr. Carmon won *The Joffrey Ballet's* 2017 *Winning Works* award and created *Suite Hearts* for eighteen of the *Joffrey Ballet's* Studio Company member and the *Joffrey Academy's* advanced trainees. Also in 2017, his work *longstoryshort* was commissioned by the *Dance Gallery Festival NYC* and was selected as the *Audience Choice Award Winner* out of 30 pieces created for the festival. He has also created works on the *AAADT* for multiple *Ailey Dancers' Resource Fund* benefit performances. He has created original and lauded works for *Houston Contemporary Dance Company*, *Vitacca Ballet* and other professional companies across America. Mr. Carmon currently teaches master classes and choreographs for festivals, companies, studios and universities across the country and internationally.



2023/24 Season Choreographer

Ethan Colangelo

Ethan Colangelo was born and raised in Toronto, Canada where he began his initial training at Canada's National Ballet School and Elite Danceworx. He is now an alumni of the Juilliard School where he received the Hector Zaraspe Prize for Choreographic Promise. He has performed repertoire by Crystal Pite, Ohad Naharin, Stijn Celis, Jose Limon, Mark Morris and has been in new creations by Roy Assaf, Stephan Laks, Loni Landon, Miceala Taylor and Jasmine Ellils, along with other creative artists. Colangelo has danced professionally for BODYTRAFFIC in Los Angeles where he toured with the company across America.

As a choreographer he has presented his work at the Baryshnikov Arts Center, Festival des Arts de Saint-Sauveur, Juilliard's Choreographic Honours Showcases, APAP 2018, Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center and the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Colangelo was also one of ten choreographers selected internationally for the Copenhagen International Choreography Competition in 2018 and in 2021. During the competition in 2021, Colangelo's work "Recurrence" was awarded the Audience Choice Award, the DAF Production Award and an invitation for a residency at Hessisches Staatsballett in Germany. Recently he has created work for the BODYTRAFFIC summer intensive, was selected as an Emerging Choreographer for Springboard Danse Montreal 2020, had a choreographic partnership with the 92Y in New York, created a new work for Arts Umbrella Dance Company in Vancouver, Canada and crafted a dance film consisting of 70 dancers from around the world. Furthermore he self-produced and choreographed an original work featuring former Ballet BC emerging artists Rae Srivastava and Stefanie Noll. Colangelo is looking forward to a new creation with Whim W'Him Contemporary Dance in Seattle and MOVE NYC coming up this fall along with setting his duet 'Recurrence' on BODYTRAFFIC this September.



2023/24 Season Choreographer

Alana Jones

Alana Jones is a Houston native. As a founding member of Vitacca Ballet, formerly known as Vitacca Dance Project, under the direction of Kelly Ann Vitacca, she trained under Ballet Master Phillip Broomhead while attending the High School of Performing and Visual Arts. In 2014 Ms. Jones was accepted on scholarship and trained with the American Ballet Theatre and Dance Theatre of Harlem. Thereafter, Ms. Jones was accepted on scholarship to SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance. During her time at Purchase College, Ms. Jones was invited into the ballet concentration where she performed and studied works by George Balanchine, Norbert De la Cruz, Michelle Ulerich and Colby Damon. During her four years she has also trained with Ballet X, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance and Arts Umbrella.

Jones earned her BFA and began her professional career with Visceral Dance Chicago for two seasons upon graduating in 2018. She then went on to join BODYTRAFFIC in 2021 where she is currently a company artist.



2023/24 Season Choreographer

Hélène Simoneau

Hélène Simoneau is a choreographer who has been commissioned by The Juilliard School, Oregon Ballet Theatre, PARA.MAR Dance Theatre, the Ailey School, BalletX, Charlotte Ballet, Dimensions Dance Theatre, the American Dance Festival, among other organizations throughout the US and Canada. She was recently a Choreography Fellow at New York City Center and received a 2021 Guggenheim Fellowship. She has also been a resident artist at Baryshnikov Arts Center, NYU/Tisch, NCCAkron, and a fellow of The NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts, Ailey's New Directions Choreography Lab, the Bogliasco Foundation, and the Swiss International Coaching Project for Choreographers (SiWiC) in Zurich. Simoneau was awarded first place for Choreography at the 13th Internationales Solo-Tanz-Theater Festival in Stuttgart, Germany, for her solo "the gentleness was in her hands." Originally from Luceville, a small village near Rimouski, in Eastern Québec, Simoneau divides her time between New York City and Montréal.



2023/24 Season Choreographer

Garrett Smith

Garrett Smith was born in Salt Lake City, Utah where he began training with the Utah Regional Ballet. Garrett was named a Presidential Scholar in the Arts, and was honored to meet George W. Bush at the White House where he was presented with an award by Mikhail Baryshnikov. He later studied at the Houston Ballet Academy and created five works for Houston Ballet II's repertoire. Garrett joined Houston Ballet and danced works by Stanton Welch, Jorma Elo, Nicolo Fonte, Christopher Bruce, Christopher Wheeldon, and Ben Stevenson. Garrett choreographed his first work on Houston Ballet as an apprentice, through an award presented by Peter Martins from the New York Choreographic Institute Fellowship.

Mr. Smith later joined Norwegian National Ballet where he worked personally with choreographers Jiří Kylián, Nacho Duato, Alexander Ekman, and danced other works by William Forsythe and John Cranko. Garrett was commissioned by Houston Ballet to create new works in the 2013, and 2015 seasons. Other recent commissions include The Mariinsky Ballet, Les Grands Ballets De Montreal, Bolshoi Ballet (Faces Project), Norwegian National Ballet, Ballet West, Pennsylvania Ballet, Ballet National de Bordeaux, Tulsa Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, Texas Ballet Theater, and Salt Contemporary Dance.

Mr. Smith was a selected choreographer to make a new work for the National Choreographers Initiative 2014. His choreography *Mortal Form* took 1st place at the 2015 Genesis International Choreographic Competition. Smith's choreography *Solace* was recently seen in a new premiere in Deauville, France as part of the Festival de L'Art Russe, as well as a U.S. premiere of his work *Imitations* with Norwegian National Ballet for the 2018 Dance Salad Festival. Garrett co-choreographed a new *Swan Lake* production on ice at the Dynamo Stadium in Moscow, combining figure skaters, acrobats, and ballet dancers, with Olympic Gold Medalist Evgeni Plushenko and prima ballerina Olga Smirnova. You can see Garrett's choreography on Netflix for the original new series *Tiny Pretty Things*.



2023/24 Season Choreographer

Robyn Mineko Williams

Robyn Mineko Williams is a director, interdisciplinary artist, dancer, and producer. She works and creates within the lanes and intersections of performance, design, culture, and place. She is the founder and director of Robyn Mineko Williams and Artists (RMW&A) and has received commissions from Pacific Northwest Ballet, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and Malpas Dance Company among others. Robyn has been in residence at Baryshnikov Arts Center and is a 2023 Artist-in Residence at the Chicago Cultural Center. Named one of “25 to Watch” by Dance Magazine in 2014, she is a 2023 Dysart Award winner and Princess Grace Foundation-USA Fellowship grant recipient. In tandem with her creations for the stage, Robyn works as a creative director and movement consultant on an array of projects including immersive experiences, film, installation, pop-up performances and music videos.

Hypnotic Forces

Garrett Smith, 22/23



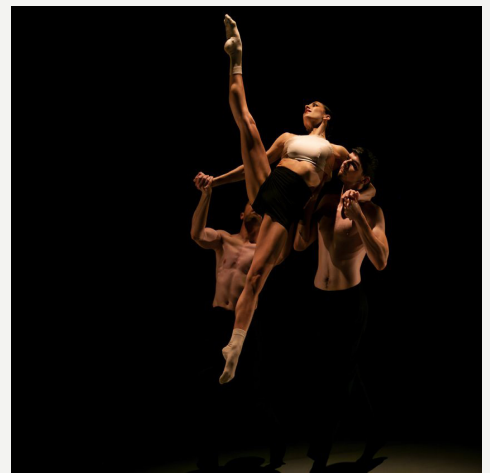
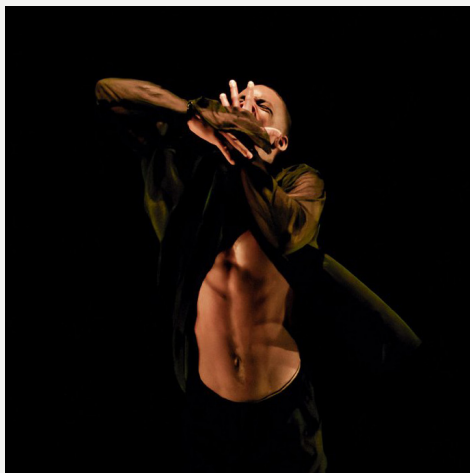
In An Apartment

Tina Kay Bohnstedt, 22/23

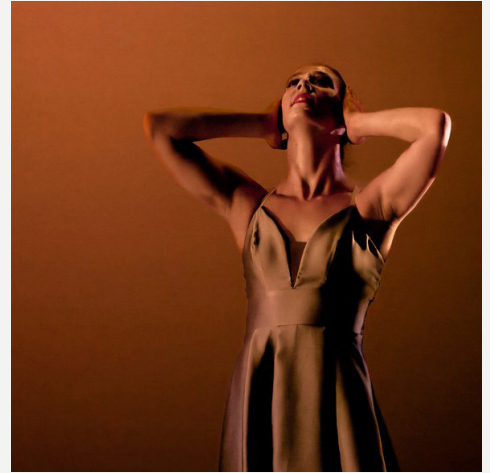


Somewhat Closer

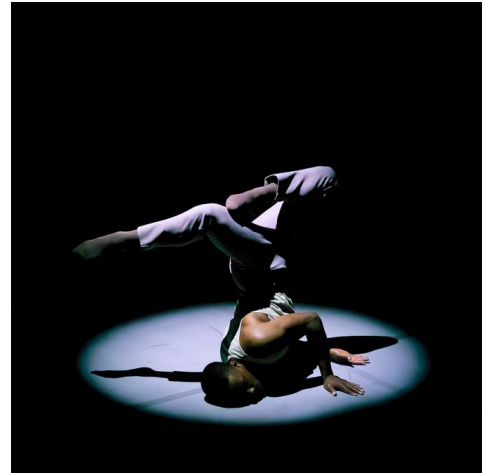
Garrett Smith, 21/22/23



Le Nouvel An
Autumn Eckman, 22/23



**Loneliness
in Numbers**
Madison Hicks 22/23



Muse
Kelly Ann Vitacca, 22/23



Overlap

Sean Aaron Carmon, 21/22

Premiered at Charles Bender Performing Arts Center in Humble, TX



Schachmatt

Tina Kay Bohnstedt, 21/22

Premiered at Charles Bender Performing Arts Center in Humble, TX



Brasas Ardientes

Shizu Yasuda, 21/22

Premiered at Charles Bender Performing Arts Center in Humble, TX



Somewhat Closer

Garrett Smith, 21/22

Premiered at Charles Bender Performing Arts Center in Humble, TX



Tokitae

Andrea Dawn Shelley, 21/22

Premiered at Charles Bender Performing Arts Center in Humble, TX



In the Light of the Night

Tina Kay Bohnstedt, 21/22

Premiered at Charles Bender Performing Arts Center in Humble, TX



A Beautiful March

Robbie Moore, 21/22

Premiered at Charles Bender Performing Arts Center in Humble, TX



Folding Promises

Roderick George, 20/21

Premiered at Charles Bender Performing Arts Center in Humble, TX



VITACCA BALLET

SOWN/WOVEN/ONE

OCTOBER 2023

FEBRUARY 2024

APRIL 2024

23/24 SEASON



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