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Tucson Regional Ballet - Announcement Press Release
Brittany De Grofft – New Artistic Director Announcement

INFORMATION FOR RELEASE:

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**NATIONALLY-ACCLAIMED AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE DANCER RETURNS HOME
TO LEAD TUCSON REGIONAL BALLET AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

TUCSON, AZ July 30, 2021: Nationally recognized for performing soloist and principal roles with American Ballet Theatre (ABT), Tucson native Brittany De Grofft has returned home to lead Tucson Regional Ballet and the Academy of Ballet as artistic director.

Born in Tucson, De Grofft began studying classical ballet at age six under the direction of Tucson Regional Ballet’s founder and recently retired director, Linda Walker. De Grofft was named among the Top Ten Dancers to Watch by Dance Spirit Magazine, performing several featured, soloist, and principal roles across the country while on tour with ABT. Her experience includes leading roles in short and full-length classics such as *Swan Lake*, *Giselle*, *La Bayadère*, *Les Sylphides*, *Onegin*, *Don Quixote*, *Manon*, and *Sylvia* among others.

“We are delighted to welcome Brittany both home to Tucson and to her artistic home at the Tucson Regional Ballet,” said Mary Lou Gammon, president of the board at Tucson Regional Ballet. “Many of us remember her mesmerizing performances as a child and as she progressed toward featured professional roles. We are thrilled she has returned to Tucson and to Tucson Regional Ballet to share her inspiring story and experience with the young dancers of our community.”

While at ABT, De Grofft worked with leading and legendary choreographers and ballerinas including Twyla Tharp, Natalia Makarova, Alexei Ratmansky, Christopher Wheeldon, Wayne McGregor and Jessica Lang. She received private coaching and trained extensively for soloist roles with legendary Russian Prima Ballerina Irina Kolpakova and Principal Ballerinas Cynthia Harvey, Julie Kent, Susan Jaffe, and Leslie Brown.

In addition to performing, De Grofft specializes in classical ballet training and coaching, teaching master classes for the American Ballet Theatre William J. Gillespie School and Ballet Theatre United Kingdom, and she has been a staff member for the Kaatsbaan Ballet Intensive.

“I am so happy to be back home in Tucson,” said De Grofft, “and I look forward to becoming a strong source of guidance for Tucson’s young dancers as they aspire to more professional roles or learn to simply appreciate the joy of dancing.”



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This summer, De Grofft and her husband, Patrick Ogle, also a former ABT dancer, taught intensive summer workshops for various levels of intermediate and advanced ballet dancers, and offered open classes to the Tucson community; they are both on staff for Academy of Ballet's upcoming 2021-2022 season. Academy of Ballet offers ballet, tap, and jazz classes for beginning through advanced dancers ages three through adult, and new students are accepted at any time. The fall session crafted under De Grofft's leadership will commence August 17.

Tucson Regional Ballet and the Academy of Ballet, the official school of Tucson Regional Ballet, are a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Tucson, Arizona that has been offering pre-professional instruction in ballet, pointe, tap and jazz for 40 years. For many of these years, Tucson Regional Ballet, in partnership with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, has presented *A Southwest Nutcracker*, a uniquely regionalized cultural translation of the original, full-length classical ballet traditionally performed during the holiday season. *A Southwest Nutcracker* will be presented on December 4 & 5, 2021. TRB also annually presents a spring showcase of classical and contemporary ballet works; for spring of 2022, the program will include excerpts from *Don Quixote*, Tucson Regional Ballet's popular original children's ballet *The Princess and the Pea*, and *Les Oiseaux*, a haunting contemporary ballet work choreographed by past artistic director Gary McKenzie. The Spring Showcase will take place on April 23 & 24, 2022.

More information may be found on the TRB website at www.tucsonregionalballet.org; please direct questions to Executive Director Bridget Wilde at bwilde@tucsonregionalballet.org or (520) 886-1222.

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