THE RYZE GUIDE



RYZE GUIDE
CHARLOTTE
INAUGURAL
SEASON
RYZEDANCE.COM

HANNA
BRICTSON

CHARLOTTE

DEC. 4–6, 2026

EVERY
BODY
RYZE

FROM THE DIRECTORS

WELCOME TO RYZE



We're so excited for our first season, and we're thrilled to have you with us!

Have an amazing weekend!

Randi + Hef

RANDI KEMPER + HEF TUITA · DIRECTORS

We are deeply committed to quality – in the training, in the environment, and in every interaction. From the moment you arrive, you'll feel the difference. This event is built and run by artists and creatives who care about dance, about people, and about creating something meaningful.

We believe dancers deserve more than just another weekend. They deserve to be seen, supported, and inspired.

This is our vision. And we can't wait to share it with you.

THE 2026-2027 TOUR

ONE SEASON. 21 CITIES.

01	NOV. 13-15	LONG BEACH, CA	GRAND OPENING	08	JAN. 28-30	LAYTON, UT	
02	NOV. 20-22	ST. AUGUSTINE, FL		09	FEB. 12-14	MEADOWLANDS, NJ	
03	DEC. 4-6	CHARLOTTE, NC	YOU ARE HERE	10	FEB. 19-21	SEATTLE, WA	
04	DEC. 11-13	ST. LOUIS, MO		11	FEB. 26-28	PITTSBURGH, PA	
05	JAN. 8-10	DENVER, CO		12	MAR. 5-7	ATLANTA, GA	
06	JAN. 15-17	GLENDALE, AZ		13	MAR. 12-14	HOUSTON, TX	
07	JAN. 22-24	PROVIDENCE, RI		14	MAR. 19-21	CHICAGO, IL	
15	APR. 2-4	SAN FRANCISCO, CA					
16	APR. 9-11	WASHINGTON, DC					
17	APR. 16-18	ORLANDO, FL					
18	APR. 30-MAY 2	LANSING, MI					
19	MAY 7-9	DALLAS, TX					
20	MAY 14-16	NASHVILLE, TN					
21	MAY 21-23	ANAHEIM, CA	REGIONAL FINALE				

OPUS

NATIONALS 2027

LAS VEGAS • JULY 5–11 · ORLANDO • JULY 12–18

OPUSNATIONALS.COM

THE CAST

2026 - 2027 SEASON

WHO IS RYZE CHARLOTTE



CO-DIRECTOR / HIP-HOP

RANDI KEMPER

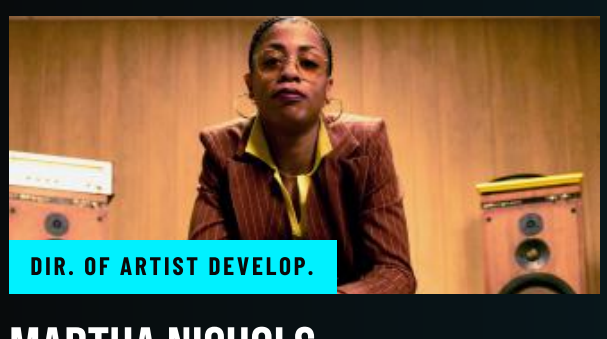
@randi_kemper



CO-DIRECTOR / HIP-HOP

HEF TUITA

@hefaleka



DIR. OF ARTIST DEVELOP.

MARTHA NICHOLS

CONTEMPORARY FUSION

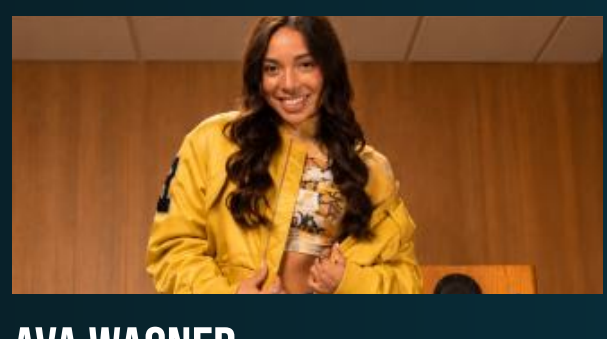
@nichols14



JA COLLECTIVE

CONTEMPORARY FUSION

@ja_collective



AVA WAGNER

DANCE TEAM/LYRICAL/CONTEMP

@avawagner22



CONNER KELLY

TAP

@itsconnerkelly



HANNA BRICTSON

BALLET

@hannaelisabeth



JAKE & SAM

JAZZ FUNK

@jakemcauley_ @sam_mcdub

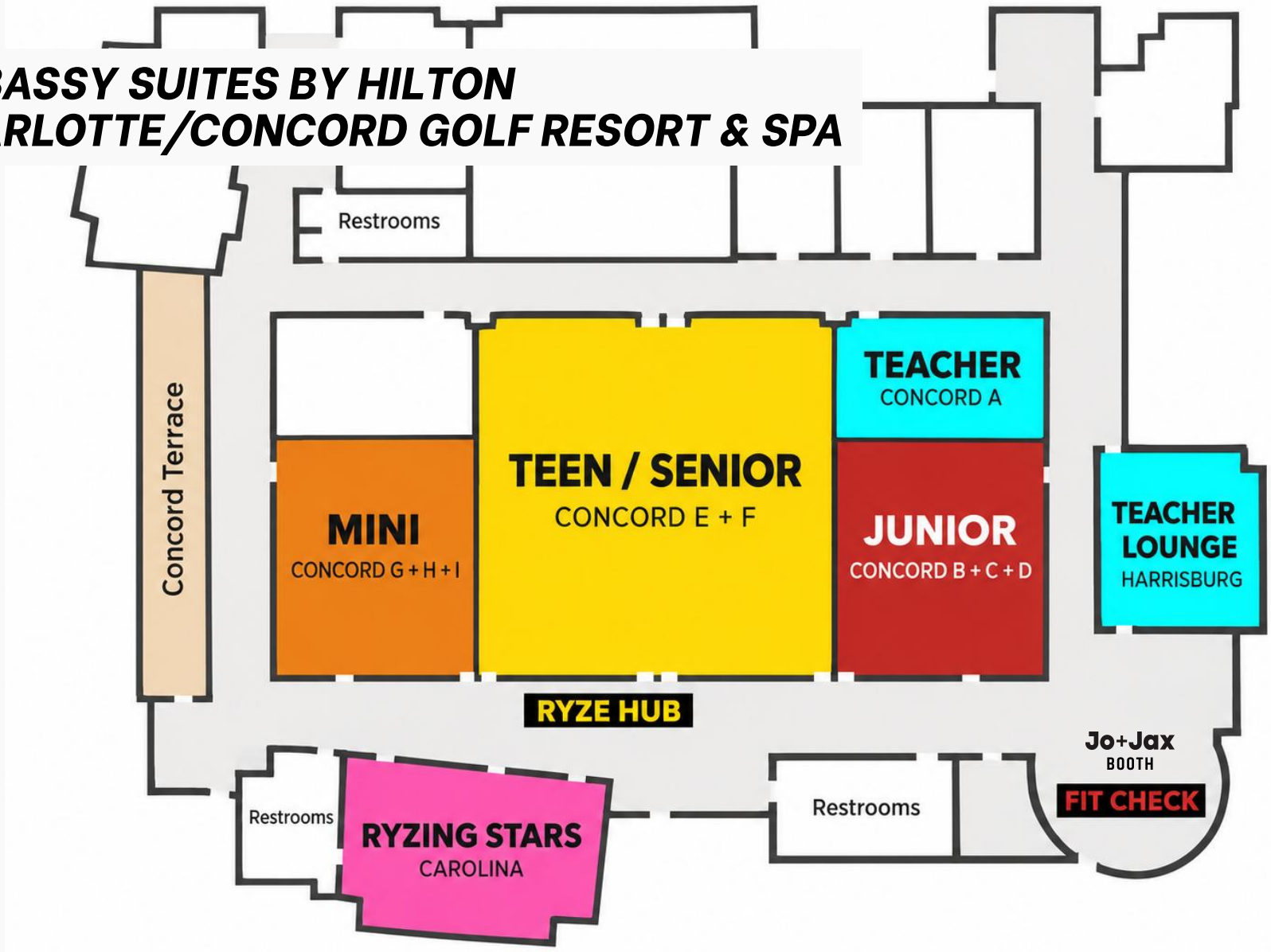


BENNET ESPINDABANICK

RYZING STAR HOST

@bennet_eb

EMBASSY SUITES BY HILTON CHARLOTTE/CONCORD GOLF RESORT & SPA



THE VENUE

CHARLOTTE VENUE

EMBASSY SUITES BY HILTON CHARLOTTE/ CONCORD GOLF RESORT & SPA

5400 John Q. Hammons Drive NW
Concord, NC 28027
+1 (704) 455-8200



EMBASSY SUITES BY HILTON CHARLOTTE/CONCORD

PARKING

ATTENDEES	$5 attendee parking · Use code **EMBASSY75**

FOOD & BEVERAGE

CAFFEINA'S	**Open daily** 6:30a–4p
ROCKY RIVER GRILLE	**Open** 5p–12a **Food service** 5p–10p **QR ordering** 11a–4p · The hotel offers a QR code for ordering from a limited menu. Your order is delivered to a designated area, and you pay on your phone.

**No outside food & beverage*

CHECK-IN · WRISTBANDS · SCHOLARSHIP NUMBERS · WAIVERS

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!



Q.01 Do I need to check in on my own?

If you're attending with a Studio — nope! Your Studio handles everything for you, including wristbands, scholarship numbers, meeting times, and any other important information.

Q.02 When do I need my wristband?

Wristbands are required for entry to all classes Saturday & Sunday.

Q.03 Can I switch Workshop rooms?

Any Workshop room changes (if available) must be done with the approval of your Studio.

Q.04 How do scholarship numbers work?

Each dancer receives four scholarship numbers. Wear one each day (Saturday & Sunday) during Workshop classes, and keep some backups just in case.

Q.05 Do I need a number on Friday?

No — scholarship numbers aren't needed for Bonus Track classes on Friday.

Q.06 Who needs to sign the waiver?

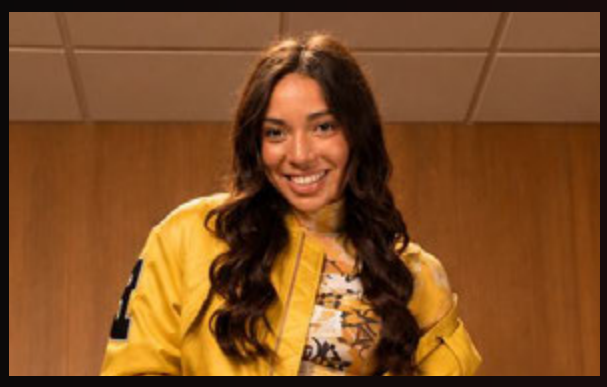
All attendees (Dancers & Teachers) must complete the RYZE waiver before participating. Your studio has the link, or visit the RYZE Hub Desk on-site.

OPTIONAL CLASSES

BONUS TRACK CLASSES!

Our Bonus Track Classes are optional classes held Friday evening for dancers who are available and not competing during those times. Please refer to the online event schedule for times and details. Our faculty understand you may be moving between competition and classes, so don't stress about arriving a little late or leaving early. Any adult wishing to watch classes must have an Observer band.

FOR BONUS TRACK DATES AND TIMES, PLEASE REFER TO THE CURRENT ONLINE SCHEDULE



01 LYRICAL

AVA

Minis & Juniors



02 JAZZ FUNK

JAKE & SAM

Teens & Seniors



03 DANCE TEAM

AVA

Teens & Seniors

SURPRYZE CLASS!



A surprise guest instructor and/or dance genre awaits Teen and Senior dancers Friday night! Find out what's in store on Instagram the day before.

WE'RE FLIPPING THE SCRIPT

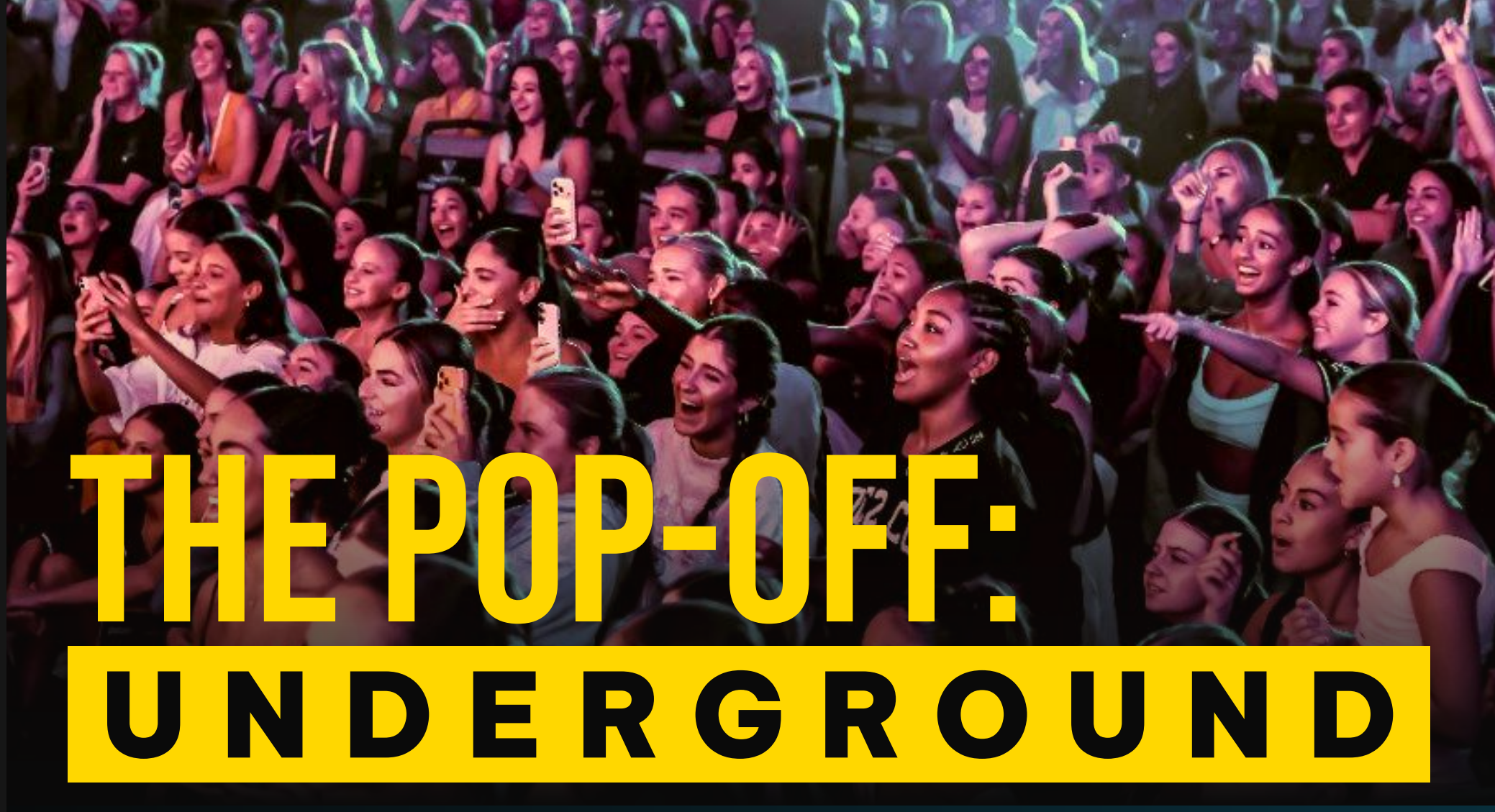
THE PARENT ROOM

This time, the parents get to dance! The Parent Room hosts a fun, low-pressure class on Sunday. Come laugh, move, and make some memories of your own!

FREE · NO WRISTBAND NEEDED

SUNDAY

12:00P - 12:45P
Stretch & Strengthen w/ Bennet
Carolina Room



THE POP-OFF: UNDERGROUND

When the lights hit and the music drops, it's time for The Pop-off: Underground! Join every dancer, teacher, and observer in the Teen/Senior Room for a 10-minute explosion of energy and joy. Watch our faculty throw down, our production and video teams light it up, and feel the power of hundreds of dancers moving as one.

This is the heartbeat of RYZE — don't miss it!



RYZE & RECOGNIZE

The Ryze & Recognize Bag Charm celebrates dancers who have made a lasting impression throughout the weekend. Faculty members honor these dancers with two bag charms — one to keep as a reminder of their impact, and one to pass forward to another dancer who they believe shines with potential.

THE GET UP

Start your Saturday morning in your individual workshop room where you will meet some faculty, get the inside scoop on what RYZE is all about, and set the tone for an unforgettable weekend. You'll connect, stretch, laugh, and warm up together — your first chance to feel the energy that makes RYZE unlike anything else.



Start your Sunday morning with intention. All Teen & Senior dancers are invited to the Teen/Senior Room for a short recharge to help guide your mind, lift your mood, and set the tone for an incredible day.

THE SEND OFF

Don't miss The Send Off — the ultimate finale to your RYZE weekend. After the last class wraps on Sunday, the main stage transforms into a high-energy celebration featuring scholarship presentations, electrifying faculty performances, and an exclusive Dance Battle you won't want to miss.

Please note: The Send Off is expected to last 60–90 minutes. There is no formal seating — attendees and spectators may stand or sit on the floor. There will be minimal reserved seating for Teachers & Studio Owners.

COMPETITION INFO

SHOWTIME

DRESSING ROOMS

Dedicated dressing rooms for Female, Male, and Gender Neutral dancers are available at all events one hour before the Competition start time. Dressing rooms are for changing only and may not be used as rehearsal space. To ensure privacy, photos and videos are strictly prohibited inside all dressing rooms. Any abuse of the dressing rooms may result in disqualification. All participants are responsible for keeping their space clean and disposing of all trash before leaving.

MUSIC

All competition music must be uploaded by the Friday before your event. Log in to your HitchKick registration account to upload — you can preview tracks once uploaded. Bring a backup copy on a smartphone or USB drive.

SCHEDULE

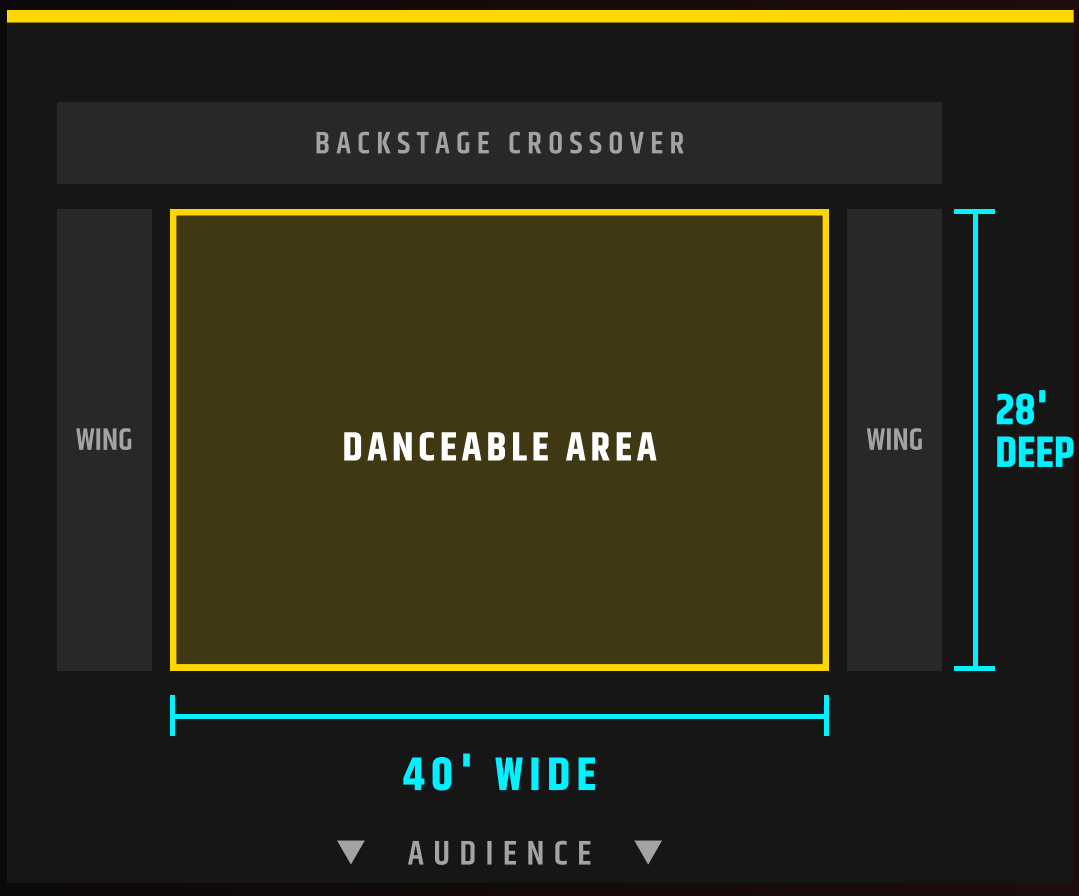
RYZE publishes estimated times for all Competition routines. We could run up to 1 hour ahead of schedule — follow along via our livestream!

COMPETITION RULES

At RYZE, we strive to make every Competition fun, inspiring, and motivating — while keeping things fair for everyone involved. Please review all detailed rules and regulations at ryzedance.com/competition. Any concerns will be reviewed and addressed at the sole discretion of the Event Directors.

STAGE 1

Our Main Stage is a custom-built performance space with a minimum danceable area of 40' wide by 28' deep, plus ample wing space and a backstage crossover. The floor is finished with professional marley for dancer safety and performance quality.



JUDGING

All entries are adjudicated by three to four qualified judges, each with their own audio/video critique. Online critiques are available within one week of the event.

PROPS

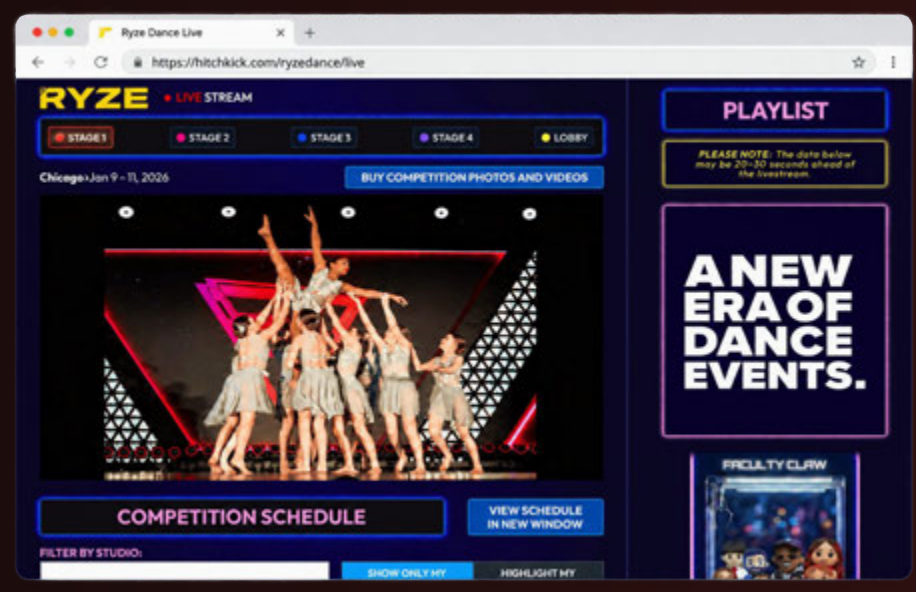
A designated prop storage area will be available on site — see a RYZE staff member on arrival for the exact location. All props must enter through the main entrance unless loading dock access has been pre-approved in writing. RYZE is not responsible for prop security, and truck parking cannot be guaranteed. We recommend removing props immediately after your routine. Full rules: ryzedance.com/competition/fine-print

PHOTO & VIDEO

Photography and videography during the Competition are strictly prohibited. Due to the advanced capabilities of modern cameras and cell phones, all recording and still photography — with or without flash — is not allowed. This protects the intellectual property of choreographers and ensures the safety and privacy of all dancers. Violations may result in disqualification of the routine and/or the studio.

LIVESTREAM

Watch the Competition free at ryzedance.com/livestream. Occasional technical issues may arise due to venue or internet limitations, and there is no rewind or playback option. Thanks for your patience!



WORKSHOP ROOMS

OBSERVER BAND

AGES 11+

To observe Workshop classes, Observer Bands may be purchased in advance through your studio. If you plan to purchase an Observer Band on-site, please be prepared to provide the dancer's full name, studio affiliation and date of birth for security verification.

CLOSING SHOW

THE SEND OFF

FREE

Families of registered dancers are welcome to watch The Send Off free of charge. Seating is not available – standing room or floor seating only.

PLAY BY THE RULES

While we encourage LOTS of enthusiasm at RYZE, there are a few guidelines set to ensure a safe and seamless event:

01

Workshop Observers should remain seated and keep all personal belongings against the walls to maximize space for dancers. RYZE reserves the right to ask any Observer to exit the ballroom if they become a distraction.

02

Competition seating is first-come, first-served. The first few rows are reserved for Studio Owners and Teachers ONLY and are clearly marked.

03

Saving more than 1 seat is not allowed. Please be considerate and make room for all guests who wish to support their dancers.

04

Air horns or similar devices are prohibited.

05

Photography and video recording are not permitted inside the Competition areas or dressing rooms.

06

All attendees and spectators must comply with the specific rules of each venue, including food, drink, and facility use policies.

07

No alcohol is permitted inside the ballrooms at any time, except at specific special events held for Teachers, Studio Owners and/or Parents/Guardians.

08

Please be respectful of all performers, staff, judges, and fellow audience members. Disruptive behavior, loud talking, or negative comments will not be tolerated.

09

Support the performers! We encourage loud applause, positive energy, and good sportsmanship throughout the event.

10

RYZE reserves the right to remove any spectator or attendee for inappropriate conduct.

11

We value the trust between studios and their dancers, so **soliciting dancers from other studios is strictly prohibited.** A first offense results in a formal warning; repeat violations may lead to suspension from future RYZE events.

SAFETY & SECURITY

On-site Event Safety Officer: Blayke Bayer · safety@ryzedance.com

Please report any Safety and/or Security concerns immediately. For our detailed Safety & Security plan, visit ryzedance.com/event-info/safety.

01

Attendees under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult parent, guardian, or dance teacher at all times.

02

Dancers (under 18) should not leave the venue without checking in with a parent or guardian.

03

All venues will have security and/or staff available if assistance is needed.

04

Stay aware of your surroundings and report any suspicious activity immediately.

05

Please do not leave your belongings unattended. RYZE is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

06

Strobe lights and other intense lighting effects may be used during performances and classes. Individuals sensitive to such effects should take appropriate precautions.



FLOOR & COMMON AREA POLICY

To maintain safe walkways, clear sightlines, and an unobstructed learning environment, blankets, portable or mobile chairs, stools, floor seating, strollers, luggage, or similar items are not permitted anywhere in workshop classrooms, competition rooms, ballroom floor areas, the event lobby, foyers, hallways, or other common spaces.

Observers may only use seating provided by the venue or placed by RYZE. Personal items may not be placed on the floor or used to create informal seating areas or to reserve space.

RYZE staff reserve the right to remove any items that obstruct walkways, exits, classroom space, or the ballroom floor.

FIT CHECK!

WEAR THE MOMENT.

EXCLUSIVE DROPS

RYZE believes self-expression is power. Dance and fashion are both languages — ways to speak your truth without saying a word. Every move, every look, every beat is a reflection of who you are and what you stand for.

Exclusive RYZE drops hit every city — hoodies, tees, sweats, and more made for the movement.

ONCE THEY'RE GONE, THEY'RE GONE.

FIND YOURS AT THE MERCH BOOTH



OWN YOUR MOMENT.

PHOTO VIDEO

VIEW THE MOMENT.

Relive your competition performance and share it with pride.

Photo & video packages available for all routines. Scan the code or visit ryzedance.com/photo-video to order yours today.

RYZING ARTISTS

AUDITIONS & SCHOLARSHIPS

MINI AGES 8-10

JUNIOR AGES 11-12

TEEN AGES 13-15

SENIOR AGES 16-19

All Mini, Junior, Teen, and Senior dancers (ages 8–19) participate in the **Ryzing Artist Scholarship Audition.** Dancers audition in their age division as of January 1, 2027, and must be in their age-appropriate ballroom for both the audition and the preceding combo class. Teen & Senior dancers may also be asked to improv during the audition. Dancers perform in small groups for the RYZE faculty, and Finalists in each division are announced at the end of the audition!

RYZING ARTISTS RECEIVE	WINNERS	RUNNERS-UP
Invitation to compete for Artist of the Year at OPUS Nationals 2027	●	●
Complimentary Workshop Tuition to OPUS Nationals 2027	●	●
Personalized Jacket & Goody Bag at OPUS Nationals 2027	●	●
Free Best Artist Title Registration at OPUS Nationals 2027	●	●
Performance at OPUS Nationals 2027 (Teens & Seniors only)	●	●
One Regional Tour Scholarship — valid at any RYZE Regional during the 2026–2027 & 2027–2028 season	●	
Priority Invitation to PIVOT, created by Mandy Moore (Senior Winners only. Senior Runners-up and Teen Winners if space is available.)	●	

SUNDAY REHEARSAL & THE SEND OFF

All Ryzing Artist Finalists will be recognized during The Send Off on Sunday. A short rehearsal for all Finalists will be held in the Teen/Senior Room at lunch on Sunday — please plan ahead and bring lunch. Finalists take the stage during The Send Off, where the Winners and Runners-up in each age division are announced.

THE RYZE RUMBLE!!!

To wrap up The Send Off, the Teen and Senior Ryzing Artist Winners face off in a high-energy improv dance battle, judged by the entire RYZE faculty! The champion takes home the custom **RYZE Crown** — plus **$300 toward a pizza party** back at their studio. (Just for fun! This doesn't affect Ryzing Artist results at Regionals or Nationals.)

IMPROVISATIONAL RULES — To ensure a safe, fair, and respectful experience, these apply to all improv events at RYZE: no removal of clothing or costumes, except accessories (hats, scarves, jackets) · no jumping or leaping off the stage · no retrieving or using props from offstage · no physical or verbal interaction with other contestants · movement and expression must remain age-appropriate — no suggestive, explicit, or sexual gestures or content. Violations may result in disqualification or point deduction at the discretion of RYZE Management & Directors.

CLASS AWARDS

SPOTLIGHT SCHOLARSHIPS

Throughout the weekend, our faculty recognize dancers who truly stand out in class by awarding Spotlight Scholarships — honoring exceptional performance, passion, and artistry in specific styles: tap, jazz, ballet, hip-hop, and more.

WHO

Ages 8–19 in Mini, Junior, Teen & Senior workshop levels. One per dancer per season; one-day students not eligible.

HOW MANY

Varies by city and class size.

WHEN

Announced in each ballroom after the last class, before The Send Off.

PRIZE

Complimentary Best Artist Title fee at OPUS Nationals 2027.



FACULTY PICKS

ARTISTS TO WATCH

Each RYZE faculty member selects one dancer who truly inspires the room — dancers who shine through their passion, energy, and love for dance. An Artist to Watch might show extraordinary growth, a standout work ethic, or a genuine spark that elevates those around them.

> **"A GENUINE SPARK THAT ELEVATES THOSE AROUND THEM."**
>
> — ON OUR ARTISTS TO WATCH

WHEN

Announced during The Send Off on Sunday.

PRIZE

Complimentary workshop tuition to one RYZE regional in the 2027–2028 season.

RYZING STARS

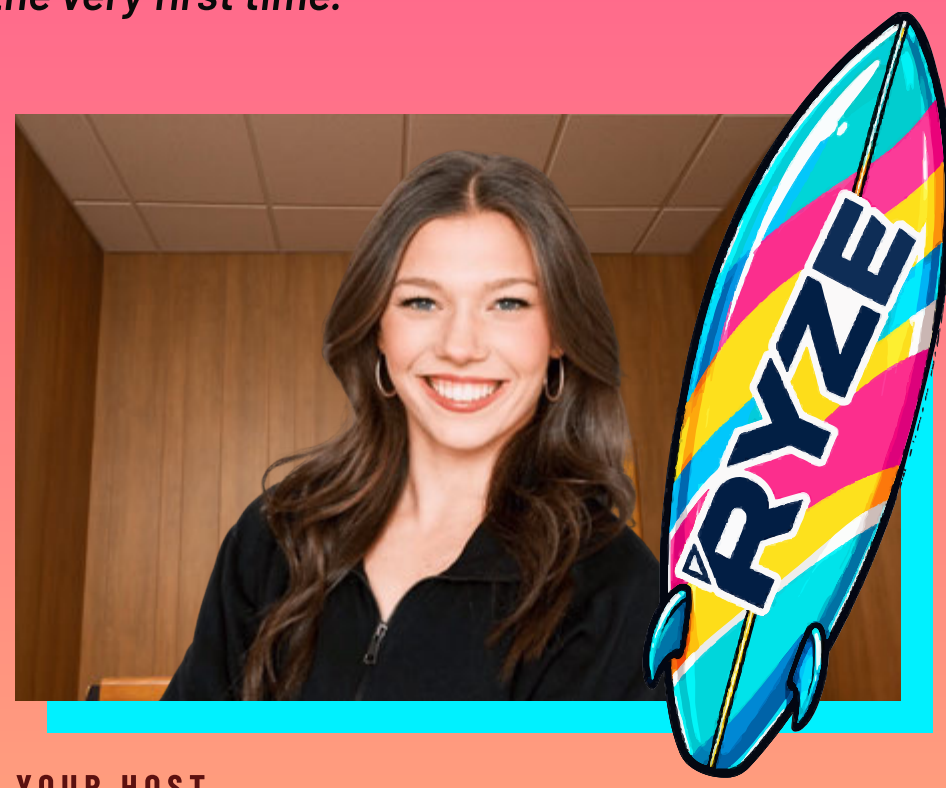
FOR RYZING STARS TIMES, PLEASE REFER TO THE CURRENT ONLINE SCHEDULE

Our youngest dancers are the stars of their own show! It's their moment to shine, explore, and experience the magic of convention – maybe for the very first time.

SATURDAY

NOW BOARDING:

- Orientation
- Musical Theatre
- Lyrical
- Hip-Hop
- Jazz
- Performance on Main Stage!



SUNDAY



- Ballet
- Tap
- Jazz
- The Next Wave Finale!

YOUR HOST

BENNET ESPINDABANICK

Each Ryzing Star dancer receives **one complimentary Ryzing Star Observer wristband** for a parent or guardian (Ryzing Star room access only). Additional wristbands may be purchased on-site, if available, with the dancer's name, studio, and date of birth.

Ryzing Stars aren't eligible for Audition or Class Scholarships, but may be considered for **Artists to Watch**.

> *Parents: please pick up your Ryzing Star backstage immediately following the performance.*



THE NEXT WAVE



STUDIO OWNERS & TEACHERS

VIP INFO



YOUR VIP WEEKEND

SATURDAY

8A–8:45A

Teacher Meet & Greet w/ Randi & Hef

CONCORD A

Join Randi & Hef as they talk through the weekend and give insights into the Teacher Program.

SUNDAY

11:45A–12:45P

Studio Owner Lunch w/ Randi & Hef

KANNAPOLIS

RYZE Reset

TEACHER LOUNGE

Need a breather? Step away from the high-energy hustle and unwind with complimentary coffee, tea, soda, and snacks. Recharge, catch up with friends, or take a quiet moment between classes.

FRI 7A–8:30P · SAT 7A–7:30P · SUN 7A–12P

HARRISBURG

BEST SEATS IN THE HOUSE

VIP SEATING

All registered teachers and studio owners enjoy reserved seating throughout the weekend — including Competition, Workshop classes, and The Send Off.

WEAR IT PROUD

VIP LANYARD

Every registered teacher and studio owner receives an exclusive VIP lanyard at check-in, so faculty, staff, and fellow attendees can easily recognize and connect with you.

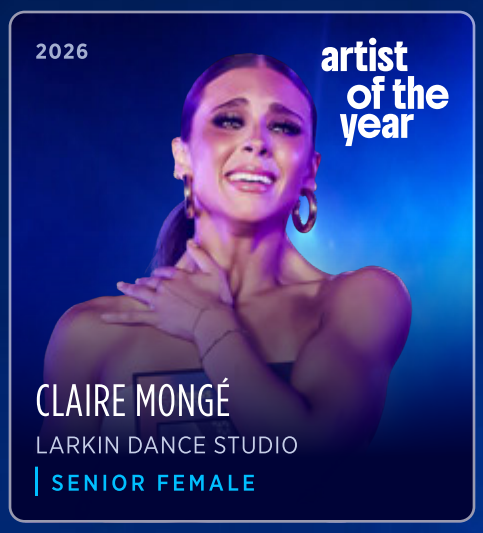
Please note: VIP lanyards do not replace your wristband. A valid wristband is still required for entry into all Workshop rooms.

OPUS

artist of the year

The pinnacle of solo dance achievement.

SENIOR

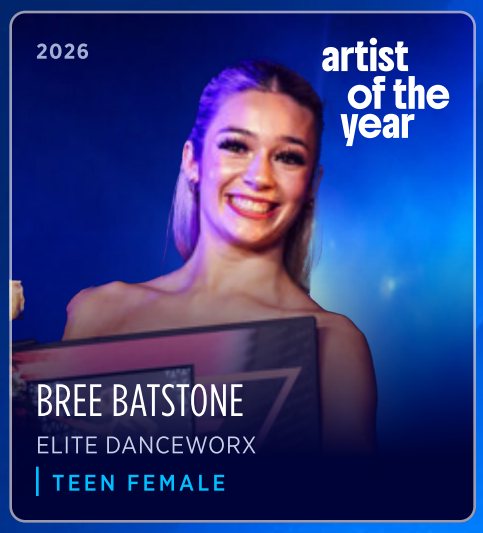


CLAIRE MONGÉ
LARKIN DANCE STUDIO
SENIOR FEMALE

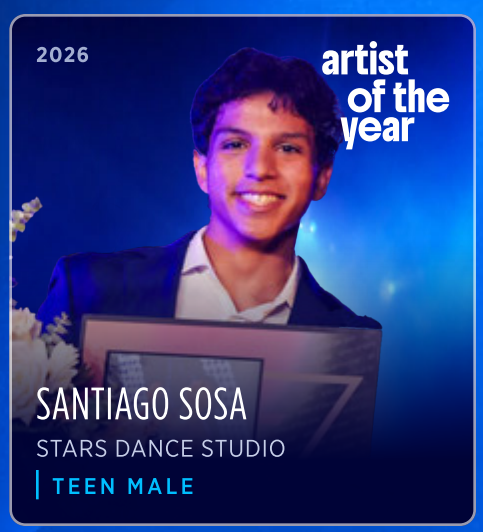


OWEN SCOGGINS
THE DANCE STUDIO OF FRESNO
SENIOR MALE

TEEN



BREE BATSTONE
ELITE DANCEWORX
TEEN FEMALE



SANTIAGO SOSA
STARS DANCE STUDIO
TEEN MALE

JUNIOR

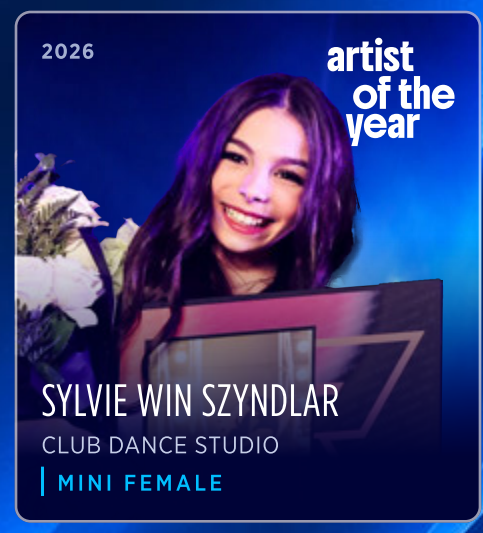


STELLA BRINKERHOFF
CENTER STAGE PERFORMING ARTS
JUNIOR FEMALE

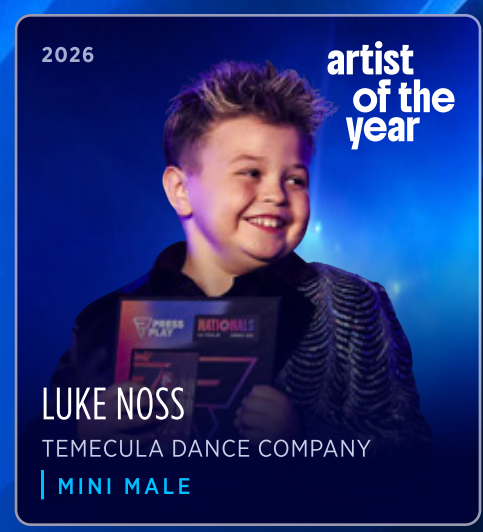


ISAIAH SANTOS
EVOLVE DANCE COMPLEX
JUNIOR MALE

MINI



SYLVIE WIN SZYNDLAR
CLUB DANCE STUDIO
MINI FEMALE

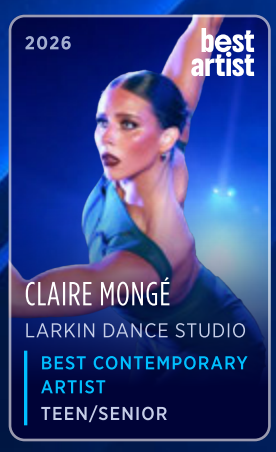


LUKE NOSS
TEMECULA DANCE COMPANY
MINI MALE

best artists

Where your style takes center stage.

CONTEMPORARY

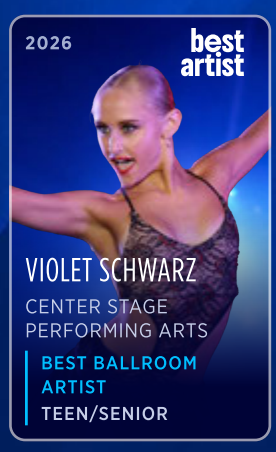


CLAIRE MONGÉ
LARKIN DANCE STUDIO
BEST CONTEMPORARY ARTIST
TEEN/SENIOR

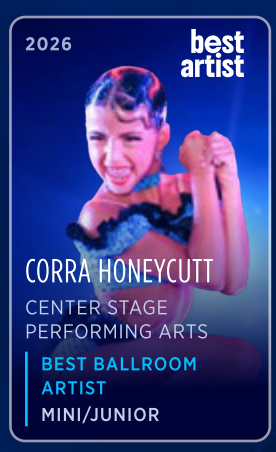


SAVANNAH JACKSON
LARKIN DANCE STUDIO
BEST CONTEMPORARY ARTIST
MINI/JUNIOR

BALLROOM

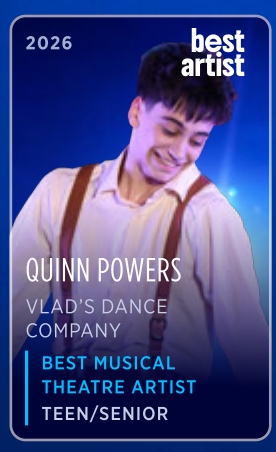


VIOLET SCHWARZ
CENTER STAGE PERFORMING ARTS
BEST BALLROOM ARTIST
TEEN/SENIOR

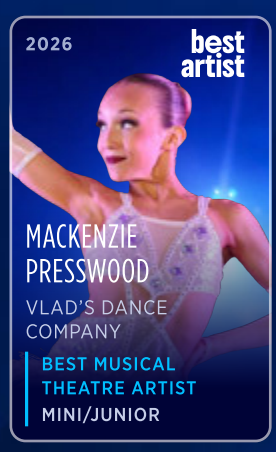


CORRA HONEYCUTT
CENTER STAGE PERFORMING ARTS
BEST BALLROOM ARTIST
MINI/JUNIOR

MUSICAL THEATRE

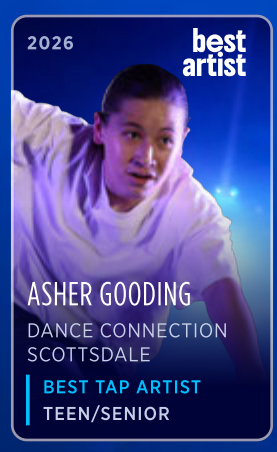


QUINN POWERS
VLAD'S DANCE COMPANY
BEST MUSICAL THEATRE ARTIST
TEEN/SENIOR

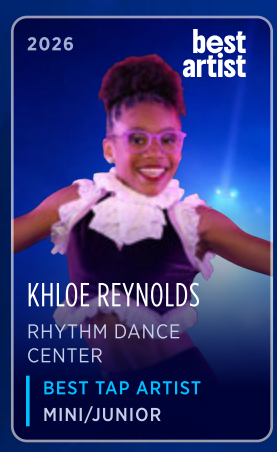


MACKENZIE PRESSWOOD
VLAD'S DANCE COMPANY
BEST MUSICAL THEATRE ARTIST
MINI/JUNIOR

TAP

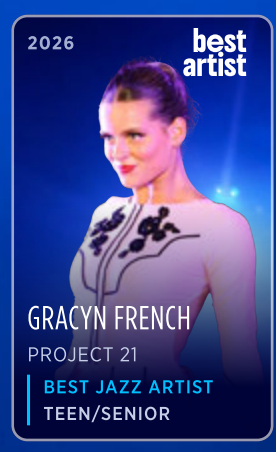


ASHER GOODING
DANCE CONNECTION SCOTTSDALE
BEST TAP ARTIST
TEEN/SENIOR

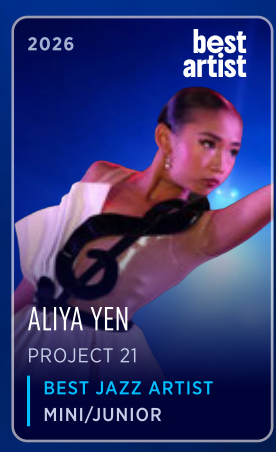


KHLOE REYNOLDS
RHYTHM DANCE CENTER
BEST TAP ARTIST
MINI/JUNIOR

JAZZ

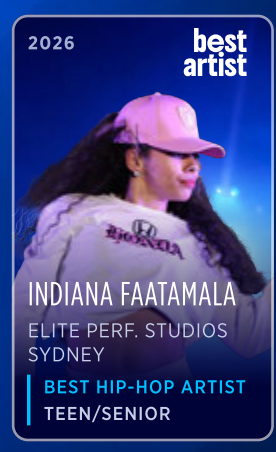


GRACYN FRENCH
PROJECT 21
BEST JAZZ ARTIST
TEEN/SENIOR

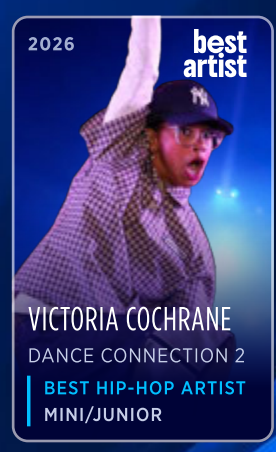


ALIYA YEN
PROJECT 21
BEST JAZZ ARTIST
MINI/JUNIOR

HIP-HOP

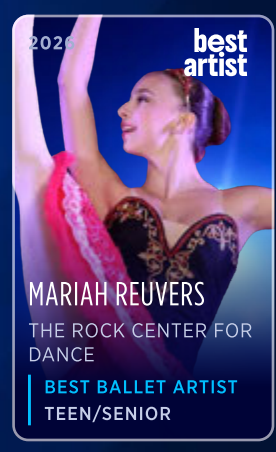


INDIANA FAATAMALA
ELITE PERF. STUDIOS SYDNEY
BEST HIP-HOP ARTIST
TEEN/SENIOR

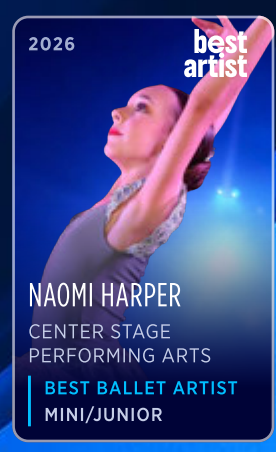


VICTORIA COCHRANE
DANCE CONNECTION 2
BEST HIP-HOP ARTIST
MINI/JUNIOR

BALLET



MARIAH REUVERS
THE ROCK CENTER FOR DANCE
BEST BALLET ARTIST
TEEN/SENIOR



NAOMI HARPER
CENTER STAGE PERFORMING ARTS
BEST BALLET ARTIST
MINI/JUNIOR

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Studio Awards celebrate outstanding achievements in specific dance styles, honoring studios that consistently deliver high-caliber performances across age divisions within a chosen genre.



CENTER STAGE PERF. ARTS

BALLROOM

STUDIO OF THE YEAR



DANCE CONNECTION 2

MUSICAL THEATRE

STUDIO OF THE YEAR



VLAD'S DANCE COMPANY

HIP-HOP

STUDIO OF THE YEAR



LARKIN DANCE STUDIO

CONTEMPORARY

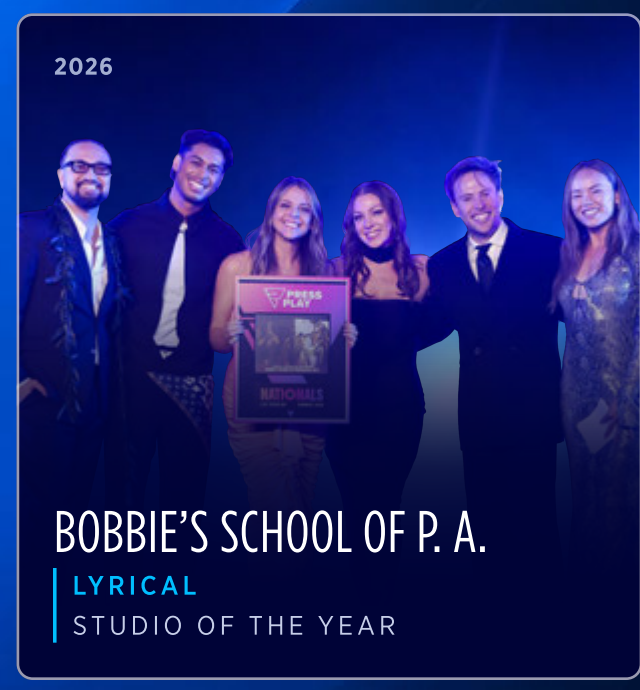
STUDIO OF THE YEAR



PROJECT 21

JAZZ

STUDIO OF THE YEAR



BOBBIE'S SCHOOL OF P. A.

LYRICAL

STUDIO OF THE YEAR



ART & SOUL DANCE COMPANY

TAP

STUDIO OF THE YEAR



THE DANCE STUDIO OF FRESNO

BALLET

STUDIO OF THE YEAR



THE ROCK CENTER FOR DANCE

BALLET

STUDIO OF THE YEAR

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LARKIN DANCE STUDIO

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THE OPUS AWARD 2026

TOP 5



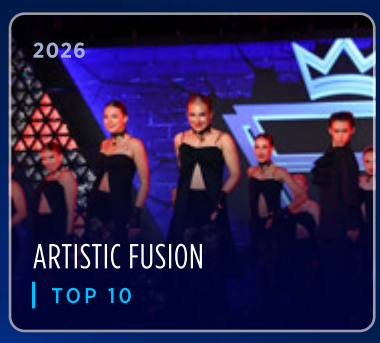


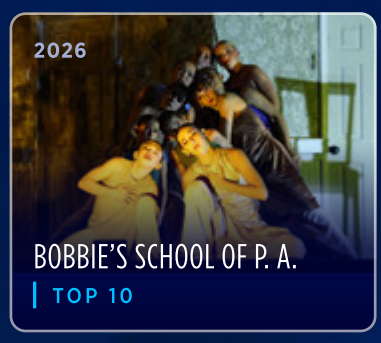




THE OPUS AWARD 2026

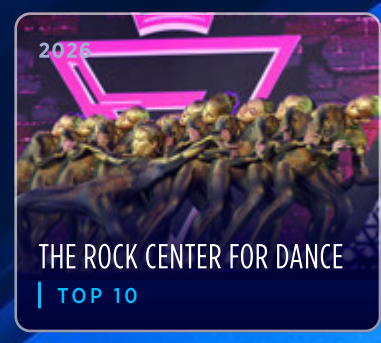
TOP 10











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