

PERFORMING  
ARTS  
EDUCATION  
SUMMARY  
2024



# Music Hall

CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

*Detroit's Leading Not-For-Profit Cultural Center*



## EDUCATION THROUGH THE PERFORMING ARTS

ELEMENTARY MUSIC AT  
THE SCHOOL AT MARYGROVE

HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC AT  
THE SCHOOL AT MARYGROVE

JAZZ VOCAL EDUCATION

JAZZ FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

JAZZ JAMS EDUCATIONAL  
WORKSHOPS

THEATER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC LESSONS

HIGH SCHOOL BIG BAND OUTREACH

CONTEMPORARY DANCE  
MASTER CLASSES

COMPLEXIONS CONTEMPORARY  
BALLET SUMMER INTENSIVE

There is overwhelming evidence of the importance of arts education to a child's development, academic achievement, and lifelong success.

Our ten youth education programs, FREE TO STUDENTS, employ eight teaching artists who bring lessons and educational experiences in music, dance, and theatre to over 5,000 students ages 3-18 each year. These programs are the heart of our efforts to improve equitable access to the arts for students who attend school in lower-income districts.

In a recent annual State of the Schools address, Superintendent Dr. Nikolai Vitti singled out Music Hall for special recognition as a model of partnership in providing arts education services to District students, and emphasized our participation in the Cultural Pathways program to provide in-school instruction in music, theater, and dance.



# OUR INSTRUCTORS

## SCOTT GWINNELL, MUSIC EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Scott is a pianist/composer/arranger/educator from Detroit. He has performed, recorded, and/or toured with Aretha Franklin, Vanessa Williams, Roberta Flack, Rodney Whitaker, Marcus Belgrave, Delfayo Marsalis, and many more luminaries. He has played on over 20 recordings and has five records to his own name. His trio is the Friday evening house band at the historic London Chop House, and he was the first artist signed to the Mack Ave. subsidiary label, Detroit Music Factory. As an 11-time award-winning BMI composer, Gwinnell has written over 400 compositions and arrangements ranging from solo piano to symphony orchestra. He has taught music full and part time at the University of Toledo, Bowling Green State University, and Wayne County Community College. In addition to his Music Hall position, he is the Ensemble Director for MSU Community Music School and a lecturer at Oakland University.



## JORDAN SCHUG, STRINGS INSTRUCTOR

Jordan earned his Bachelors of Music in Jazz Studies at the University of North Texas in 2005 and his Masters in Music Improvisation from the University of Michigan in 2014. He's played the Detroit Jazz Festival, and performs with Hot Club of Detroit, Scott Gwinnell Jazz Orchestra, Ramona Collins, Ethan Daniel Davidson, and Laith Al-Saadi. He creates original compositions for film and television, and currently instructs cello, upright bass, and electric bass.

# OUR INSTRUCTORS

## JIANA HUNTER, GROUP CHORAL INSTRUCTOR

Ms. Hunter is a vocal music educator, performer, worship leader, songwriter, arranger and vocal coach. She holds degrees in Jazz Studies performance (MM – Western Michigan University) and Music Education (BME – Kentucky State University), was the first Vocal Jazz Director of the Memphis Jazz Workshop, has taught collegiate and grade school music, and created performance arrangements for notable programs throughout the U.S. Jiana's first Gospel Jazz single "True Love" gives a glimpse of her spiritual and traditional influences.



## SAMI BLOSSER, WOODWIND INSTRUCTOR

Sami began her study of classical saxophone at age 12 and fell in love with jazz. She graduated from WMU with a degree in jazz studies, receiving high praise for her compositions and arrangements. Based in Metro Detroit, she leads and collaborates on a variety of projects, from straight-ahead jazz to avant garde. Her students participate in district and state honors bands and are accepted into highly competitive university music programs.



## JOHN DOUGLAS, BRASS INSTRUCTOR

John is your funk specialist, your acid- and latin-jazz all-star, a seasoned be-bop professional, and a dedicated educator with a 25-year career on world stages. He rips the high notes, caresses the low notes, and rocks the melodic scales in between. His exclusive trumpet style is described as hefty, technically accomplished, unexpected, and downright phat.



# OUR INSTRUCTORS



## SEAN PERLMUTTER, PERCUSSION INSTRUCTOR

Sean is a drummer, bandleader, composer, and instructor who began playing and teaching professionally at age 16. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Music from Wayne State University with a concentration in Jazz Studies. In 2019, Sean released his debut album of original compositions with the avant-garde jazz trio MOUTHBREATHr. He performs a wide range of musical styles at venues such as Cliff Bell's, Aretha's Jazz Cafe, Willis Show Bar and the Dirty Dog Jazz Café.



## JASON SMITH, JAZZ FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEATER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE INSTRUCTOR

Growing up in a music education family, Jason hit the stage at age 3, continuing his professional development as assistant leader of his mother's 'Sunflower Choir' by the time he turned 10. As a young adult, he assembled a team of early childhood educators and social workers to create music and dance-based programs for Detroit students that taught a variety of life skills he knew to be missing from the educations of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, focusing on strategies for academic and career success. As Music Hall's early childhood artist-in-residence, Jason combines his musical skills and theatrical flair with a deep and lifelong commitment to the Detroit community he has always called home. His enthusiasm for his work and dynamic presence are an inspiration to the Music Hall team.



## JOSIE ALA, ELEMENTARY MUSIC INSTRUCTOR

Josie is a multi-talented performer and educator from Windsor, Ontario, and a recent graduate of the University of Michigan Jazz and Contemporary Improvisation Program. Her teaching experience includes individualized studio piano and music theory lessons, with 30-40 weekly students of all ages and experience levels. As a trumpeter, vocalist and pianist, Josie brings her unique voice to the stage and the classroom. She has a passion for community involvement and plays regularly with local groups such as the Paul Keller Orchestra in Ann Arbor, MI.

# SCHOOLS SERVED BY MUSIC HALL PROGRAMS

Since 2010, our artists-in-residence have sustained the rare privilege of being allowed to give their lessons in the classrooms during the school day, alongside District faculty. Approximately 85% are African American, 10% Caucasian, 5% a combination of LatinX, Middle Eastern, and mixed race.

Our current in-school and after-school service in the DPSCD system includes: The School at Marygrove, Detroit School of Arts, Renaissance High School, Cass Technical High School, Brenda Scott Academy, Ellington Conservatory at Beckham Academy, Brenda Scott Academy, John R King Academic and Performing Arts Academy, Spain Elementary-Middle School, Carver STEM Academy, and Mackenzie Elementary-Middle.

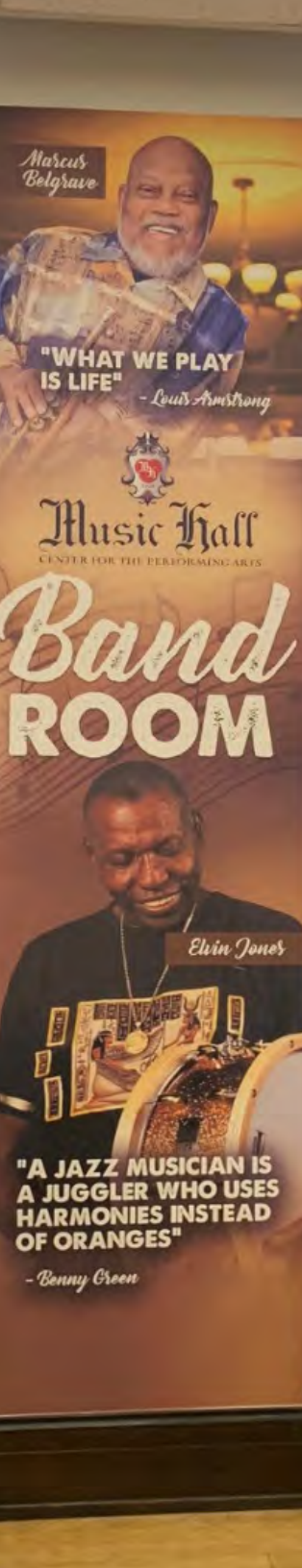
## BIG BAND JAZZ NIGHTS

Participants in the Jazz Big Band Nights come from throughout the city and region; the 2021-22 schools are: Pontiac Notre-Dame HS, Troy HS, Fraser HS, Detroit U of D Jesuit HS, Troy Athens HS, St. Clair Shores Lake Shore HS, St. Clair Shores Kennedy MS, Rochester HS, Utica Eisenhower HS, Utica Malow MS, Plymouth Canton HS, Rochester Stoney Creek HS, Grosse Pointe South HS, and Grosse Pointe Pierce MS.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Service of early childhood programs rotates among schools including: Amelia Earhart Elementary, Beard Early Childhood Center, Beckham Academy, Bennett Elementary, Blackwell Institute Middle School, Burton International Academy, Central High School, Detroit International Academy for Young Women, East Detroit High School, East English Village High School, Emerson Elementary-Middle, Fisher Magnet Lower Academy, Fleming Early Education Center, Golightly Education Center, Henry Ford High School, Mann Elementary, Maybury Elementary, Martin Luther King High School, Munger Elementary, Osborn High School, Pasteur Elementary, Priest Elementary, Pulaski Elementary, Renaissance High School, Roberto Clemente Learning Academy, Schulze Elementary-Middle, and Western International High School.



# HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC EDUCATION AT THE SCHOOL AT MARYGROVE

Music Hall's nearly two decades of partnership with the Detroit Public Schools, as a provider of performing arts education, led to an invitation to launch music education courses on the District's new 'cradle to career' campus when the school opened in 2019.

Our Director of Music Education, the renowned Scott Gwinell, leads a six-instructor team. As would be expected in a music-loving city, there is a very high level of enthusiasm and excitement among the students!

Classes run all week and include an introductory overview class that brings students from varied levels together, establishing a shared base of knowledge. From there, students can choose choral or instrumental instruction, beginning with group keyboard lessons and allowing time to become familiar with the full suite of band instruments as a point of entry to additional study.



# HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC EDUCATION AT THE SCHOOL AT MARYGROVE

VISION: To add the crucial element of music education, in the form of a renowned Music Academy, to the curriculum of The School at Marygrove. The Music Hall Music Academy will ensure that each student at all grade levels has the opportunity to study music – a discipline with proven benefits for overall academic performance and career success, particularly in fields of study & work involving math and language. Jazz music is the foundation of the program, for its flexibility of form and its presence across the spectrum of contemporary music.

- ❖ **After-school 60 minute time blocks (students choose)**
  - Beginning Choir & vocal instruction with individualized acceleration for students with any previous training
  - Individual Instrumental Instruction & Jazz Ensemble.
- ❖ **After-school 60 minute time blocks (all music students together)**
  - Introduction to Music – Appreciation, Overview, & Theory: Guided listening, basic music reading, historical perspective, elementary keyboarding
- ❖ **Guest Artist Lecture/Demonstrations**
  - Regional or national-level artist demonstrating work, discussion of nature of study & preparation, relationship of music to other fields
- ❖ **Semi-Annual Student Concerts Featuring Choir & Jazz Ensemble**



# ELEMENTARY MUSIC EDUCATION AT THE SCHOOL AT MARYGROVE

Students in grades K-4 enjoy a jazz-based interactive introduction to music and music appreciation. They learn fundamental musical concepts, sounds, instruments, rhythms, and melodies, making music with their voices and their bodies in an immersive, fun, inclusive experience. Discovery of Detroit's musical legends inspires pride in our city's accomplishments and empowers students' own musical journeys.



# JAZZ VOCAL EDUCATION

A pre-professional geared program for talented middle and high schoolers. Led by Detroit's renowned orchestra leader and Music Hall Education Coordinator, Scott Gwinnell, who creates and implements curriculum, auditions and instructs students, and prepares and presents the culminating performances. Each semester, a beaming audience of friends and family gather to attend the students' performance, given in full formal concert attire, as they present their skills in performing and producing a full evening of work.



Scott Gwinnell at the piano, instructing JVE students



Culminating performance in Aretha's Jazz Café!

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

## *Good evening Mr. Gwinnell!*

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Tomorrow is the seniors' last day of school so I just wanted to extend my thanks to you for all that you've done this school year. It's been such a pleasure to be able to play with you and I've definitely been able to expand my music tastes all thanks to you. It's really been a great year & experience and I'm sad to see it end. I just wanted to let you know that I'd be singing God Bless the Child by Billie Holiday and Cheek to Cheek by Ella Fitzgerald. Ms. DeBose said that we'd be meeting Thursday so I'll see you then. Again, thanks for all you've done!  
We really appreciate you.

*Vivian – DPSCD Student*

## *To Whom It May Concern:*

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I have truly enjoyed having Scott Gwinnell, each Friday afternoon, to work with my students on Vocal Jazz Selections. They learned three songs to perform at the Music Hall.

This is a viable program which provides an opportunity for students to experience and perform Jazz music outside of the school setting. It's pleasant to see Scott working with the students and enjoy them. He has developed an environment that is comfortable for students to sing without consequences.

Thank you for allowing my students to be apart of the program. We look forward to working with Scott again.

Sincerely,

*Marcia Cotton-Flint*

Duke Ellington Conservatory of Music & Art  
@ Beckham Academy

## JAZZ FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Based on the popular concert series from Lincoln Center, with curriculum designed for elementary - middle school students and beyond. Explores core concepts and major figures in jazz, and use accessible, multi-media, interactive components to enliven its rich cultural heritage. The form's definitive musical elements are taught, as well as its relationship to current culture and music. Students' ears tend to perk up when they learn about the connections between their favorite songs and the jazz form.

Jason Smith, Instructor



# JAZZ JAMS EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

Free and open to the public on Sunday evenings and with personalized guidance available for students of all ages. The Jams are an enhanced version of the time-tested method of mentor/student practice as a means of transferring jazz knowledge and skills to the next generation. Students develop the confidence needed to survive the night onstage, playing different tunes in unfamiliar keys, with difficult tempos, in front of an audience, oftentimes alongside virtual strangers, and they begin to speak the language that only other jazz players understand. As the experienced and new musicians mingle socially and musically, they carry on the legacy of a 'bandstand education' that has nurtured the art form for ages. We believe this program to be the only consistent opportunity of its kind in the city and region. Led by Scott Gwinnell.





The goal is to prepare children for kindergarten and beyond as fully engaged active learners.



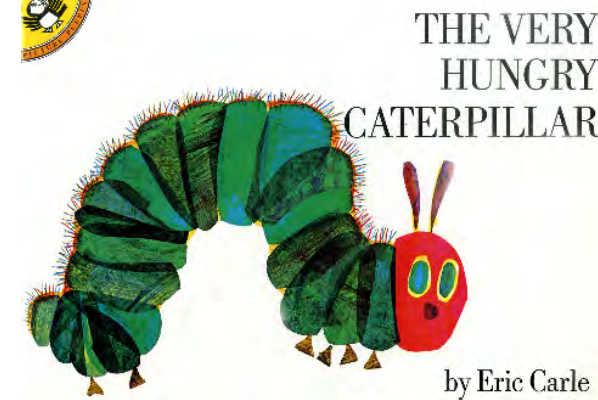
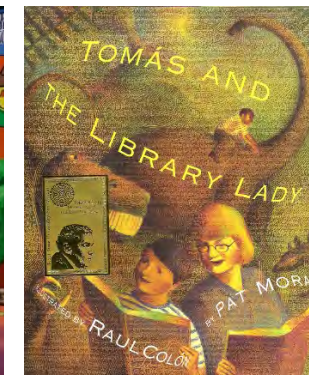
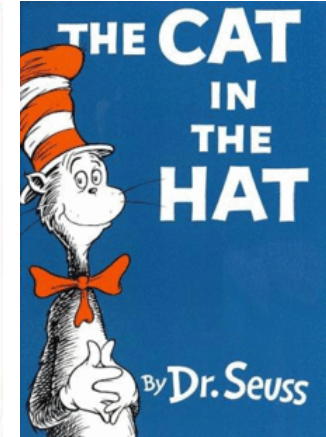
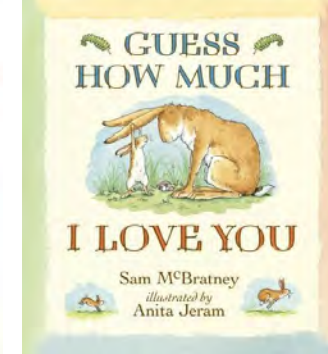
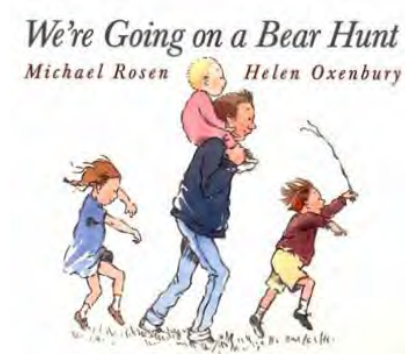
## THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

### *PRE-K INTRODUCTION TO CLASSIC LITERATURE & THEATRE*

- ❖ Originally under the auspices of the PNC Foundation, the program is designed to improve school readiness of children from birth to age five, with a special focus on those from low- and moderate-income families.
- ❖ The program synergizes with Music Hall's Family Theater Series presentations. Bringing classic stories to life with interactive play, instructor Jason Smith introduces children to the themes and characters. Every child receives a book to keep.
- ❖ At the end of a lesson, the excited children and their families are invited to experience the staged version of the story! They board the bus and step into the magical world of live theatre, with characters larger than life emerging from behind the hush of the velvet drapes.
- ❖ Exposure to music, dance, and theatre does more than provide a source of beauty, wonder, and creativity. ***The arts spark curiosity. They provide tools for learning. They serve as a platform for development and sometimes even become the building blocks of a career.***

# THE STORIES AND THE LESSONS

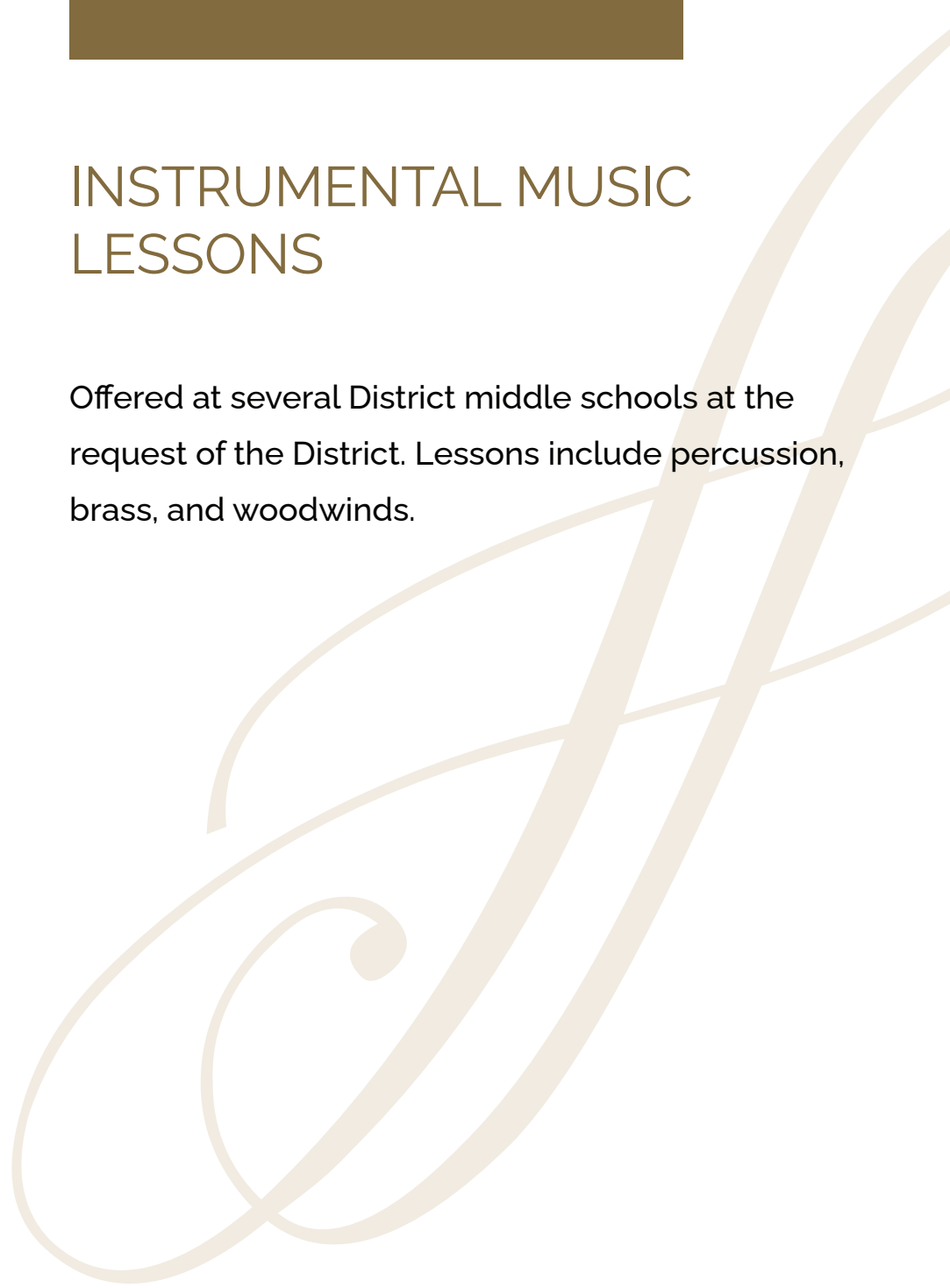
Dramatic play to improve story comprehension...  
kinetic activity associating shapes with sounds...  
music introduction contributing to memory skills...  
Imagination exercises that build cognitive skills  
and social perspective. All classroom activities  
are tested, evaluated, and refined. GOAL: to  
support pre-school teachers in the use of the arts  
to prepare children for school as fully engaged,  
active learners and to create measurable, lasting  
improvement in K-12 education.





## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC LESSONS

Offered at several District middle schools at the request of the District. Lessons include percussion, brass, and woodwinds.





## HIGH SCHOOL BIG BAND OUTREACH

Middle school and high school bands from Detroit and the greater region perform in Aretha's Jazz Cafe on a rotating basis, double-billed with a performance of the Scott Gwinnett Jazz Orchestra and with guidance from the professional musicians for the students.





## CONTEMPORARY DANCE MASTER CLASSES

Artists in the Series have included Jessica Lang Dance, Parsons Dance, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Shanghai Ballet, Body Traffic, Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal, MOMIX, and Shen Wei Dance Arts.

We bring teaching artists from touring companies to our local high school & college students. Thus are the rhythms and steps of the world's major stages picked up by the emerging dancers of Metro Detroit. Recall that Sonya Tayeh, of 'So You Think You Can Dance' and now a sought-after Broadway choreographer, emerged from Detroit's creative dance pipeline.



# COMPLEXIONS CONTEMPORARY BALLET SUMMER INTENSIVE

With annual culminating performances held on the Music Hall stage since 2012, the 1-week instructional period also relocated to the Music Hall in 2021, using our outdoor Amphitheater and stage as learning spaces. Teaching artists from the world-class company instructing over fifty students ages 13+ in classical and contemporary techniques. Students gather from around the country and the world to learn contemporary movement fundamentals that give them the versatility they need to work in today's dance world.

