



THE EVOLUTION OF BALLET

Art Form: Dance

Culture: European & American

Technical Needs

- ❑ Electrical outlet
- ❑ Extension cord
- ❑ Space of at least 20x20

Meet the Artists

The artists and dancers of **Elements Contemporary Ballet (ECB)** are dedicated to being an integral part of the evolution of ballet. They present innovative concepts to the classical art with the use of exclusive ballet vocabulary and a uniquely uniform style, yet keep with preserving the essence of traditional ballet by dancing engaging classical line into all of our works. Overall, they strive to keep ECB an exciting and enjoyable experience for all audiences of all cultures and are proud to be the first contemporary ballet company in Chicago.

The dancers include: **Elizabeth Buckley, Joseph Caruana, Julie Kostynick, Tetyana Martyanova, and Amy Roby.** Individually, they have performed with such well-known companies as River North Dance Chicago, Thodos Dance Chicago, the Joel Hall Dancers, the Joel Hall Dancers II, Chicago Dance Theatre, ViBe Dance Theatre, Rebecca Davis Ballet, Columbia Classical Ballet, Carolina Ballet Theater, and DanceLoop Chicago.

Mike Gosney is the Founder, Artistic Director, and Ballet Master of Elements Contemporary Ballet. Mike began Elements Contemporary Ballet as a way of showcasing the many professional dancers he was training and coaching, as well as a means of forming his innovative movement concepts into exciting choreographic works. He is well known for his unique style and sense of line, and particularly, a phenomenal method of coaching to which dancers from all around the world attest. He is a professional ballet teacher and additionally coaches and privately trains many professional and pre-professional dancers in Chicago.

Extremely dedicated to his students, he continues to make education, good health and athleticism, experimentation, and an open mind his tools for training dancers.

He continues to choreograph new cutting edge works for ECB performances that combine the beauty of classical technique with the boldness of contemporary ideas.

About the Performance

The performance explores the transformation that the art of ballet has undergone from the early seventeenth century to today. Audience members are given an inside look into the lives of dancers, the training process, and how choreography is created. The following are the stops the performance takes on the journey to contemporary ballet.

Classical Ballet demonstration

- Lecture/Demonstration of barrework and steps.
- Performance:
 - "A Royal Birthday"
 - "Eine kleine Nachtmusik", Serenade in G Major, K. 525: III. Menuetto
 - Music by: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
 - Choreography by: Mike Gosney

The art of Ballet can trace its origins to the early seventeenth century, when dancers performed to entertain audiences between scenes of an opera. These short dances grew in popularity until they became a form of theater in their own right. In 1661, King Louis XIV of France founded the *Académie Royale de Musique et de Danse*, establishing Paris as the center of academic ballet. Italian dancers also developed their own styles and approaches to the dance, and both schools flourished throughout the 18th and early 19th centuries. As the years passed, Russia became the international center of ballet, combining the strength and passion of Italian style with the softness and fluidity of the French school.

Classical ballets are generally structured on storytelling. It is important that the audience has an understanding of the basic story line so they can fully understand the complex combination of movement, music and storytelling that makes up a performance.

Neoclassical Ballet demonstration

- Lecture/Demonstration of visual and conceptual evolutions in classical line, intent, musicality and architecture.
- Performance:
 - "Thank you Mr. B!"
 - Music String Quartet No. 10 in A-Flat Major by: Dmitri Shostakovich
 - Choreography by: Joseph Caruana

Neoclassical ballet is a term describing the ballet style which uses traditional ballet vocabulary, but is generally more expansive than the classical structure allowed. For example, dancers often dance at more extreme tempos and perform more technical feats. Spacing in neoclassical ballet is usually more modern or complex than in classical ballet. Although organization in neoclassical ballet is more varied, the focus on structure is a defining characteristic of neoclassical ballet.

It is style of 20th century ballet exemplified by the works of George Balanchine. It draws on the advanced technique of 19th century Russian Imperial dance, but strips it of its detailed narrative and heavy theatrical setting. What is left is the dance itself, sophisticated and modern, retaining the pointe shoe aesthetic.

Contemporary Ballet demonstration

- Lecture/Demonstration of ECB concepts, improvisation, choreographic process
Improvised choreography by Mike Gosney and Dancers
- Performance:
"The 4 Elements"
Music by: Clint Mansell from "The Fountain"
Choreography by: Mike Gosney

Contemporary ballet is a form of dance influenced by both classical ballet and modern dance. It takes its technique and use of pointework from classical ballet, although it permits a greater range of movement that may not adhere to the strict body lines set forth by schools of ballet technique. Many of its concepts come from the ideas of 20th century modern dance, including floorwork and turn-in of the legs.

As artists of *Elements Contemporary Ballet* (ECB), we are dedicated to being an integral part of the evolution of ballet. We present innovative concepts to the classical art with the use of our exclusive ballet vocabulary and keep with preserving the essence of traditional ballet, engaging classical line into all of our works.

Vocabulary

Contemporary Ballet: a form of dance influenced by both classical ballet and modern dance.

Choreographer: the person who invents the steps and patterns of a dance to be presented to an audience

Classical Ballet: (1) The traditional style of ballet, which stresses the academic technique developed through the centuries of the existence of ballet. (2) A ballet in which the style and structure adhere to the definite framework established in the nineteenth century.
Examples of classical ballets are *Coppélia*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake*.

Dance: a series of rhythmic and patterned body movements usually performed to music

Neoclassical Ballet: style that uses traditional ballet vocabulary, but is less rigid than the classical ballet.