

# INTERNATIONAL BALLET EXCHANGE

## Annual Report 2017

(Fiscal Year July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017)



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## MISSION

Established in 1998, IBE has an overarching mission: to bring high-quality classical ballet education to students from diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds; to foster valuable artistic and life skills, international understanding, and aesthetic awareness; and to make the understanding and appreciation of ballet accessible to all segments of society.

## HISTORY

International Ballet Exchange (IBE) began as a partnership between Wissahickon Dance Academy (WDA) in Philadelphia and the Pisarev Choreography School in Donetsk, Ukraine. Since its inception, teachers from the Pisarev School have been invited to teach at WDA. In 1993, 1995, and 2007, WDA students had the opportunity to participate in special intensive ballet programs in Donetsk. In 2013, a group of WDA students participated in a two-week international program with the National Ballet of Cuba, in Havana, Cuba.

IBE's presence in the Philadelphia public schools began in 1999 with a pilot in-school program at Simon Gratz High School in North Philadelphia. With the full support of school administrators, 25 students received ballet training with a ballet master from the Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine and then had the rare experience of performing with the Donetsk Ballet in a free community performance of *Peer Gynt*.

Since 2000, IBE has provided ballet residencies at 11 Philadelphia public schools: Simon Gratz High School (1999–2010), University City High School (2000–2001), Kenderton Elementary School (2001–2003), Philadelphia High School for Girls (2002–2004), **Northeast High School** (2004–2006; **2016–**), Anna B. Pratt Elementary School (2007–2012), George Washington High School (2010–2016), Morris E. Leeds Middle School (2010–2012), and Leslie P. Hill Elementary School (2011–2012), and **James G. Blaine Elementary School (2015–)**. Each year, at the close of a 30-week program of lessons with an IBE ballet master, the residency students dance in a fully staged ballet with students from WDA and guest artists.

Through IBE, audiences of children and youth from the Philadelphia public schools have also had the opportunity to see free performances of the Donetsk Ballet's *Swan Lake*, *Don Quixote*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *La Bayadere* and *Peer Gynt*. The Donetsk Ballet's annual touring production of *The Nutcracker* offers Philadelphia public school students and residents of the Philadelphia area the opportunity to experience a performance by a world-class ballet company supported by a cast of local children. Each spring, IBE also presents a fully staged story ballet with guest artists and a youth cast that includes all the students in the IBE ballet residency program for the Philadelphia public schools. Among these ballets have been *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Four Seasons*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Gaîté Parisienne*, *La Boutique Fantasque*, *La Fille Mal Gardée*, and IBE's two original ballets set to opera: *Carmen* and *Porgy and Bess*.

IBE participates in the Cultural Data Project, is a member of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, and annually donates tickets to Art-Reach.

*Cover photo: Students from WDA and Simon Gratz High School in IBE's 2004 production of Porgy and Bess (photo credit IBE ©)*

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The overarching goal of the International Ballet Exchange is to make ballet accessible to those who might not otherwise experience ballet—as audience members, students, and performers. We know we’ve succeeded when we see the joy in the faces of the Philadelphia public school students in our 30-week ballet course as they discover new movement vocabulary, new goals to work toward, new experiences, and a new world of ballet; when the applause and cheers of our wildly appreciative student audiences ring in our ears long after the curtain has closed on a performance; and when repeat patrons call months ahead seeking tickets for *The Nutcracker* with the Donetsk Ballet.

One of the unique features of IBE’s program for the Philadelphia public schools is that the students in the ballet course, taught on site at their school with an IBE teacher “in residence,” perform as part of the youth cast of our spring ballet. This year, we were delighted that the staff and students of George Washington High School hosted IBE’s performances for the school district: *The Nutcracker* with the Donetsk Ballet supported by a cast of local youth; and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, featuring guest artists, advanced students from Wissahickon Dance Academy, 30 students, grades 1–4, from Blaine Elementary School, and 12 students from our pilot a residency at Northeast High School.

We invite all of those who share our passion for making accessible the beautiful art of ballet to support our programs, and we offer our gratitude to our many supporters, past, present and future.

Sincerely,  
Nancy Malmed  
Executive Director  
International Ballet Exchange

## WHAT WE DO

IBE makes a difference: We build audiences, teach ballet, offer performance opportunities, and bring great ballet to Greater Philadelphia.

- IBE brings the beauty and excitement of classical ballet to Philadelphia's underserved public schools. In fact, IBE brings ballet directly *into* the schools with in-school performances of fully staged story ballets.
- Through IBE's 30-week in-school "residencies" where students learn from master teachers, then perform in a fully staged ballet presented for the school district.
- IBE also brings ballet to the Greater Philadelphia community by staging *The Nutcracker* in an accessible venue, usually a school auditorium in the near suburbs, with moderately priced tickets.



*Student Marielle Issa and guest artist Yosbel Delgado-Hernandez in Carmen (2015) (photo credit: IBE©)*

## IBE Builds Audiences

Seeing a story ballet unfold on stage is a marvelous experience, and IBE brings its productions specifically to the school district's young audiences, in a school setting, **laying the foundation for their future appreciation of the performing arts**. These performances are exclusively for the students: it is not a dress rehearsal, and the performance is scheduled early in the school day so that they see the ballet in full.

*It deeply moved me to see the students get to experience something that otherwise may not have been made available to them. Bravo.*

—Teacher, School District of Philadelphia (SDP)

By providing free study guides to the participating educators, we help maximize their students' experience. In addition to introducing the ballet and ballet in general, we include pre- and post-performance classroom activities that build or reinforce students' skills in reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing—even math and geography.

*My students were excited after the performance and shared details even I didn't notice ... I LOVE that the study guide provided a map and accompanying questions. That led to a very productive discussion. My students also enjoyed the mime cards, it was a great activity.*

—SDP teacher with students attending *The Nutcracker* (2015)

*It was a great way to activate the students' prior knowledge and give them a background on something they had never experienced before. Thank you!*

—SDP teacher with students attending *Gaîté Parisienne* (2014)

The teachers' responses to the experience of taking their students to see IBE's productions are consistently positive: of those responding to the post-performance surveys, 100 percent rate the performance an "important" cultural and educational experience, 100 percent report their students as having enjoyed the ballet, and 100 percent say they would bring students to an IBE performance again.

*Thank you so much for a wonderful program. Our children were spellbound. For many it will be the only ballet they ever see in their lives. This was a wonderful experience.*

—SDP teacher with students attending *Carmen*

*The performance was an excellent way for my students to experience and enjoy the ballet. It was their first ballet performance and they couldn't stop talking about it ... Bravo!*

—SDP teacher with students attending *Carmen*



Each December IBE presents the Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine's production of *The Nutcracker*, featuring the company's professional dancers supported by a cast of up to 50 local children and youth drawn from an open audition. IBE presents one show for the Philadelphia school district and two shows for the Greater Philadelphia community. Each spring IBE presents a fully staged story ballet for the school district, performed by a youth cast, guest artists, and including the residency students. Among the ballets IBE has brought to the school district are *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Four Seasons*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Gaité Parisienne*, *La Boutique Fantasque*, *La Fille Mal Gardée*, and our original ballets set to opera, *Carmen*, and *Porgy and Bess*.

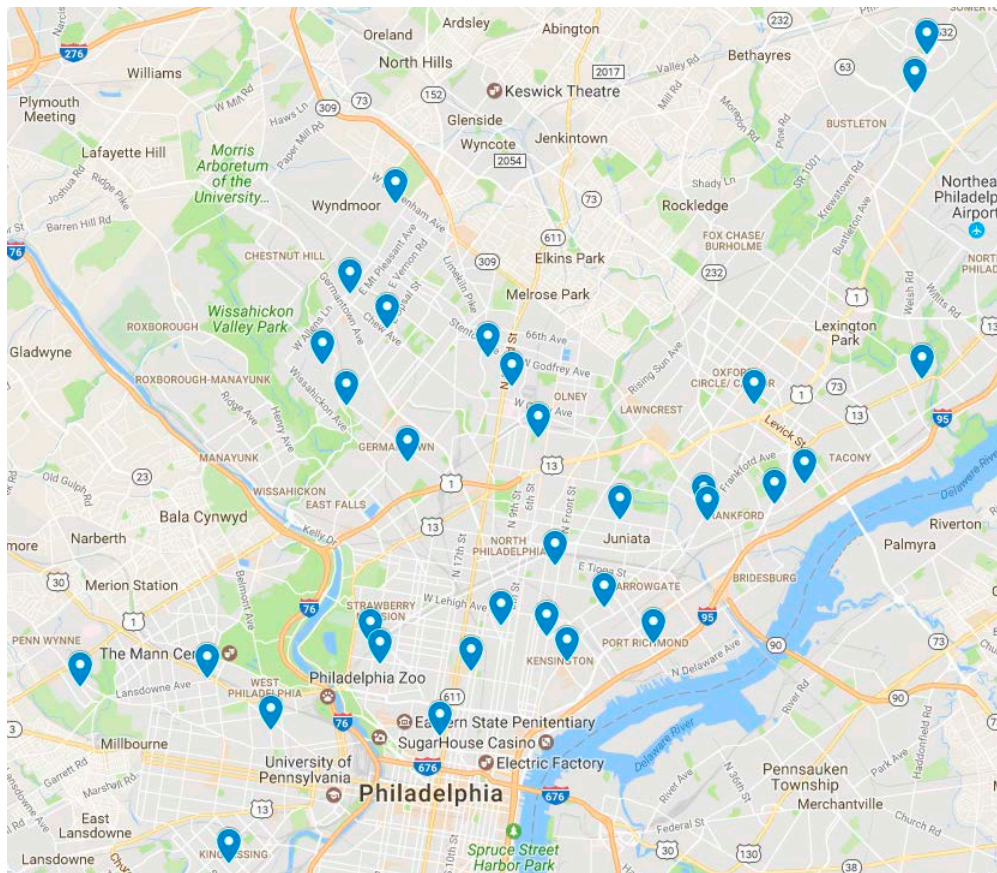


*Above: Local youth perform in The Nutcracker with the Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine (2014)  
(photo credit: Nathaniel Hamilton for NewsWorks©)*

*Below: Local youth perform in The Nutcracker with the Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine (2015)  
(photo credit: Julieanne Harris©)*



Since 2015 alone, students from 39 schools have attended an IBE performance or hosted an IBE ballet residency. Of these, 35 were Philadelphia public schools and 4 were private/parochial schools; homeschooled students also attended.



(map credit: Katie Yohe, IBE©)

**1. James Blaine  
(residency site)**

2. Joseph Brown
3. William Cramp
4. Paul Dunbar
5. Eleanor Emlen
6. Fox Chase
7. Franklin Learning Center
8. Horatio Hackett
9. Prince Hall
10. John Hartranft
11. Charles Henry
12. Edward Heston
13. Julia Ward Howe
14. William Hunter
15. Juniata Park

16. John B. Kelly
17. William Kelley
18. Robert Lamberton
19. Henry Lawton
20. Anna Lingelbach
21. William Loesche
22. James Logan
23. John Marshall
24. Thurgood Marshall
25. John McCloskey
26. S. Weir Mitchell
- 27. Northeast (residency site)**
28. Gilbert Spruance
29. Southwark
30. Allen Stearne

31. James Sullivan
32. Gen. Louis Wagner
- 33. George Washington  
(host school;  
residency site 2010–  
2016)**
34. Martha Washington
35. Frances E. Willard
36. Holy Cross School
37. New Hope Christian Academy
38. Our Lady of Port Richmond
39. Holy Cross School



In 2016–2017, IBE transported more **students and teachers from the Philadelphia public schools** to the magic realm of dance:

- On December 15, 2016, IBE presented the Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine’s *The Nutcracker*, with a cast of local children, to an audience of students, teachers, and chaperones from Philadelphia public schools at George Washington High School. The company and youth cast also performed for the Greater Philadelphia community, with two weekend shows at Plymouth-Whitemarsh High School on December 17 and 18.
- On June 6, 2017, IBE presented *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, to students, teachers, and chaperones from Philadelphia’s public schools during school hours at George Washington High School; IBE’s “residency” students from Northeast High School and James Blaine Elementary School joined a cast of youth and guest artists on stage.
- To maximize the students’ experience of seeing the ballets and being part of an audience for the performing arts, IBE provided free teachers’ guides for each ballet. With pre- and post-performance lessons and activities to use in the classroom, IBE invites teachers to use the ballet as a context for developing their students’ skills in reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing, and more.

*IBE appreciates the assistance of the School District of Philadelphia’s Office Arts and Academic Enrichment in communicating about the program.*

*Below: IBE’s Midsummer Night’s Dream (June 2017)  
(photo credit: Julieanne Harris©)*





## IBE Teaches Ballet

During the 2016–2017 school year, IBE’s teachers provided **30 weeks of high-quality ballet lessons** for students at Blaine Elementary School and Northeast High School. Uniquely, IBE’s in-school course culminates in participation in a fully staged story ballet alongside youth from WDA and guest artists, performed for a cross-district audience. This year, the “residency” students performed in IBE’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. IBE provides ballet slippers and dance attire for the residency students to wear in class and costumes for their roles in the spring ballets.

We believe it is important to be a presence for at least two years, to work, when possible, with cohorts of students, building their skills and confidence.

Elena Tiuriakulova, IBE’s “ballet master,” piloted an IBE residence at **Northeast High School**. Ms. Tiuriakulova received her training from the world-famous Vaganova Choreography School (Kirov School) in St. Petersburg, Russia. As principal ballerina with the State Ballet and Opera of Kyrgyzstan she danced the major roles in *Giselle*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Don Quixote*, *La Bayadere*, and *Swan Lake*, among others.



*Elena Tiuriakulova teaching IBE residency students at George Washington (2013)*  
(photo credit: IBE©)

In 2016-2017 we entered our second year in residence at **James G. Blaine Elementary School** in North Philadelphia, and the 30 students, grades 1–4, taught by IBE master teacher Cara King, performed in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Ms. King, whose extensive training includes completion of the Royal Academy of Dance syllabus in the United States and England, specializes in teaching ballet at the pre-school and elementary grade level.

*I was on stage and people were clapping for me!*

—Blaine 3rd-grader, reflecting on performing in *Alice in Wonderland* (2015)



*Above: Blaine Elementary School students (grades 1-4) performing in A Midsummer Night's Dream June 2017 (photo credit: Julieanne Harris©)*

Studying ballet over a 30-week period, especially with IBE's qualified and inspiring teachers, **offers a unique opportunity** to develop physical and mental skills, and it exposes students to the music, mathematics, and vocabulary of dance, and to the long-term goal of being part of a performance. The students build transferable skills of focus, goal setting, commitment, teamwork, and develop the self-respect that comes from mastering a complex skill.

Here are some of the things our high school participants consistently tell us about their experience:

- *It taught me a whole new dance genre outside of hip hop.*
- *It was nice to learn a different style of dance.*
- *The ballet program has opened my eyes to the dancing world.*
- *I loved to watch the other professional dancers dance.*
- *I learned a lot from performing.*
- *I was on stage!*
- *It made me more confident.*
- *It challenged me in many ways.*
- *Ballet taught me how to express my feelings through dance.*
- *It was nice learning ballet and performing in front of a crowd.*
- *It was something new and exciting.*

## IBE Offers Performance Opportunities

In December 2016, the Donetsk Ballet and a **diverse cast of area children and youth** performed alongside 18 professional dancers of the internationally renowned Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine. On December 15, they performed at George Washington High School for students from 13 schools in the Philadelphia school district. On December 17 and 19 they performed for a community audience of more than 1,000 at Plymouth-Whitemarsh High School's theater.

IBE annually holds an **open audition** for the opportunity to perform with this world-class ballet company. Children and youth ages 5 to 22, currently enrolled in ballet classes anywhere in the Greater region are welcome to audition for this production. IBE's open audition is held the third Sunday of September. Those selected rehearse for 12 weeks in preparation for final rehearsals with the Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine when the troupe arrives in Philadelphia during its U.S. tour.

Each spring, local guest artists and advance-level students from our partner school Wissahickon Dance Academy perform the leads in a fully staged ballet performed for the schools, with up to 40 intermediate-level students and the "residency" students forming the supporting cast.



*Above: Viktor Yeliobin rehearsing local youth and members of the Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine for The Nutcracker (2014) (photo credit: Nathaniel Hamilton for NewsWorks©)*

*Below: Students from Wissahickon Dance Academy in Porgy and Bess (2004) (photo credit: IBE ©)*





## IBE Brings Great Ballet to Greater Philadelphia

The Donetsk Ballet annually tours the United States with 18 professionals. Many of these dancers have competed and won medals in international competitions. The company is led by artistic director Vadim Pisarev. The company's tradition of performing with youth casts in the cities on their tour gives Greater Philadelphia young people an opportunity to perform with a professional company. IBE holds an open audition for the youth cast. IBE also arranges for families to host the dancers during their Philadelphia stay.

The Donetsk's first stop in Philadelphia is always IBE's show for the Philadelphia school district: this world-class company brings its elaborate sets, magnificent costumes and leading dancers into a school auditorium. The company and IBE's cast of local youth ages 5 to 22 then perform two shows for the Greater Philadelphia community at the highly accessible Plymouth Whitmarsh High School.

Recent years have brought political strife and violence to the company's home city of Donetsk. The dancers' commitment to their art and to their audiences is captured in feature articles by NewsWorks (access the article with slide show at <http://tinyurl.com/pr7ucsx>) and the *Chestnut Hill Local* (<http://tinyurl.com/goefttg>).



*Yulia Polgorodnyk and Maxim Valchik of the Donetsk Ballet in The Nutcracker (photo credit IBE ©)*



## WHO WE SERVE

International Ballet Exchange **serves diverse communities.** In 2016–2017, **IBE involved both children and adults** in ballet through our performances: 45 students participated in IBE’s residency; students, teachers, and chaperones attended *The Nutcracker* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*; local youth were in the cast of *The Nutcracker* with the professionals from Donetsk Ballet; and WDA students, along with guest artists and the residency students, performed in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. In addition, community members of all ages attended the public performance of *The Nutcracker*.

- The audiences for IBE’s in-school performances of *The Nutcracker* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* were broadly representative of the school district’s population, which was last reported as more than 87 percent qualifying for free or reduced lunch and currently reported in 2016-2017 51 percent African American, 20 percent Latino, 14 percent Caucasian, 8 percent Asian, 7 percent multiracial/other; 14 percent with individual learning plans; and 10.5 percent English-language learners.
- George Washington High School, our host school for performances, reported its student demographics as 40 percent Caucasian, 28 percent African American, 16 percent Asian, 12 percent Latino, 3.3 percent multiracial/other; 16 percent are English-language learners; 20 have individual learning plans; at last report over 89 percent of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. The students in the IBE “residency” ballet course self-reported as 50 percent African American, 35 percent Latino, and 21 percent Caucasian.
- Residency site James G. Blaine Elementary School reported 100 percent of its students as economically disadvantaged; 90 percent African American, 1.3 percent Latino, 0.6 percent Caucasian, 7 percent multiracial/other; and 21 percent with individual learning plans.
- Residency site Northeast High School reported 90% economically disadvantaged and nearly 20% English language learners.
- IBE’s local student performers and guest artists typically self-report as 48 percent Caucasian, 42 percent African American, 2 percent Latino, 2 percent Asian, and 6 percent multiracial/other.
- So that disabled adults or disadvantaged may attend the performance free, IBE’s annually donates 40 tickets to public performances of *The Nutcracker* to Art-Reach.



*Backstage at rehearsal for The Nutcracker (2014) (photo credit: Nathaniel Hamilton for NewsWorks©)*

## OUR SUPPORTERS

IBE benefits from the generosity of many donors, volunteers and providers of in-kind goods and services.

### Funders

IBE expresses our sincere gratitude to the following public and private foundations for their support during 2016–2017:

Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts  
Philadelphia Cultural Fund  
Christopher Ludwick Foundation  
Henrietta Tower Wurts Memorial Fund  
Seybert Foundation  
Union Benevolent Association

### Contributors

Every contribution, even a modest one, helps bring the beauty and excitement of ballet to our public school and community audiences and helps provide a remarkable experience for the students in IBE's residency program.

### Donors

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Katie Yohe  
Cristina Wuenschel  
The Rosin Box  
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*Below: Wissahickon Dance Academy students perform in A Midsummer Night's Dream June 2017 (photo credit Julieanne Harris©)*



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Alicia Green-Carter  
Sheila Hawes, Esq.  
Leslie Macedo  
Cristina Wuenschel  
Katie Yohe  
Nancy Malmed *ex officio*

### Program

Nancy Malmed, executive director, IBE  
Joleen Miller, office manager  
Elena Tiuriakulova, master teacher  
Cara King, master teacher  
Michele-Olivia François, ballet mistress, children's cast, *The Nutcracker*  
Coralie Francois, ballet mistress, children's cast, *The Nutcracker*  
Ashley Warren, wardrobe mistress

### Guest artists

Donetsk Ballet of Ukraine  
Yosbel Delgado-Hernandez

*Below: Members of the youth cast of The Nutcracker prepare to perform (photo credit: IBE)*





## **FINANCIALS**

### **Summary, July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2017**

#### **Revenue**

Grants	\$19,766
Individual giving	\$10,511
Earned income	37,480

Total revenue	<hr/> \$67,757
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#### **Expenses**

Program	\$54,521
Operations	\$16,501

Total expenses	<hr/> \$71,022
	(\$3,265)

Net assets	\$9,407
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International Ballet Exchange has 501(c) 3 designation from the Internal Revenue Service and is a registered charitable organization with the Pennsylvania Department of State.