

**THE BIG MUDDY** DANCE COMPANY  
CELEBRATING **10 YEARS**

# IMPACT REPORT 2020



invigorating life through dance.

# ABOUT THE COMPANY

Vision: A diverse community that believes in the love, joy, and transformative power of dance.

The Big Muddy Dance Company is a St. Louis-based repertory dance company which seeks to build a love of dance by providing fun, experiential, and highly entertaining performances. By engaging both emerging and established choreographers, collaborating across the community through senior outreach, and training future performers through our educational programs, we constantly strive to invigorate life through dance.

**St. Louis Dance Theatre, doing business as The Big Muddy Dance Company, was founded by Paula David and incorporated in May 2010 as a 501(c)3 organization, defined by the Internal Revenue Service. All donations are tax-deductible.**



15%

contributed revenue growth



19

employees from eleven states



100 %

salary retention in 2020



# Dearest supporters,

The Big Muddy Dance Company has forged forward in its tenth season amidst a global pandemic, thanks to its avid supporters and volunteers. The company of 14 company dancers and 15 trainees has grown immensely since its first season, and although we still recognize our Pioneer Partners for their entrepreneurial spirit to get us started in 2010, there have been many more contributors that have jumped on the train along our journey. We are so grateful to those who financially support our causes of great artistry, entertainment, athleticism, senior citizen outreach, dance education and training, and innovative programming.

As you continue to support our activities to improve the arts community in St. Louis and beyond, we make a promise to maintain the highest quality of technique, performance, and outreach as we move forward into our next chapter. Our goal to put St. Louis on the national map of dance becomes more realistic every day. If you have supported The Big Muddy Dance Company in the past, I hope you will continue to do so and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your generosity. If you are unfamiliar with our company, I urge you to look through some of our materials online and see what kind of difference you could make, both for the St. Louis arts community and beyond.



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*To all of our supporters,  
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of technique, performance,  
and outreach as we move  
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Most Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Erin Warner Prange.

Erin Warner Prange,  
Executive Director

# The Big Muddy's Staff



**Brian Enos**  
Artistic Director

Mr. Enos, originally from San Francisco, CA, began studying ballet at the age of 16. After his training at the Maria Vegh Ballet Centre and The Houston Ballet Academy, he was invited to join Houston Ballet at the age of 18. After several years performing with Houston Ballet, Mr. Enos went on to dance for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago for eight years, before retiring from the stage in 2010. He's danced leading roles in works by choreographers such as Jiri Kylian, William Forsythe, Ohad Naharin, Ben Stevenson, Twyla Tharp, and Christopher Bruce, among others.

Mr. Enos also has an impressive choreographic career spanning 15 years, with over 30 original works, and glowing reviews from both critics and audiences throughout the United States and abroad. Some of the companies on which he's created work include: Houston Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Ballet Met, Nashville Ballet, Grand Rapids Ballet, Thodos Dance Chicago, and many more. Mr. Enos has served as The Big Muddy's Artistic Director for 6 years.



**Erin Warner Prange**  
Executive Director

Born and raised in St. Louis, Erin Warner Prange holds her B.A. in Dance and Spanish from Colorado State University and her Masters of Fine Arts in Arts Management and Leadership from Webster University. In 2006, Erin taught dance for the Boston public school district through the Topf Center for Dance Education, and danced with Fusionworks II in Providence, RI under the tutelage of Deb Meunier and Stephanie Sanford. After moving back to St. Louis, she worked as aTrek Dance Collective's Education Program Coordinator, and worked as the head coach of the dance team and color guard at Webster Groves High School. Erin founded the modern and contemporary programs at the Dance Center of Kirkwood, and was a company member of the Slaughter Project under artistic direction of Cecil Slaughter before joining The Big Muddy Dance Company as a dancer in 2011. Erin has had the privilege of working with talented artists such as Chung-Fu Chang, Lee Cooper, Jody Weber, Marcus Schulkind, and Christien Polos in her study and training. Mrs. Prange has served as The Big Muddy's Executive Director since 2013.



**Dustin Crumbaugh**  
Director of Educational Programs

(Houston, TX) began his formal dance training at Houston Metropolitan Dance Company's pre-professional second company, Houston Met Too. Since graduating high school, he spent two years as a dance major at Point Park University where he performed works by renowned choreographers such as Margo Sappington, Robert Battle, and Harrison McEldowney. He then completed his traineeship with Ballet Austin, where he performed works by Stephen Mills, Gina Patterson, Septime Weber, and Dwight Rhoden, and trained at LINES Ballet, where he studied under master teachers such as Alonzo King, Maurya Kerr, and Amy Raymond. Dustin joined Houston Metropolitan Dance Company as a professional company member in 2005, and in 2007 joined Luna Negra Dance Theater under the direction of Eduardo Vilaro, performing works by Edgar Zendejas, Alejandro Cervera, and Gustavo Ramirez Sansano. He then danced on scholarship at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and participated in Springboard Danse Montreal, working with Jose Navas/Cie Flak and Julian Barnett. In 2009, he performed with Cerqua Rivera Dance Theater until joining The Big Muddy Dance Company in 2011.

*“Our financial standing is a true measure of our most valuable asset of all – our people.”*

## **Carly Vanderheyden** Communications Coordinator



Originally from Green Bay, Wisconsin, Carly attended the University of Iowa where she graduated with honors and earned a BFA in Dance, BA in Health and Human Physiology, and Certificate in Arts Entrepreneurship. While pursuing her BFA, Carly performed works by Autumn Eckman, Marc Macaranas, Armando Duarte, Melinda Jean Myers, Eloy Barragàn, Jesse Factor, and Martha Graham. Carly has participated in intensives at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, DanceWorks Chicago, the Martha Graham School, American Dance Festival, and the Kirov Academy of Ballet. Carly is a certified teacher with the American Ballet Theatre National Training Curriculum, as well as a 200-hour Registered Yoga Teacher with the Yoga Alliance. Beyond dance, Carly is a Certified Health Education Specialist through the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, and a freelance photographer. Upon graduating from the University of Iowa, Carly joined the Big Muddy Dance Company's Convergence Trainee Program for the 2017-18 season, where she also served as the company's Communications Intern. She stepped into her roles as Communications Coordinator and company dancer in 2018.

## **Molly Rapp** Office Administrator



Originally from Saint Louis, Missouri, Molly attended Webster University where she graduated summa cum laude, earning a BFA in Dance; emphasis in Ballet, and a BA in Business Management. While attending Webster University, Molly performed works by Jose Limon, Monica Newsam, Nejla Yatkin, Alicia Graf-Mack, and Michael Uthoff. She spent her summers working with Kansas City Ballet and Saint Louis Ballet, as well as working for Newsam Aerial Dance in company development. Upon graduating from Webster University in May 2017, Molly joined the Big Muddy Dance Company's Convergence Trainee Program, where she also worked as the company's Development Intern. Molly is thrilled to be joining the company as a Company Dancer for the 2019-20 season, as well as continuing in her new role as Office Manager.

## **Brandon Fink** Development Coordinator



Brandon Fink received his B.F.A. in Dance Performance from the University of Central Oklahoma. His pre-professional experience includes R.A.C.E. Dance Company and UCO Kaleidoscope Dance Company. Upon graduation, Brandon attended the American Dance Festival School where he was selected for the 2011 Past/Forward Gala to perform Twyla Tharp's "Sweet Fields." In 2012, he was selected for the River North Dance Chicago Summer Apprenticeship Program under the direction of Frank Chavez. Brandon was a company member with the Modern American Dance Company (2011 - 2016), The Munny – Fiddler On The Roof (2016), Variety Theatre – Wizard Of Oz (2017) & The Little Mermaid (2018). He is also an active member of the Actors' Equity Association and The American Guild of Musical Artists. Brandon's choreography has been presented at the Big Muddy Dance Company & The Convergence Trainee Program, the University of Missouri St. Louis, the University of Central Oklahoma, Florida Atlantic University, the American College Dance Festival, the Oklahoma Contemporary Dance Festival, the St. Louis Arts Alliance, the American Dance Troupe, and MADCO. He works with various high school marching band winter guard programs throughout the St. Louis metro area as well as the Cavaliers Drum & Bugle Corps. Brandon is in his fifth season with The Big Muddy Dance Company, and serves as founder and Artistic Director of La Voûte Performance Ensemble.

# 2020-2021 Board of Directors

Christy Beckmann, President  
Kathie Winter, Vice President  
Bill Hornbarger, Treasurer  
Timothy Wichmer, Secretary  
Jan Albus  
John Brase  
Lauren Brickler  
Lauren Brooks  
Liz Crabtree  
Dawn Gilbertson  
Kathleen Goodman Turner  
Marilyn Sheperd  
Tracy Sykes-Long  
Calvin Windschitl

## **Advisory Board:**

Sara Burke  
Linda Hunter  
Dave Toben, President Emeritus

*“In a surprisingly short time, The Big Muddy Dance Company has become one of the most exciting ensembles in town.”*

*-Calvin Wilson, St. Louis Post Dispatch*



# PROGRAMS

## Main Stage Productions & Collaborations



### **A CHRISTMAS CAROL**

*World Premiere presented by Garden View Care Centers  
Edison Theatre at Washington University, November 2019*

The Big Muddy presented a contemporary dance retelling of the classic story of love and redemption for our friend Ebenezer Scrooge. The production combined Artistic Director Brian Enos' blend of classical and contemporary choreography, an original arrangement of Tchaikovsky music by Brendan Hollins, performed live to feature a raucous cast of characters onstage.

*(photo credit Katie Strzelec)*

### **BEAT BALLADS**

*presented by Kathleen and Kent Turner  
The Grandel in Grand Center, January 2020*

As the second production on The Big Muddy's Fortissimo Season: Celebrating Musical Minds through Movement, Beat Ballads gave a nod to the brilliant composer Joby Talbot through the feature of his eclectic mix of soundtracks. This mosaic repertory concert also included a company premiere of "Hadal Zone" by Artistic Director Brian Enos, a world premiere work by Marc Macaranas, and the remounting of "With You Always" by Shannon Alvis, choreographed to the beautifully recorded music by St. Louis' own Steph Plant of the Leonas.



### **MOVES AND GROOVES**

*presented by Christy Beckmann and Jim Vykopal  
Online performance, filmed at The Grandel in September 2020*

This dual presentation of two casts featured an eclectic mix of musical styles and choreographic voices such as Kirven Douthitt-Boyd, Artistic Director Brian Enos, Robyn Mineko Williams, Marc Wayne, and Robert Poe. The show highlighted a special sneak preview collaboration around the entrancing soundscapes of Brooklyn-based musical artists "Fancy Feelings". With two world premieres, a Senior Embrace repertoire feature, and an exciting partnership with these New York musicians, this performance gave a peek into the intertwining threads between music and dance.

### **LEMP LEGENDS**

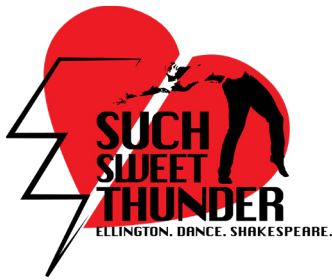
*(in-person production rescheduled for April 2021)  
Online performance featuring 3 casts, filmed at Lemp Mansion and Lemp Grand Hall, November 2020*

This reimagined rendition of the infamous beer kings' tale took the audience on a haunted behind-the-scenes virtual walking tour of their love, tragedy, and scandal.



# PROGRAMS

## Collaborations & Virtual Programs



### **SUCH SWEET THUNDER**

*Curated and directed by Bruce Longworth*

*presented by*

Collaborative production, Jack Galmache Public Media Commons, October 2019

Four major St. Louis cultural institutions came together for three nights to present an unprecedented outdoor stage production, free to the public and full of artistic inspiration. The collaboration between Nine Network of Public Media, Jazz St. Louis, St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, and The Big Muddy Dance Company resulted in a multi-disciplinary performance that featured original dance choreography by Dexandro Montalvo, live jazz music, Shakespearean verse and theatre, and breathtaking lighting and video as the backdrop for the tempestuous love story set in the 1950's. Such Sweet Thunder, a twelve-part Duke Ellington suite based on Shakespeare's plays and sonnets, has been described by NPR as "one of the most remarkable orchestral pieces in all of American music." The four-way collaboration won two St. Louis Theatre Circle Awards for 2020 (Best Musical Production and Best Choreography), and won a St. Louis Arts Award for "Best Collaboration" by Arts & Education Council.

### **A LATE SUMMER NIGHT'S STROLL**

*presented by St. Louis Shakespeare Festival*

Collaborative progressive performance, Forest Park, August-September 2020

The Big Muddy participated with many St. Louis organizations as part of St. Louis Shakespeare Festival's 80-minute jaunt full of poetry, music and art. Loosely inspired by Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "A Late Summer Night's Stroll" put guests at the center of the story: four lovers' escape to an enchanted wood and the magical night of transformation that follows. A socially-distant self-guided tour of iconic spots and hidden gems, featuring custom installations, open-air performances and charming vignettes.



### **ADDITIONAL VIRTUAL PROGRAM CONTRIBUTIONS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Arts United STL Collaborative Benefit Event

Omni Arts Foundation, "Lean on Me" Concert Series

Virtual Premiere of "The Moth"

Sneak Virtual Preview of "Several Dreams"

Throwback Thursdays Summer Series- weekly archived repertoire showings & Zoom happy hours

The Big Muddy Virtual Ball 2020



# PROGRAMS

## Education

### 2020 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

- Trainee Program-** The 33-week training and repertory program, targeted for post-college age dancers that are preparing for a professional career, grew from 11 dancers in the 2019-2020 Season to 15 dancers in the 2020-2021 Season. The program includes performances on company Main Stage productions, community performances, outreach, and an eclectic mix of repertoire to be presented at an annual Trainee Showcase.
- Elevate Student Project-** The Big Muddy added a third annual Elevate Student Project in summer of 2020, to accommodate a total of 30 high school students (ages 14-18) throughout the year. Each of the three specialized 7-week programs featured these young dancers in a premiere performance at company Main Stage productions and in our Dance Fest virtual showcase.
- Summer Intensive Programs-** COVID-19 brought unique opportunities for virtual training to our summer intensive programs in 2020. Our younger students (ages 10 - 17) joined us for one week and our adult students (ages 18 and up) joined us for two weeks, both in a hybrid format: half the group participated in-person with limited capacity, and half the group trained from home virtually. All three sessions presented their intensive's work in a filmed virtual showcase for friends and family at home.
- The Big Muddy Dance Fest-** The September 2020 dance-filled weekend event provided many opportunities for dancers of all levels and ages to participate either in-person or virtually. Master classes in ballet, tap, jazz, modern, contemporary, hip hop, yoga, Pilates, and more brought the dance community together in a collaborative series of programs and conversations. Other offerings on the weekend's schedule included an arts administration panel discussion, roundtable discussions, resume and branding workshop,



## Senior Embrace Outreach

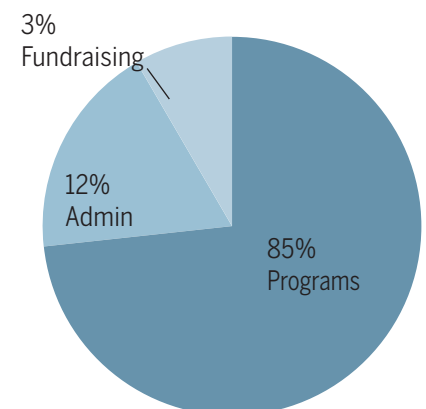
**Performances-** In fall of 2019, the company visited 15 retirement homes across Missouri and Illinois with genre-specific repertoire to trigger memories for senior residents and to create shared opportunity for conversation between seniors, caregivers, and dancers. Although the company has been unable to perform in the facilities since the start of the pandemic to ensure the residents' safety, we are making plans for spring of 2021 to debut a filmed Senior Embrace performance, Zoom happy hours with the seniors, and possible outdoor socially-distanced performances.

**Hands-on Workshops-** The Big Muddy dancers continued with hands-on workshops for seniors with Alzheimer's disease throughout the pandemic in the spring of 2020 through Zoom meetings and virtual movement exercises. Spring of 2021 will bring further virtual workshop training for retirement home staff and caregivers. Upon return of in-person gatherings in 2021, there are plans to resume in-person socially distanced workshops for seniors living at home.

# The Financial Picture

|                          | INCOME | YTD 12/31/20   | 06/30/20       |
|--------------------------|--------|----------------|----------------|
| Corporate Donations      |        | 20,176         | 28,065         |
| Classes & Intensives     |        | 41,581         | 46,440         |
| Grants                   |        | 78,454         | 57,462         |
| Individual Contributions |        | 35,034         | 85,062         |
| Performance Fees         |        | 1,412          | 3,650          |
| Special Events           |        | 83,802         | 10,549         |
| Tickets/Admission        |        | 19,184         | 30,899         |
| Other                    |        | 1,530          | 4,120          |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>      |        | <b>287,907</b> | <b>325,029</b> |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>          |        |                |                |
| Programs                 |        | 163,568 (72%)  | 329,044 (85%)  |
| Fundraising              |        | 18,618 (8.2%)  | 11,466 (3%)    |
| Administrative           |        | 45,002 (19.8%) | 46,484 (12%)   |
|                          |        |                |                |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>    |        | <b>227,187</b> | <b>386,994</b> |
| <b>NET INCOME</b>        |        | <b>60,721</b>  | <b>-61,965</b> |

*Emerging from a challenging 2020 cash flow outlook, the company is working diligently to develop a sustainable system of revenue for future seasons.*



Total YTD 2020 Net Assets: \$51,852

# DID YOU KNOW?

## The Big Muddy Dance Company...

PERFORMS FOR UP TO

10k

audience members in one season

COLLABORATED WITH

31

local and national non-profit organizations in its 10-year history

PERFORMS FOR

30

retirement homes every season through Senior Embrace

REACHES

66

students per week through educational programs

PROVIDES

90

aspiring dancers free dance classes and scholarships per season

SAFELY EMPLOYED

26

artists throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

APPLIES

86%

of its annual budget directly to programming that invigorates life through dance

PRESENTS ARTISTS WITH

577

combined years of experience

BRINGS IN DANCERS FROM

17

states to live and work in St. Louis

PROVIDES DANCERS

33

weeks of employment each season

**Most dancers in the U.S., including those at The Big Muddy, are paid annual wages under the poverty line. We have increased dancer salaries each year, but we still have a long way to go to support our Dancers' Living Wage Fund.**

*Please help support our artists as they continue to invigorate life through dance, and your donation will be matched by a generous contribution by Ron and Cheri Fromm and the Berges Family Foundation.*

Photos by Gerry Love

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