

# The W. Wizard of Oz

April 5 & 6, 2008

*River Raisin  
Ballet Company*

A performance company of the  
River Raisin Centre for the Arts



## The Ballet

The River Raisin Ballet is presenting this newly choreographed ballet based on the movie version of the L. Frank Baum Story, *The Wizard of Oz*. We hope that you will find Dorothy's journey through the Land of Oz even more special when brought to life through the language of dance. The overture, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," the signature song of the classic movie, is sung by Alyson Zuckerman, an RRB senior company member.

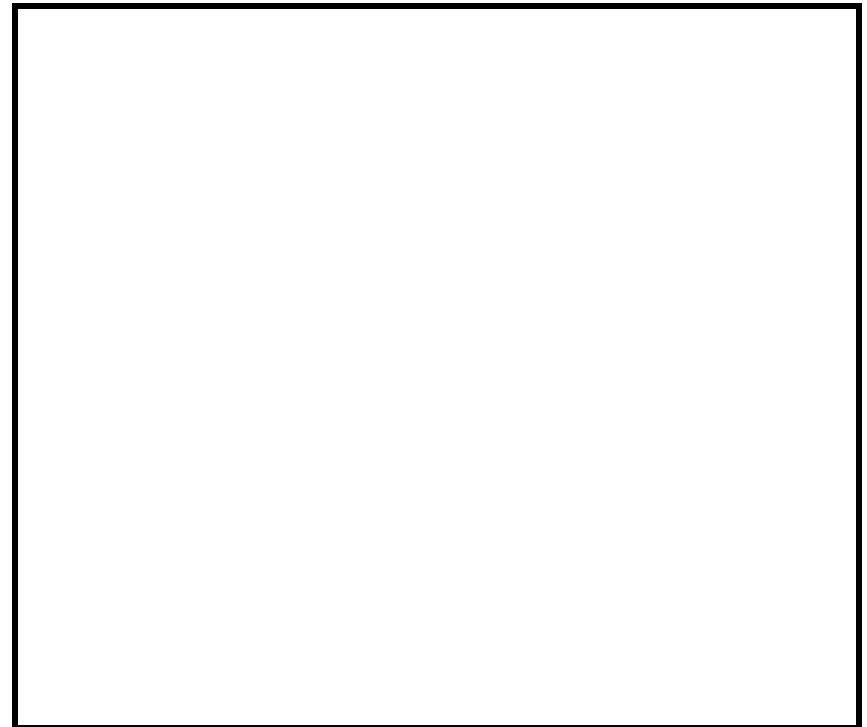
Our ballet begins when a little Kansas farm girl, Dorothy, and her dog Toto are blown away in a tornado and end up in the Land of Oz. Things in Oz are strange yet beautiful, and even though Dorothy is welcomed all she really wants is to get back home to Kansas. She is helped by Glinda the Good Witch of the North, but she is also in a great deal of trouble with the Wicked Witch of the West, who seeks revenge for the death of her sister. She blames Dorothy whose house landed right on the Wicked Witch of the East.

Munchkin Land is a place filled with whimsically clad Munchkins, who dance with celebration when Glinda proclaims Dorothy a good witch. Dorothy is delighted but tells the Munchkins that she really needs to find her way home. Glinda tells Dorothy that she must travel to the Emerald City and seek the Great Wizard of Oz for help. It is with this quest in mind, that Dorothy begins her journey. She travels along the Yellow Brick Road, where she meets a Scarecrow who needs a brain, a Tin Man who wants a heart, and a Cowardly Lion who desperately needs courage. They all hope to meet with the Wizard of Oz before the Wicked Witch of the West catches up with them! They encounter talking apple trees, a scary forest with hooting owls, and a seemingly beautiful poppy field which the Wicked Witch has cursed to make them fall asleep. Luckily Glinda intervenes with a spell of her own calling forth a gentle snowfall which wakes the foursome in time to see the grand Emerald City in the distance.

Act Two opens at the gate of the impressive Emerald City. The contemporary Ozians dressed in futuristic fashion greet Dorothy and her friends with dances of welcome and encouragement. Once they are finally permitted a visit with the Great Wizard, they are disheartened to discover that the Wizard will not grant their wishes until they bring back the Wicked Witch's broomstick. Undaunted, they venture into a haunted forest and overcome many dangerous challenges including flying monkeys, haunted trees, and bumbling castle guards before accidentally killing the witch. Upon their return to the Wizard they discover that he is really just an ordinary man without any magical ability at all. The Wizard redeems himself by craftily addressing everyone's wish except Dorothy's. Bringing out an old hot air balloon, he decides to leave Oz and take Dorothy home to Kansas. Unfortunately, the plan is thwarted, and Dorothy must rely on herself and the magic of the powerful ruby slippers to take her home. The ballet comes to a close as Dorothy says good-bye to her wonderful friends wishing them well with both tears of parting and tears of joy for the new beginning which faces each one. The lively grand finale speaks of heartfelt joy ... because, after all, there is no place like home.



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Senior Company Members: Left to Right: Front Row: Isabella Inbels, Drew Batton, Brittany VanRiper. Second Row: Meaghan Crawford, Alyssa Langmeyer, Samantha Snell, Alexis Howland, Elizabeth Blanchette. Top Row: Lindsay Crawford, Alyson Zuckerman, Katrina Snyder (Neeli Amin: not pictured)

## The River Raisin Ballet

The River Raisin Ballet was formed in 2001 as a part of the RRCA Dance Academy's special performance curriculum options for classical ballet students. Spring performances have included *Peter and the Wolf*, *Graduation Ball*, *Coppelia*, and *Cinderella*. RRB members have performed four seasons of *The Nutcracker Ballet* at the RRCA.

Students of the RRB in this production are dedicated to classical ballet training at the RRCA Dance Academy. They take multiple ballet classes during the school year including, partnering, pointe, and variations. The Cecchetti syllabus is a part of the curriculum and taught throughout the year providing students the opportunity to take ballet examinations. Students are currently enrolled in Grades I through the Advanced, Grade VII. In addition, students attend master classes, extended courses, and intensive summer programs across the country.

## The Artistic Director

Ms. Choate-Pettit, a summa cum laude graduate of Eastern Michigan University, holds her Bachelors in Education. She also holds the Enrico Cecchetti Diploma and is permanent examiner for the Cecchetti Council of America (CCA). She is a frequent guest teacher at CCA workshops, festivals, and seminars, conducting student and teacher classes, in the United States and abroad. As business administrator of the CCA, Gail organizes the annual two-week intensive International Ballet Summer School held at Hope College in Holland, Michigan. Ms. Choate-Pettit was trained in the Detroit area, studying and performing with the Detroit City Ballet Company, under the artistic direction of Marjorie Hassard. She received teacher training with Marjorie Randazzo, Betty Bandyk, and Dawn Greene. Additional dance studies include programs in New York, England, and Canada

## The Wizard of Oz Production Staff

Artistic Director .....	Gail Choate-Pettit
Assistant Director.....	Melissa Moore
Rehearsal Assistant.....	Julie Merz
Costume Design.....	Dyanne Howland
Stage Manager.....	Laurie Langmeyer
Scenery Painting.....	Lucy Ingels, Lois Morris
Set and Prop Construction.....	Kirk Snyder, Jeff and Ian Boze, Garth Slatinsky
Stage Crew.....	Ian, Jordan and Meghan Boze, Cam Eggly, Deb Jajuga,
Lighting design .....	Mike Trapp
Dressing Room Coordinator .....	Lynn Fedewa
Dressing Room Assistants.....	Angel Biggs, Katie Heilman, Stephane McLeod, Dana Reicker, Jessica Molnar, Tammy Mo- rales, Diane Slatinsky, Joette Zochowski
Merchandise Coordinator.....	Kris Zuckerman
Videographer.....	John McCarthy

*A special "Thank You" to the volunteers who have graciously shared their talent and time. They provide the framework for our success.*



## Director's Notes

The idea to create the Wizard of Oz as a ballet is not new; numerous ballet companies have performed it using their own selections of music and ideas. It takes a team of talented people to create a new ballet; the music, the costuming, the sets, the lighting, the staging and choreography are all separate aspects that must work together as one.

My search for music started several years ago, and I would like to thank Susie and Emily Pozek who helped me begin the search for the perfect blend of music to tell this story well. The project was made fun by their spirit of adventure. I personally love the final selections as the music is what has inspired me from the beginning.

All of the costumes are newly designed and created by Dyanne Howland whose exceptional creative talent colors every scene with beauty. Jeff and Ian Bose worked to create the witch's costuming and theatrical must-haves; their inventive ideas always add much to the show. The sets and props have been personally handled and expertly organized by Laurie Langmeyer who methodically (and patiently, I might add) worked to make my dreams become reality. The RRB is fortunate to have set builders like Kirk Snyder and Garth Slatinsky and scenery artists like Lois Morris and Lucy Ingels on board. John McCarthy generously offered his assistance in creating the video clips that make several scenes literally come alive. It is Mike Trapp's technical savvy and lighting wonders which artistically wrap all the aspects of the performance together in one beautiful package.

Although the choreography for poppies was set last summer by Catrina Choate, most of what is on the stage was created in a short period of time and could not have been possible without Melissa Moore's assistance and creative input, without Julie Merz' ability to clean the technical detail, and without Josh Mohler's fun, theatrical suggestions. This ballet features movements from comedic slapstick to serious ballet mime, and demonstrates dance styles of contemporary, modern and classical ballet. There is even a little soft shoe if your look carefully enough.

The River Raisin Ballet is proud to present the Wizard of Oz Ballet and to add it to its growing repertory of diverse performances. You can visit our web site at [www.riverraisinballet.org](http://www.riverraisinballet.org) for information about the company and to view photographs of our previous performances.

## Act I

### *Scene One—The Tornado*

Dorothy.....Samantha Snell (Sun), Brittany VanRiper (Sat)  
Wicked Witch of the West.....Jeff Boze  
Tornado.....Neeli Amin, Elizabeth Blanchette,  
Lindsay Crawford, Meaghan Crawford, Isabella Ingels,  
Samantha Snell, Katrina Snyder, Alyson Zuckerman,  
Brittany VanRiper

### *Scene Two—Munchkin Land*

Glinda the Good Witch .....Lindsay Crawford (Sat), Katrina Snyder (Sun)  
Glinda’s Attendants.....Elizabeth Blanchette, Alyson Zuckerman  
Mayor of Munchkin Land .....Haley Langmeyer  
The Coroner .....Alison Treece  
Munchkins.....Willow Biggs, Emily Brace, Ann Brinkmeier,  
Sidney Collino, Gabriella Fedewa, Sophie Grider,  
Elaina Karpenko, Bria Lapp, Ellie LaPrad, Chloe and Kate  
McLeod, Autumn Molnar, Avery Morales, Isabella  
Petrangelo, Sophia Petrangelo, Sarah Reicker, Amber Snider,  
MacKynze Slatinsky, Faith and Catherine Zochowski  
Lollipop Guild .....Gabe and Ethan Hileman, Alex and Benjamin Molnar,  
Evan Sauer  
Lullaby League.....Anthonette Fedewa, Emily Hileman, Abigail Fleszar,  
Alexis Zuckerman

### *Scenes Three and Four—Traveling The Yellow Brick Road*

The Scarecrow .....Alyssa Langmeyer  
Crows .....Willow Biggs, Emily Brace, Bria Lapp, Ellie Laprad,  
Chloe and Kate McLeod, Isabella Petrangelo  
The Tin Man .....Alexis Howland  
The Lion .....Drew Batton  
Forest Trees .....Rachel Bruck, Sarah Clark, Christyne Hilken, Darcy  
Howland, Laurel Kinsey, Kenna Lee, Lindsay Navarre, Anna  
Raymond, Alexandra Sauer, Shelby Sensing, Alyssa Webber  
Woodland Owls .....Sarah Reicker, Faith and Catherine Zochowski  
Woodland Bunny .....Isabella Petrangelo

### *Scene Five—The Poppy Field*

Poppies .....Neeli Amin, Elizabeth Blanchette, Lindsay Crawford,  
Meaghan Crawford, Isabella Ingels, Samantha Snell (Sun),  
Katrina Snyder, Alyson Zuckerman, Brittany VanRiper (Sat)

## Act II

### *Scene One—Emerald City*

Emerald City Gatekeeper.....Josh Mohler  
Citizens of Emerald City.....Neeli Amin, Elizabeth Blanchette, Rachel Bruck,  
Sarah Clark, Lindsay Crawford, Meaghan Crawford,  
Christyne Hilken, Darcy Howland, Laurel Kinsey,  
Isabella Ingels, Kenna Lee, Lindsay Navarre, Anna  
Raymond, Alexandra Sauer, Shelby Sensing, Samantha  
Snell, Katrina Snyder, Alyson Zuckerman, Brittany  
VanRiper, Alyssa Webber  
Ozian Musicians.....Reina Cooke, Anthonette Fedewa, Gabe and  
Emily Hileman, Abigail Fleszar, Kiera Malone, Morgan  
Slatinsky, Laurel Webb, Alexis Zuckerman  
The Dance of Wisdom.....Lindsay Crawford and Katrina Snyder  
The Dance of Love.....Elizabeth Blanchette, Samantha Snell (Sat),  
Brittany Van Riper (Sun), Alyson Zuckerman,  
The Dance of Courage.....Neeli Amin, Meaghan Crawford, Isabella Ingels

### *Scene Two—The Wizard’s Chamber*

### *Scene Three—The Haunted Forest*

Haunted Trees.....Allison Booth, Reina Cooke, Kiera Malone,  
Alessandra Rutkowski, Morgan Slatinsky, Laurel Webb  
Flying Monkeys.....Neeli Amin, Elizabeth Blanchette,  
Lindsay Crawford, Meaghan Crawford, Isabella Ingels,  
Samantha Snell, Katrina Snyder, Alyson Zuckerman,  
Brittany VanRiper  
Pet Monkeys .....Gabriella Fedewa, Sophia Petrangelo, MacKynze Slatinsky

### *Scene Four—The Witch’s Castle*

Castle Guards.....Allison Booth, Rachel Bruck, Reina Cooke,  
Sarah Clark, Christyne Hilken, Darcy Howland, Laurel  
Kinsey, Kenna Lee, Kiera Malone, Lindsay Navarre, Anna  
Raymond, Alexandra Sauer, Shelby Sensing, Morgan  
Slatinsky, Laurel Webb, Alyssa Webber

### *Scene Five—The Wizard’s Chamber*

Great and Powerful Wizard.....Josh Mohler

### *Scene Six—Emerald City—Finale*

Emerald City Citizens .....The Cast

**Finale**.....Entire Cast