

'Books to Ballet' program connects literacy with dance

The Cuyahoga Falls Library and Ballet in the City are collaborating to connect literacy and performance art.

Jessica Wallis, CEO & Founder of Ballet in the City, approached the library with the idea to collaborate back in December after receiving an anonymous grant for educational outreach.

"I grew up in Cuyahoga Falls and the library was my second home," said Wallis. "I developed a deep passion for ballet through reading stories of successful ballerinas at the library. It was through reading that I realized ballet could be a viable career path."

Wallis' appreciation of literacy and the library gave her the idea for a dance infused story time. In this unique partnership, Wallis and her staff at Ballet in the City will be offering three ballet programs throughout

the year. The program series, Books to Ballet, will feature books about dance that address themes like self-confidence, gender stereotypes, inclusivity and diversity.

Wallis and her team will bring the books to life through movement, music and interactive lessons of ballet fundamentals. The program will be geared towards girls and boys ages 6-12. Additionally, participants will be eligible to gain free tickets to Ballet in the City's presentation of The Ashley Boudier Project with prima ballerina Ashley Boudier and fellow dancers of the New York City Ballet at E.J. Thomas Hall in October. The library and Ballet in the City plan to develop programs for a variety of audiences following the Books to Ballet series.

"We are excited to demonstrate the

unique ways literacy can shape lives," said Cuyahoga Falls Library director, Valerie Kocin. "Our team is always seeking opportunities to provide interactive and engaging programming for all ages and interests. Ballet in the City is a wonderful example of the way the library opens doors."

To commemorate the ongoing relationship, through the grant funding, Ballet in the City will be gifting a rare, signed print of ballerina Ashley Boudier by renowned photographer of the New York City Ballet, Paul Kolnik, to the library on April 26 at 5:30 p.m. Books to Ballet are slated for May 7 at 6:30 p.m., June 20 at 2 p.m. and September 28 at 2 p.m.

To register, visit www.cuyahogafallslibrary.org/calendar. Registration is required



Courtesy of
Kimberly Hain
**Emily Hain
and Logan
McIntosh will
be performing
at the May
Books to Ballet
program
at the
Cuyahoga
Falls Library.**

and will open a week before each Books to Ballet program. For more information on Ballet in the City, visit <http://www.balletinthecity.org/>