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Oklahoma International Dance Festival in Full Swing at Oklahoma Contemporary

Dancers Prepare for Public Performances Aug. 1–2 at The Magnolia

OKLAHOMA CITY (July 27, 2025) — The Oklahoma International Dance Festival (OIDF) is now in its second week of activity, following a dynamic first week of intensive classes, rehearsals and collaboration among dancers, choreographers and faculty at Oklahoma Contemporary.

Running through Aug. 2, the festival brings together participants from across the United States and South America for a rigorous two-week experience of technical training and creative growth. Now in its sixth year, OIDF continues to serve as a bridge between generations, cultures and artistic disciplines—offering world-class instruction in ballet, modern, jazz, African dance and choreography.

This year's festival theme—centered on innovation, connection and transformation—invites dancers to deepen their artistry, expand their versatility and forge lasting creative bonds.

Public Performances This Weekend

The 2025 festival culminates in two public performances at The Magnolia, located at Broadway Avenue and NW 7th in Oklahoma City:

Choreography Showcase

Friday, Aug. 1 - Doors open at 8 p.m. Show starts 8:30 p.m.

Hosted by OIDF, the Choreography Showcase is a curated platform for independent choreographers to present original work to a live audience. Selected through an



adjudicated process, choreographers from Oklahoma and beyond are invited to stage their work with full production support. This performance is not part of the festival's core intensive, but reflects OI DF's broader mission to uplift diverse voices in contemporary dance by providing professional presentation opportunities.

Closing Performance

Saturday, Aug. 2 - Doors open at 8 p.m. Show starts 8:30 p.m.

The final evening of the festival offers audiences a window into the creative process nurtured over the two-week intensive. Dancers and choreographers work side-by-side to generate new works—pieces that begin as ideas in the studio and evolve through improvisation, feedback and exploration. Faculty members also contribute original choreography, blending their global experience with the raw energy of emerging artists. The result is a one-night-only performance of premieres that reflect risk-taking, storytelling and the evolution of movement in real time.

Tickets for both performances are available at okdancefest.org. Seating is limited and advance purchase is encouraged.

A Faculty of Global Excellence

OI DF 2025 features an exceptional international faculty, offering dancers the rare opportunity to learn from leaders in both classical and contemporary practice:

Vincent Gros (France/Spain) – Ballet Master of Ballet de Catalunya, known for his rich classical technique and versatility

Alba Nadal (Spain/Germany) – Former soloist, Royal Danish Ballet; celebrated for her expressive artistry

Kevin O'Day (USA/Germany) – International choreographer with more than 80 ballets to his name

Raffaele Irace (Italy/Germany) – Director of Gallus Theater Frankfurt and founder of Solocoreografico Festival

Karen Boyd Bethel (USA) – Former Radio City Rockette and musical theater choreographer

Ayinde Hurrey (USA) – Performer and educator specializing in West African dance and drumming traditions

Austin Hartel (USA/Paraguay) – OI DF artistic director and former member of Pilobolus



“We’ve seen incredible focus and generosity in the studios this week,” said Hartel. “The dancers are not just absorbing technique—they’re pushing themselves to create and take artistic risks. That spirit is what makes OI DF a transformative space.”

Community Day for Young Dancers

OI DF continues its commitment to accessibility through its Community Day programming. A second free day of classes for youth ages 9 to 15 will be held on Saturday, Aug. 2, from 10:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. at Oklahoma Contemporary, which generously serves as a venue sponsor for the festival. Participants will experience a variety of styles including ballet, jazz, modern and African dance. Pre-registration is encouraged. Dancers should bring lunch, water and appropriate attire.

A Mission of Access and Growth

OI DF is a nonprofit organization committed to advancing access to high-caliber dance education. Through partnerships with Allied Arts, the Oklahoma Arts Council and generous support from the Kirkpatrick Foundation and private donors, the festival offers this opportunity to dancers of all backgrounds.

“There would be no Oklahoma International Dance Festival in its current form without the Kirkpatrick Foundation,” said Hartel. “Their support is not just financial—it’s visionary. They believe in what this festival means for our dancers, for the arts in Oklahoma and for the broader cultural dialogue.”

Founded in 1955, the Kirkpatrick Foundation has played a pivotal role in developing and sustaining Oklahoma’s arts ecosystem. Its mission aligns with OI DF’s values of artistic excellence, community engagement and cultural enrichment.

More Than a Festival

OI DF alumni have gone on to join professional companies, university programs and collaborative projects around the world. Beyond technique, the festival nurtures self-discovery, storytelling and global connectivity through movement.

“Each year, the studio becomes a space where language dissolves and creativity takes the lead,” said Thyrsa Da Rosa, festival director. “This is where dancers find their voice—and often, their future.”

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