

SATURDAY
MAY 16
2026

2:00 PM
6:00 PM

Durham
Ballet
THEATRE
PRESENTS

CAROLINA
THEATRE
309 W. MORGAN ST.
DURHAM, NC

Aladdin

DURHAMBALLETTHEATRE.ORG

**Durham
Ballet**
THEATRE



OUR MISSION

Creating a diverse, inclusive, artistic culture

**Durham Ballet Theatre believes that
"Dance in all its forms, is for everyone."**

That's why our auditions are open to the community, offering opportunities for passionate dancers of all levels and backgrounds to participate in our performances. It's also why we host sensory-friendly, free shows, for members of the community that may otherwise be excluded from experiencing the arts.

DURHAMBALLETTHEATRE.ORG



Durham Ballet Theatre Board of Directors

Welcome to Durham Ballet Theatre's 2026 production of Aladdin, our fifth production of this dazzling ballet! We are excited to present this latest performance filled with fresh choreography, new and updated sets, and, of course, a talented team of new and returning dancers from your community.

May the magic and wonder you see on this stage inspire you to see the potential in the most humble of characters, and may the setting of the Silk Road markets remind us all of how much we gain by sharing our cultures and stories with each other.

A production of this scale is truly a labor of love, and it would not be possible without our amazing creative team, our parents and volunteers, our committed board members, our dedicated dancers, and - most importantly - you, our donors and supporters. We are truly grateful to every person who has contributed to our success with your financial support, your volunteer hours, and your presence at this performance. We want to give special thanks to the Durham Arts Council, Durham Merchants Association Charitable Foundation, the Owl Fund, the Fletcher Performing Arts Fund, and North Carolina Arts Council (a division of the Department of Natural & Cultural Resources), without whom we could not carry out our mission to expand access to the arts for those who have historically been unable to experience ballet.

These are challenging times for DBT as arts funding becomes less available, and unfortunately, there's no genie to grant our wishes. Your support in the coming year is critical. If you feel moved and inspired by today's performance, we ask you to donate and help us to bring our 2027 production to life!

Now, sit back and let the power of dance take you to a land of magic where wishes do come true.

Matt Conner, Board Chair
Shelby Carroll
Tiffany Clark
Kate Frost
Bambi Riggsbee-Smith
Lindsay Roberts



Letter from the Artistic Director

Thank you all for joining us for our fifth staging of Aladdin, at the magical Carolina Theatre. This year the title role of Aladdin will be danced by the multi-talented Jared Brunson. Jared, we are thrilled to have you back! In addition, we are elated to have two talented guest artists who are reprising their roles in this show: the lovely and talented Lilit Hogtalian, from MorDance NYC, who will be reprising her role of Badoura and the masterly Joel Morin-Kensicki, lead dancer with Louisville Ballet, who is reprising his role as the Magician. (Fun note: Joel has danced in each of our five productions of Aladdin since the first time we staged in 2009). We are very fortunate to have this level of artistry on our stage. We are deeply grateful that they are once again sharing their gifts with our community.

When we first produced our staging of Aladdin in 2009, there were just two of us on the production team. We recruited dancers, we ran auditions, we choreographed, we staged pieces, we directed rehearsals, we coordinated with the Carolina Theatre. We built sets, we created props, we designed and fashioned costumes. We created playbills. We raised money to pay for it all. Now, 17 years later, we have a production team that includes 5 people –an Associate Artistic Director, a Production Manager and two Assistant Stage Managers and 17 sewists, as well as 4 people to repair the old, damaged set pieces – in all an incredible team of creative, talented and organized individuals. To illustrate the time required for each of these roles, our Wardrobe Mistress and board member, Bambi Rigsbee-Smith, has spent well over 300 volunteer hours building, repairing, and resizing our costumes. (I believe that is an underestimate). We do this because we believe in the power of the performing arts to lift our spirits and bring us closer together in human connection, which changes our lives for the better.

Our community needs this, perhaps now more than ever.

As always I am always looking to “raise the bar” on our production values with our small budget and hard-working student dancers. This includes upgrading older costumes and creating new ones, re-creating choreography and making room for new scenes, and finding new technologies to give you more magic! We have come up with some new creations this year as a result of imagination and ingenuity – I hope you enjoy the results.

I would like to take this opportunity to express how proud and how appreciative I am for all the work and long hours that have been invested in the preparation and execution of this production. There are over 90 custom-made costumes in this show and each costume has at least 3 pieces (that’s at least 270 costume pieces). I haven’t found a way to adequately thank all of you that have donated your time, your skill, your money and your children to make this production possible. I’ll keep working on it -- but for now please know that I deeply appreciate you all!

I also am also tremendously grateful to our community. Without your financial support we could not be here in the theatre today. 80% of our annual budget comes from community donors, largely at the \$200 level. This type of grassroots funding is unusual and speaks volumes about how much you care about Durham Ballet Theatre. This is literally your production!

Last but not least, a very special and grateful thank you to all the parents who have supported their children throughout this endeavor. I know it is a tremendous commitment to participate in a full evening production. Without your willingness to rearrange your lives for 4 months we would not have a show. Thank you!!!!!!!

So now, get settled into your seat, relax, and let us take you to the 8th century in Dunhuang China on the mystical Silk Road.

With gratitude,

Boleyn Willis

Artistic Director

JARED ALLAN BRUNSON

Jared Allan Brunson is a Saint Petersburg, FL native, receiving his initial training in West African song, music and dance from Jai Hinson and Baba Chuck Davis. After 10+ years traveling with DunDuDole Urban African Ballet as a young apprentice, Jared went on to begin classical training by Suzzanne Pomerantzeff, garnering scholarships to Boston Ballet, The Rock School, Houston Ballet, among others.

At age 18, after working briefly with Florida Dance Theatre, Jared joined BalletX as one of its first full-time members. While there, he was mentored and coached by Michael Sheridan. He participated in seven world premieres by Olivier Weavers, Nicolo Fonte, Matthew Neenan and more. He was a guest at the Pennsylvania Ballet and the University of the Arts on multiple occasions, performing at the Kennedy Center, The Mann Center, and the Academy of Music.

At age 20, Jared joined Oregon Ballet Theatre under the new direction of Kevin Irving. Performing works by Nacho Duato, George Balanchine and Christopher Stowell, Jared was shortly thereafter offered a contract with Ballet Memphis where he performed as a soloist and principal for four seasons. There, he has acquired acclaim in Dance Magazine, the New York Times and many national publications for his performances.



LILIT HOGTANIAN

Lilit Hoggatian is a Los Angeles native who began her ballet training under Yuri Grigoriev. She graduated from Académie Princesse Grace in Monaco under the direction of Marika Bessobrazova and Luca Masla and went on to work for the Slovak National Theatre, Ballet Memphis, and Dance Theatre of Harlem.

Lilit was recognized as a Los Angeles Times "Face to Watch" following her performances as Clara in Los Angeles Ballet's production of The Nutcracker. She was a semi-finalist in Prix de Lausanne in 2008 and a 1st place winner at YAGP, Long Beach.

Her repertoire includes The Sylph in La Sylphide, Autumn Fairy in Michael Corder's Cinderella, Diana & Acteon, as well as featured roles in Nacho Duato's Coming Together, Matthew Neenan's Darting Eyes, William Forsythe's The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude, Square Dance, and Minkus Pas de Trois by George Balanchine.



JOEL MORIN-KENSICKI

Joel Morin-Kensicki received his early training at Durham School for Ballet and The Performing Arts from Tama Guerra Rivero, Pablo Perez, Aline Molina, Miguel Campaneria, and Boleyn Willis. After graduating in 2014, he attended Butler University to perform with Butler Ballet under the direction of Larry Attaway.

During his time at Butler, he studied under Marek Cholewa, Rosanna Ruffo, Ramon Flowers, Derek Reid, Michelle Jarvis, Laura Byram, Patrick Hinson, Susan McGuire, and Cynthia Pratt. He also had the privilege of performing principal roles in ballets such as The Nutcracker, Giselle, Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, The Four Temperaments, and La Bayadère, along with many contemporary works.

While at Butler, he had the honor of traveling to Europe with Marek Cholewa and Rosanna Ruffo to study at the national ballet schools of Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. He graduated from Butler University in 2018 with his BA in Dance Pedagogy. He joined Louisville Ballet as a Company Artist in 2024.



ABBY HYLTON

Abby Hylton is a trapeze artist and contortionist known for performances that are sometimes playful, sometimes unsettling, but always evocative and lovely. Originally a swimmer for the Irish National Team, Abby moved back to the United States to attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After working in the nonprofit sector, they discovered circus arts and have been performing and teaching since 2013.

Abby's training includes work with Cirque du Soleil artists Ulia O'Hara and Enya White since 2016 and renowned contortion coach Catie Brier since 2017. They have pursued additional training not only in trapeze and contortion but lyra, silks, partner acrobatics, and juggling at the New England Center for Circus Arts, the School of Acrobatics and New Circus Arts, Circus Warehouse, the National Centre for Circus Arts, and École Nationale De Cirque.

Abby has performed with Circus on Ice, Purple Marble Circus, Dakota Fox Productions, Satarah Productions, and Cirque du Floyd. Beyond performing, Abby coaches students of all ages in trapeze, lyra, silks, and flexibility, and has choreographed aerial pieces for Durham Ballet Theatre's Enchanted Stories, Peter Pan, and Cinderella, Holly Springs High School's Barnum, and Jordan High School's Water For Elephants.



Boleyn H. Willis, Artistic Director



Boleyn began her dance training at age 5 in Durham NC, studying ballet with Adrianna Ciompi. She continued at New Performing Dance Company on scholarship, and was granted apprenticeship to the company.

She entered NYU School of the Arts, Theater/Dance Department and studied with Lawrence Rhodes and Moshe Feldenkrais.

While living in New York City she studied Cunningham Technique at Merce Cunningham Studio, Isadora

Duncan dance technique with Lori Bellilove and ballet with Nadine Revene, Madame Darvash, Francis Patrelli, Dick Andros and Kat Wildish. Also while in NYC she danced professionally with Carolyn Turnage and Dancers and performed with The Divine Comedy Theatre and other Off-Off-Broadway theater groups.

Upon Boleyn's return to North Carolina, she attended North Carolina State University; where she graduated Summa Cum Laude and as a Phi Beta Kappa with a degree in social work. Boleyn was also the resident choreographer for Long Leaf Opera and has choreographed for many theatre and dance companies in North Carolina, New York City and London, England.

Boleyn has been successfully teaching dance locally and nationally for over 46 years. She genuinely loves teaching and sharing her passion for dance with dancers and non-dancers of all ages. Boleyn has been a certified instructor in American Ballet Theatre's National Training Curriculum, Pre-Primary - Level 7 & Partnering since 2010 and recently gained certification in Progressing Ballet Technique. She has been a Level 1 practitioner of Lisa Howell's Perfect Form Physio since 2014.

Boleyn founded Legacy Studios for the Performing Arts in October of 2005 and formed Durham Ballet Theatre, formerly Legacy Repertory Company, in April of 2009.

An advertisement for Barri Payne Family & Law Mediation. The background is a photograph of a modern brick building at dusk. A large, illuminated sign in the foreground reads "BARRI PAYNE FAMILY & LAW MEDIATION". To the right of the sign, text reads "Compassionate and Dependable Lasting Resolutions" and lists services: "Divorce and Custody", "Property Settlements", "Adoptions", and "Mediation Services". Below the sign, it says "Board Certified Specialist in Family Law" and "Certified Family Financial Mediator". At the bottom, the address "1911 Hillandale Rd Suite 1030 | Durham, NC 27705" and phone number "919-808-2826" are listed, along with the website "http://durhamfamilylawspecialist.com".

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An advertisement for Triangle Youth Music. The background is a solid blue color. At the top, the text reads "Join us at Triangle Youth Music!" in a large, bold, white font. Below this, it says "We offer programming for all musicians ages 8-18 who have at least one year of experience playing an instrument. Everyone is welcome!" in a smaller white font. Underneath, it says "Financial Aid available for all programming!" in a blue font. To the left, there is a list of activities: "String, jazz, and wind ensemble summer camps", "Three Full Orchestras", "Two String Orchestras", "Four Jazz Bands", and "Two Chamber Ensembles". To the right of the list are four photographs showing young musicians playing instruments. At the bottom left, there is a logo for "triangle youth music" with the tagline "Shaping the Future of Music." in red. At the bottom right, the website "triangleyouthmusic.org" and phone number "919.645.8434" are listed.

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EVERYTHING NOW ALL AT ONCE

ON VIEW
THROUGH NOV 1

Celebrate 20 years of bold vision at the Nasher Museum of Art with *Everything Now All At Once*—a dynamic anniversary exhibition featuring landmark works.

Everything Now All At Once is organized by Xuxa Rodriguez, Ph.D., Patsy R. and Raymond D. Nasher Curator of Contemporary Art, with support from Julianne Miao, Curatorial Associate.

This exhibition is made possible by The Nancy A. Nasher and David J. Haemisegger Family Fund for Exhibitions and the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation.

Barbara Chase-Riboud, *Malcolm X #5* (detail), 2003. Polished bronze and silk with steel support, 76 1/2 x 29 x 27 inches (194.31 x 73.66 x 68.58 cm). Collection of the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, NC. Gift of Nigel and Ayodele Hart, 2017.22.1. © Barbara Chase-Riboud. Photo by Peter Paul Geoffrion.

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Sensory Friendly Performance

Durham Ballet Theatre is committed to inclusive and accessible public performance opportunities for those whom are under-served culturally, economically, and artistically in the Durham community.

Durham Ballet Theatre's objective is to promote and increase accessibility to the performing arts by providing educational lectures/demonstrations for the public, by giving free performances for members of our community who might not otherwise have the means or opportunity to attend a performance and by directly engaging in and providing facilities for others to engage in the promotion of the arts.

It's important to remember these performances are about access and inclusion not only for the individuals with special needs but also for their family and caregivers. Lack of sensory friendly, accessible events that allow the whole family to attend can contribute to social isolation for those with special needs and their families. We also include members of our community who might not otherwise have the means or opportunity to attend a performance and by directly engaging in and providing facilities for others to engage in the promotion of the arts.

DBT doesn't restrict the number of tickets per party so that entire families can attend together and caregivers from facilities can ensure safe outings for their clients.

Durham Ballet Theatre is open to all ages, ethnicities, abilities, and levels of accomplishment in the arts. Scholarships are available for those who wish to train and perform but do not have the means.

Without sponsors and volunteers like you, Durham Ballet Theatre would not be able to offer these Friday evening performances, free of charge.

This project was supported by the Durham Arts Council's Durham Culture & Arts and a grant from the Fletcher Performing Arts Fund of the Triangle Community Foundation.



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Durham Ballet Theatre thanks you!

The Story of Aladdin

Picture yourself in the days of camels and caravans somewhere on the Silk Road, where the borders of China and ancient Arabia blur ...

Here on this very road, we find a boy named Aladdin. His mother despairs that Aladdin might never make anything of himself — all he wants to do is play with his friends, the street urchins of the market.

Act I

Our story begins as the market opens one morning. The vendors are setting up their shops, and the street urchins are making it a challenge! In comes Aladdin, looking for his friends. Suddenly, a stranger new to the town accosts Aladdin and explains that he is Aladdin's long-lost uncle. Aladdin's fellow urchins are not sure about this newcomer, this long-lost "uncle."

The man describes a place of wonder and riches and gives Aladdin a special gift: a silver ring. It turns out that this "uncle" is a powerful magician, and as he changes the market into a desert and the desert into a cave door, Aladdin realizes that everything is not as it seems.

The Magician pushes Aladdin into a cave full of wondrous, dancing jewels. The jewels direct him to the greatest prize of all, a battered old lamp. When Aladdin returns to the cave door, the Magician insists on having the lamp before he will allow Aladdin to leave the cave. Aladdin realizes there must be something special about the lamp when the magician pushes him back into the cave. Alone and in despair, Aladdin begins to polish the ring given to him by the magician.

In the meantime, Aladdin's mother begins to search for him, fearing that he has been taken by the Emperor's guards. Suddenly, Aladdin appears out of nowhere with stories of a cave filled with riches and a special lamp. Aladdin's mother tells Aladdin to polish the lamp...

A beautiful princess strolls by with her little sisters on their daily walk. Aladdin sees her and instantly falls in love, begging his mother to go to the Emperor to ask for the princess' hand in marriage.

The Story of Aladdin continued

Act II

To great fanfare, the Emperor and his advisors enter his throne room. But who is the man that follows behind? To our horror, the last man to enter the room — the supposed “Grand Vizier — reveals himself to be none other than the magician, Aladdin’s “uncle,” from Act I. Aladdin’s mother appears and pleads for the hand of Princess Badoura. At first, the Emperor’s advisors mock Aladdin’s mother, but they change their minds when they see the precious jewels she has brought. The Emperor prepares to marry Princess Badoura and Aladdin but the scribe bursts through with a message from the Fortune Teller. Aladdin and the princess are wed after all and so they dance for joy!

The day following the wedding, the magician disguises himself as a lamp seller. He goes to the princess and offers her a shiny new lamp in place of Aladdin’s battered old one. Princess Badoura gives into temptation and agrees to the trade. Now in possession of the battered old lamp, the magician is suddenly all-powerful! He kidnaps the princess, places Aladdin in chains and makes off with the lamp.

Aladdin is thrown in the dungeon in his chains. What shall he do? The princess is trapped in the Magician’s palace — what will she do? How will the two newlyweds get out of their predicaments?



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THE CAST OF ALADDIN

Act 1

Lamp Genie Alex Bray

Ring Genie Addison Carbone

The Magician Joel Morin-Kensicki

Market Merchants Suomo Ammah, Fernanda Andrade,
Brian Hendrix, Abby Hylton, Adeline Parks,
Tom Speroni, Jacob Thomsen, Elizabeth Wedge

Street Urchins Nayla Ngaboyamahina, Olivia Ngaboyamahina,
Catherine Speroni, Blaise Thomsen, Naomi West

Scribe Matt Conner

Aladdin's Mother Stephanie Ong

Market Circus Lyra Sadie Ambrose

Market Circus Elizabeth Dorman, Violeta Flores,
Imogen Frost, Kaia Moyer, Blaise Thomsen

Market Guard Wes Council

Aladdin Jared Brunson

Sand (Floor dancers) Addison Carbone, Norah Jones, Peyton Lee,
Salome Mazenet, Zemyna Nealon, Madison Neely,
Stephanie Ong, Andreea Pop, Amelia Roberts

Sand (Aerial dancers) Sadie Ambrose, Fernanda Andrade, Violeta Flores

Princess Badoura Lilit Hogtanian

Pearls Imogen Frost, Mary Hendrix, Kairi Hines,
Catherine Speroni, Blaise Thomsen, Naomi West,

Onyx Norah Jones, Peyton Lee, Tomoko Shinoda

Sapphires Fernanda Andrade, Elizabeth Dorman,
Salome Mazenet, Liza Jayne Miller, Madison Neely,
Adeline Parks, Amelia Roberts, Francesca Speroni

Sapphires (Demi-Soloists) Zemyna Nealon, Andreea Pop

Topaz Abby Hylton

Emerald Tomoko Shinoda

Rubies Lyra Elizabeth Dorman

Rubies Silks Zemyna Nealon, Sarah Rosen

Lead Diamond Tomoko Shinoda

Diamonds Addison Carbone, Norah Jones,
Peyton Lee, Stephanie Ong, Andreea Pop

Onyx Tray Nicole Kallsen

Emerald Tray Madison Neely

Ammahs Elizabeth Dorman, Salome Mazenet

Little Princesses Margot Ashton, Penny Ashton,
Eulalie Friedman, Ava Krebs, Alectra Loder Farahany,
Edith Mixon, Eva Reid, Ellie Wedge



Intermission



Act 2

Guards Wes Council, Brian Hendrix

Emperor Jacob Thomsen

Scribe Matthew Conner

Fortune Teller Addison Carbone

Magician as Vizier Joel Morin-Kensicki

Aladdin's Attendant Blaise Thomsen

Badoura's Attendant Kairi Hines

Carpet Bearers Andreea Pop, Tomoko Shinoda

Dragon Wes Council, Salome Mazenet,
Madison Neely, Catherine Speroni,
Blaise Thomsen, Naomi West

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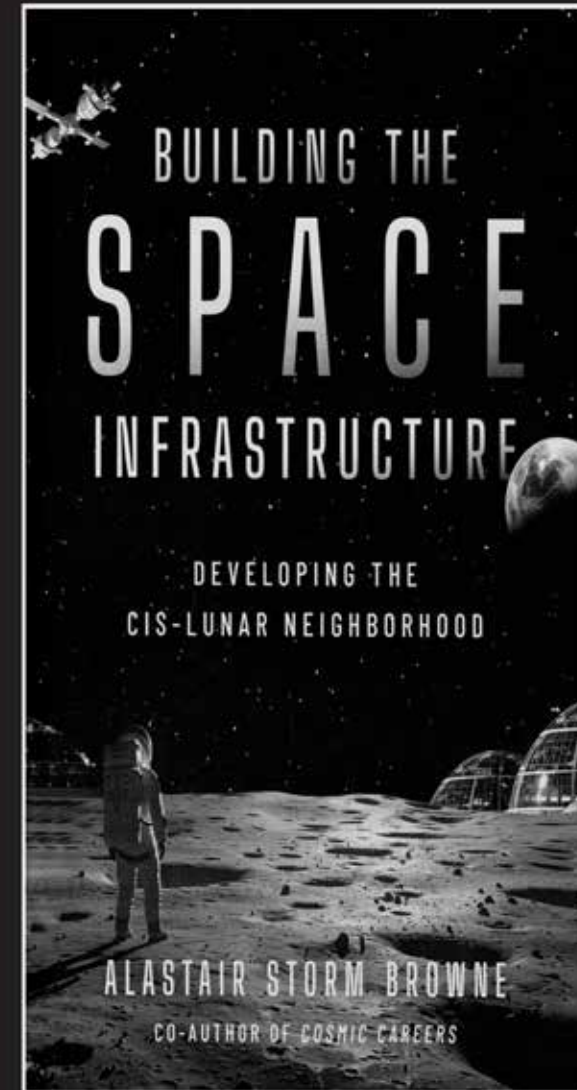
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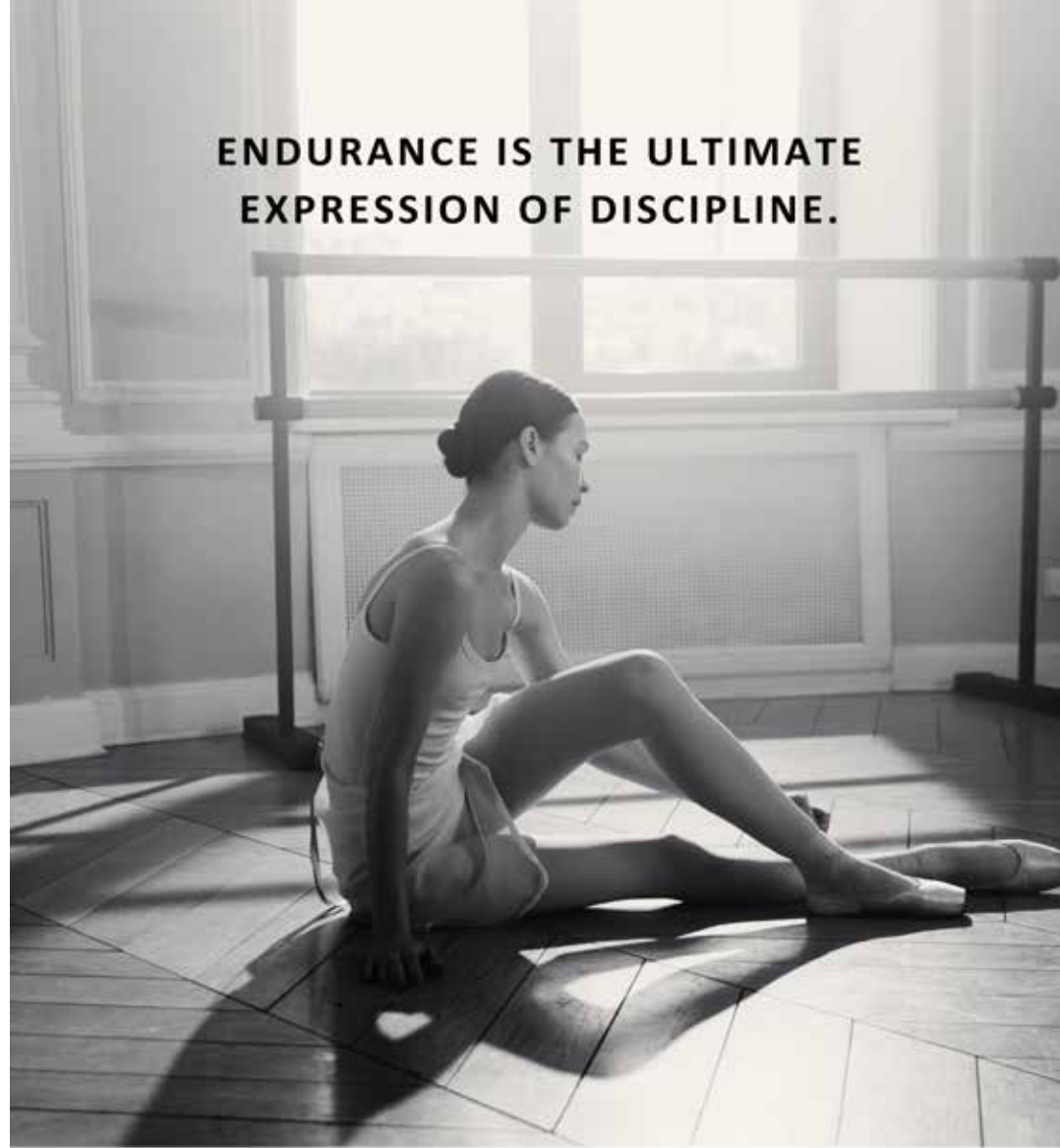
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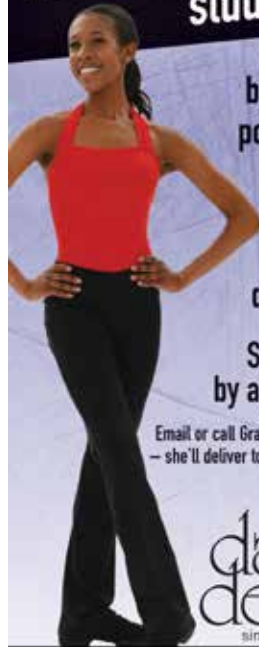


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His 17 years of local brokerage experience plus a unique background in construction and real estate development across the country enables Adam to offer his clients incredibly effective insight and outstanding results.

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