

PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

# Website + Identity Redesign

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## Pennsylvania Ballet has been a reputable force in the dance world

for generations, but with the 2014 appointment of its latest Artistic Director, Angel Corella, it is poised for a new chapter in its esteemed history. Corella, an internationally recognized dancer, brings with him a wealth of experience and has reinvigorated the Company. Pennsylvania Ballet requires a redesign of both its identity and website to keep pace not only with the exciting changes in its leadership, but also with the evolution of an increasingly mobile audience that expects content to be responsive across all platforms.

The following presentation documents the process for creating a reimagined identity system and dynamic web presence for Pennsylvania Ballet. In both cases, I based my decisions on research and sought to achieve designs that respect the legacy of the Ballet's past but also make this institution relevant to a new generation of fans.

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# PART I: RESEARCH



# RESEARCH PLAN

## Goal

To better understand the needs, perceptions, and behaviors of the Ballet's target audiences so that the redesign can support them.

## Methodology

1. Review of secondary research conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts for a high-level view of performing arts engagement by consumers in the U.S. and attendance barriers
2. Stakeholder interview and follow-up summary
3. Competitive/Heuristic analysis (would include other dance companies as well as Philadelphia arts organizations)
4. An online survey performed via Typeform (see the following list of proposed questions). The survey will be done for the purpose of:
  - collecting both demographic and qualitative audience data
  - functioning as a screening device for conducting interviews and usability studies further into the process. I will work with the Ballet to carefully select 5-6 candidates who have agreed in the survey to be contacted for further questioning.
5. Usability studies during the redesign process (using rough sketches and paper and/or digital prototypes of the newly designed website). This testing will be conducted either in-person or remotely and would consist of asking a user their overall perceptions of the new site experience as well as asking them to perform a few tasks and noting their actions.

## PROMOTION & INCENTIVES

The online survey will be promoted on the Ballet's social media channels. I suggest incentivizing the survey to encourage greater participation. For partaking in the online survey, a user's name will be entered in a raffle for two free Nutcracker tickets. Likewise, for engaging in a usability test, the Ballet could offer each participant two additional free tickets to a season performance or a gift card.

## Usability Study Participants

I will test site prototypes for usability with at least one representative member from each group:

1. Single-ticket buyer
2. Season-ticket buyer
3. Board member
4. Parent

The participants for these groups will be carefully selected from the original online survey results. I will aim to choose a diverse cross-section with regard to age, gender, ethnicity, and income level.

## Schedule

- Stakeholder interviews conducted 9.14.16.
- Summary document due by 9.21.16.
- Competitive/Heuristic analysis due by 9.26.16.
- Online survey approved by the Ballet the week of 9.26.16. I will work with the Ballet to develop promotional graphics and will launch and promote the 1-week survey the week of 10.3.16, if not sooner. Survey data will be collected, analyzed, and presented to the Ballet within a few days of the survey's conclusion.
- Usability studies TBD.

## Online Survey Questions

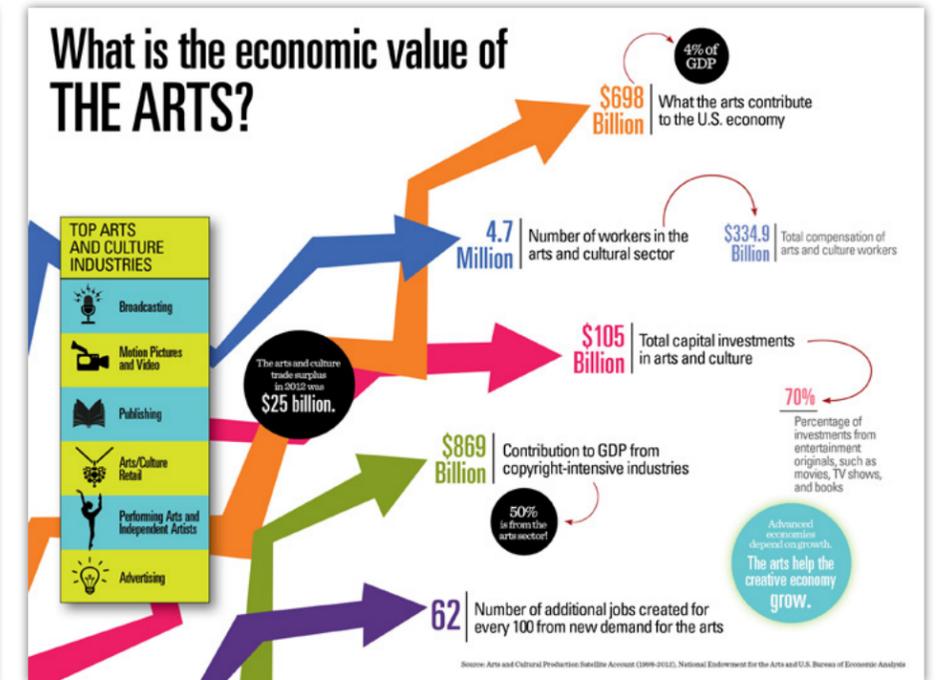
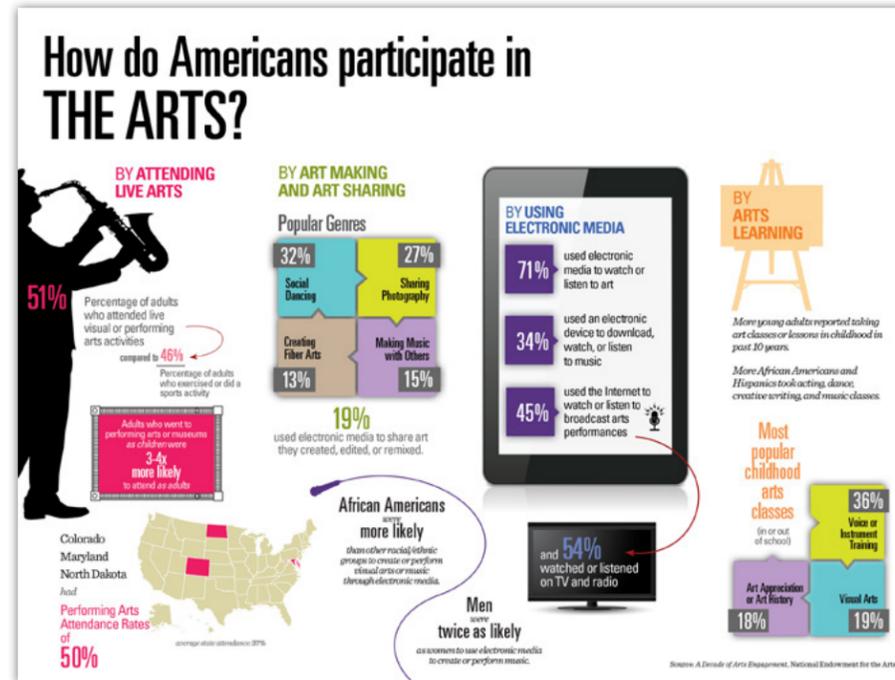
1. Age?
2. Gender? (will provide options)
3. Ethnicity? (will provide options)
4. Average yearly income? (will provide a range)
5. Have you purchased tickets to a Pennsylvania Ballet performance in the past 12 months?

6. If so, how many times? (will provide a range)
7. If so, for whom are you buying tickets? (1 for myself; 2 for myself and a friend/partner; 2+ for myself and my family)
8. Are you a season ticket holder?
9. What words and/or images come to mind when you think of Pennsylvania Ballet?
10. How often do you visit Pennsylvania Ballet's site? (will provide a range)
11. What are your reasons for visiting the Ballet's site?
12. Did it take you more or less time than you expected to find what you were looking for on the site? (range from a lot less time to a lot more time)
13. What site pages and/or feature(s) are most important to you? Least important?
14. Do you feel anything is lacking from the current site design? If so, what?
15. How would you rate the following aspects of the website?
  - Ease of Use (range from extremely easy to not at all easy)
  - Organization of Information (range from extremely well organized to not at all organized)
  - Visual Appeal (range from extremely appealing to not at all appealing)
16. How would you describe the website in 10 words or less?
17. Would you recommend the website to a friend?
18. Would you be willing to provide your e-mail address for follow-up questioning, if selected? Participants chosen for more research will be compensated.



# LITERATURE REVIEW

As part of my research, I read findings from various articles and journals, including statistics released from the National Endowment for the Arts on audience engagement levels and arts patronage.



**A DECADE OF ARTS ENGAGEMENT: FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS**

**Arts Organizations Search for the Missing Audience**  
by Tom Jacobs

**When Going Gets Tough: Barriers and Motivations Affecting Arts Attendance**

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

### Why do people attend THE ARTS?

#### MOTIVATIONS

- 73% To Socialize with friends or family
- 64% To Learn new things
- 63% To Experience high-quality art
- 51% To Support the community

#### BARRIERS

- 47% Time
- 38% Cost
- 37% Access
- 22% No One To Go With

**ATTITUDE** (purple circles):

- How one views one's own social status affects attendance.
- First-generation immigrants are more likely than the average arts-goer to attend on their own.
- Despite similar incomes, only 48% who identified as working class attended (97% of middle class did).
- Particularly true for older adults.
- Adults with no high school diploma/ lowest income attend the arts at lower rates (70%).

**Values of Arts Participants**

- 83% Being devoted and loyal
- 76% Listening to other perspectives
- 60% Being creative, original
- 47% Trying new things
- 28% Enjoying the excitement, adventure, and risk-taking

**Lifestyles of Arts-Goers**

- 50% of Adults attend the arts with friends
- 68% of Parents of children under 6 go to socialize
- Young Adults who are full-time students attend most in the 18-34 age group
- Retirees go to experience high-quality art

**Ideas to reach the missing audience**

- Provide low-cost admission with learning-focused programming
- Increase community engagement
- Provide opportunities to socialize and experience new art forms
- Market to couples focusing on "date night" options

Address the motivations and barriers and change perceptions and behaviors!

# STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

## Questions

### Topic: Organizational Structure

1. Please state your name and title.
2. How long have you been in this role?
3. What are your essential duties and responsibilities?
4. What does a typical day look like?
5. Who are the people and teams with whom you work most closely? How well is that relationship working?

### Topic: Pennsylvania Ballet Brand & Mission

6. Who do you view as your competitors?
7. What do you offer that your competitors don't and how does your brand communicate this?
8. Which characteristics do you want people inside and outside the company to associate with the brand or product, and which do you want to avoid?
9. Why have you focused your mission on "making dreams of dance come true?"

### Topic: Pennsylvania Ballet Website

10. Who would you classify as your target audience?
11. What is the central problem to be solved through the website's redesign?
12. Regarding the website project we're working on, how would you define success?
13. From your perspective, what will have changed for the better once it's complete?
14. What do you think the greatest challenges to success are? Internal and external?

15. How do you expect your interactions with other people inside or outside this organization will change based on the outcome of this project?
16. What do you use the website for the most? What are your most common tasks with the site?
17. What problems have you noticed? Is anything missing?
18. What kinds of work-arounds do you use?
19. Have you any concerns about this project?
20. Are there any features customers/season ticket-holders/board members are requesting on the site? If so, what issues do these features address?
21. What will the approval process be for this project? From whom should I be receiving approval at various steps to proceed?

## Analysis

### Site Redesign Objectives

- improved functionality, ease of use, and navigation
- mobile-friendly/responsive
- easier CMS
- more videos and photography
- showcase diversity and international talent (both via Angel and the Company's globally experienced dancers)
- simple purchase path
- for the School, highlight a dancer's progression and their success from student to professional
- feature the dancers more in-depth to allow audiences to engage and connect with them

### Target Audiences

- vary, depending on the performance (could be moms with families, a younger couple on date night, etc.)
- for Development purposes, high net worth individuals with disposable income, but also younger, more diverse audiences than competitors (enables the Ballet to receive funding to reach these groups)
- women age 35+

### Challenges

- difficulty in engaging new audiences, especially those under the age of 40 who are put off by ballet
- a need to make the Ballet more approachable and remove the barriers to accessibility (end consumers' misconception that "insider knowledge" is needed in order to appreciate ballet). This also aligns with the Company's mission of "making dreams of dance come true:" an inclusive message promoting connectivity.
- the Ballet shouldn't be viewed as intimidating: it should be fun, edgy, and hip—not boring and stodgy
- the site must showcase the elite talent of the Company without coming off as elitist
- avoid appearing as an all-white, too-skinny Company: promote diversity to better reflect today's consumers (and more specifically, Philadelphia itself); take into account growing Latino community
- need a smooth workflow solution for producing and maintaining new site's content; also, universal back-end updates should be applied

### Competitors

#### Other Philadelphia arts organizations:

- Opera Philadelphia
- Philadelphia Orchestra
- Broadway Philadelphia

#### Other East Coast ballet companies:

- The New York City Ballet
- BalletX
- American Ballet Theatre

#### School-specific:

- The Rock School for Dance Education

### Strengths & Highlights

- longstanding reputation of superior performances (50+ years)
- athleticism, beauty, strength, artistry
- high-caliber production value
- Ballet provides a live performance and a live orchestra, both of which are world-class and not offered by competitors. Currently, this attribute is not promoted as much as it could be. Likewise, the Ballet's conductor is a woman, which is another unique selling point.

### Defining Success

- simple, direct, streamlined navigation and organization
- elegant, beautiful, intuitive interface
- increased conversions (higher patronage, more tickets purchased and students enrolled in the School)
- patrons developing vested interests in the Ballet and reasons to visit the site frequently
- a greater awareness in Philadelphia of the Ballet's offerings and events
- donors will communicate their excitement rather than their frustrations

# HEURISTIC ANALYSIS

ORGANIZATIONS

| <p>PABALLET.ORG<br/>HEURISTIC AND<br/>COMPETITIVE<br/>ANALYSIS</p>                  | <p><b>VISIBILITY OF SYSTEM STATUS</b><br/>The system should always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within reasonable time.</p>  | <p><b>MATCH BETWEEN SYSTEM AND THE REAL WORLD</b><br/>The system should speak the users' language, with words, phrases and concepts familiar to the user, rather than system-oriented terms. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.</p>   | <p><b>CONSISTENCY AND STANDARDS</b><br/>Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing. Follow platform conventions.</p>   | <p><b>AESTHETIC AND MINIMALIST DESIGN</b><br/>Dialogues should not contain information which is irrelevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in a dialogue competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility.</p>  |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <p>PENNSYLVANIA<br/>BALLET</p>  | <p>When on an interior page, it's not clear what top-level category you're in, other than a tiny breadcrumb trail. It's easy for a user to get lost. It also seems difficult to easily purchase a few tickets for any given performance. Clicking "Buy Tickets" at the top doesn't take you to a ticketing landing page; it's just a list of the season's performances with buttons to "subscribe" and go to "student rush tickets" (which in itself is an unclear phrase). If a user just wants to buy some tickets without ordering a subscription (or isn't a student), s/he has to do further digging and be curious enough to click "More." This will then lead to the performance landing page, where buried under a few paragraphs is one small text link for "Buy Tickets." The ease of buying a ticket needs to be addressed in the redesign.</p> | <p>Throughout the site, the text is lengthy and doesn't convey a distinct tone. The huge blocks of copy without a visual break (like in "About the School") will likely make a user lose interest fast. Also, the phrases should communicate accessibility and inclusiveness instead of speaking only to an audience already interested in ballet. In particular, "Plan Your Visit" could be much more engaging, concise, and user-friendly. This section should be service-driven, offering consumers helpful tips and suggestions for making their experience the best it can be and encouraging repeat visits (both in the digital and physical senses). "FAQs" could be revised to "How May We Help You?" or something similar. Moreover, all the questions in "FAQs" could be reorganized to fit within the other three categories of this nav. item. In "Theater Information," the five drop-down bars mostly include a list of "don'ts" and policies (not to mention each of these buttons is red) — not welcoming at all.</p> | <p>Clicking on any top-tier nav. item leads to different results each time. Sometimes, the landing page will be the first sub-page listed for that nav. item, like how clicking "The Company" takes a user to "Our Story, Mission, and History." Other times, a user will be directed elsewhere, like when clicking on "Season &amp; Tickets" takes a user to the last sub-page of that group, not the first. The three green buttons at the top ("Buy Tickets," "Donate," and "Shop") take a user to widely dissimilar landing pages. The first leads back to an interior site page (also frustrating since it's not an easy, direct click to a purchase path); the second opens a generic-looking, unstyled form; and the third leads to the Ballet's separate shopping website. Under "Outreach," the First Positions blog takes a user away from the Ballet site and onto a page that looks completely different (worse, it looks like it was never updated, and clicking "About" directs you to a default template page that instructs you how to use a WordPress blog).</p> | <p>Overall, this site suffers from information overload. Most pages are crammed with lots of text, supplementary inner-page tabs, and duplicate navigation sidebars. Also, some info. is irrelevant (example: in "Outreach," outdated school dress rehearsal dates appear). "For the Media" only has press releases and nothing else — is it necessary as a top-level category of its own? Should probably be a part of another category. The generic typography and primary color scheme don't convey the prestige and beauty for which the Ballet is known. Likewise, a lack of large photos and videos keep hidden the Ballet's most valuable asset — its elite Company of world-class performers. Even the archive of past performance photos is difficult to find (buried in a tiny text link at the top of the page and easily missed).</p>   |
|  | <p>Like the PA Ballet site, it's hard to tell what page you're on once you're there. The top-tier nav. items change color when you hover over them, but there's no signifier of being in a category section when you're on an interior page. For example, clicking "In Schools" takes you to a landing page with an incomplete breadcrumb trail. It would be a helpful marker if "In Schools" was at least highlighted, underlined, or in any way treated differently in the top nav. when you're in that section of the site.</p>   | <p>The site has a nice tone of voice throughout and displays a consistency in its messaging. Opera is probably perceived by many to be high-class entertainment, but the welcoming, friendly headlines engage viewers and debunk the stereotype of a stuffy art form. Good examples: "Opera is what living sounds like. Are you listening;" "We're Our Fans' Biggest Fans;" "What's On" instead of something like "season performances;" and "Chat with Guest Services" instead of "customer service." Opera Philadelphia strikes the right balance of sophistication and accessibility.</p>  | <p>The top-tier navigation functionality is a little strange and doesn't follow expected standards. It's as if the site was built mainly for mobile, without thinking through the navigation interactivity on a desktop browser. It's not clear which of the top nav. items have drop-down menus. On first glance, I thought none of them did since they don't occur on a rollover. It was only after clicking "Opera Lab" that I realized some (but not all) nav. items contain drop-downs. Also, when a drop-down appears, it's typical for a menu item to have some difference applied to it when rolled over to help a user choose (like an underline or color change), but on this site that visual cue is missing.</p>  | <p>Of all the sites reviewed in this analysis, Opera Philadelphia has, by far, the most elegant, engaging, and modern design. The stylish typography and palette play nicely off of the bold, full-color photos and vivid, illustrative videos. There's a good amount of content, but it's well organized and not overwhelming. For example, "About" is listed at the far right of the top-tier navigation. It's not the first item a user views from left to right (or top to bottom on mobile), nor should it be. The Opera seems to have a good handle on what's important to a user: the latest performances and how to buy tickets. There's a subtle animation throughout the whole site on most heading illustrations. I feel like it would be more interesting if it actually did something, other than just follow your cursor on the page. But all in all, it's a nice little interactive touch.</p> |

# HEURISTIC ANALYSIS

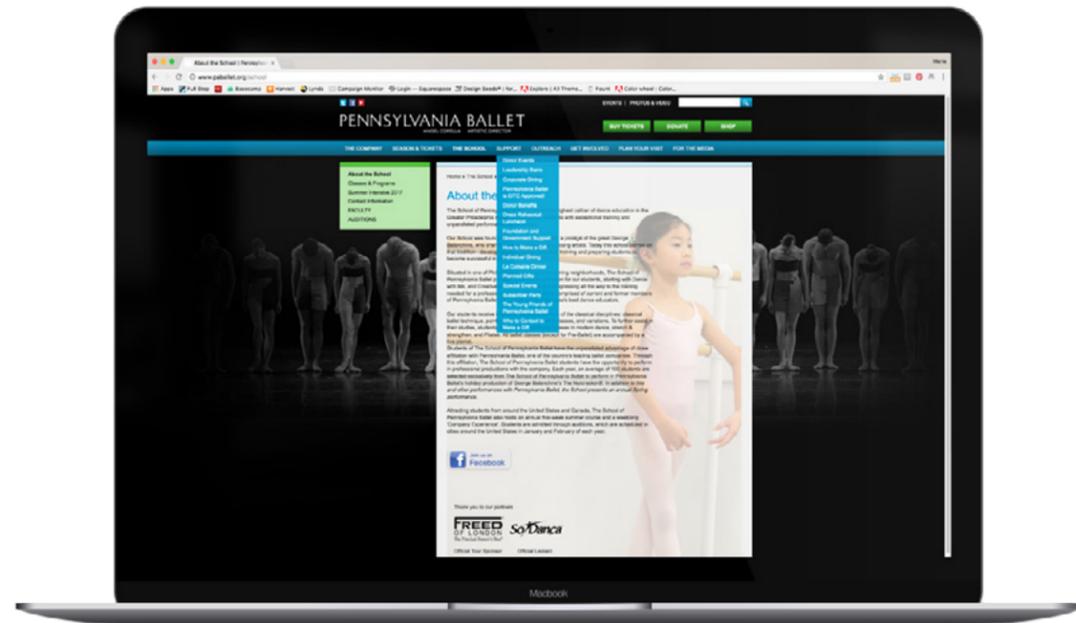
ORGANIZATIONS

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|---|---|---|--|--|
|   | When a user has clicked on a top-tier nav. item, a black bar and arrow appears underneath the type, which is a good location indicator. However, hovering over adjacent top nav. items brings up boxes that area also colored black, so it can be confusing which drop-down relates to which nav. item. | Overall, the information is stated clearly and plainly and doesn't require the user to have extensive knowledge of the orchestra in order to engage with the site. However, on individual concert pages, the descriptions veer toward a more academically inclined audience and don't necessarily promote participation for the novice orchestra attendee. To illustrate, the following is an excerpt from the description of "Mozart's Great Mass:" "Theofanidis weaves his <i>Rainbow Body</i> from selections of the music of medieval abbess and mystic Hildegard von Bingen." I'm not proposing the Orchestra dumb-down its offerings — simply make the descriptions more inclusive to potentially attract a wider audience. | One critique would be to reconsider the heart as an icon for "donate now." While the heart could symbolize giving, it's also commonly used on other sites to signify a user's favorites or personalized settings (could be misinterpreted).  | The top-tier nav. uses double-columns for "About" and "Blog," but the added photo content feels unnecessary and overwhelming. Typography styles are clean throughout most of the site, but in the blog, the script typeface (especially for the all-caps "HEAR") looks a bit antiquated and not the best complement for the rest of the site's fonts. The top-tier nav. might benefit from grouping some categories and sections together so as not to overwhelm a user with too many menu options. On the homepage, the calendar is clearly present, but feels like an afterthought or feature that was added post-launch. It often obstructs the top photo and headline and doesn't feel like it was intentionally designed to be in its current position. Similarly, other pages with large top photos and headlines seem to be built for widescreen monitors but get cut off on a laptop view (like the "Yannick Nézet-Séguin" landing page). Overall, the site has a clean aesthetic, but text-heavy pages like "Musicians" could be improved with more photography. Currently, clicking on an individual name renders an often text-heavy lightbox with more biographical details. Visual breaks would help users feel more engaged. |
|  | Each interior page clearly displays its title as a heading, which is a helpful marker. The top-tier nav. also effectively uses color to differentiate between menu items as a user hovers or scrolls.   | The site's navigation items and buttons are all straightforward and clear. It also helps that the homepage features quotes of praise from major media outlets, widely recognized by the general public, and not just ballet connoisseurs (like <i>The New York Times</i> , <i>The Huffington Post</i> , and <i>The Philadelphia Inquirer</i> ).   | In the bottom footer, "Socialize" seems to be the only display-type area on the site that doesn't have a rollover state. Moreover, it seems unnecessary to even include this headline, since most users are familiar with social media icons. That said, the Twitter icon seems so styled as to be nearly unrecognizable. I used context to figure that it was probably Twitter, but an icon that follows the shape of Twitter's bird more closely could clear up any potential confusion. | As is the case with PA Ballet, BalletX doesn't have a responsive site, which is a major drawback. However, BalletX knows who it is and its design reflects a more contemporary dance company. Bright colors, bold typography, and atypical dance photos (like showing only cropped legs in the header) work together to create a cohesive brand feel. However, the site layout in general feels dated and doesn't display the interactive features that users have come to expect from responsive sites. Like paballet.org, the BalletX site has frequent instances of giant text blocks that could be streamlined (or at the very least, aided by complementary visuals like photography).  |

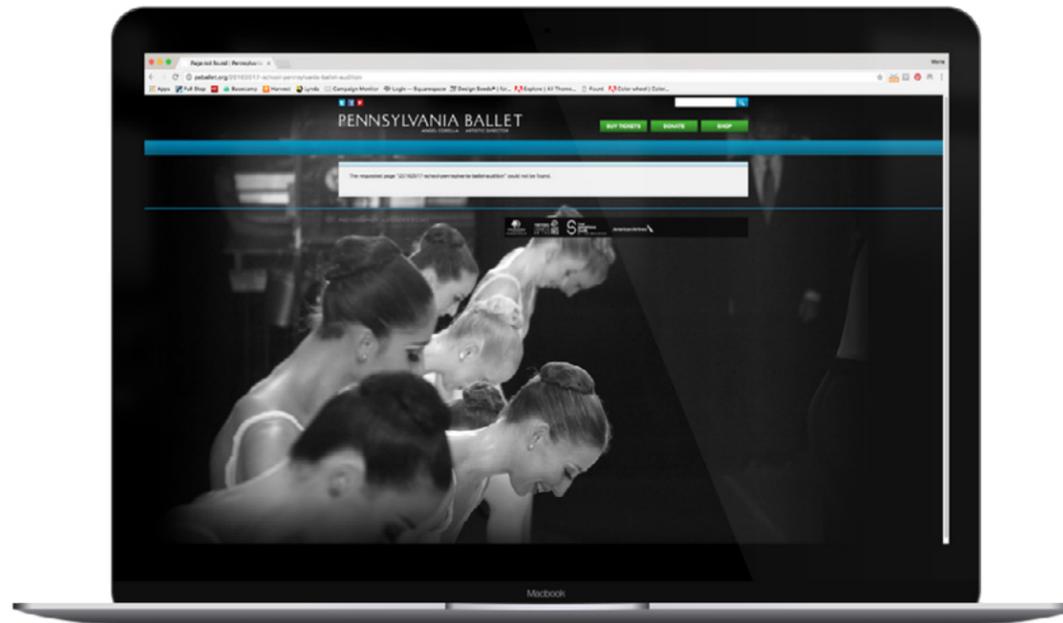
Note: Since the time this analysis was created, BalletX has since redesigned its website.

# HEURISTIC ANALYSIS

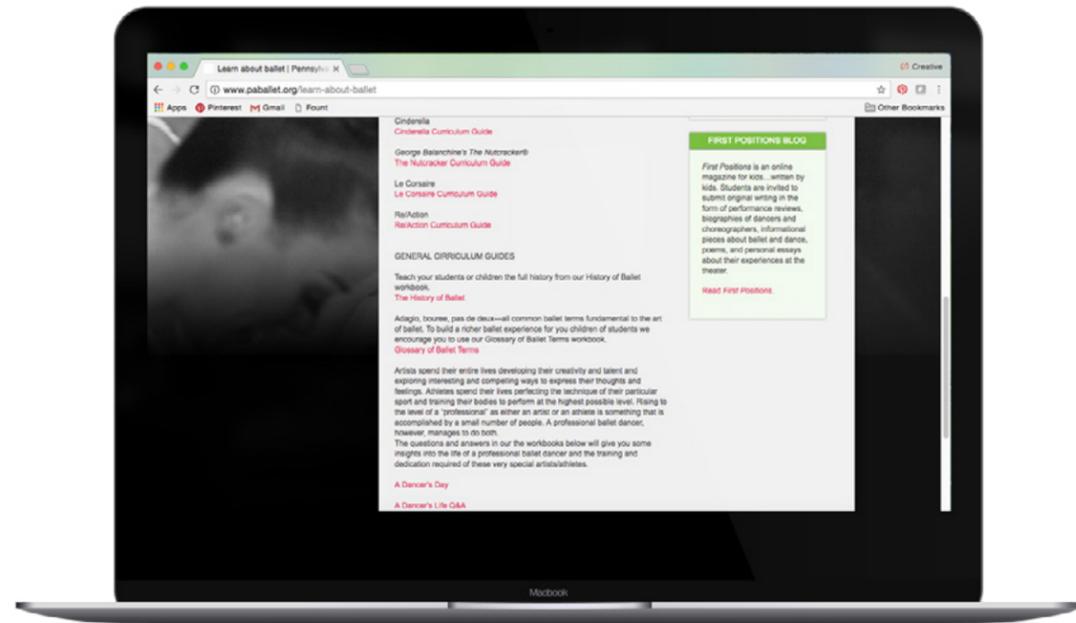
The following screens are examples of some issues with the current PA Ballet site, evaluated in more detail in the previous chart.



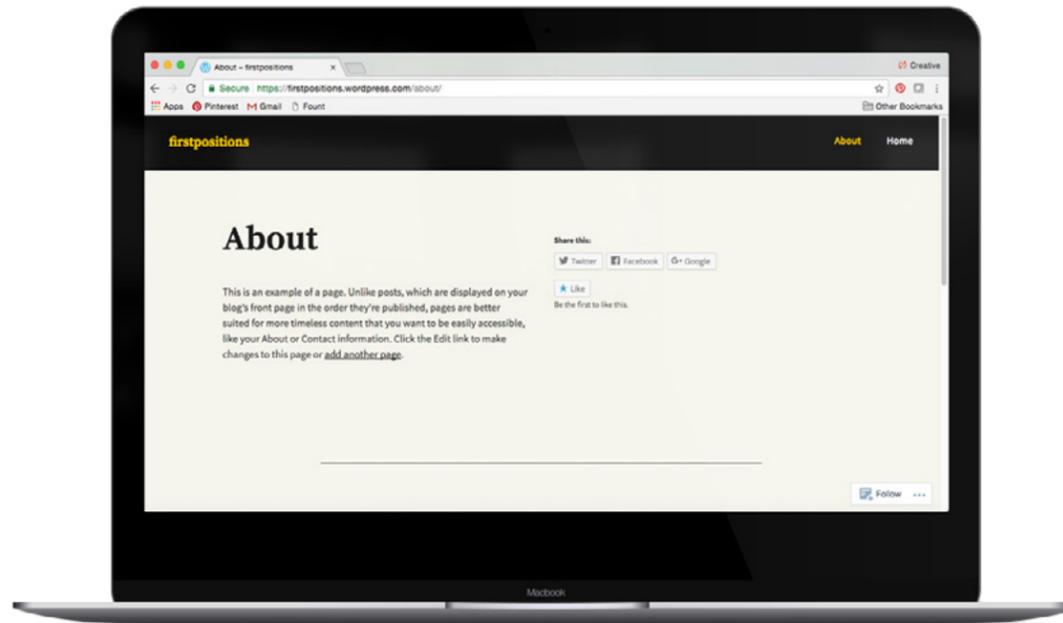
lengthy blocks of copy and an excessive number of drop-down categories



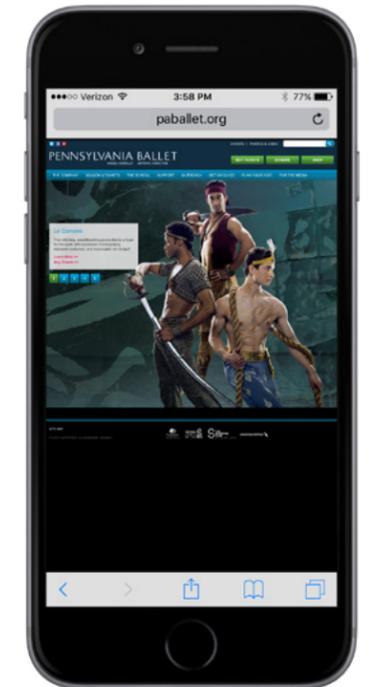
several links (including those in the top navigation) leading to error messages and instances of “page not found”



misspelled headlines and mistakes throughout the site, like “General Cirriculum Guides”



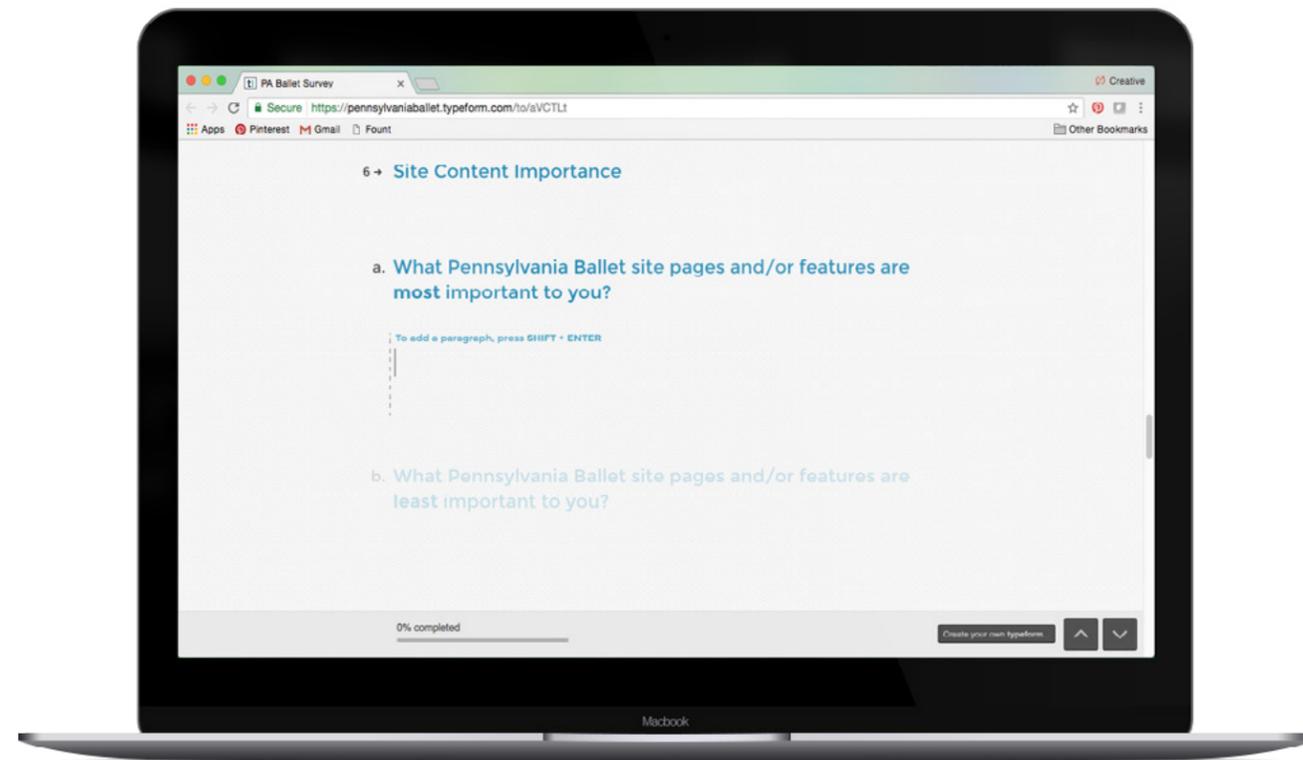
a blog styled inconsistently with the rest of the site and also appearing to be a generic template with instructions on how to build a page



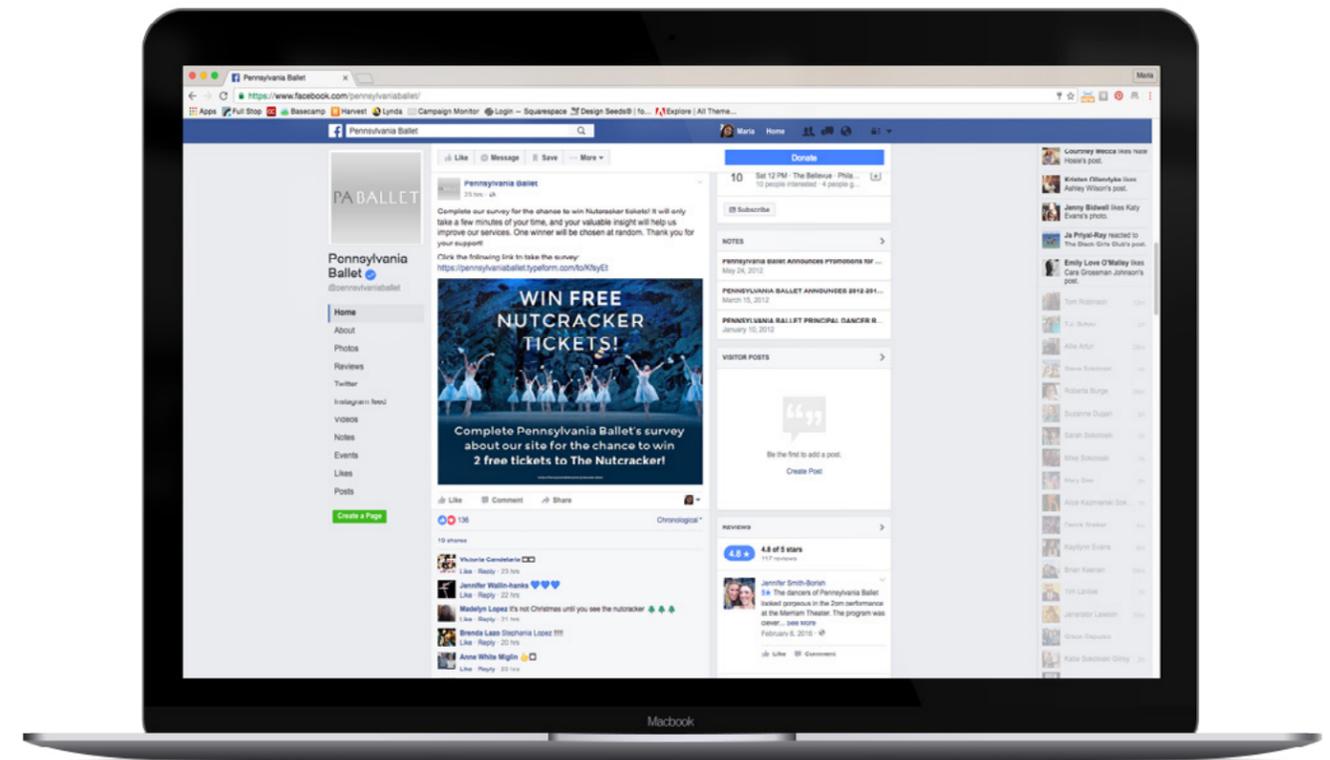
unresponsive design, leading users to many frustrating pinch-and-spread motions (if they have the patience to stay on the mobile view at all)

# SURVEY

As described in the research plan on page 5, I built an online survey using Typeform to gather data and also function as a screening device for user interviews. I used the Ballet's social media to advertise the survey, and with the Ballet's permission, offered two free Nutcracker tickets as an incentive. The survey was a success, yielding 337 responses and enabling me to interview six respondents from this pool.



Typeform survey



social media promotion

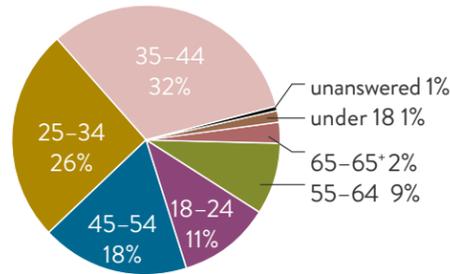
# SURVEY DATA

Data compiled from a six-day online survey, promoted via Pennsylvania Ballet's Facebook page, that generated 337 submissions.

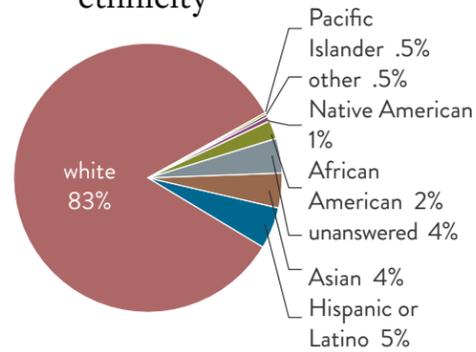
## gender



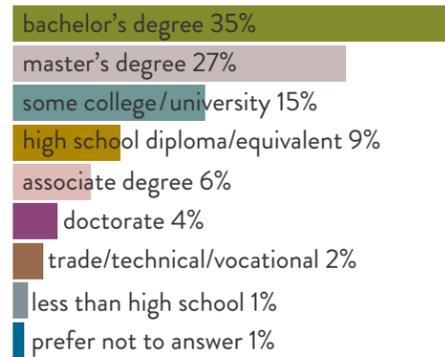
## age



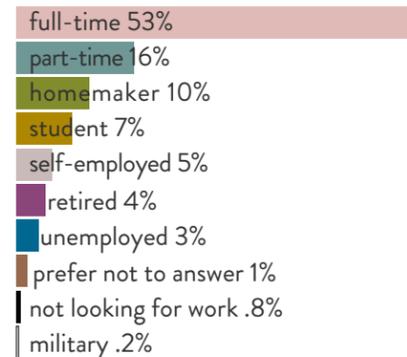
## ethnicity



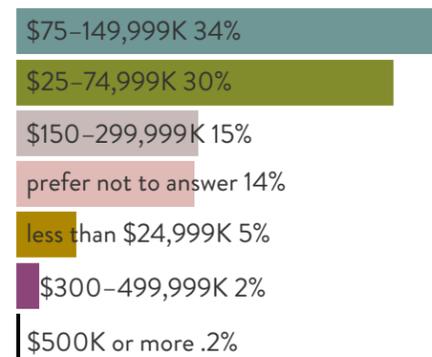
## highest level of education



## employment status



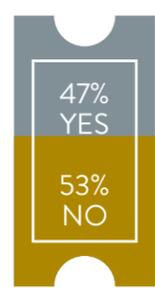
## annual household income



## average household size 3.36



## bought tickets in the past 12 months



## season subscribers

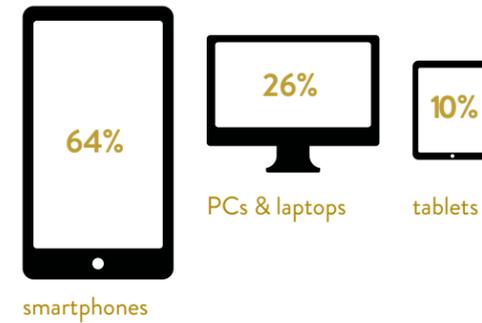


## purchasing frequency of subscribers\* and non-subscribers who bought tickets in the past 12 months



\*Of this pool, subscribers noted instances of purchasing one-time subscriptions as well as purchasing packages plus individual tickets throughout the season. "1 time" does not necessarily translate to only buying tickets for one performance and can encompass a one-time purchase of a multi-ticket subscription.

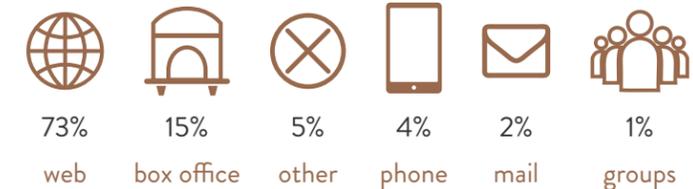
## unique visits to the survey per device



## recipients of buyers' purchased tickets



## purchasing method of those who bought tickets in the past 12 months

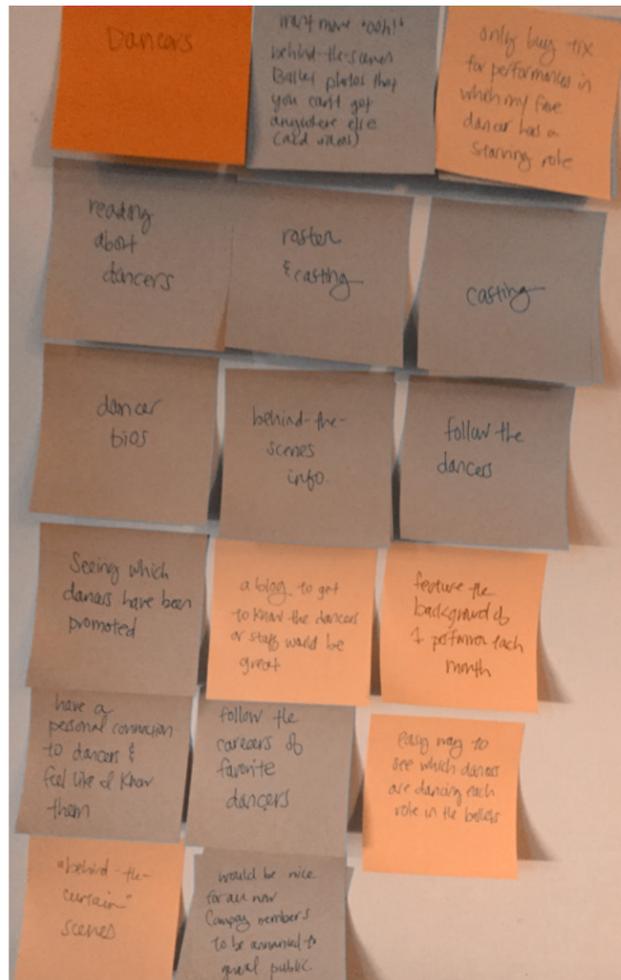


## top Pennsylvania Ballet descriptors

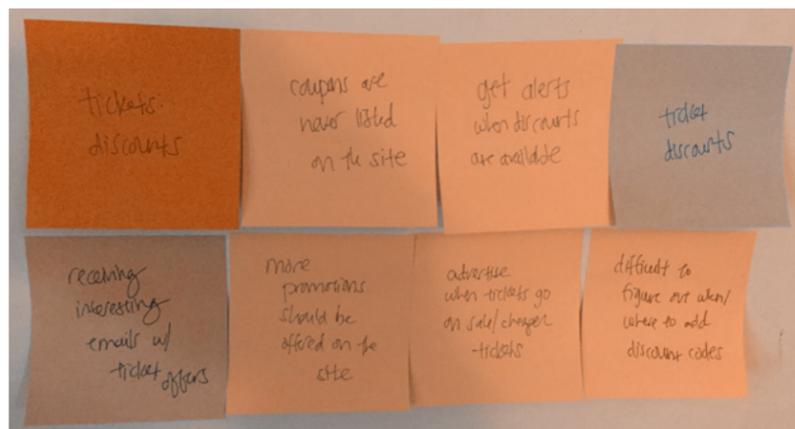




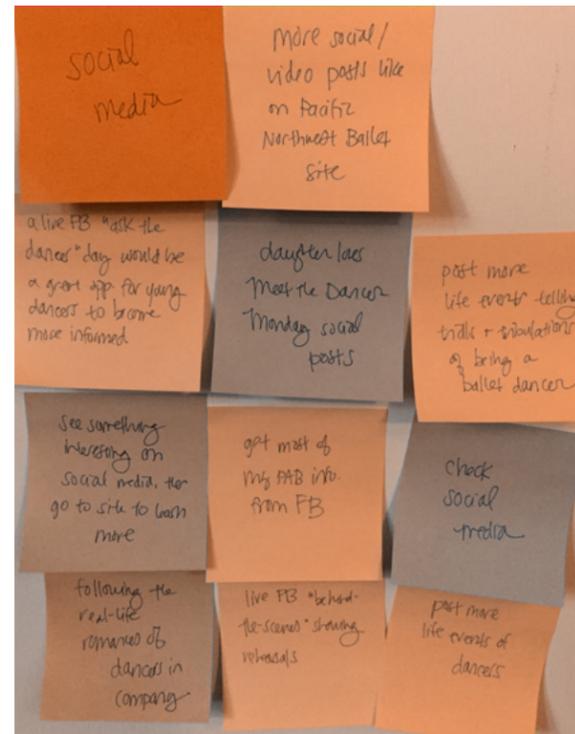
# PATTERNS



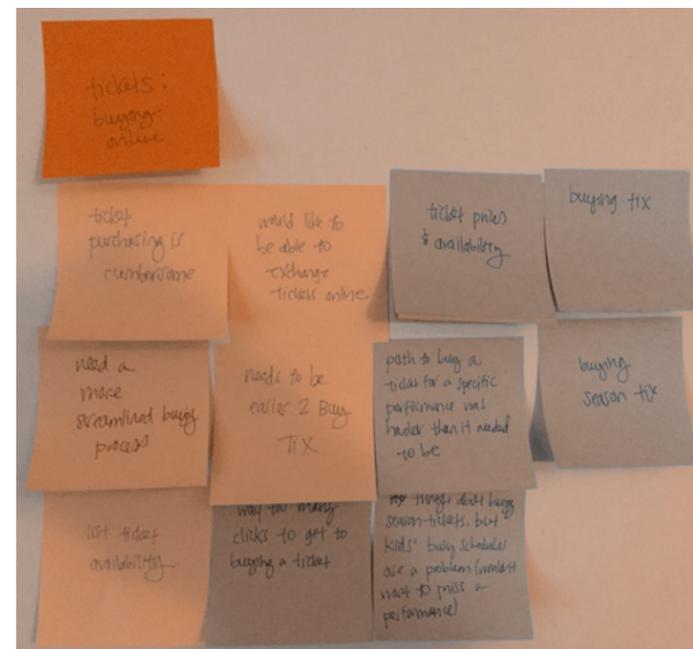
dancers



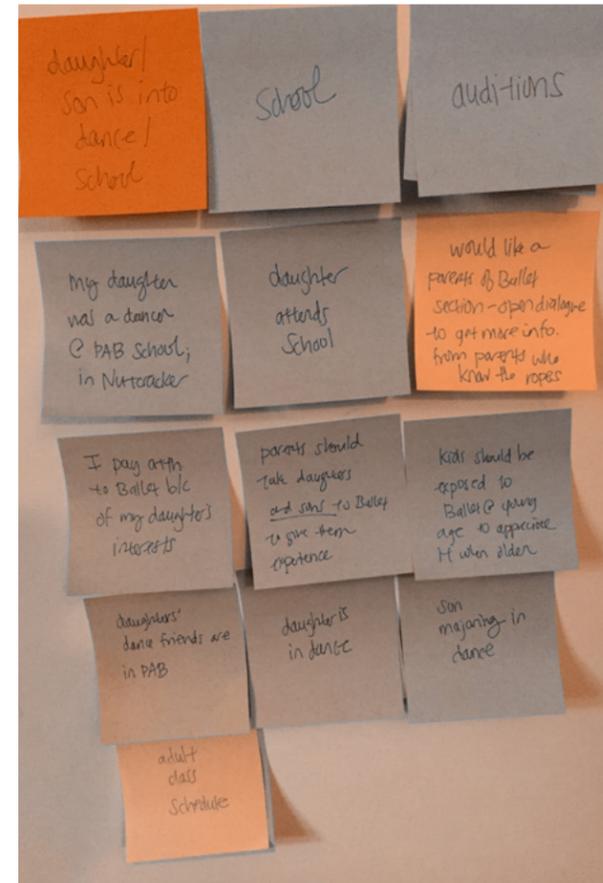
tickets: discounts



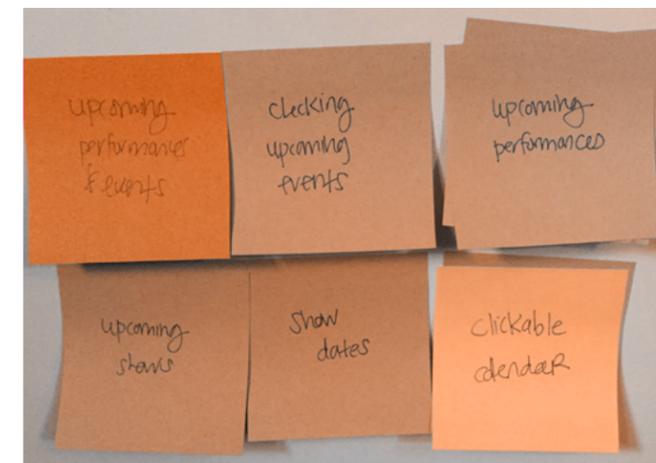
social media



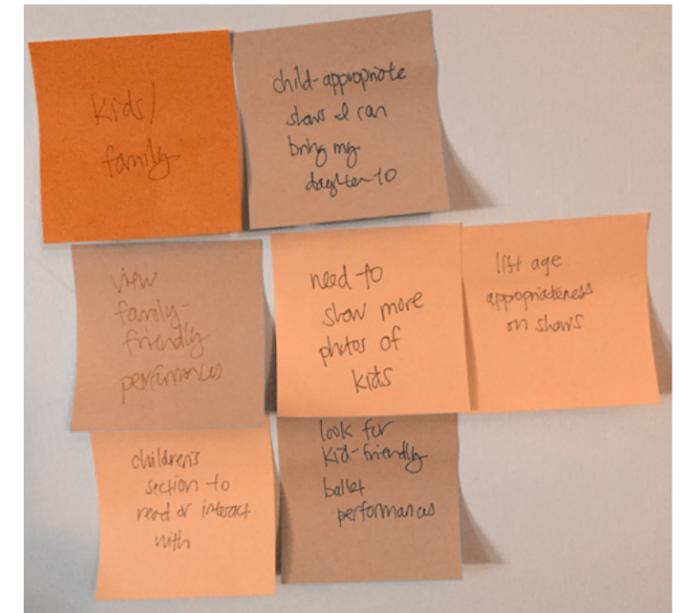
tickets: buying online



child is into dance/attends the School



upcoming performances & events

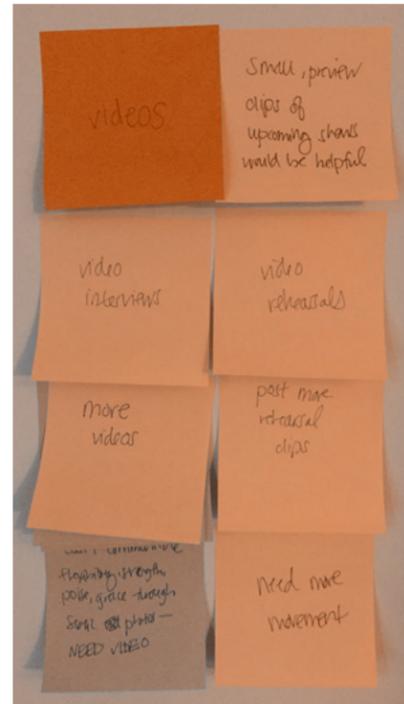


kids/family

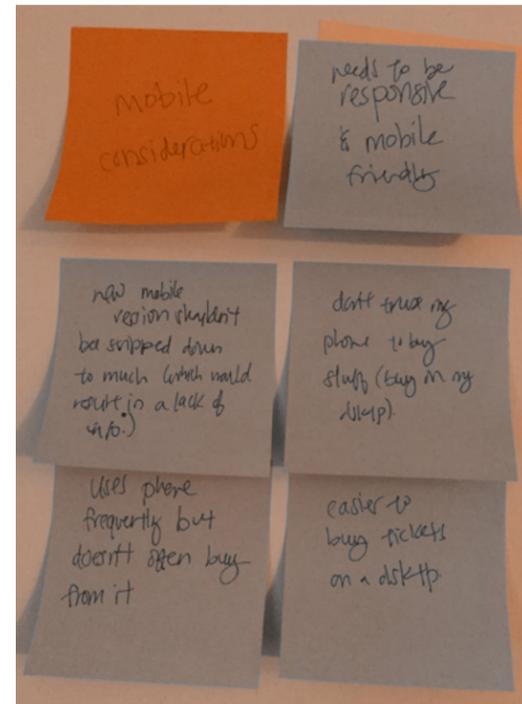


seating

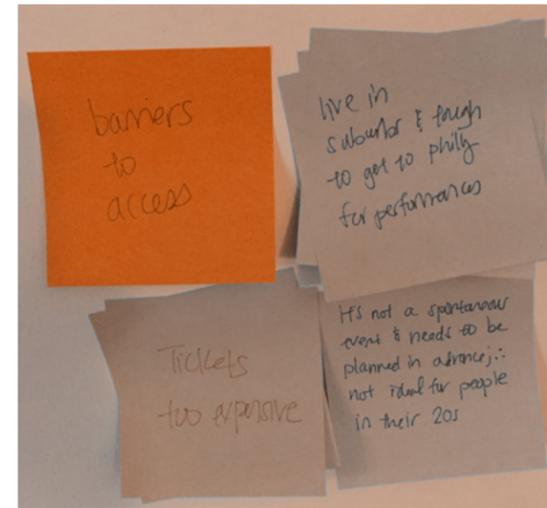
# PATTERNS



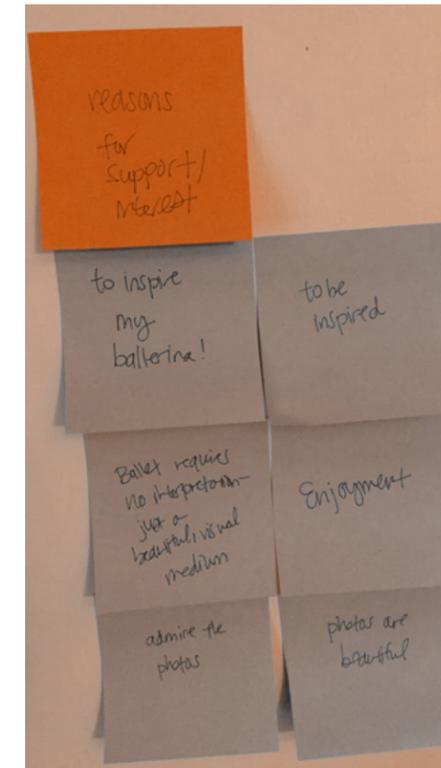
videos



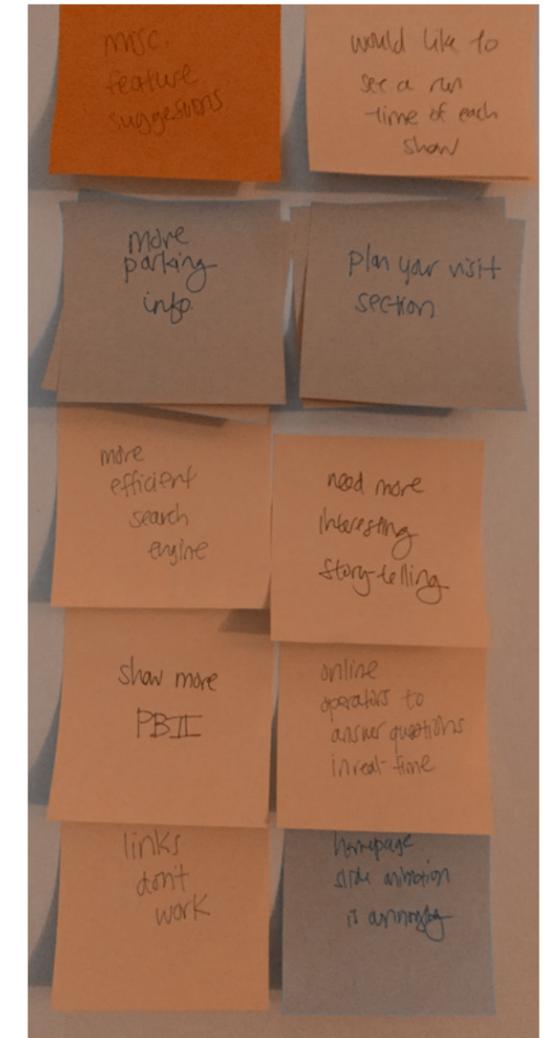
mobile considerations



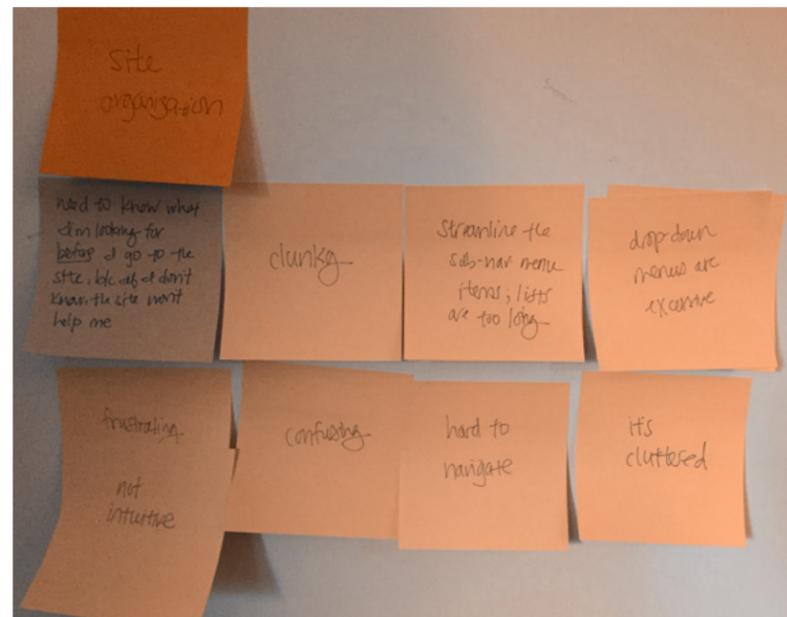
barriers to access



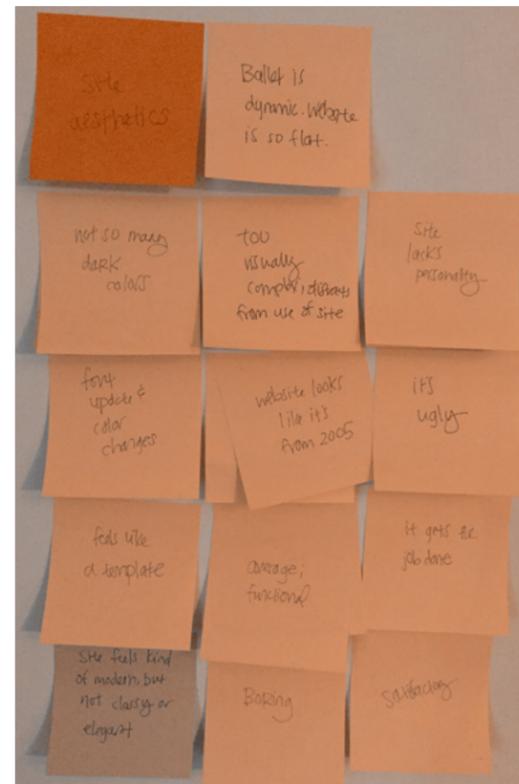
reasons for support/interest



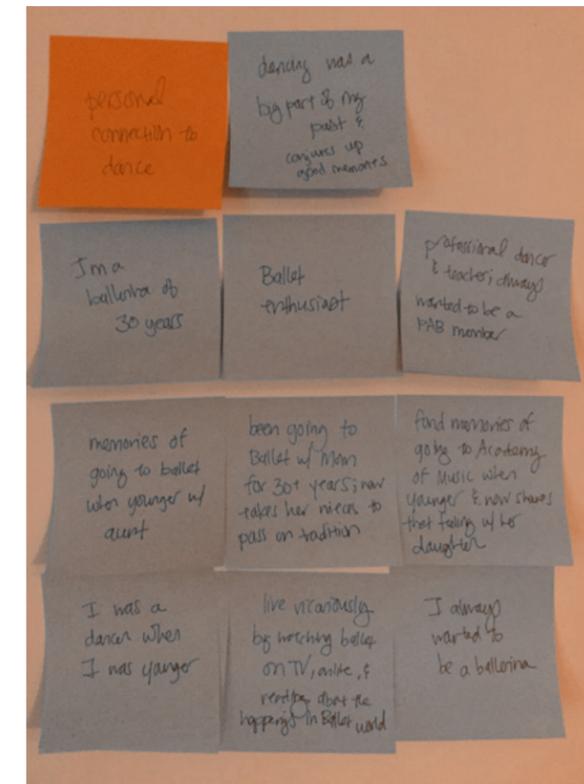
misc. feature suggestions



site organization

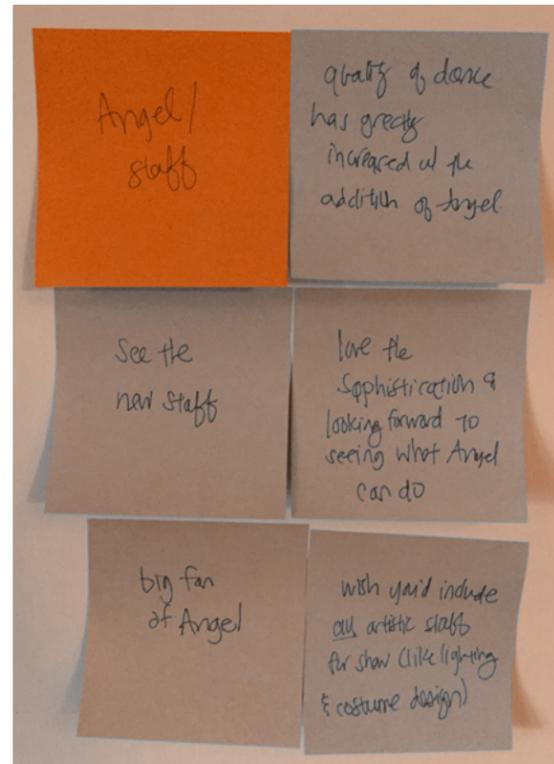


site aesthetics

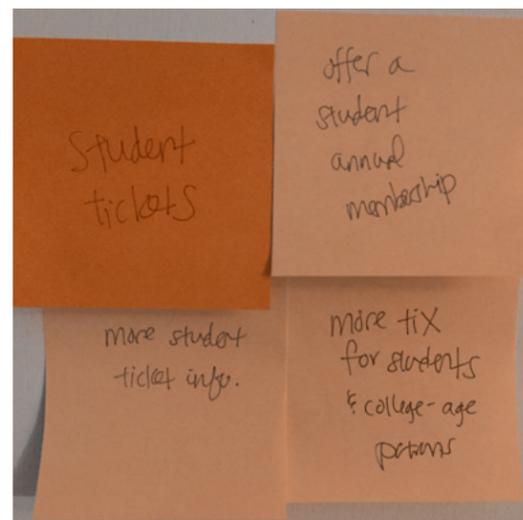


personal connection to dance

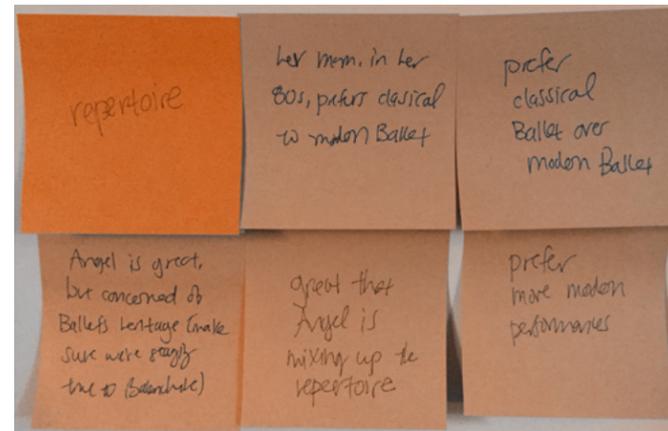
# PATTERNS



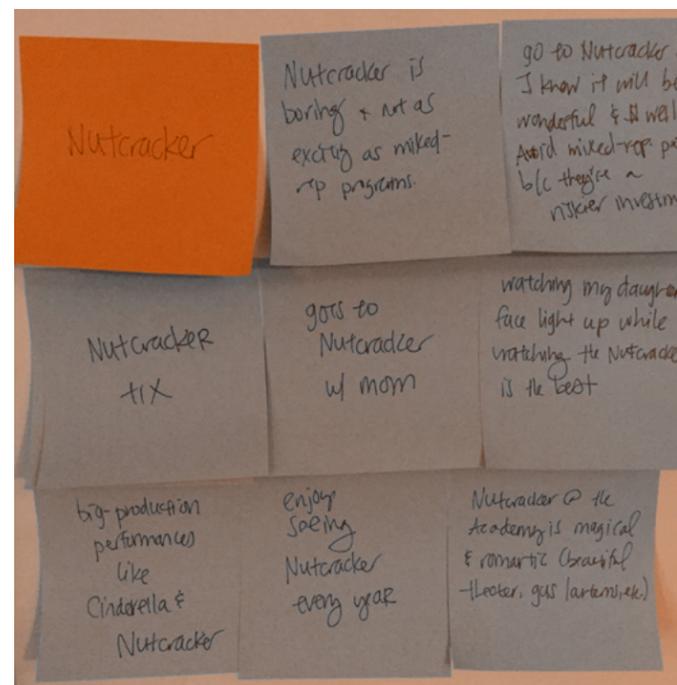
Angel/staff



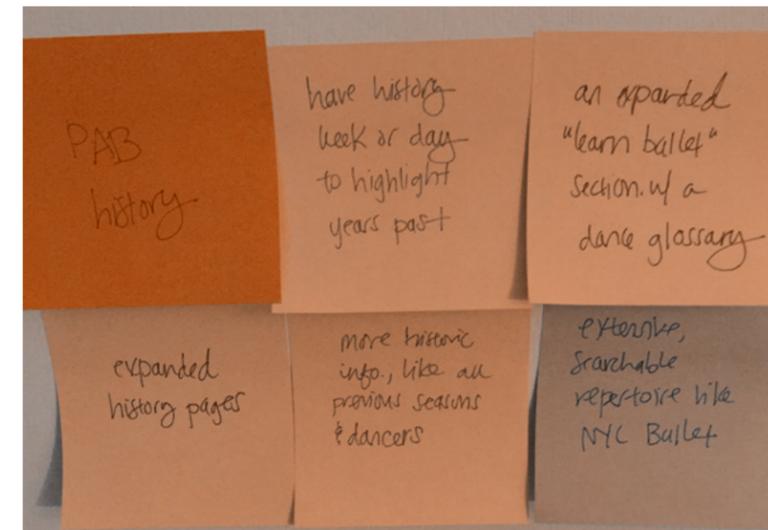
student tickets



repertoire



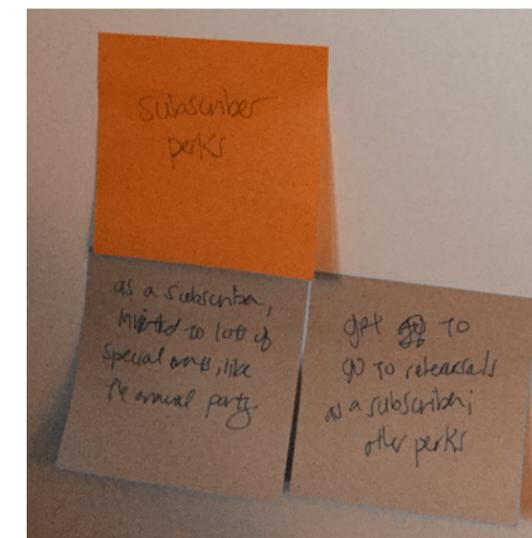
Nutcracker



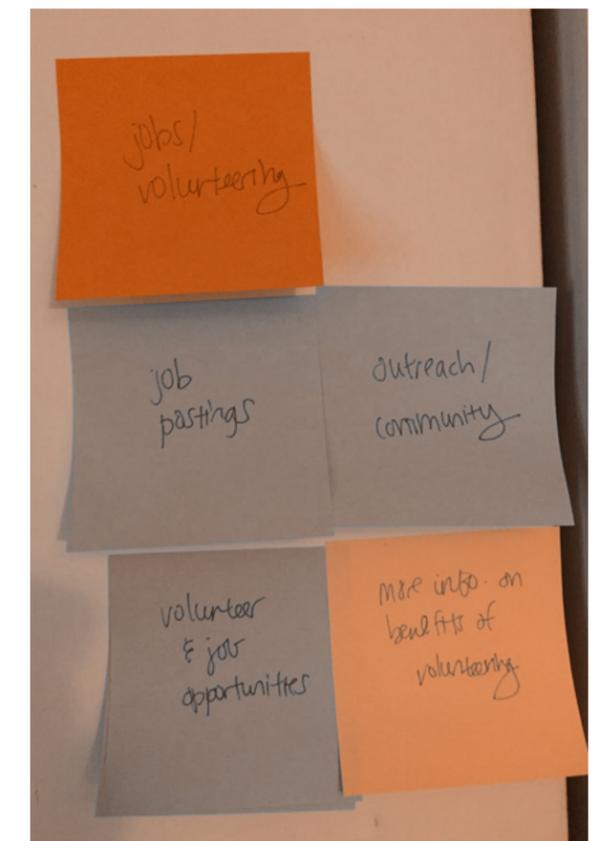
Pennsylvania Ballet history



gifts/merchandise



subscriber perks



jobs/volunteering

# KEY OBSERVATIONS

## Dancers Drive Interest

One of, if not *the* most common theme throughout the research, was interest in the dancers, both on and off the stage. Highly invested fans noted following the careers of their favorite dancer(s) from company to company and expressed feeling a “personal connection” to members of Pennsylvania Ballet. Audiences are hungry for more “behind-the-scenes” content and react favorably when it’s posted on social media (like “Meet the Dancer Monday”). Just like any other celebrity or professional athlete, devoted patrons of the Ballet idolize the dancers for their strength and beauty, but also enjoy learning about the more common, relatable details of their lives. Along with performance details and ticketing, easily accessible (and interesting) dancer profiles, potentially accompanied by the dancers’ individual social handles, should be a main feature of the new site.

## Casting is Crucial

Since the dancers play a huge role in capturing users’ attentions, casting, likewise, was top-of-mind for many of them as well. Fans at all income levels follow their favorite dancers and noted that the casting announcements often drive their buying behavior (if a patron’s most admired performer is cast in a lead role, s/he will be more motivated to buy a ticket for that specific performance). Casting should be emphasized and promoted heavily on the site and all social channels to help boost transactions.

## Social Media Fills the Void

Though users expressed frustrations with navigating the site’s content (and its unresponsive layout), they pointed to social media as a leading source of information; particularly Facebook. Respondents often use the Ballet’s social channels to access most of the content they require, and if a post interests them enough, they’ll check out the website. It is a goal of the redesign to build a more robust site that will inform, engage, and delight users—a continually updated platform that fans will *want* to visit frequently. However, maintaining and improving the Ballet’s social presence should remain a top priority, as these channels provide opportunities for direct user engagement and strengthening brand loyalty.

## Streamline the Process

While most patrons seem to use the third-party ticketing site with relative ease, *getting there* is a problem. They noted annoyance at the lack of a clear purchase path and the amount of clicks it takes to buy tickets for a specific performance (buttons only leading to distracting landing pages).

### Other ticket and performance-related features requested by patrons include:

- a simple, clickable calendar to select tickets for individual performances
- a clearer illustration and description of the various seating levels
- the ability to exchange tickets online
- more prominent advertising when discounts become available (including alerts)
- a listing of ticket prices and availability
- noting the run times for each performance
- an improved “plan your visit” section with better parking details
- online operators to answer questions in real-time chats

## Family Matters

Many respondents indicated either their children and/or families as a reason for their involvement with Pennsylvania Ballet. This group includes parents whose children take dance classes (either at the Ballet’s School or otherwise) as well as parents with an appreciation of the arts in general and a desire to share it with their families.

One long-time subscriber bemoaned the stigma of boys in ballet thought to be effeminate, when in her opinion, the athleticism of the professional male dancers clearly points to the opposite. Her suggestion was to encourage parents to bring both their daughters *and* sons to performances to encourage arts awareness at a young age. This aligns with a statistic from a 2015 report released by the National Endowment for the Arts that surveyed a decade of consumer arts participation. The study revealed that **adults who**

**attended performing arts as children were three to four times as likely to see shows as adults. Further, exposure to arts in childhood is a stronger predictor of adult arts participation than education, gender, age, or income.**

Regarding this issue, Pennsylvania Ballet offers a variety of programs for children and families. However, per user suggestions, the Ballet could increase the visibility of such offerings by featuring more photography and videos of children on the site (both experiencing ballet as audience members and participating as students). Boston Ballet, in preparation for its production of *Le Corsaire*, puts a kid-friendly treasure hunt front and center on its site (and sets the appropriate tone with phrases like “Aho!” and “Arrrr!”).

Moreover, patrons’ concerns over finding family-friendly performances could be due to the current site’s overwhelming navigation structure and not the lack of such programs being offered. Instead of dividing family-related content across multiple categories, consolidating them into one clearly labeled location could solve this problem. For instance, a parent might not necessarily associate “outreach” with a destination for child-suitable performances and available programs. Likewise, burying this content under the Ballet’s current season descriptions might not be the most likely spot for a user to find it. Investing in younger audience engagement not only will serve the needs of families now, but also will help to bolster the Ballet’s future patronage.

## Barriers to Accessibility

The high cost of tickets was cited most frequently as a barrier to audience participation. Additionally, other obstacles include busy schedules/limited time, location (for suburban patrons making travel arrangements to the city), and, for younger respondents, a lack of spontaneity in attending a performance (due to the higher price of tickets, it feels like less of a casual experience that could be suggested to friends on a night out and requires more upfront arrangements). A more detailed “plan your visit” section (as previously noted) could potentially counter some of these issues. Simplifying the process for a user to view parking and meal options removes the burden of planning all details of the outing and reduces the perception of it being a difficult task.

## Dance = Movement = Videos

Echoing Ballet stakeholders, audiences likewise crave more video content. While many respondents admire the site’s current photography, most are also in favor of a push toward rehearsal and performance videos (both on the site and in social media) to complement the moving art form. In addition to casual videos of dancers behind the scenes, users suggested brief clips of each performance at the outset of the season to give a better sense of the repertoire.

## Mobile Considerations

Not surprisingly, creating a mobile-friendly experience is a leading mandate for most respondents. However, several users noted that while they frequently use their phones for web browsing, they don’t necessarily use it as often for buying tickets. This pool of patrons prefers to buy tickets on a desktop for reasons including security (wary of providing financial information on a phone), ease of use (the larger screen enables a better experience for viewing seating options), and functionality (some mobile platforms don’t have the proper e-commerce mechanisms available). While the Ballet doesn’t have control over the functionality of the ticketing portion, implementing both a direct purchase path and an easily understood seating chart could encourage more mobile transactions.

## It’s Personal

A large portion of respondents referenced a personal relationship to ballet. Numerous patrons described fond memories of both attending Pennsylvania Ballet performances as a child (especially *The Nutcracker*) as well as the joy of sharing that same experience with either their children or younger relatives. Other audience members took lessons as children, and while they may no longer actively dance, they still maintain a deep and positive association with ballet.

# EMPATHY MAPS AND PERSONAS

Empathy maps and personas put the “user” in a user-centered design process. *Empathy maps* help to place everyone in the mindset of users by quickly visualizing their needs and shedding light on which problems to solve. *Personas* are user archetypes created from research data. They represent a collection of needs and behaviors and help to align strategy and goals to specific user groups. In short, they answer the question, “For whom are we building this website?” A persona puts a name and face to an otherwise vague “user” and includes characteristics and quotes pulled from actual data. Based on the survey submissions and interviews, I’ve created two personas:

1. Liz the Dance Mom
2. Jesse the Fan

These archetypes might not necessarily cover the Ballet’s biggest market segment, but they are the ones most often engaging with the site, a point supported by survey and interview feedback. For example, during interviews, two subscribers (both in the 55+ demographic) said they rarely using the Ballet’s website and buy tickets either through the mail or the box office. One of the interviewees noted that her elderly mother, also a Ballet subscriber for more than 30 years, has most likely never interacted with the site. By designing for the two personas listed above, I’ll ideally be creating a better experience for everyone. In time, I’d hope for the Ballet to grow the amount of people in the older demographics who are engaging with the website. Over the next 5-10 years, people who will age into that bracket will be more tech-savvy and likely to visit the site to get their season tickets, so I’ll be building the experience for a group that’s only going to get bigger.

Personas are highly representative of key users and provide much-needed focus to the process. A well-defined target makes for a streamlined, consistent design and a better overall product. Sites that try to be all things to all people overwhelm with unnecessary content and are harder to learn and use. In the current industry landscape of decreased arts participation and more competitors than ever vying for consumers’ attention in the realm of recreational activities, focus is critical. Audiences have neither the time nor the patience for a website crammed with irrelevant content. With that in mind, the following pages illustrate my two empathy maps and focused personas in more detail.



# EMPATHY MAP 1

## Liz the Dance Mom



# PERSONA 1

## Liz the Dance Mom

### Bio

Liz grew up in the Philadelphia area and now lives with her husband and three children in Wayne, PA. She serves as the marketing manager for a financial services company not far from her home. Often, she's required to juggle the family's busy schedules and, with her husband, ensure that their children attend all of their extracurriculars. Her 10-year-old daughter Sophie has been taking dance lessons since she was five, and it is through her that Liz interacts with Pennsylvania Ballet.

### Goals

Though often strapped for time, Liz and her husband feel a shared importance to be attentive, involved parents. Because of Sophie's commitment to ballet, Liz has become interested in it as well. To show support of her daughter's pursuits, Liz buys ballet tickets for Sophie and herself. They bond over watching the series *Breaking Pointe* together and follow the activities of other large companies; particularly American Ballet Theater (and Misty Copeland especially). Moreover, Liz and her husband want to provide each of their children with a well-rounded upbringing, and exposing them to other arts organizations in their community is a goal.

### Attitude

Liz has fond memories of attending Pennsylvania Ballet performances as a child and the "magic and romance" of seeing a show at the Academy of Music. Though her interest in PA Ballet doesn't run as deep as her daughter's, she still appreciates the beauty of the art form. She notes that "it's exciting to watch someone do what they love" and is inspired by such passion. Sophie looks forward to each "Meet the Dancer Monday" post by PA Ballet, and Liz also enjoys viewing what she perceives as exclusive content on the Ballet's Facebook and Instagram: intimate, behind-the-scenes photos and videos of dancers in their personal and professional lives.

### Behavior

Liz and her daughter attend a few Ballet performances each year, especially classics like *The Nutcracker*. While she knows her daughter would love a subscription, Liz is hesitant to purchase one because the family's schedule is always in flux and she doesn't know if they'd be able to attend all the performances. Also, managing to get her whole family to the city can be "a production," and finding suitable parking in Philly is often an issue. It would be helpful for planning purposes if the length of each performance was listed on the site. Likewise, a clear labeling of family-friendly programming throughout the site would make it faster for her to make purchasing decisions.

Liz has limited time and patience for sifting through the Ballet's site pages to get to the content that really matters to her: performance details and ticketing. She's noted that she doesn't really visit the site to learn more about the Ballet, but instead, to make a quick purchase and move on. She's experienced challenges with the ability to quickly and smoothly buy tickets for single performances, and is frustrated when every "buy tickets" button or link just leads her further into the site, but not to a ticketing portal.

She frequently uses her phone, but doesn't even bother going to the Ballet's site on it because of its unresponsiveness. She knows some of the other School parents, but would appreciate an online group discussion where dance parents can trade notes. Potentially, the Slack app could be a worthwhile solution to this request.



### Stats

- 42 years old
- married with 3 children
- marketing manager for a financial services company
- lives in Wayne, PA

“Ballet matters to my daughter, so it matters to me, too.”

# EMPATHY MAP 2

## Jesse the Fan



# PERSONA 2

## Jesse the Fan

### Bio

Jesse is a subscriber and has been an avid fan of Pennsylvania Ballet for years. Though he took classes as a child, he no longer dances as an adult. However, he still strongly identifies with ballet and it holds positive associations for him. A well-educated Philadelphian, Jesse works at one of the city's universities and has a modest amount of disposable income, which he often uses toward supporting local arts organizations (like Pennsylvania Ballet, BalletX, and the Museum of Art).

### Goals

To Jesse, ballet is more than an art form—it's a community. A highly invested fan, Jesse feels a close connection to many of the dancers after having seen them perform year after year. He's witnessed some dancers elevate in the ranks of the company, from apprentice all the way to principal. Learning more about the dancers' lives both on and off the stage provides a sense of relatability and shared experiences. He currently accesses most of this content through the Ballet's social media channels, and particularly enjoys any "behind-the-scenes" photos or video footage. Additionally, he acquires knowledge of the Ballet and its dancers through in-person meetings at subscriber events, "Preludes," and "Conversations."

Attending PA Ballet performances provides a way to rekindle the spark of his childhood, enjoy a highly entertaining art form, and belong to a group of like-minded supporters.

### Attitude

Jesse is more of a "deep diver" when it comes to the Ballet's web content and acknowledges that his interests might not always align with the casual site visitor just looking to buy tickets. While performance information is important to him, he is also eager to learn more about the dancers themselves, the company history, and the Ballet's rich and diverse repertoire. Through following the trajectories of former PA Ballet dancers, he's become familiar with many other companies' sites and often uses their features as points of comparison to the current PA Ballet website.

### Behavior

Jesse uses a computer at work and feels very comfortable using his phone, though not always for purchases. He's become accustomed to sites that are mobile-friendly, serve ample video content, and are constantly updated, giving him a reason to check in with them often. His frustration lies in the fact that the current PA Ballet site lacks all of these qualities. Moreover, to Jesse, the site is an inaccurate portrayal of the beauty and professionalism he finds in the performances themselves. The dark colors, static photos, and unresponsive layout appear dated and don't reflect the dynamic company he knows and loves. He turns to the Ballet's Facebook and Instagram for more in-depth video footage and biographical "nuggets" of the dancers. He has been a subscriber for years, and will buy additional tickets for a performance if either (a.) one of his favorite dancers is cast in a lead role for a specific date; or (b.) a friend accompanies him to the performance.



### Stats

- 35 years old
- single
- administrative coordinator at a local university
- lives in Philadelphia

“I’m a self-described ballet nerd.”

# USER STORIES

Using my personas as a base, I created user stories to document requirements for the site redesign. Each story comes from the perspective of a potential user and why the feature matters to them.

| DANCER INFORMATION   |   |
|--|---|
| As a dance fan, I want to watch videos of dancers discussing their experiences and routines                                | so I can relate to them and satisfy my curiosity.   |
| As a dance fan, I want to read interesting details about the dancers' lives that extend beyond their training stats        | so I can relate to them and satisfy my curiosity.   |
| As a dance fan, I want to watch videos and view photos of dancers rehearsing   | so I can get a virtual backstage pass to an environment that is typically inaccessible to me. |
| As a dance fan, I want to watch videos and view photos of the dancers meeting the wardrobe department for costume fittings | so I can get a virtual backstage pass to an environment that is typically inaccessible to me. |
| As a dance fan, I want to watch videos of the dancers describing their relationships to music and the orchestra            | so I can get a virtual backstage pass to an environment that is typically inaccessible to me. |
| As a dance fan, I want to watch videos and view photos of my favorite dancers performing on stage                          | to admire their strength and beauty.  |

| SEASON PERFORMANCES  |   |
|--|---|
| As a dance mom, I want to watch a video trailer of each performance                              | so I can have a better sense of which ones would be suitable for my whole family.                             |
| As a dance fan, I want to read a brief synopsis of each performance                              | so I can learn what to expect before I attend one.  |
| As a dance fan, I want to view a photo slideshow of each performance                             | so I can learn what to expect before I attend one.  |
| As a dance mom, I want to view the run time of each performance                                  | so I can factor that into my family's travel plans.   |
| As a dance fan, I want a cast list of each performance (once it's announced)                     | so I can see if my favorite dancers received lead roles (and potentially buy tickets for those performances). |
| As a dance fan, I want the ability to buy a ticket for any season performance                    | so I can make a quick purchase after I learn about it.  |
| As a dance mom, I want to see which programs and performances are categorized as family friendly | so I can easily find the types of shows that would be suitable for my whole family.                           |

| TICKETS  |   |
|--|---|
| As a dance mom, I want to buy tickets with less clicks                         | so I can save time digging through pages to get to what I need.   |
| As a dance fan, I want to exchange my tickets online                           | so I can avoid losing money due to changes in my schedule.  |
| As a dance fan, I want a list of ticket prices and availability                | so I can see which price range and seating option works best for me.                                      |
| As a dance fan, I want a notification when discounted tickets become available | so I can save money.  |
| As a dance fan, I want an interactive seating chart                            | so I can clearly understand the cost differences and vantage points associated with the various sections. |
| As a dance fan, I want to view subscription options                            | to determine which one best fits into my price range.   |
| As a dance fan, I want to view subscriber benefits                             | so I can understand the value in purchasing a package.  |

| CALENDAR   |  |
|--|--|
| As a dance mom, I want a calendar of events and performances                                     | so I can quickly see which event and performance dates will work within my family's busy schedule. |
| As a dance mom, I want individual event and performance times listed                             | so I can quickly see which event and performance times will work within my family's busy schedule. |
| As a dance mom, I want to click on any given event or performance and buy a ticket               | so I can make a quick purchase.  |
| As a dance mom, I want to see which programs and performances are categorized as family friendly | so I can easily find the types of shows that would be suitable for my whole family.                |

| PLANNING SECTION   |  |
|--|--|
| As a dance mom, I want to view a map that highlights all nearby parking and public transportation options                          | so I can factor that into my family's travel plans.                      |
| As a dance fan, I want to view a clickable list of nearby restaurants  | so I can make plans in advance for a meal before or after a show.        |
| As a dance mom, I want a list of tips for the first time I take my child to view a performance (involving attire, etiquette, etc.) | so either myself or my family don't act inappropriately for the setting. |

# USER STORIES

| EDUCATION   |  |
|---|--|
| As a dance mom, I want descriptions and schedules of the different programs offered   | so I can determine which would be best suited for my child.  |
| As a dance mom, I want to know the credentials of who will be teaching these classes  | so I can trust that my child is getting a proper education.  |
| As a dance mom, I want to learn the benefits of enrolling my child in these classes   | so I can be assured my money will be well spent.   |
| As a dance mom, I want to learn how to enroll my child  | so she can begin taking classes.   |
| As a dance mom, I want to learn about upcoming auditions for advanced programs  | so I can prepare my child to meet necessary deadlines.   |
| As a dance mom, I want to view photos and watch videos of children performing in class and in recitals  | so I can share this with my child and gauge whether I should enroll her in class.                    |
| As a dance fan who once took lessons, I want a list of adult classes offered  | so I can get back into an activity I once enjoyed.   |
| As a dance fan who has never taken lessons, I want a list of adult classes offered  | so I can experience firsthand an art form I admire.  |
| As a dance mom, I want to communicate directly with other parents of children enrolled in classes   | so I can learn from those who are more experienced and can offer advice and tips.                    |
| As a dance mom, I want to learn if any ballet programs are offered outside of the city  | so my family and I can have easier access to them from the suburban area in which we live.           |
| As a dance mom, I want to learn if any ballet programs are offered at my child's school   | so she can participate in them without having to commute to the Ballet's Philadelphia dance studios. |
| As a dance mom, I want to learn other general facts about ballet that I can share with my children (like the names of dance moves, how many pointe shoes a dancer uses in a season, etc.) | so we can better understand and appreciate ballet together.  |

| BALLET HISTORY  |  |
|---|--|
| As a dance fan, I want a detailed timeline of Pennsylvania Ballet's history                                 | so I can learn more about the company's origins.                                     |
| As a dance fan, I want access to an extensive, searchable repertoire  | so I can learn which performances have already been produced at Pennsylvania Ballet. |
| As a dance fan, I want the ability to search for a past performance by title, season, and/or performer name | so I can reference a specific ballet that I attended.                                |
| As a dance fan, I want to view photos and videos of past performances                                       | so I can watch my favorite dancers in action.  |
| As a dance fan, I want access to a searchable list of dancers for each past season                          | so I can follow the career paths of my favorites.                                    |

| SHOP   |   |
|--|---|
| As a dance fan, I want to buy PA Ballet merchandise online | so I can show my support of the company.          |
| As a dance mom, I want to browse gifts and apparel         | so I can buy ballet-themed items for my children. |

| VOLUNTEER, JOBS, AND SUPPORT  |   |
|---|---|
| As a dance fan, I want to learn about volunteer opportunities                 | so I have an affordable way to experience ballet programs even if I can't always buy tickets. |
| As a dance fan, I want to learn about job openings                            | so I can apply to work for a company I admire.  |
| As a dance fan, I want to learn about ways to support or donate to the Ballet | so I can help sustain an organization I love.   |



PART II:  
CONTENT STRATEGY

# CARD SORT

A card sort is an activity designed to gauge how users organize content and is useful research for building a site's information architecture. Participants sort into groups a stack of cards, each of which has a task written on it that someone could perform on the website. When they're done sorting, participants name each group.

For this card sort, I recruited a small sampling of the same candidates who participated in user interviews (male and female, subscribers and single-ticket buyers). While the data gleaned from this activity isn't precise, it does help to shed light on where users might look for information in the redesigned site. The following

pages contain a sampling of user-generated categories as well as a similarity matrix. Through this data cluster, we can see some patterns emerging. The differently colored sections roughly comprise the following categories: ticketing, current season, dancers/human interest, the School, shop, and past performances. Users' final groups varied, but the language they used provided valuable insight and was utilized for the actual navigation categories I created. For instance, participants used words like "community" and the idea of "meeting" the Company. Both of these answers correlate with my previous findings of users looking for a more personal connection with the Ballet.

## Users' Card Sort Categories

|                             |   |  |     |   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|-----|---|
| Past programs               | 3 | determine if Chroma was performed by the Ballet during the 2015-2016 season  | 1.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | search for photos of last season's Don Quixote performance   | 2.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | learn about the other dance professionals who help Angel train and choreograph the Company members                   | 3.0 | 1 |
| Past Seasons                | 2 | search for photos of last season's Don Quixote performance   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | determine if Chroma was performed by the Ballet during the 2015-2016 season  | 2.0 | 1 |
| PB2                         | 3 | find audition deadlines for the Ballet's Trainee Program   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | find out if Pennsylvania Ballet's community programs will be offered at my son's school                              | 2.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | learn about Pennsylvania Ballet II and why they perform in surrounding communities                                   | 3.0 | 1 |
| PB2/Community Outreach      | 2 | find dates and times for family-friendly performances like The Jungle Book   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | learn about Pennsylvania Ballet II and why they perform in surrounding communities                                   | 2.0 | 1 |
| Scheduling/Casting/Purchase | 5 | see if Principal Dancer Mayara Pineiro was cast as the Sugar Plum Fairy in any of this year's Nutcracker productions | 1.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | find dates and times for family-friendly performances like The Jungle Book   | 2.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | quickly determine if there's a Ballet performance on April 8th for when my friends are in town visiting              | 3.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | view a seating chart of the Academy of Music and Merriam Theater   | 4.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | buy two tickets to a matinee of the program Revolution   | 5.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | <a href="#">Show less</a>  |     |   |
| School/Class enrollment     | 2 | enroll my child into the Ballet School's Children's Program  | 1.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | find the cost of attending a dance class for adults  | 2.0 | 1 |
| Season and tickets          | 7 | buy two tickets to a matinee of the program Revolution   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | read the synopsis of the upcoming performance Le Corsaire  | 2.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | view a photo slideshow of next spring's Romance program  | 3.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | watch a video trailer promoting next spring's program Re/Action  | 4.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | compare the differences between subscription packages  | 5.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | read about the benefits of a subscription to determine if it's worth the money                                       | 6.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | view a seating chart of the Academy of Music and Merriam Theater   | 7.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | <a href="#">Show less</a>  |     |   |
| Shop                        | 2 | order a Nutcracker necklace for my daughter  | 1.0 | 1 |
|                             |   | buy a PA Ballet shirt for my friend  | 2.0 | 1 |

|                          |   |  |     |   |
|--------------------------|---|--|-----|---|
| Shop                     | 2 | buy a PA Ballet shirt for my friend  | 1.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | order a Nutcracker necklace for my daughter  | 2.0 | 1 |
| Specific production info | 5 | view a photo slideshow of next spring's Romance program  | 1.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | see if Principal Dancer Mayara Pineiro was cast as the Sugar Plum Fairy in any of this year's Nutcracker productions | 2.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | search for photos of last season's Don Quixote performance   | 3.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | watch a video trailer promoting next spring's program Re/Action  | 4.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | read the synopsis of the upcoming performance Le Corsaire  | 5.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | <a href="#">Show less</a>  |     |   |
| Subscription info        | 2 | compare the differences between subscription packages  | 1.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | read about the benefits of a subscription to determine if it's worth the money                                       | 2.0 | 1 |
| support / membership     | 3 | compare the differences between subscription packages  | 1.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | find the cost of attending a dance class for adults  | 2.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | read about the benefits of a subscription to determine if it's worth the money                                       | 3.0 | 1 |
| Ticket purchasing info   | 7 | find a restaurant for you and your date after a Ballet performance   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | learn tips for the first-time Ballet attendee (any dress requirements, etiquette, when to clap, etc.)                | 2.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | find dates and times for family-friendly performances like The Jungle Book   | 3.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | buy two tickets to a matinee of the program Revolution   | 4.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | access a map of all parking and public transportation options close to the Ballet theaters                           | 5.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | view a seating chart of the Academy of Music and Merriam Theater   | 6.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | quickly determine if there's a Ballet performance on April 8th for when my friends are in town visiting              | 7.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | <a href="#">Show less</a>  |     |   |
| UpComing                 | 7 | learn tips for the first-time Ballet attendee (any dress requirements, etiquette, when to clap, etc.)                | 1.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | view a photo slideshow of next spring's Romance program  | 2.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | watch a video trailer promoting next spring's program Re/Action  | 3.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | find dates and times for family-friendly performances like The Jungle Book   | 4.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | quickly determine if there's a Ballet performance on April 8th for when my friends are in town visiting              | 5.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | find audition deadlines for the Ballet's Trainee Program   | 6.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | read the synopsis of the upcoming performance Le Corsaire  | 7.0 | 1 |
|                          |   | <a href="#">Show less</a>  |     |   |

|                                |   |   |     |   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|-----|---|
| Meet the People                | 6 | learn what inspired Principal Dancer Lillian Di Piazza to first take ballet lessons   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | watch a video about the exercise routines of Company members Aleksey Babayev, Russell Ducker, and Alexandra Hughes  | 2.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | see if Principal Dancer Mayara Pineiro was cast as the Sugar Plum Fairy in any of this year's Nutcracker productions  | 3.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | watch a video of how Conductor Beatrice Jona Affron prepares the Ballet's orchestra for a performance   | 4.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | read about Artistic Director Angel Corella's career   | 5.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | watch a video of Company member Holly Lynn Fusco visiting the wardrobe department for her costume   | 6.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | <a href="#">Show less</a>   |     |   |
| Membership                     | 2 | read about the benefits of a subscription to determine if it's worth the money  | 1.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | compare the differences between subscription packages   | 2.0 | 1 |
| Merchandise                    | 2 | buy a PA Ballet shirt for my friend   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | order a Nutcracker necklace for my daughter   | 2.0 | 1 |
| Outreach / History             | 4 | enroll my child into the Ballet School's Children's Program   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | learn about Pennsylvania Ballet II and why they perform in surrounding communities  | 2.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | find out if Pennsylvania Ballet's community programs will be offered at my son's school   | 3.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | discover who founded Pennsylvania Ballet  | 4.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | <a href="#">Show less</a>   |     |   |
| PAB company historical content | 5 | discover who founded Pennsylvania Ballet  | 1.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | read about Artistic Director Angel Corella's career   | 2.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | learn about the other dance professionals who help Angel train and choreograph the Company members  | 3.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | determine if Chroma was performed by the Ballet during the 2015-2016 season   | 4.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | learn miscellaneous dance facts I've always been curious about, like the names of dance moves and how many pointe shoes a dancer typically uses in a season | 5.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | <a href="#">Show less</a>   |     |   |
| PAB dancer program info        | 1 | find audition deadlines for the Ballet's Trainee Program  | 1.0 | 1 |
| PAB merch                      | 2 | order a Nutcracker necklace for my daughter   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | buy a PA Ballet shirt for my friend   | 2.0 | 1 |
| Past performances              | 2 | determine if Chroma was performed by the Ballet during the 2015-2016 season   | 1.0 | 1 |
|                                |   | search for photos of last season's Don Quixote performance  | 2.0 | 1 |

# Users' Card Sort Categories

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Inside stories                           | 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>watch a video of Company member Holly Lynn Fusco visiting the wardrobe department for her costume</li> <li>read about Artistic Director Angel Corella's career</li> <li>learn miscellaneous dance facts I've always been curious about, like the names of dance moves and how many pointe shoes a dancer typically uses in a season</li> <li>watch a video of how Conductor Beatrice Jona Affron prepares the Ballet's orchestra for a performance</li> <li>see if Principal Dancer Mayara Pineiro was cast as the Sugar Plum Fairy in any of this year's Nutcracker productions</li> <li>watch a video about the exercise routines of Company members Aleksey Babayev, Russell Ducker, and Alexandra Hughes</li> <li>learn about the other dance professionals who help Angel train and choreograph the Company members</li> <li>learn what inspired Principal Dancer Lillian Di Piazza to first take ballet lessons</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p> |
| Insider PAB info and content             | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learn what inspired Principal Dancer Lillian Di Piazza to first take ballet lessons</li> <li>watch a video about the exercise routines of Company members Aleksey Babayev, Russell Ducker, and Alexandra Hughes</li> <li>watch a video of how Conductor Beatrice Jona Affron prepares the Ballet's orchestra for a performance</li> <li>watch a video of Company member Holly Lynn Fusco visiting the wardrobe department for her costume</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p>   |
| Learn more/behind the scenes/dive deeper | 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>watch a video of how Conductor Beatrice Jona Affron prepares the Ballet's orchestra for a performance</li> <li>watch a video about the exercise routines of Company members Aleksey Babayev, Russell Ducker, and Alexandra Hughes</li> <li>watch a video of Company member Holly Lynn Fusco visiting the wardrobe department for her costume</li> <li>see if Principal Dancer Mayara Pineiro was cast as the Sugar Plum Fairy in any of this year's Nutcracker productions</li> <li>learn what inspired Principal Dancer Lillian Di Piazza to first take ballet lessons</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p>   |

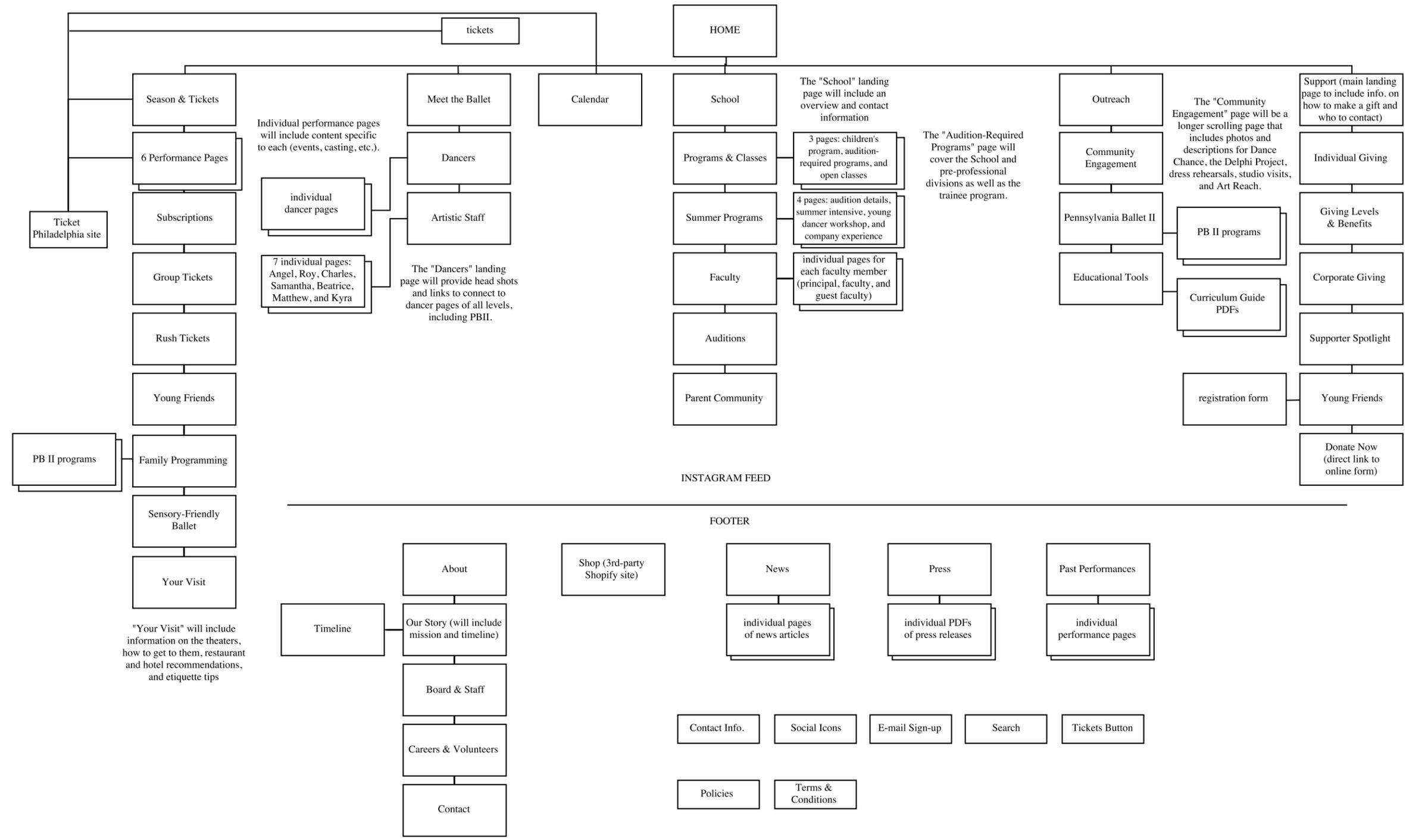
|                       |   |   |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Upcoming Performances | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>view a photo slideshow of next spring's Romance program 1.0 1</li> <li>read the synopsis of the upcoming performance Le Corsaire 2.0 1</li> </ul>  |
| Video and Educational | 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learn miscellaneous dance facts I've always been curious about, like the names of dance moves and how many pointe shoes a dancer typically uses in a season 1.0 1</li> <li>watch a video trailer promoting next spring's program Re/Action 2.0 1</li> <li>watch a video of how Conductor Beatrice Jona Affron prepares the Ballet's orchestra for a performance 3.0 1</li> <li>watch a video about the exercise routines of Company members Aleksey Babayev, Russell Ducker, and Alexandra Hughes 4.0 1</li> <li>watch a video of Company member Holly Lynn Fusco visiting the wardrobe department for her costume 5.0 1</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p> |
| What's Happening      | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>view a photo slideshow of next spring's Romance program 1.0 1</li> <li>read the synopsis of the upcoming performance Le Corsaire 2.0 1</li> <li>watch a video trailer promoting next spring's program Re/Action 3.0 1</li> </ul>   |

|                            |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| About                      | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discover who founded Pennsylvania Ballet</li> <li>read about Artistic Director Angel Corella's career</li> </ul>   |
| Access                     | 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>order a Nutcracker necklace for my daughter</li> <li>view a seating chart of the Academy of Music and Merriam Theater</li> <li>find a restaurant for you and your date after a Ballet performance</li> <li>access a map of all parking and public transportation options close to the Ballet theaters</li> <li>buy two tickets to a matinee of the program Revolution</li> <li>buy a PA Ballet shirt for my friend</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p>   |
| Archives                   | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>determine if Chroma was performed by the Ballet during the 2015-2016 season</li> <li>search for photos of last season's Don Quixote performance</li> </ul>   |
| Before and After Show      | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>find a restaurant for you and your date after a Ballet performance</li> <li>learn tips for the first-time Ballet attendee (any dress requirements, etiquette, when to clap, etc.)</li> <li>access a map of all parking and public transportation options close to the Ballet theaters</li> </ul>   |
| Buy tickets                | 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>buy two tickets to a matinee of the program Revolution</li> <li>view a seating chart of the Academy of Music and Merriam Theater</li> <li>quickly determine if there's a Ballet performance on April 8th for when my friends are in town visiting</li> <li>read about the benefits of a subscription to determine if it's worth the money</li> <li>compare the differences between subscription packages</li> <li>find dates and times for family-friendly performances like The Jungle Book</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p> |
| Calendar                   | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>quickly determine if there's a Ballet performance on April 8th for when my friends are in town visiting</li> </ul>   |
| Children and Adult Lessons | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>find the cost of attending a dance class for adults</li> <li>enroll my child into the Ballet School's Children's Program</li> </ul>  |
| Community                  | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>find out if Pennsylvania Ballet's community programs will be offered at my son's school</li> <li>find a restaurant for you and your date after a Ballet performance</li> <li>access a map of all parking and public transportation options close to the Ballet theaters</li> <li>learn tips for the first-time Ballet attendee (any dress requirements, etiquette, when to clap, etc.)</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p>   |

|                              |   |   |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Community engagement         | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>find out if Pennsylvania Ballet's community programs will be offered at my son's school</li> <li>learn about Pennsylvania Ballet II and why they perform in surrounding communities</li> </ul>   |
| Company and School           | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>find audition deadlines for the Ballet's Trainee Program</li> <li>learn about Pennsylvania Ballet II and why they perform in surrounding communities</li> <li>enroll my child into the Ballet School's Children's Program</li> <li>find the cost of attending a dance class for adults</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p>   |
| Get involved                 | 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>find audition deadlines for the Ballet's Trainee Program</li> <li>enroll my child into the Ballet School's Children's Program</li> <li>find out if Pennsylvania Ballet's community programs will be offered at my son's school</li> <li>learn miscellaneous dance facts I've always been curious about, like the names of dance moves and how many pointe shoes a dancer typically uses in a season</li> <li>find the cost of attending a dance class for adults</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p> |
| Getting here                 | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>access a map of all parking and public transportation options close to the Ballet theaters</li> <li>find a restaurant for you and your date after a Ballet performance</li> <li>learn tips for the first-time Ballet attendee (any dress requirements, etiquette, when to clap, etc.)</li> </ul>   |
| History and Fun Facts        | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discover who founded Pennsylvania Ballet</li> <li>learn miscellaneous dance facts I've always been curious about, like the names of dance moves and how many pointe shoes a dancer typically uses in a season</li> <li>learn about the other dance professionals who help Angel train and choreograph the Company members</li> </ul>   |
| History/Leadership/Biography | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discover who founded Pennsylvania Ballet</li> <li>read about Artistic Director Angel Corella's career</li> <li>learn about the other dance professionals who help Angel train and choreograph the Company members</li> <li>learn what inspired Principal Dancer Lillian Di Piazza to first take ballet lessons</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Show less</a></p>   |



# INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

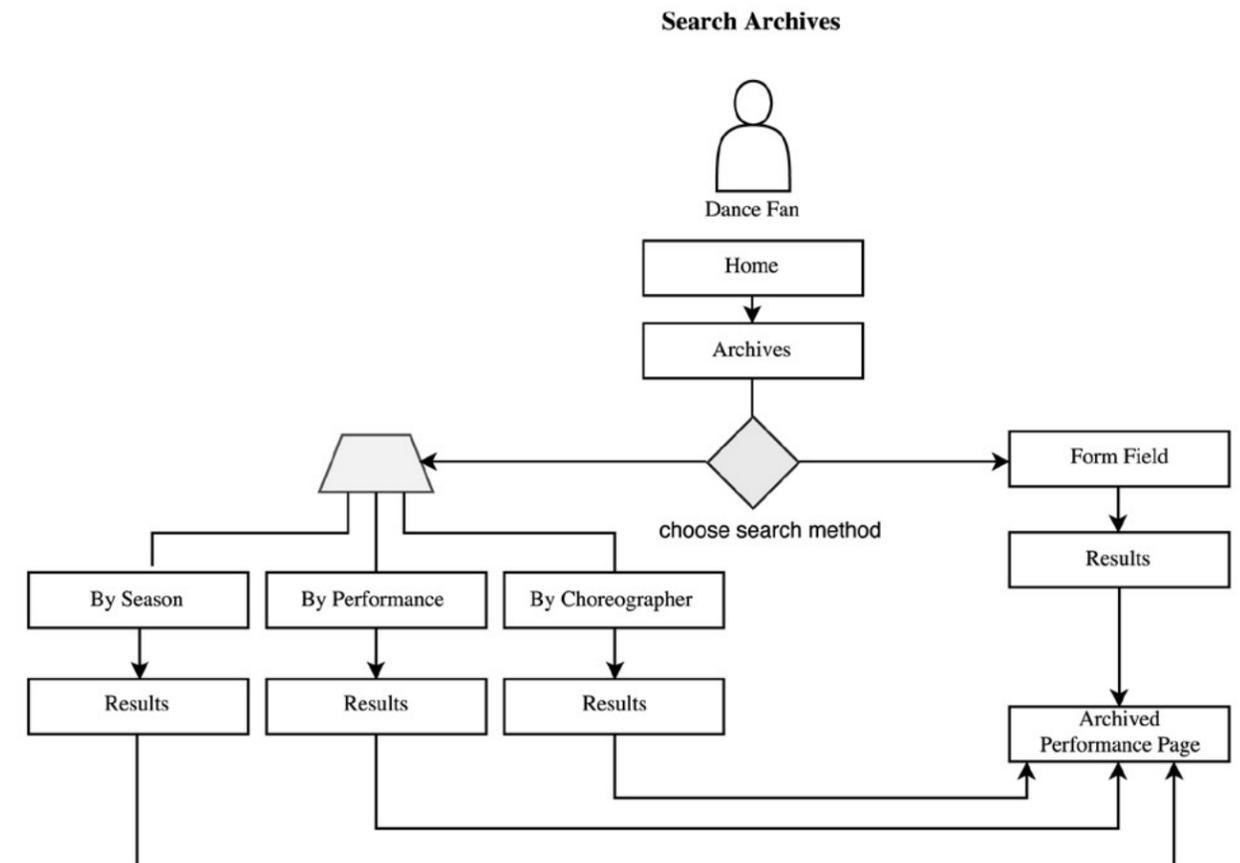
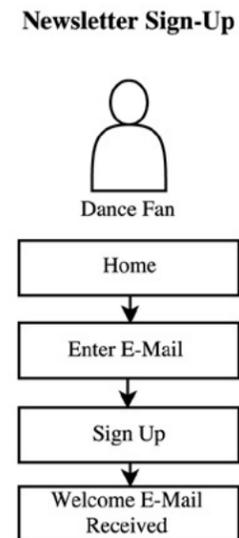
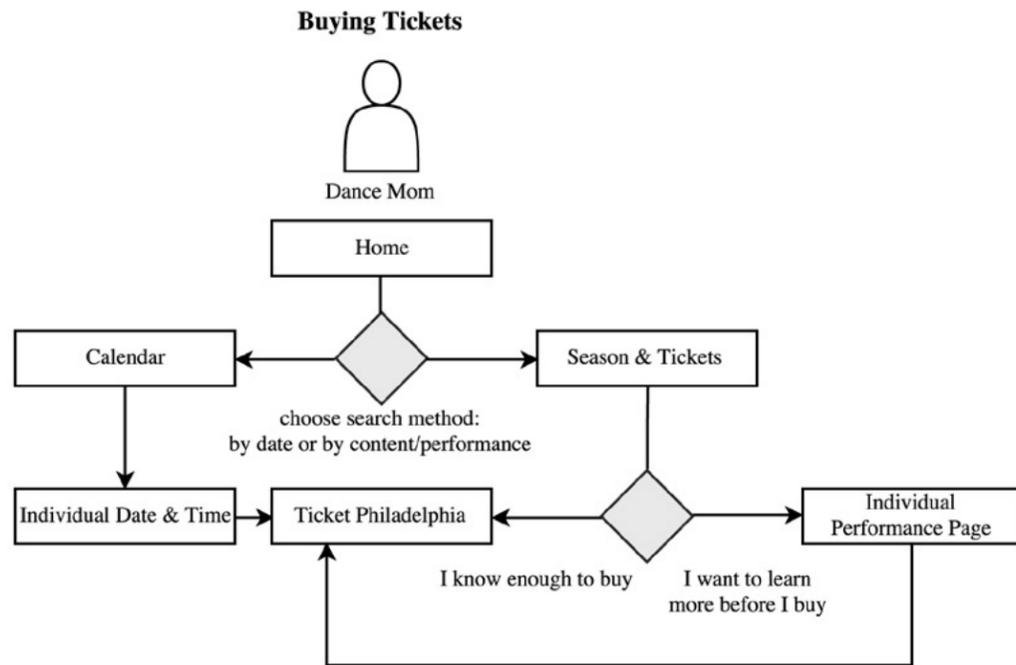
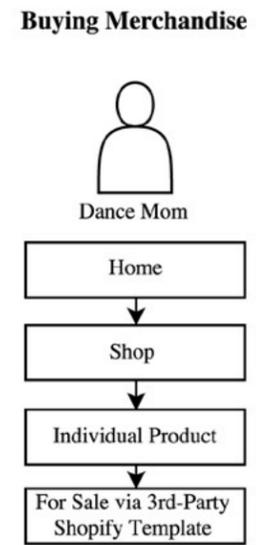
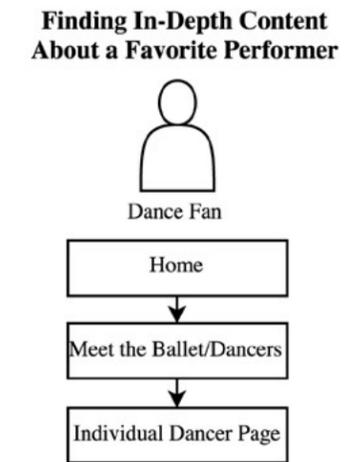
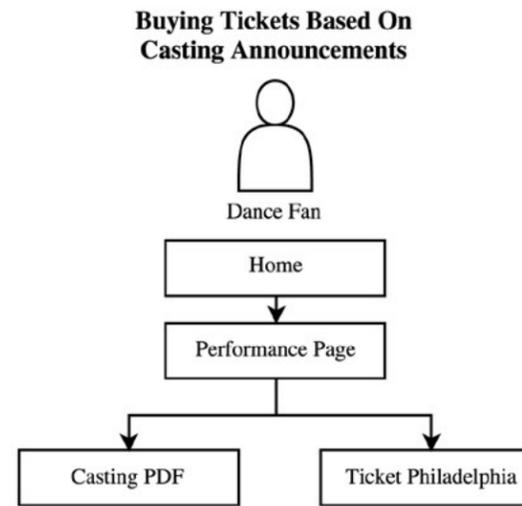


BOTTOM-MOST FOOTER: SPONSOR LOGOS

# USER FLOWS

User flows are simple diagrams that demonstrate the steps involved in achieving a goal. Disregarding these goals at the outset of a project could lead to user frustration after the product launches, and often a customer turned off by an unpleasant experience will instead go elsewhere to get what they need.

Pennsylvania Ballet's site redesign comes with its own set of challenges; namely, the inability to either purchase a ticket directly from the site or control the user experience during this transaction. However, I still aim to reduce friction in the site redesign by simplifying the path to Ticket Philadelphia. The following user flows illustrate some of the more common goals a site visitor might have, including buying tickets and learning about dancers.



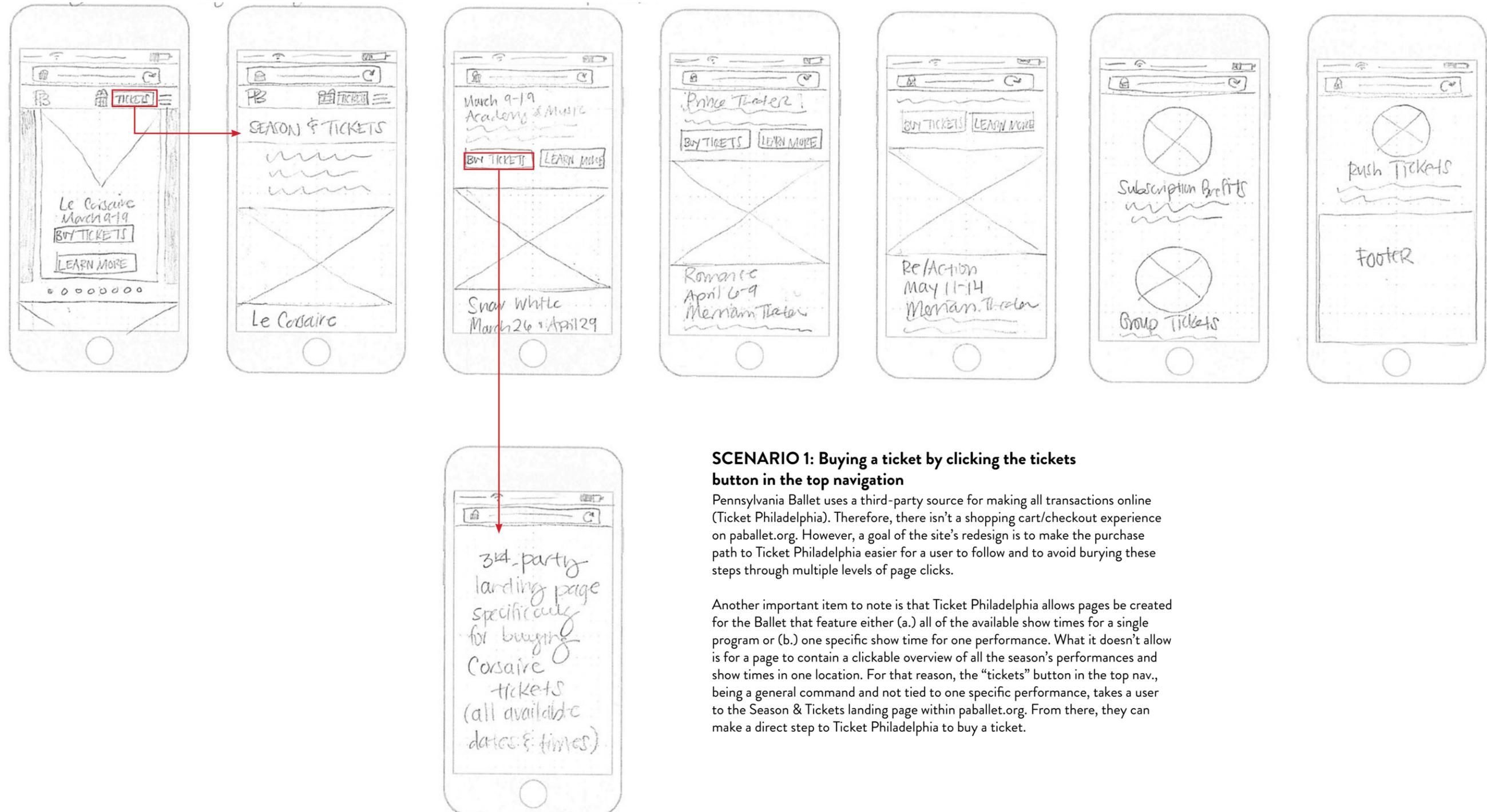
PART III:  
SKETCHES +  
WIREFRAMES





# SKETCH PROTOTYPES

As with everything else throughout this project, I refined and revised my sketches multiple times based on feedback from others. I've included a few examples of sketched prototypes to demonstrate a user's path in various processes.

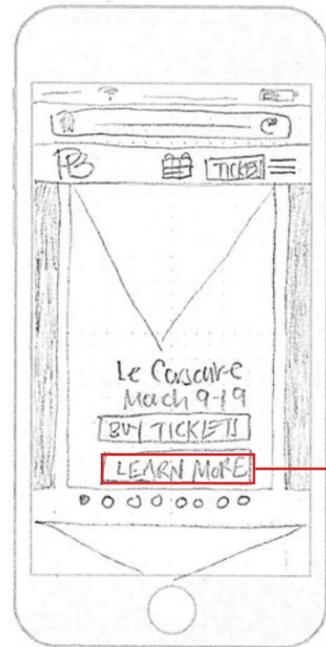


## SCENARIO 1: Buying a ticket by clicking the tickets button in the top navigation

Pennsylvania Ballet uses a third-party source for making all transactions online (Ticket Philadelphia). Therefore, there isn't a shopping cart/checkout experience on paballet.org. However, a goal of the site's redesign is to make the purchase path to Ticket Philadelphia easier for a user to follow and to avoid burying these steps through multiple levels of page clicks.

Another important item to note is that Ticket Philadelphia allows pages be created for the Ballet that feature either (a.) all of the available show times for a single program or (b.) one specific show time for one performance. What it doesn't allow is for a page to contain a clickable overview of all the season's performances and show times in one location. For that reason, the "tickets" button in the top nav., being a general command and not tied to one specific performance, takes a user to the Season & Tickets landing page within paballet.org. From there, they can make a direct step to Ticket Philadelphia to buy a ticket.

**SCENARIO 2: Buying a ticket from viewing the program images on the home screen**



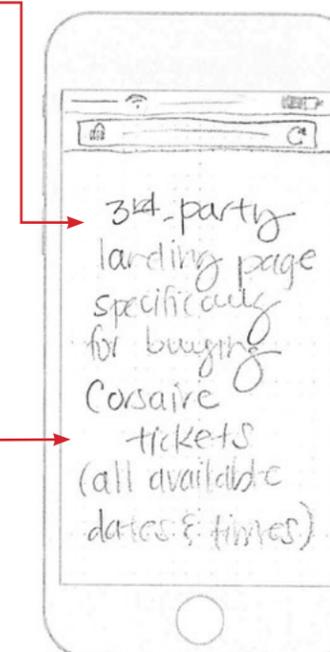
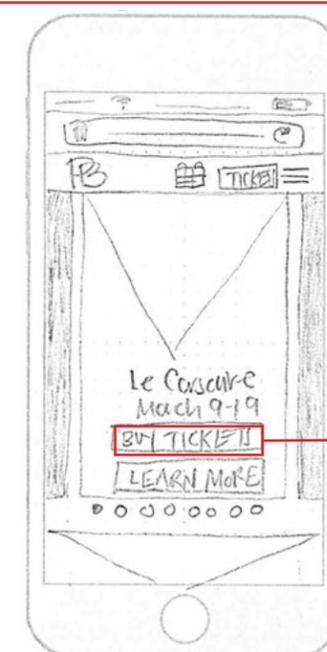
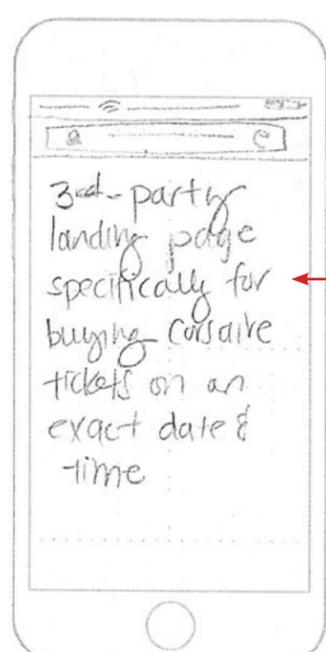
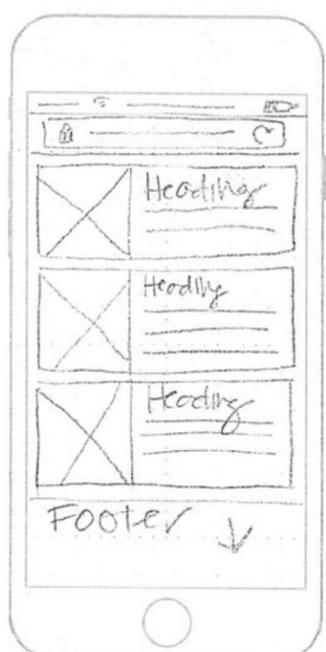
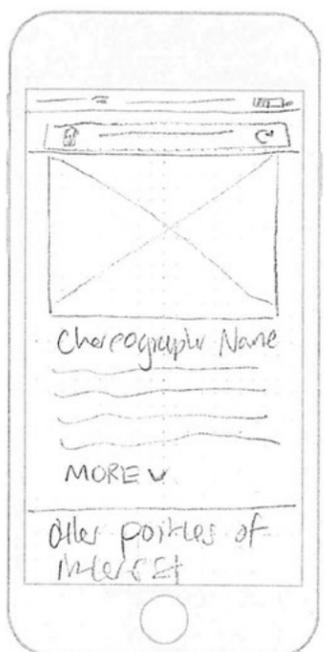
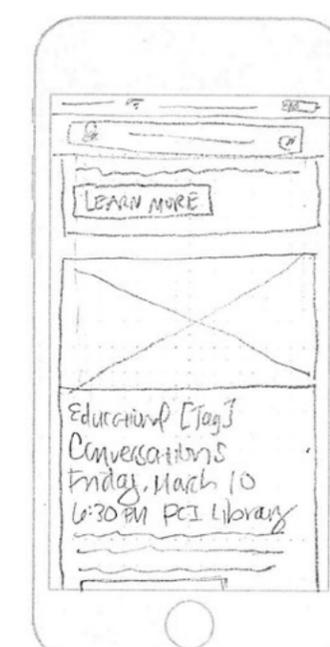
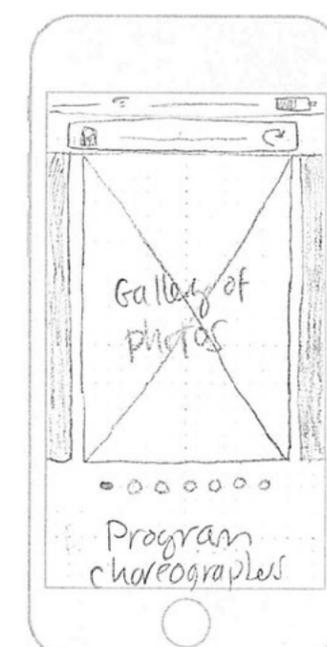
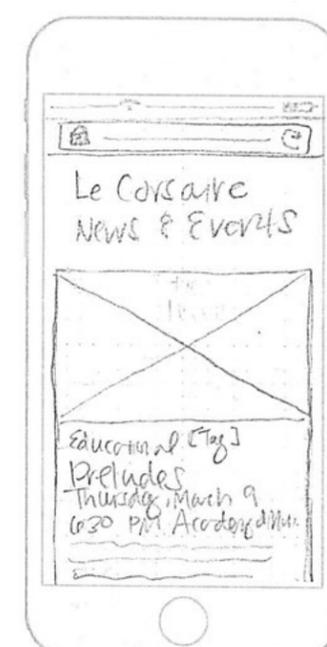
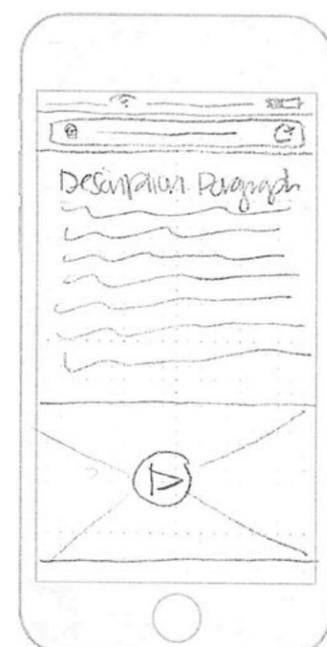
If a user would first like to learn more about a specific program before buying a ticket, she can swipe left and right through the top slider to view all the season's programs. Selecting "learn more" on any of the images will take her to that program's landing page.



On the program landing page, a user can then click "buy tickets" in the top photo header and be sent to Ticket Philadelphia's page of all show times for that program.



Or, she can browse through this page more in-depth and click on any of the individual show time links and be sent to Ticket Philadelphia's page for that specific performance and time.



Alternatively, if a user would like to buy a ticket for a performance after swiping through the season's photos on the homepage, she can click "buy tickets" on any of these photos and be taken to the Ticket Philadelphia page set up for that program (which would list all available dates and times for the program selected).

**SCENARIO 3: Learning more about a specific dancer via the hamburger menu**

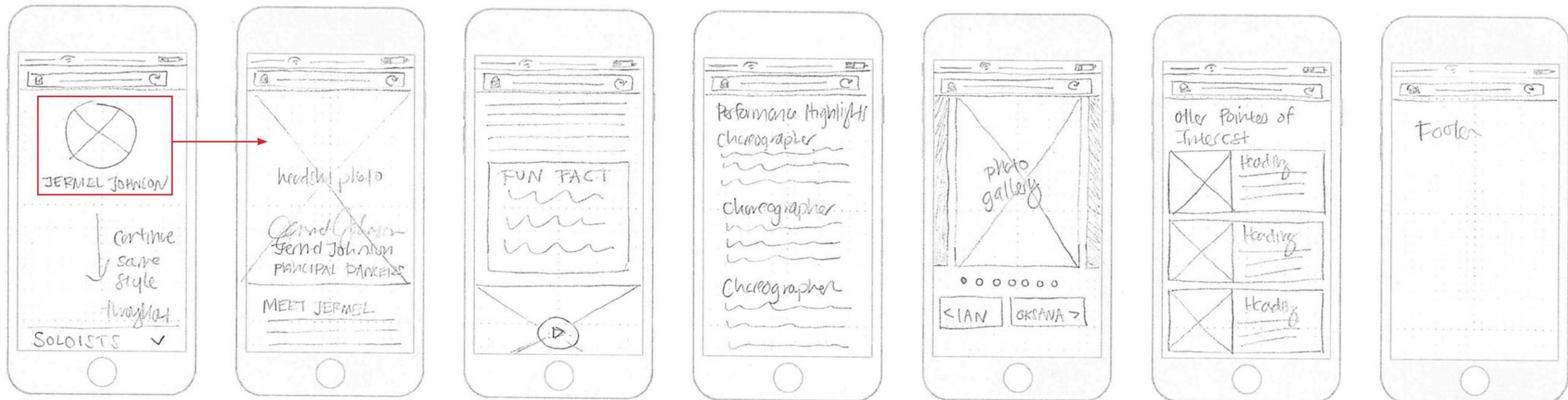


Selecting the hamburger menu in the top right will cover most of the screen with the top-tier navigation. To learn more about a specific dancer, a user can tap the down arrow to the right of "Meet the Ballet" to reveal a drop-down of categories.

Choosing "Dancers" will then take the user to the Dancers landing page.

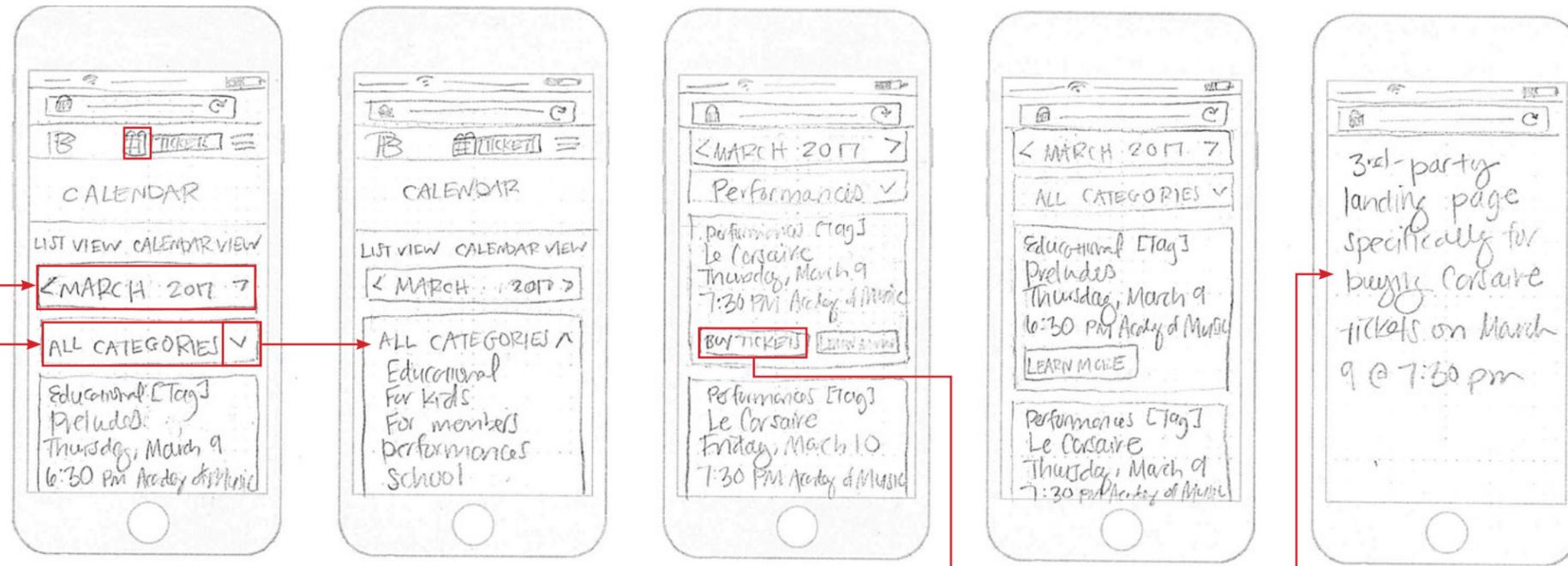
This page has been designed with a smaller screen in mind. It uses a series of accordion menus to more quickly find a dancer based on their title (principal dancers, soloists, etc.) instead of one giant scroll of everyone lumped together.

Within each accordion drop-down, a dancer's head shot and name will appear. Tapping on either will take a user to that dancer's page, where she can read the dancer's biography and view videos and photo galleries.



## SCENARIO 4: Buying a ticket via the calendar's "list view"

In the calendar section, a user has the option of either viewing events in a list or on a calendar grid. Both provide the same information, and they're intended to address different user needs. For example, if a user is more casually researching this section for upcoming events, she can scroll through the list. Alternatively, the visual aid of a calendar grid could be more helpful if a user has a specific time frame in mind and would like to quickly see if there are any performances available (for example, the second weekend in March). Toggling through the calendar views to see the colored date squares (that symbolize an event is occurring) is a faster solution in this context.

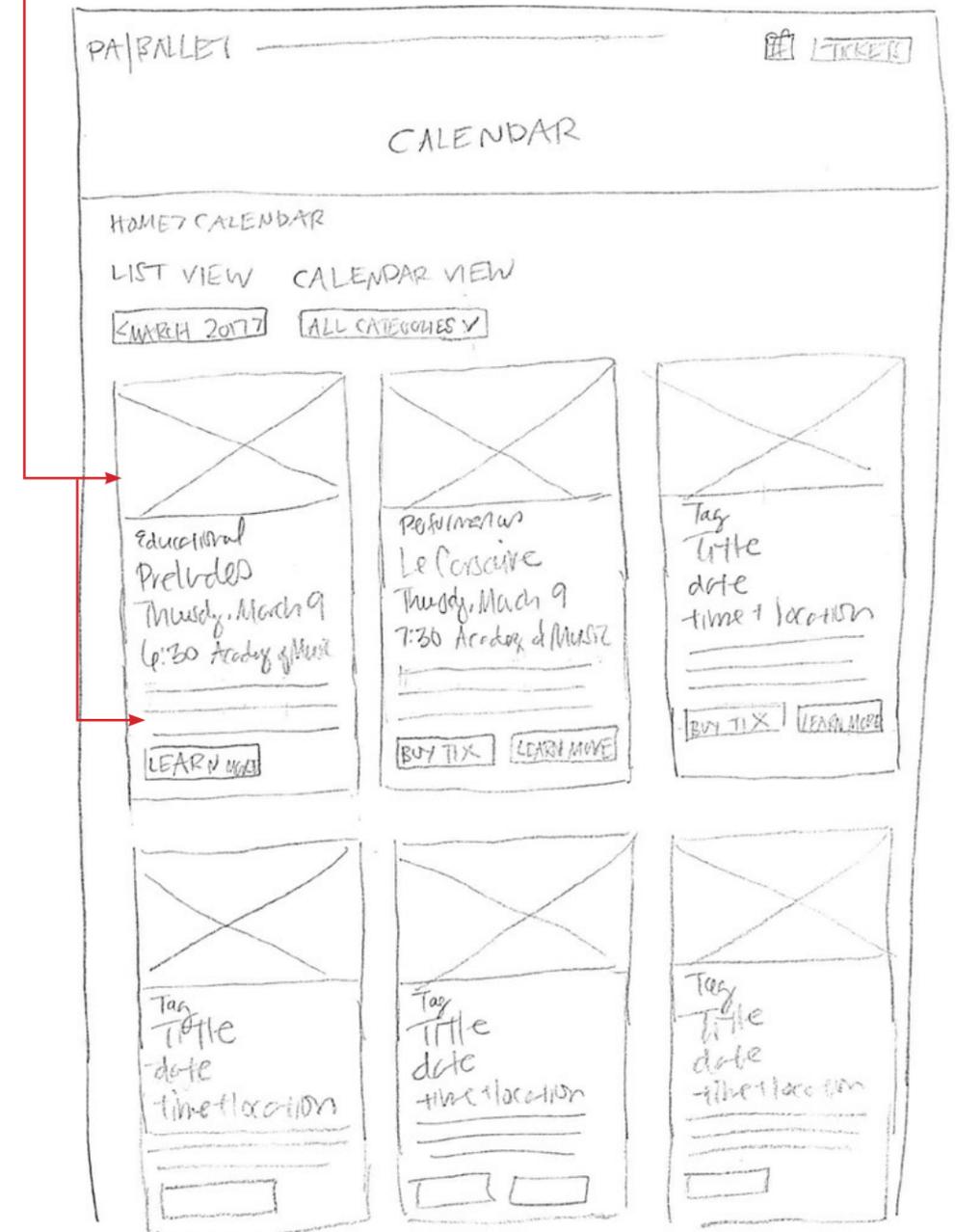


The calendar's list view contains a filter for a user to switch back and forth between months (enabling someone to view past, current, and upcoming calendar events). It will default to the current month when the screen loads.

Underneath the month toggle, a user can select a specific type of event from the list of categories (this will default to "all categories" when the screen loads).

Below the filters, all of the event cards will appear in a scroll down the screen. Each card will display a category tag, the event title, date, time, and location. If an event is free, only "learn more" will appear as a button. If an event requires a ticket, both "learn more" and "buy tickets" buttons will appear. "Buy tickets" will take a user directly to Ticket Philadelphia's site, and "learn more" will take a user to that event's page.

This shows the same list view of the calendar in a larger screen. When more space permits, photos and brief descriptions can be included for each card.



## SCENARIO 5: Buying a ticket via the “calendar view”



As in the list view, the calendar view contains a filter for a user to switch back and forth between months (enabling someone to view past, current, and upcoming calendar events). It will default to the current month when the screen loads.

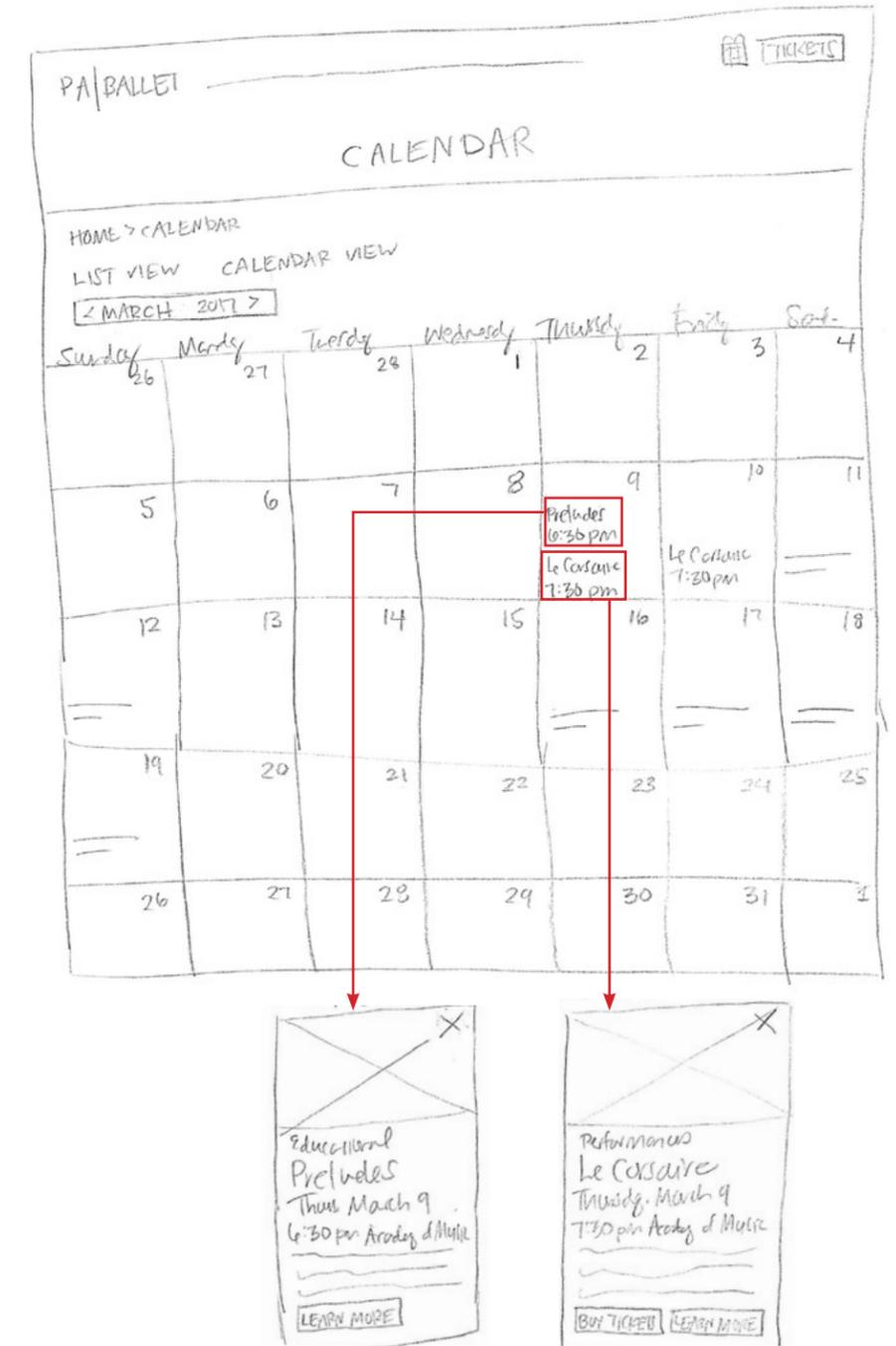
Underneath the month toggle, a user can view a calendar grid with large numbers, enabling easy tapping for specific dates. Any date with an event will have its square colored, providing a visual cue that something is occurring on that day.

Tapping on a colored square in the calendar grid will pop up a lightbox that reveals all of the events for that date.

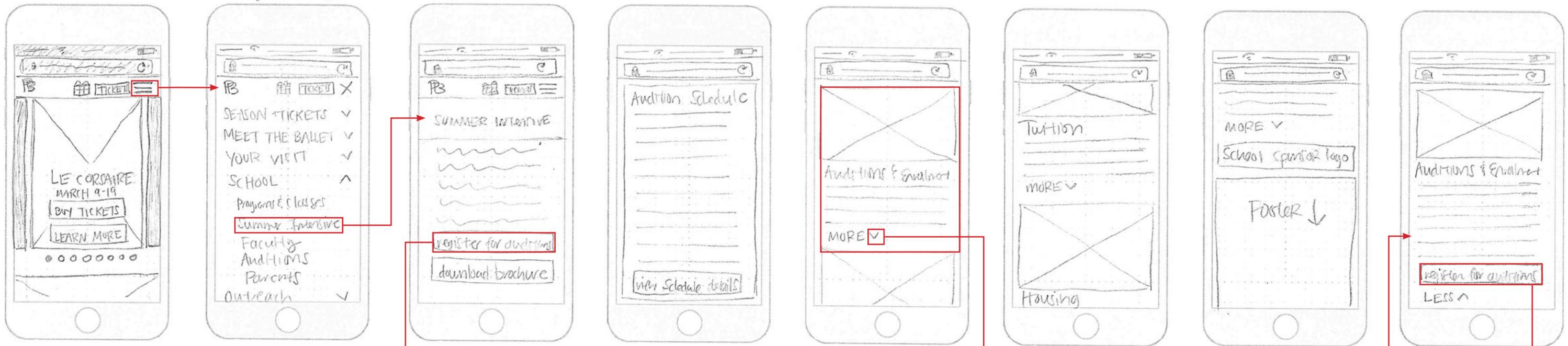
As with most content cards on the site, each event will include a category tag, title, date, time, location, and the option(s) to learn more and/or buy a ticket.

Just as in the list view, the “buy tickets” button on a content card will take a user directly to Ticket Philadelphia’s site, and “learn more” will take a user to that event’s page.

This shows the same calendar view in a larger screen. For the mobile screen, a solid color fill was used to designate that a date included an event. When more space permits, brief text links can appear instead (just listing the event’s name and time). When one of these text links are clicked, a lightbox will appear with more information for the event, a photo, and buttons to either learn more or, where applicable, buy tickets.



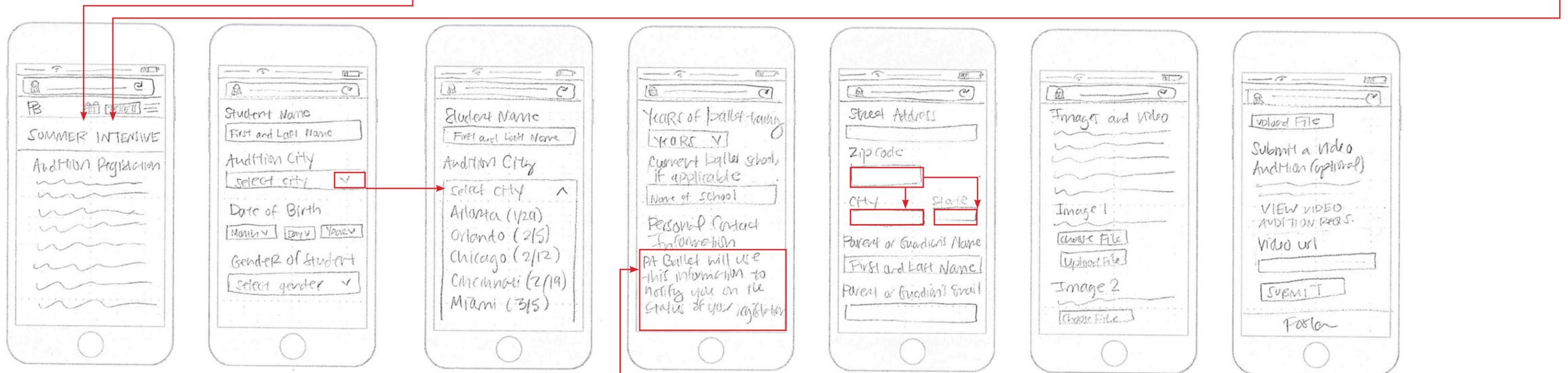
**SCENARIO 6: Signing up for the School's summer intensive program via the hamburger menu**



Selecting the hamburger menu in the top right will cover most of the screen with the top-tier navigation. To view information about the Summer Intensive program, a user can tap the down arrow to the right of "School" to reveal a drop-down of categories.

Within the Summer Intensive page, a few instances exist for a user to register for the program. Below the page's header photo and introductory text, a prominent button allows a user to click and access the online form directly.

Also, in the section of content categorized as "Auditions & Enrollment," a user can click the "more" accordion drop-down to reveal the full amount of information as well as another button prompting a user to register for auditions.



A brief blurb with pertinent dates and contact information begins the Summer Intensive registration form. This section is followed by a series of inputs, optimized for ease of use on a smaller viewport size. Where applicable, gray labels appear within fields as helpful cues. Questions of a more sensitive nature will allow the user to select the option of "I prefer not to answer" (as in gender selection).

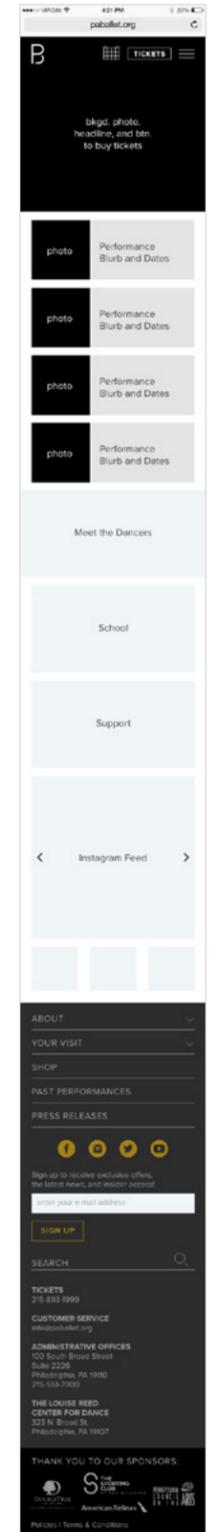
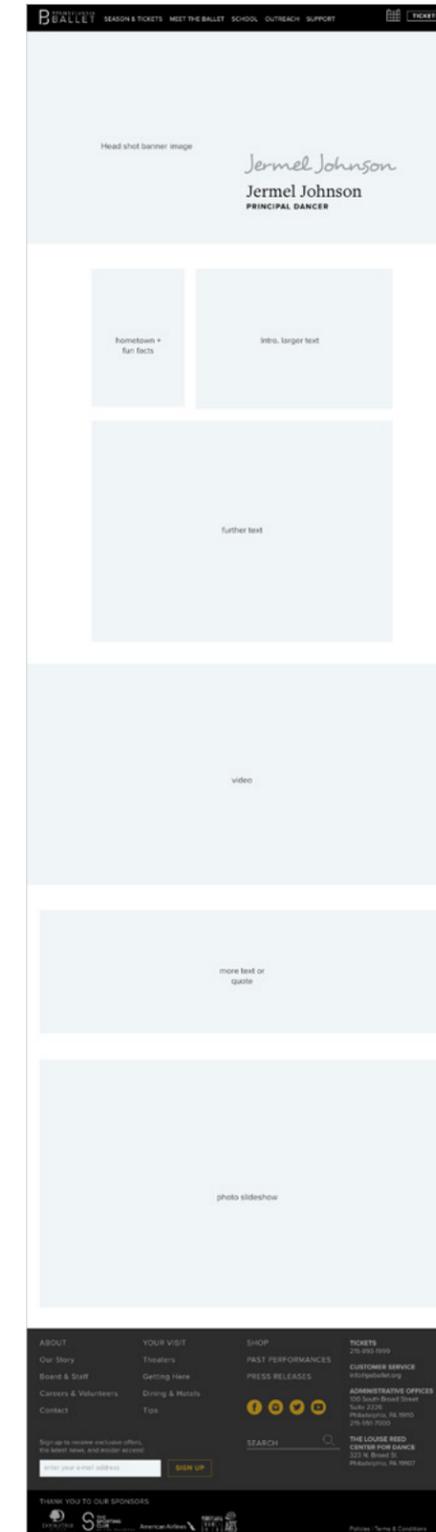
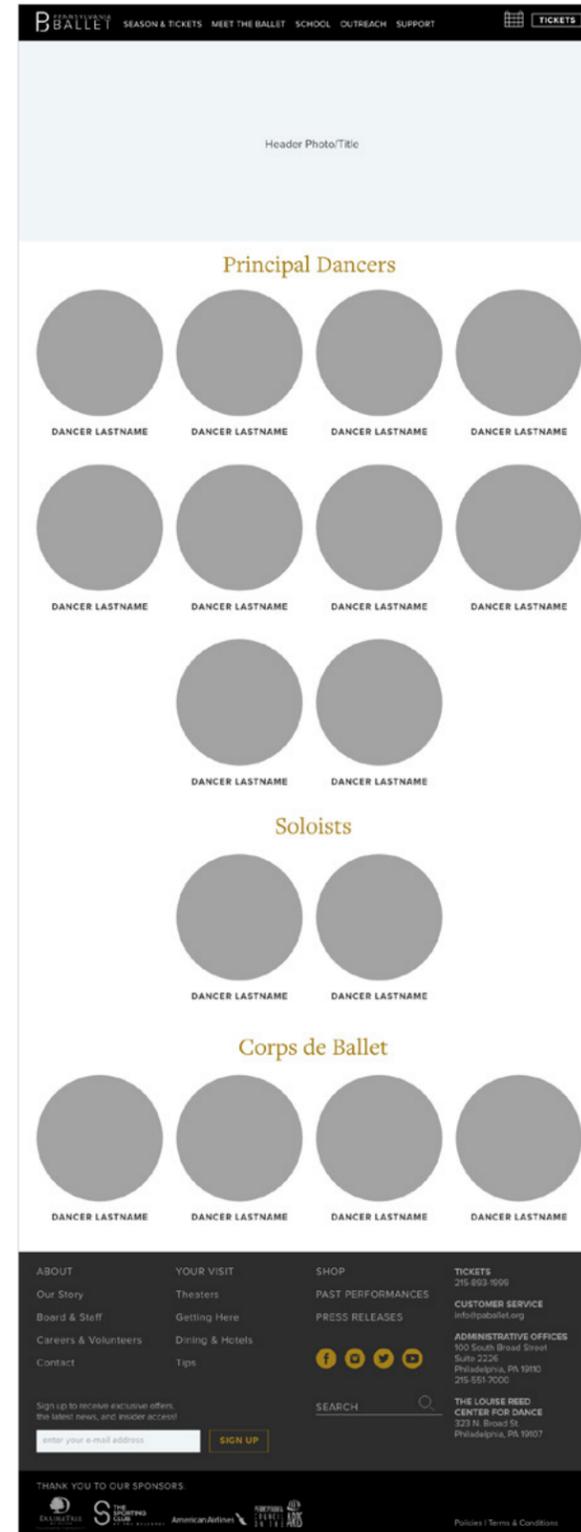
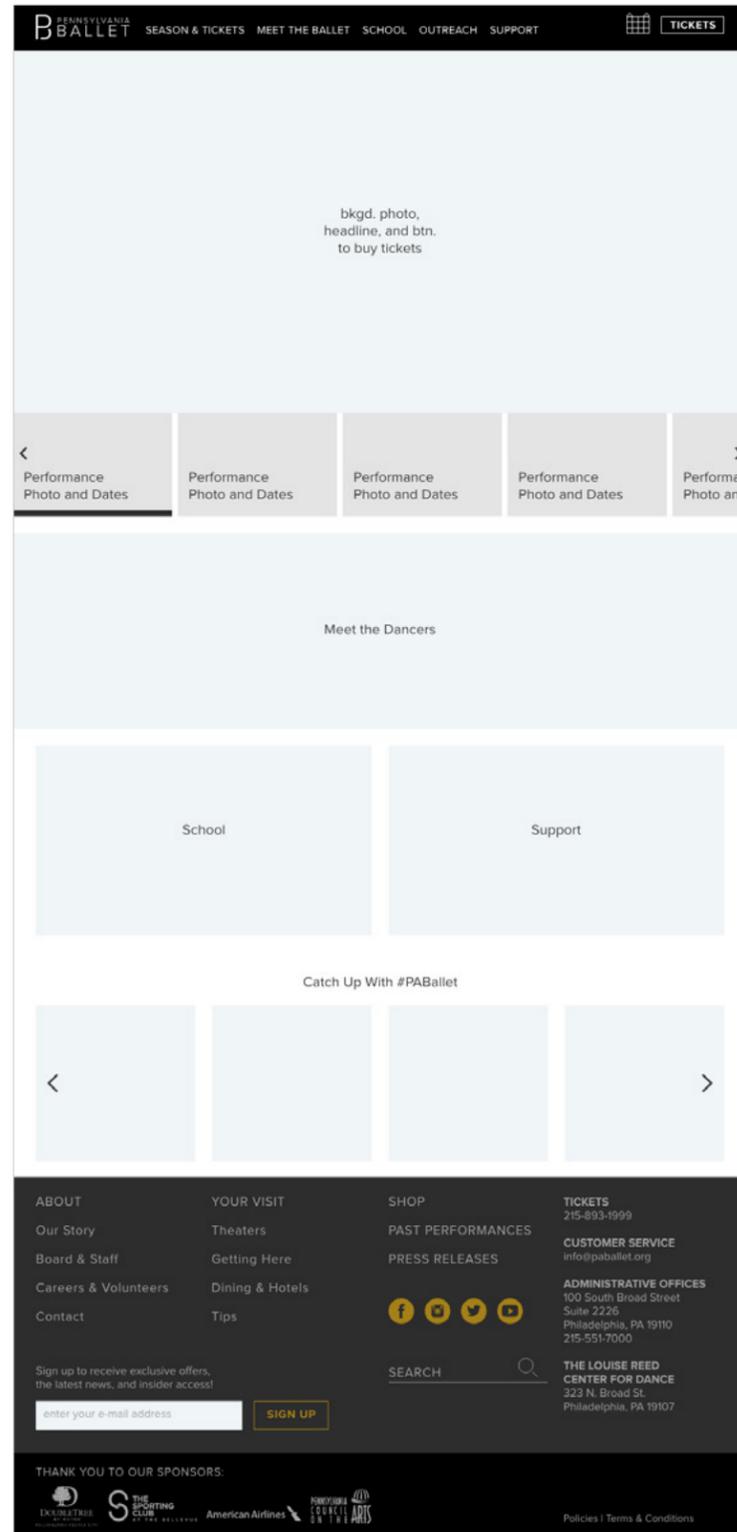
To ease a user's potential anxiety at sharing personal information online, a brief description will be written explaining why the Ballet needs these details.

The address section will begin by requesting the user fill out the zip code first. Once these digits are entered, the city and state fields will populate automatically.

# WIREFRAMES

After sketching layouts, I then moved on to building wireframes for different screen sizes, a few of which are displayed to the right. Each blocks out the general locations for the site's content.

Using my research, sketches, and wireframes as a base, I created three web design directions that differ aesthetically but maintain similar functionality and features. These directions, as well as the new Ballet identity options, are explored further in the next section.



# PART IV: VISUAL DESIGN



# IDENTITY OPTIONS

This page and the ones that follow it show the initial round of identity and web design options that I presented to Pennsylvania Ballet.

## current identity

PENNSYLVANIA  
BALLET

---

## proposed redesign options

PA | BALLET

PA  
BALLET

PENNSYLVANIA  
BALLET

PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

**BALLET**  
PENNSYLVANIA

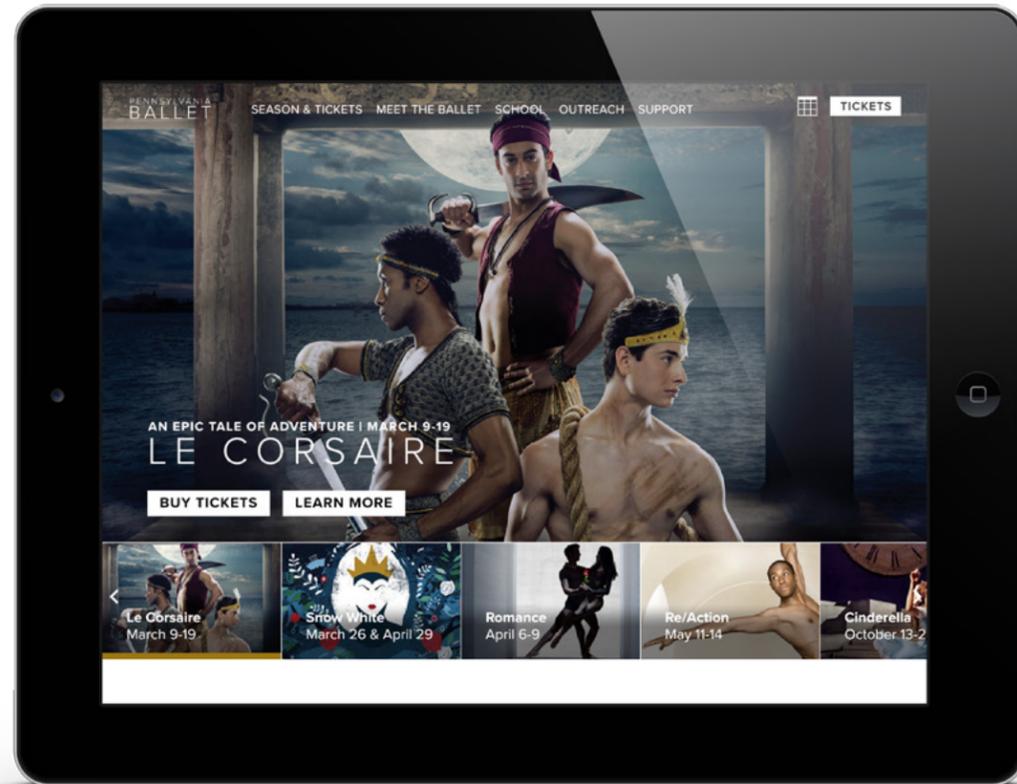
PENNSYLVANIA  
**ballet**

**B** PENNSYLVANIA  
BALLET

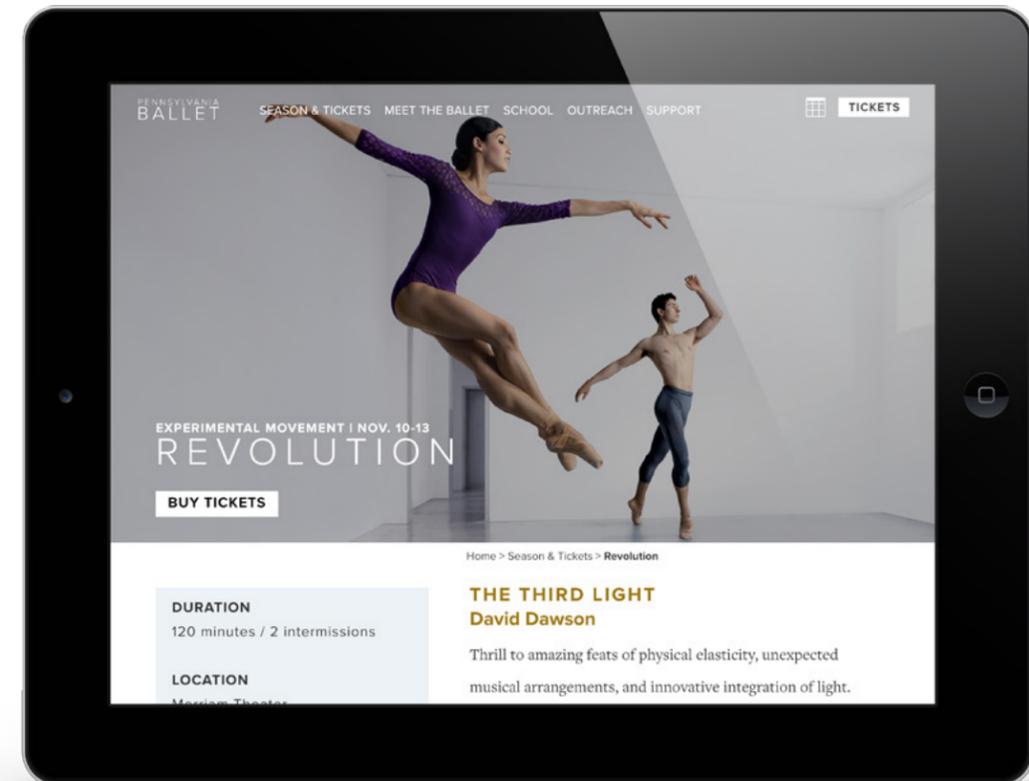
PENNSYLVANIA  
**BALLET**

# DESIGN CONCEPT 1

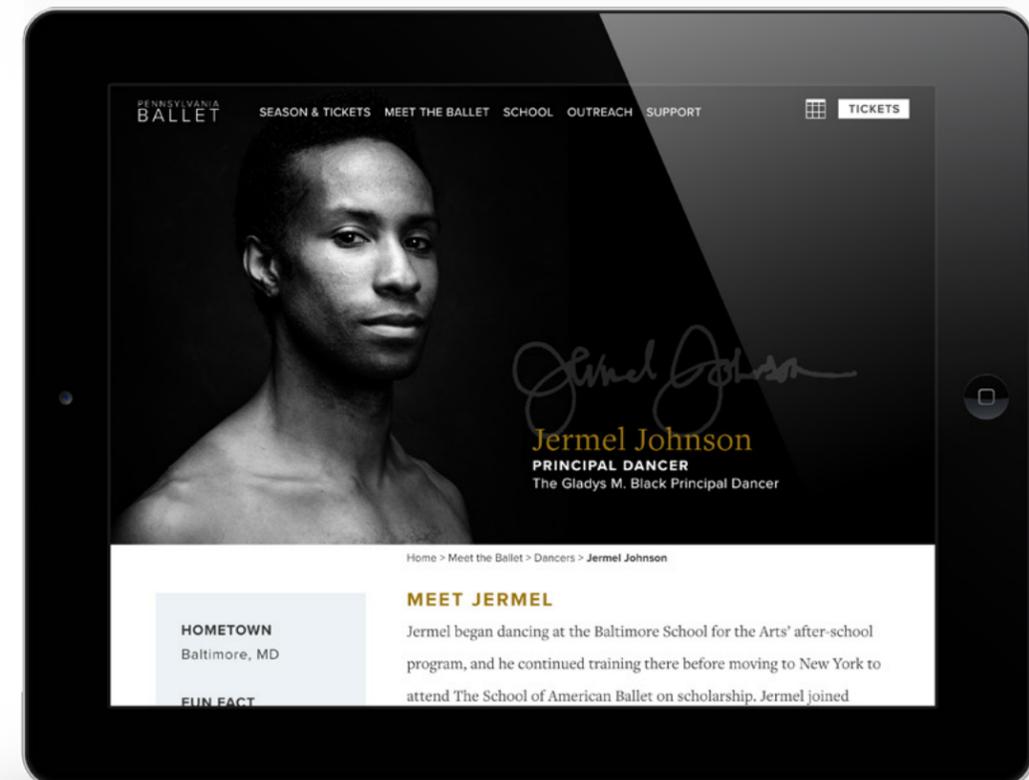
[View Concept 1 Screens in Full](#)



homepage



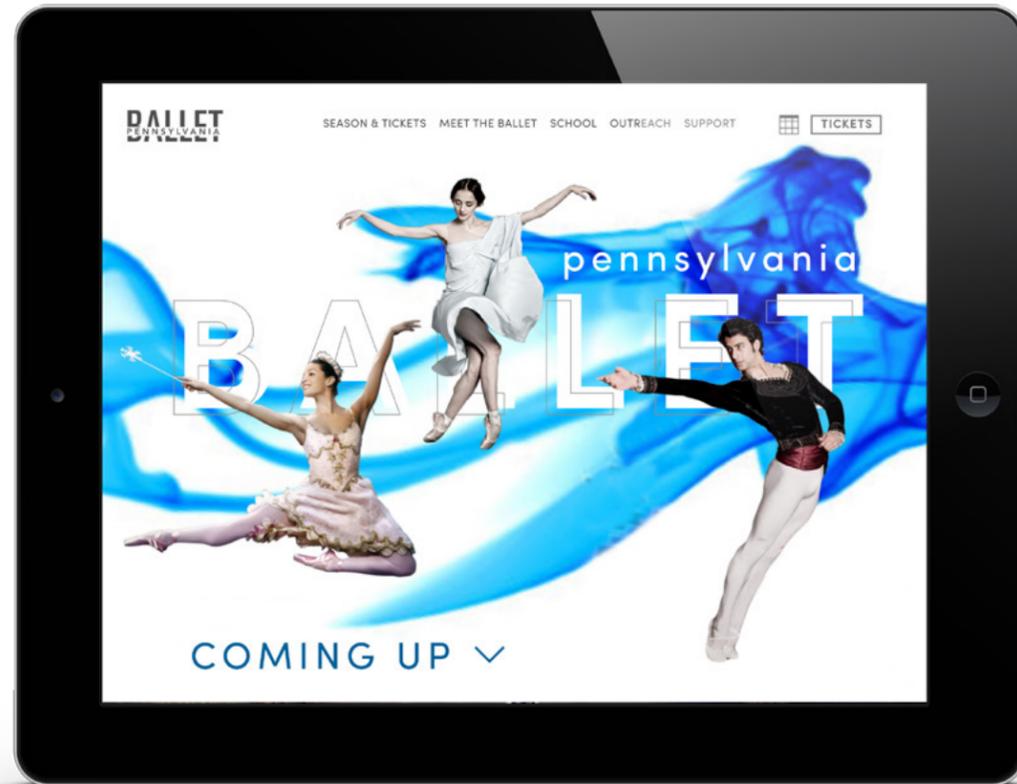
performance page



dancer page

# DESIGN CONCEPT 2

[View Concept 2 Screens in Full](#)



homepage



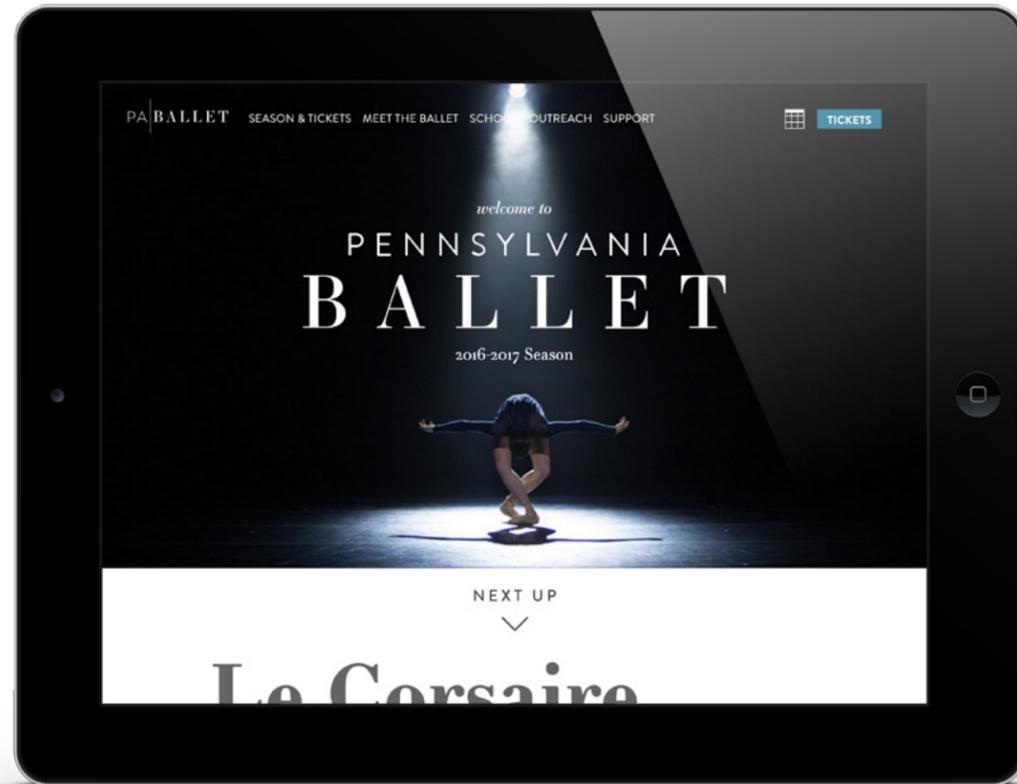
performance page



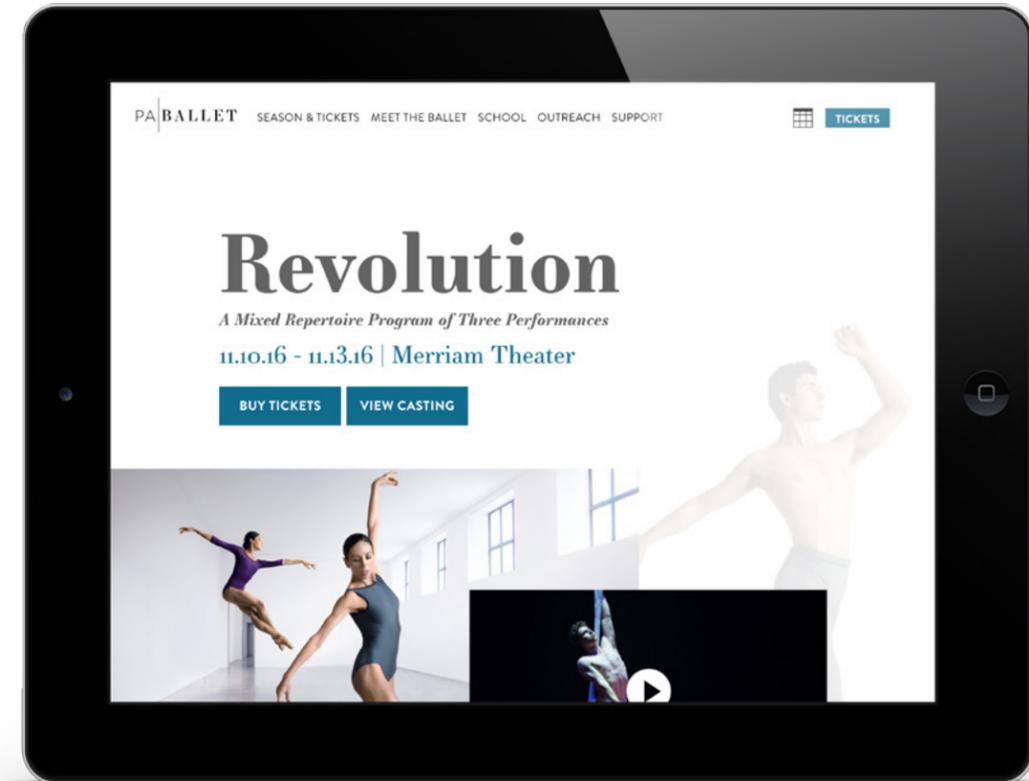
dancer page

# DESIGN CONCEPT 3

[View Concept 3 Screens in Full](#)



homepage



performance page

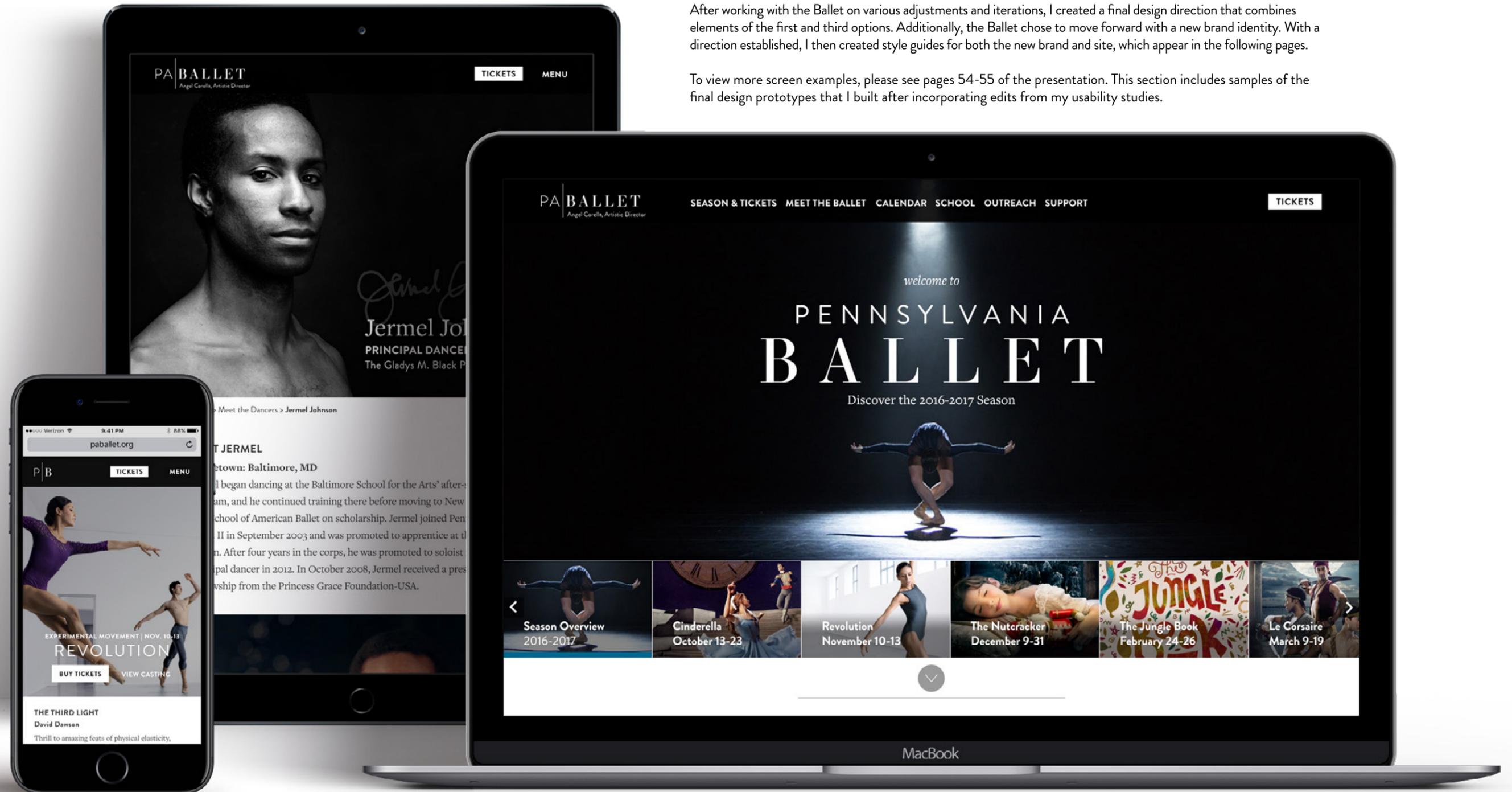


dancer page

# SELECTED DIRECTION

After working with the Ballet on various adjustments and iterations, I created a final design direction that combines elements of the first and third options. Additionally, the Ballet chose to move forward with a new brand identity. With a direction established, I then created style guides for both the new brand and site, which appear in the following pages.

To view more screen examples, please see pages 54-55 of the presentation. This section includes samples of the final design prototypes that I built after incorporating edits from my usability studies.

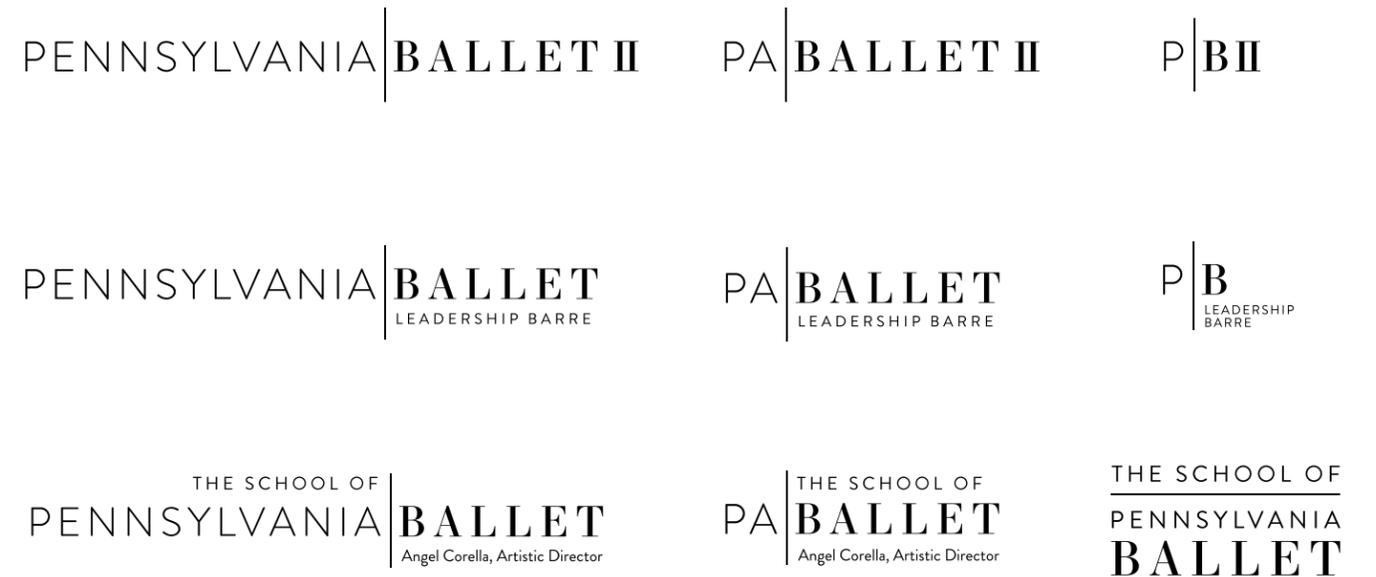


# STYLE GUIDE, IDENTITY

## Identity Variations



## Sub-Brand Identities



## Color Variations



## Palette, Color Proportions, And Typography



C: 0  
M: 0  
Y: 0  
K: 100

Black

R: 0  
G: 0  
B: 0

HTML: 000000



C: 45  
M: 44  
Y: 53  
K: 10

PMS 8003 Metallic Coated

R: 139  
G: 126  
B: 112

HTML: 8B7E70



C: 68  
M: 41  
Y: 28  
K: 2

PMS 8201 Metallic Coated

R: 94  
G: 131  
B: 155

HTML: 5E839B

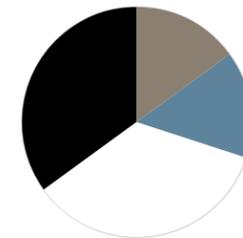


C: 0  
M: 0  
Y: 0  
K: 0

White

R: 255  
G: 255  
B: 255

HTML: FFFFFFFF



BRANDON  
ESSONES DISPLAY

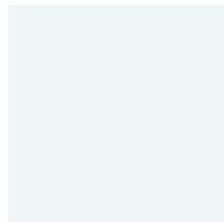
# STYLE GUIDE, WEB

## Primary Palette



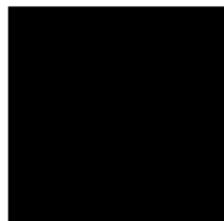
#006890

Used for link text color (including tags), buttons, and active items in a carousel.



#EEF4F7

Used for text block and sidebar backgrounds.



#000000

Used for text in buttons with a white background and the footer and top-tier navigation backgrounds. In top-tier nav., black appears at 70% opacity.



#333333

Used for most of the text color throughout the site.



#9A9A9A

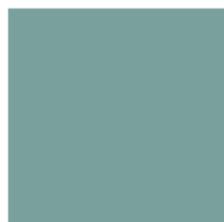
Used for lines used to separate areas of content, footer text, and text that appears within a form label.



#FFFFFF

Used for page titles and headlines that appear in a page's header photo, top-tier nav. logo, text, and buttons, button backgrounds (and text color), any text that appears over a photo, arrows in sliders, and "You May Also Like" footer headline.

## Secondary Palette (used for any supporting graphics)



#6F9795



#828C2C



#AD6766



#7B7996



#AE5528



#8C4579



#819097



#938A8C



#938A8C



#8B7E70

# STYLE GUIDE, WEB

The site uses variations of two font families: Brandon Grotesque and FreightText Pro. The following are specific type treatment examples.

Brandon Grotesque Regular

*Brandon Grotesque Regular Italic*

**Brandon Grotesque Bold**

FreightText Pro Book

*FreightText Pro Book Italic*

**FreightText Pro Bold**

**BUTTON TEXT**

Brandon Grotesque Bold  
14/22  
+40 Tracking

**LEARN MORE**

static

**LEARN MORE**

hover/roll-over

## Headlines

FreightText Pro Book  
42/50; mobile: 34/42  
Normal Tracking

## Pull Quotes, Sidebar Heads, and Footer Headline

FreightText Pro Book  
34/42; mobile: 28/38  
Normal Tracking

Subheads (for content card headings,  
descriptive text following a headline,  
and landing page description blocks of text)

FreightText Pro Book  
22/30; mobile: 20/28  
Normal Tracking

Body Text

FreightText Pro Book  
18/28; mobile: 16/24  
Normal Tracking

**Body Links**

FreightText Pro Bold  
18/28; mobile: 16/24  
Normal Tracking

# STYLE GUIDE, WEB

## HEADER PHOTO HEADLINE

Brandon Grotesque Regular  
42/50; mobile: 34/42  
+150 Tracking; mobile: +100 Tracking

### SUBHEADS

Brandon Grotesque Bold  
18/24; mobile: 16/24  
+25 Tracking

### Sidebar Links

Brandon Grotesque Bold  
16/26; same for mobile except  
performance dates: 18/44  
Normal Tracking

### NAVIGATION TEXT

Brandon Grotesque Regular & **BOLD**  
14/24; mobile: 16/24  
+25 Tracking for headings only

### QUOTE ATTRIBUTES, DANCER NAMES, AND PROGRAM INTRO. LINES IN PHOTO SLIDERS

Brandon Grotesque Bold  
16/26; mobile: 14/20  
+75 Tracking; mobile: +50 Tracking

### FOOTER LANDING PAGE TITLE LINKS /

#### Footer Sub-page Title Links

Brandon Grotesque Bold & Regular  
16/34  
+25 Tracking

### SIDEBAR HEADINGS and Text

Brandon Grotesque Bold and Regular  
16/26; same for mobile  
Normal Tracking

### Footer Sign-Up Text

Brandon Grotesque Regular  
16/24  
Normal Tracking

### Breadcrumb Trail Link and Text and Captions

Brandon Grotesque Bold & Regular  
14/20  
Normal Tracking

### Tags

Brandon Grotesque Bold  
14/28  
Normal Tracking

### Footer Smaller Text

Brandon Grotesque Regular  
14/22  
Normal Tracking

PART V:  
EVALUATION



# USABILITY STUDIES

## Purpose

Usability studies began the week of March 5 to test out core features of the new Pennsylvania Ballet website with users. I conducted these studies both in-person and remotely (via teleconferences and shared screens). The goal of this research is to determine the relative ease (or pain) of completing tasks on the new interface, both on mobile and desktop platforms. Such tasks include buying a ticket, learning about a dancer, and enrolling a child in a class at the School program.

## Participants

I completed seven usability studies with participants who hold the following characteristics:

- Male and female
- Age ranges covering 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, and 65+
- Season subscribers and single-ticket buyers
- A parent of a child enrolled in dance classes
- A parent of two young children
- Someone who has no affiliation with Pennsylvania Ballet nor has ever been to the current website—but would otherwise fit the characteristic of a Ballet ticket-buyer (female, 63 years old, affluent). This particular participant was chosen to provide an unbiased experience and, having no prior knowledge of PA Ballet, was a good candidate to purely test the site's functionality.

## Usability Study Script & Tasks

*The following describes the explanation given to study participants and the tasks they were asked to perform.*

This study should take less than an hour and will consist of me asking you how you'd find information on the new site. It is by no means an assessment of your ability—I'm conducting it to see if the website is functioning like it should and if anything needs to be adjusted to better accommodate your needs.

What you're viewing is a prototype of the new Pennsylvania Ballet website that represents the overall design direction. It's not fully functional and there are placeholders for text and imagery throughout the pages. Likewise, not everything will link to other sections. However, I'll be here to guide you if you try accessing something that's unclickable.

I encourage you to please "think aloud" as you're working through the tasks. This will help me to better understand your thought process.

Please feel free to speak freely throughout the process. You won't be hurting my feelings by stating your opinions and I encourage you to let me know if you dislike or disagree with something.

Your involvement is voluntary and I'm very grateful for your time and cooperation! You can stop at any time, you're not obliged to perform any task, and I won't be asking you to give any personal information.

Now I'm going to give you a few different scenarios to approach the site with:

[Mobile Site Link 1](#)  
[Desktop Site Link 1](#)

1. Take a couple of minutes to tell me what you think the site is about and what you can do on the site. Feel free to scroll around, but stay on this page for now.

[Mobile Site Link 2](#)  
[Desktop Site Link 2](#)

2. You'd like to buy tickets to the evening performance of Revolution on Saturday, November 12th (2016). Please show me how you would do this.

[Mobile Site Link 3](#)  
[Desktop Site Link 3](#)

3. In April (2017), your sister and 10-year-old niece are visiting from out of town. The three of you would like to see a ballet during their stay. How would you learn if one is offered during their visit?

[Mobile Site Link 4](#)  
[Desktop Site Link 4](#)

4. You've just seen a ballet performance that featured Jermel Johnson and would like to learn more about him and read his biography. How would you find this information?

[Mobile Site Link 5](#)  
[Desktop Site Link 5](#)

5. You'd like to donate \$400 to Pennsylvania Ballet and wonder if the Ballet offers any other donation perks for contributing this amount of money. How would you get an answer to this?

[Mobile Site Link 6](#)  
[Desktop Site Link 6](#)

6. You'd like to enroll your 3-year-old daughter/son in dance classes at Pennsylvania Ballet. Which class would be suitable for her/him?

[Mobile Site Link 7](#)  
[Desktop Site Link 7](#)

7. Your 14-year-old daughter/son is interested in Pennsylvania Ballet's summer intensive. How would you enroll them in this program?

8. What was your overall impression of this experience? Would you suggest anything be changed?

## Observations

### Aesthetics and Navigation

- Overall, the new site design and Pennsylvania Ballet identity were very well received. Participants across the board responded similarly, repeatedly calling the aesthetic "clean," "sophisticated," and "streamlined," and noting that the experience "looks consistent from desktop to mobile." One participant stated that he thought the current paballet.org site is usable, but with this new version, "all the usability is there—plus additional visual appeal."
- Users also reacted strongly to the use of large photography throughout the site, calling it "beautiful" and "dramatic." One user commented specifically on the homepage image, calling it "a powerful opener." Another user noted that aside from the imagery being "gorgeous," it "didn't distract from important messages in the header." This user noted in particular how the header images chosen for the "Dancers" landing page and Revolution homepage slider and performance page are visually impactful, but still allowed her to easily view any pertinent information also displayed in the frame, like performance dates and links to buy tickets and view casting. One user stated that the use of large images and ample white space "make the site look like art."

- Similarly, several users commented on the typography, calling the font choices "elegant." They also reacted favorably to the size of type throughout the site and found it readable. One participant in the 55-64 demographic appreciated the use of black and white for the text and buttons, noting that she sometimes has difficulty reading colored text on screens. Users also appreciated the size and placement of the easily accessible "tickets" button. Likewise, they said that they enjoyed how the top-tier navigation in general is "uncluttered," and, with its simple titles, is "easy to read and understand."
- A few participants in older age demographics didn't realize that the hamburger icon in the mobile view represented the navigation, so I revised it to more clearly state "menu" instead.
- On the desktop homescreen, numerous users appreciated viewing the entire season in a filmstrip underneath the top header and liked the ease of quickly seeing a snapshot of all the performances and their dates ("gives me just enough that I know what they are and what they're about"). In fact, when asked to buy a Revolution ticket on the desktop, several users clicked on the thumbnail image in the top slider as the first way to access this information (whereas on mobile, everyone used the "tickets" button at the top for all tasks relating to tickets).
- In the footer, one user appreciated the contact information being easily accessible. Another gravitated toward the related content image boxes at the bottom, especially "Shop PA Ballet." She suggested that "points of interest" be revised to something that didn't sound "so formal and stuffy." In its original iteration, "pointes of interest" was at least a play on words, but the participant had a valid point and this heading has been adjusted to "You may also like."

### Dancers

- When asked to learn more about Jermel, on the "Dancers" landing page, the participants already familiar with him went to the "principal dancers" section (or drop-down menu on mobile). The others all went directly to the search functionality within this section, so that was a helpful suggestion by the Ballet team. Also on this page, a few users liked seeing all of the Company together and the inclusion of apprentices and PBII ("it's impressive to see how many people are involved in putting on a ballet").

# USABILITY STUDIES

- On Jermel's page, his photo, signature, video, and "fun fact" were appreciated by a few users (with one participant stating that seeing his autograph "is fabulous—he's like a celebrity!"). Two users also valued seeing the new features of the chance to sponsor Jermel and view upcoming events in which he's participating—again, great suggestions by the Ballet team.

## Support

- While most users navigated to the "Giving Levels and Benefits" page for the question regarding donation perks, some went to "Individual Giving" first, expecting to see this information there. Those who went to the "Giving Levels and Benefits" page first said that they thought the answer could also be found in "Supporter Recognition." To address these issues, a link has been included in "Individual Giving" to take a user to the "Giving Levels" page and "Supporter Recognition" was renamed "Supporter Spotlight" to avoid confusion.
- In the mobile version of "Giving Levels and Benefits," not all users realized that the condensed, phone-friendly chart was able to display more than two columns of information. Explanatory text has been added. Additionally, donations have been reordered from largest to smallest, left to right. This was due to a few users stating that the chart made it look like you don't get a lot of benefits when glancing the two lowest categories on the mobile screen.

## Performances & Tickets

- On the Revolution page, a few users liked the convenience of seeing the program's duration at the top, with one stating that "it's helpful to know how long a ballet lasts since I commute to the city and rely on train schedules." They also appreciated the prominent "view casting" link at the top to "see if my favorite dancers are cast."
- The one task that none of the participants were able to complete was #3: *In April (2017), your sister and 10-year-old niece are visiting from out of town. The three of you would like to see a ballet during their stay. How would you learn if one is offered during their visit?* After questioning them on their confusion,

across the board everyone replied that they were looking for a calendar function. At least three respondents said that they wouldn't think of going to "Events" since it sounded too much like it only contained content relating to "fundraisers, volunteering, and black-tie events." Therefore, "Events" has been renamed "Calendar" to provide a clearer call to action. An added benefit of this adjustment is that while someone might click on "Calendar" when looking for available ballet performances, they'll also instantly see all the other programs and events offered by the Ballet, if they weren't already aware of them.

- While all users were able to buy tickets to Revolution on their first try, several expressed frustration at having to be directed to the "Season and Tickets" landing page after clicking the "tickets" button at the top. As previously noted, the "tickets" button seemed to be the top choice for all participants when any task involved buying tickets (using this button as opposed to opening the mobile menu or browsing the desktop drop-down navigation items). One user stated that her "biggest pain point" with the current Ballet site is the amount of steps it takes to get to Ticket Philadelphia. A few users said that the "tickets" button didn't match their expectation—they were hoping to instantly see a list of tickets they could buy and then quickly moving on to the next steps in the purchase path (choosing seats, etc.). To address these concerns, the "tickets" button has been adjusted so that now when it is either clicked or tapped, it will reveal a quick list of the Ballet's six programs and their dates—each program serving as a direct link to a corresponding Ticket Philadelphia landing page. This should ease the friction in the ticket-buying process.

## School

- The participant who also has a daughter enrolled in dance classes especially enjoyed the ease of use for the School pages. She "loved" that the various programs and classes list children's ages prominently at the top of each description and appreciated seeing an infographic describing the various options for the summer intensive program. She noted that she recently enrolled her daughter at another dance company's summer intensive. The process of registering her on that site

was "way harder than it needed to be" and as a result, she welcomed a more straightforward description of the steps involved in this prototype. A few other users were slightly confused by the chart's use of numbered steps, and one participant thought that all the large circles clicked out to other pages. This was an astute observation, since in all other instances on the site, circular images do just that—lead to other pages. With that feedback in mind, the chart has been simplified in the latest iteration.

## Conclusion

- In summary, the seven participants were able to complete all but one of the tasks with relative ease (#3; checking if a ballet was offered on a specific date). I'm confident that my recommended revisions described above (and accessible via the links in the following pages) will amend the issues brought to light by the usability studies.





PART VI:  
CONCLUSION

## Next Steps

After the usability studies concluded, I shared my findings with the Ballet and our development team. Taking into account feedback from both the Ballet and my sample of early users, I revised the designs where necessary. The following links represent the most recent site prototypes, and I've included a sample of the interfaces on this page and the next. In the coming months, I'll be working with our developers and the Ballet staff to build and populate the new site, which is slated to launch summer 2017.

## Revised Iterations Based On User Feedback

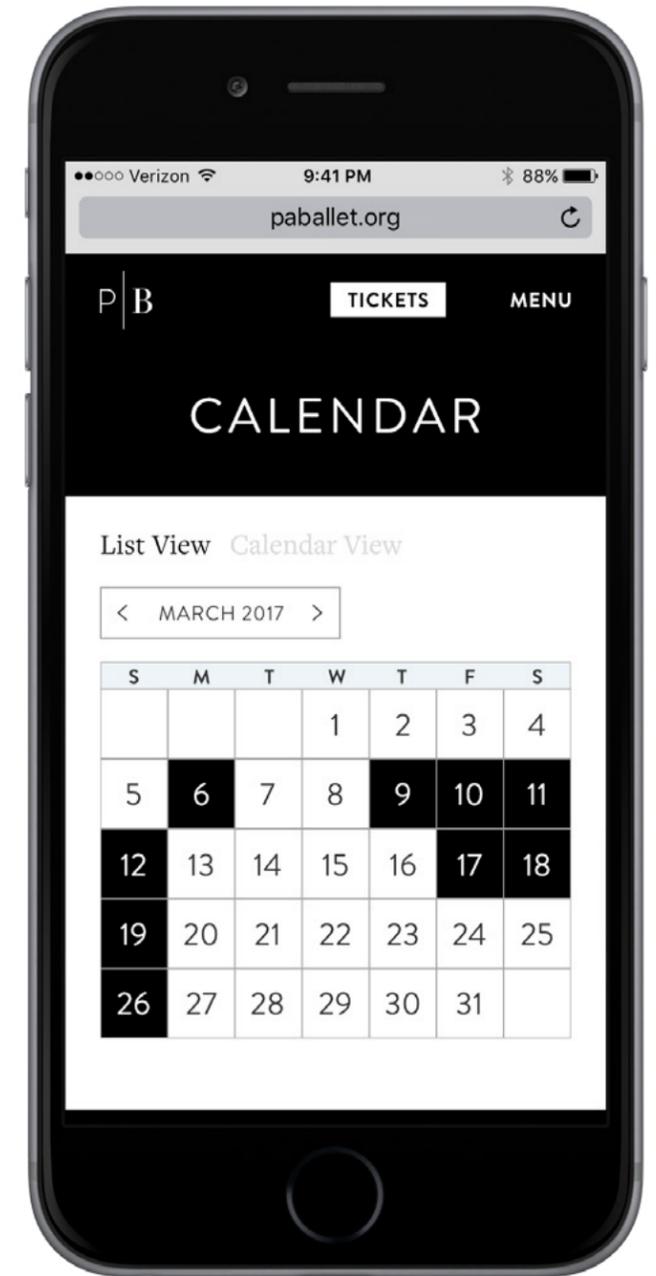
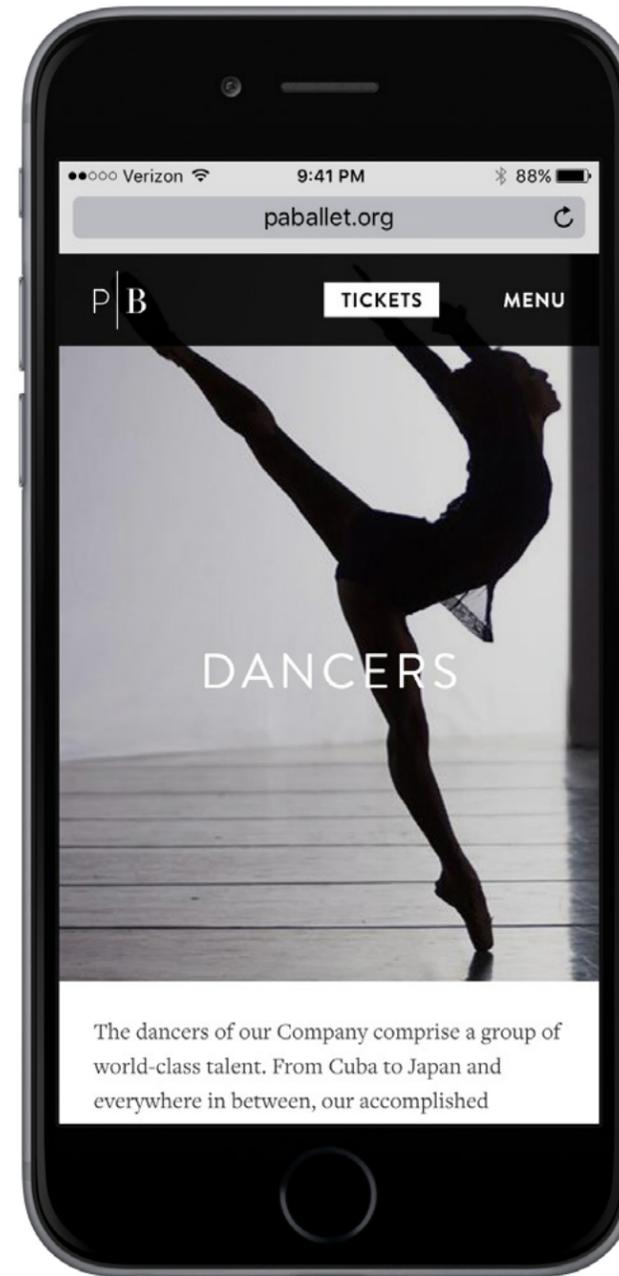
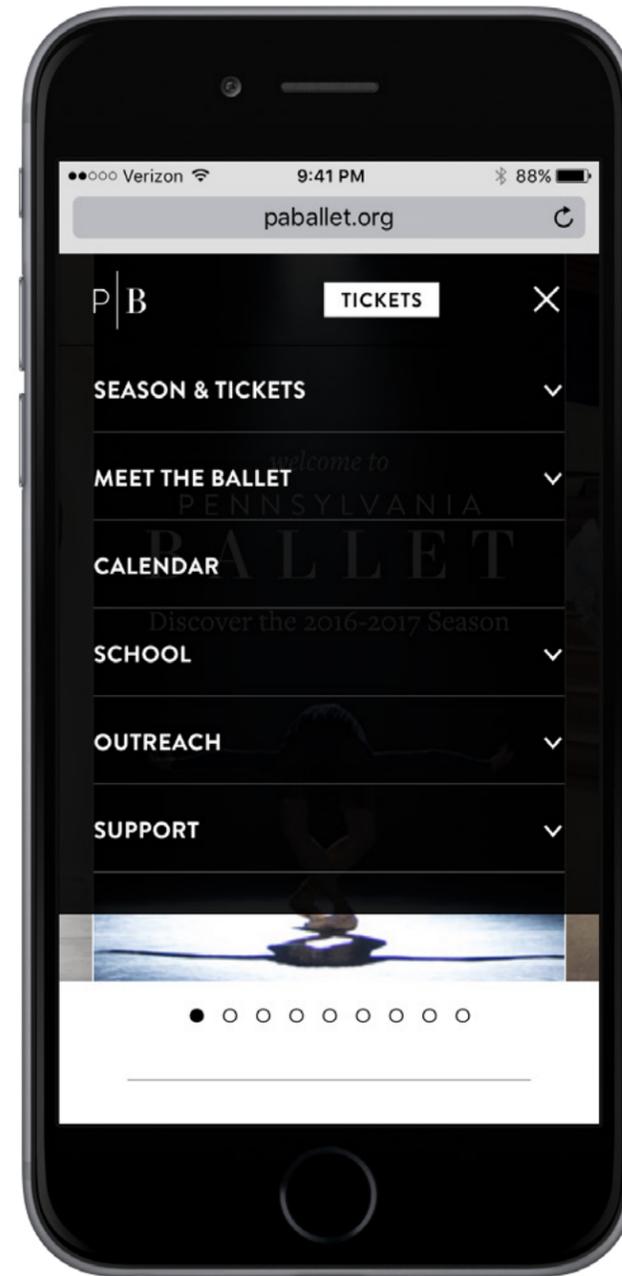
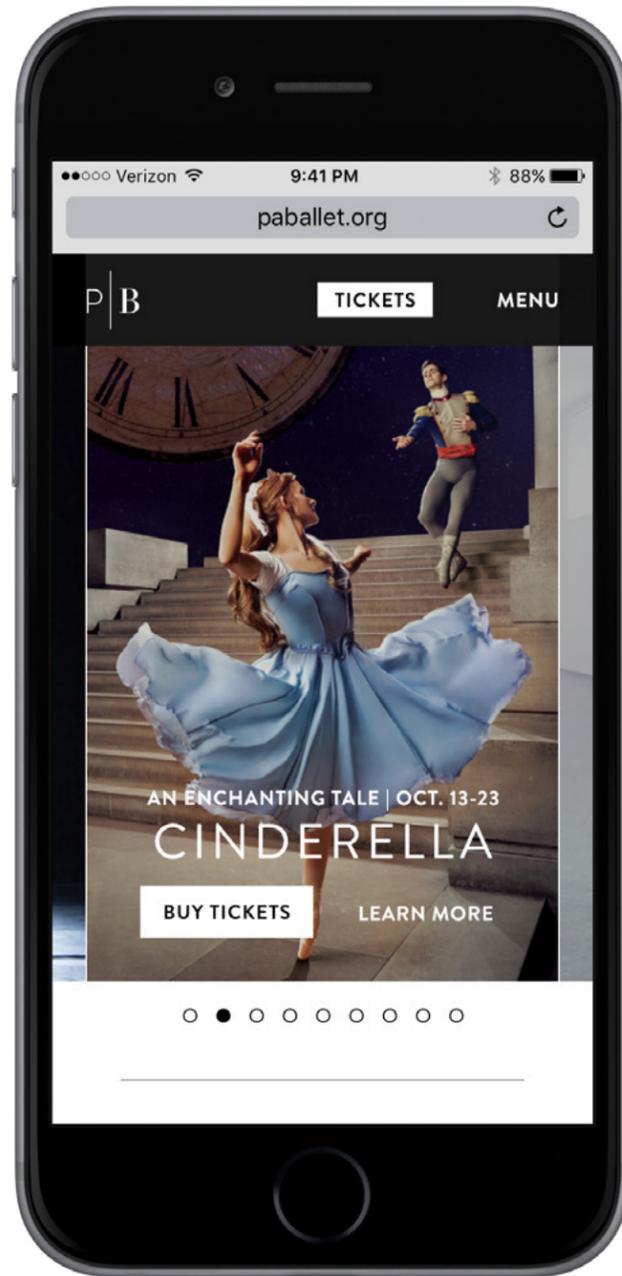
[Season and Tickets, Performances, and Calendar mobile view](#)  
[Season and Tickets, Performances, and Calendar desktop view](#)

[Support mobile view](#)  
[Support desktop view](#)

[Outreach mobile view](#)  
[Outreach desktop view](#)

[Meet the Ballet mobile view](#)  
[Meet the Ballet desktop view](#)

[School mobile view](#)  
[School desktop view](#)



## Step Into School

Through our School program, students and adults alike have the chance to enroll in classes taught by our acclaimed faculty. Take your first step to our stage!

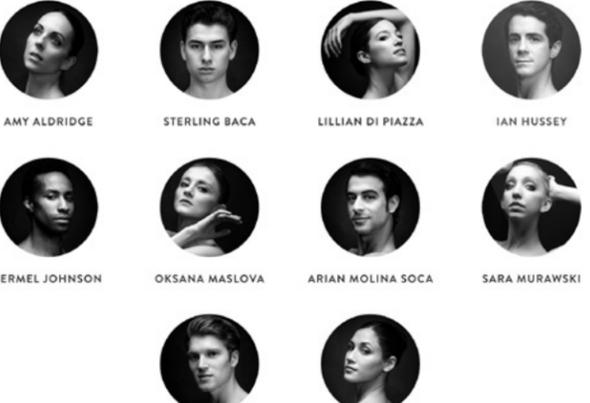
[LEARN MORE](#)




## Le Corsaire Dinner

Set sail for the event of the spring!

## Principal Dancers



AMY ALDRIDGE    STERLING BACA    LILLIAN DI PIAZZA    IAN HUSSEY  
 JERMEL JOHNSON    OKSANA MASLOVA    ARIAN MOLINA SOCA    SARA MURAWSKI  
 ALEXANDER PETERS    MAYARA PINEIRO

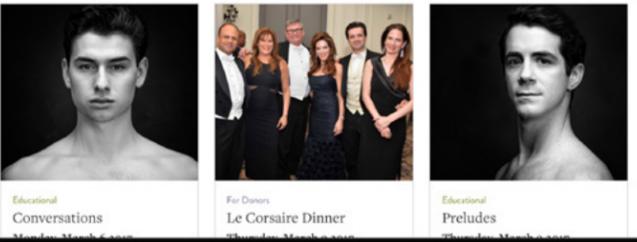
PA BALLET    SEASON & TICKETS    MEET THE BALLET    CALENDAR    SCHOOL    OUTREACH    SUPPORT    TICKETS

# CALENDAR

Home > Calendar

List View    Calendar View

< MARCH 2017 >    ALL CATEGORIES ▾



PA BALLET    SEASON & TICKETS    MEET THE BALLET    CALENDAR    SCHOOL    OUTREACH    SUPPORT    TICKETS

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Home > Outreach > Community Engagement

Since 1996, Pennsylvania Ballet's Community Engagement programs have provided a variety of in-school, after-school, and theater-based programs for Philadelphia-area school children, free of charge. These programs open up new worlds and contribute to the cultural development of Philadelphia-area school children.

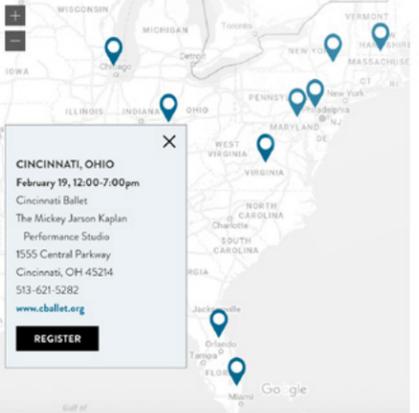
|  | CHAMPION<br>\$500-\$999 | AFICIONADO<br>\$1000-\$499 | DEVOTEE<br>\$500-\$999 | ENTHUSIAST<br>\$100-\$499 | SUPPORTER<br>\$50-\$99 | FRIEND<br>\$20-\$49 |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Advance notice of PAB news and special events              | ✓                       | ✓                          | ✓                      | ✓                         | ✓                      | ✓                   |
| Exclusive donor season guide                               | ✓                       | ✓                          | ✓                      | ✓                         | ✓                      | ✓                   |
| 2 admissions to an afternoon dress rehearsal(s)            |                         |                            |                        |                           | ✓                      |                     |
| Evening wine and cheese reception and technical rehearsals | ✓                       | ✓                          | ✓                      | ✓                         |                        |                     |
| 4 admissions to an afternoon dress rehearsal(s)            |                         |                            |                        | ✓                         |                        |                     |
| Year-round listing in Playbill                             | ✓                       | ✓                          | ✓                      |                           |                        |                     |
| Pair of autographed pointe shoes from your favorite dancer | ✓                       | ✓                          | ✓                      |                           |                        |                     |
| 6 admissions to an afternoon dress rehearsal(s)            | ✓                       | ✓                          | ✓                      |                           |                        |                     |
| VIP ticket services  | ✓                       | ✓                          |                        |                           |                        |                     |
| Invitation to PAB panel discussion and cocktail reception  | ✓                       | ✓                          |                        |                           |                        |                     |
| Invitation to watch a working rehearsal at PAB studios     | ✓                       |                            |                        |                           |                        |                     |

[DONATE TO THE ANNUAL FUND](#)

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### AUDITION DATES

|             |                  |
|-------------|------------------|
| January 8   | Philadelphia, PA |
| January 15  | Washington, D.C. |
| January 16  | New York, NY     |
| January 22  | Boston, MA       |
| January 29  | Atlanta, GA      |
| February 5  | Orlando, FL      |
| February 12 | Chicago, IL      |
| February 19 | Cincinnati, OH   |
| March 5     | Miami, FL        |
| March 12    | Richmond, VA     |
| March 12    | Philadelphia, PA |



tap the map points to explore our audition locations

**CINCINNATI, OHIO**  
**February 19, 12:00-7:00pm**  
 Cincinnati Ballet  
 The Mickey Jarnon Kaplan  
 Performance Studio  
 1555 Central Parkway  
 Cincinnati, OH 45214  
 513-621-5282  
[www.cballet.org](http://www.cballet.org)  
[REGISTER](#)

THE END

