



SEASON OVERVIEW: 2020-2021

AUGUST 2021

Report Summary

The following Report is Dance Data Project® (DDP)'s third annual Season Overview Report and analyzes the works programmed by the Largest 50 U.S. ballet companies between August 2020 and August 2021, specifically focusing on the gender distribution of choreographers.

DDP found, for the third consecutive year, that the majority of work was choreographed by men. Men choreographed 69% of the works programmed in the 2020-2021 season, a slight decrease from 72% in the previous season and 81% the season before. In comparison, women choreographed 27% of works, and 4% of works were choreographed by co-choreographers of different genders and/or gender non-conforming choreographers.

Encouragingly, programmed works by women have increased by 10% since DDP's first Season Overview Report, which analyzed the 2018-2019 season. See Section II for the full year-to-year analysis.

The Report also analyzes the number of individual choreographers and groups of co-choreographers whose work was programmed in the 2020-2021 season. DDP recorded 447 unique choreographers/groups of co-choreographers, of whom 60% were men. The two choreographers whose work was programmed by the largest number of companies were George Balanchine and Marius Petipa. See Section III and the Appendix for details.

Introduction

The period analyzed in this Report was a highly unusual one due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Ballet companies across the country and the globe were largely unable to perform in main stage theaters and for large audiences, which previously represented the main form of programming (and a significant stream of income). Public health concerns and business mandates differed between regions; thus, some companies were able to perform live while others operated entirely virtually. Ballet companies programmed a wide range of innovative works: outdoor and drive-in performances, live shows streamed virtually, dance films created specifically for the screen, choreography by company members, and more.

Accordingly, DDP has adjusted our data collection to best represent this unique season. DDP chose not to qualify works as "main stage or non-main stage" (as done in previous reports) and added a new qualifier: "hybrid, virtual, or live." For full operational definitions used in data qualification, see the Methodology, Limitations, and Notes section at the end of this Report.

The Report is broken into the following sections:

- I. 2020-2021 Season Programming
- II. Year-to-Year Comparison
- III. Choreographer Analysis
- IV. Methodology, Limitations, and Notes
- Appendix.** Choreographer Listing

Section I: 2020-2021 Season Programming

The following graphs break down season programming by category and by gender of choreographers: women, men, and other/mixed gender. The other/mixed gender category encompasses co-choreographers of different genders, as well as non-binary and gender non-conforming artists. When co-choreographers were of the same gender, they were recorded as that gender. All operational definitions are provided in Section IV.

All Works

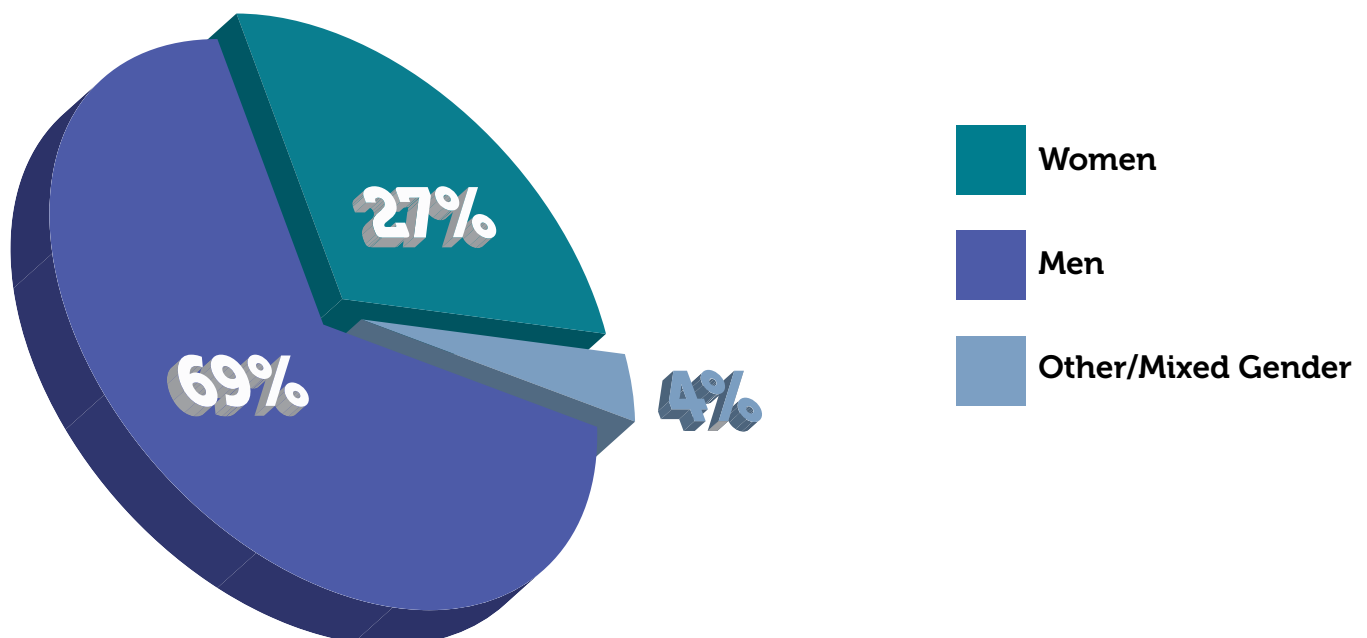
Dance Data Project® recorded 1066 works programmed by the Largest 50 U.S. ballet companies for the 2020-2021 season. DDP defines “works” as individual pieces of choreography, presented either alone or alongside other works. Works which were presented more than once are counted more than once.

27% of works were choreographed by women.

69% of works were choreographed by men.

4% of works were choreographed by people of other/mixed genders.

**All Works | 2020 - 2021 Season
Gender Distribution of Choreographers**



Programs

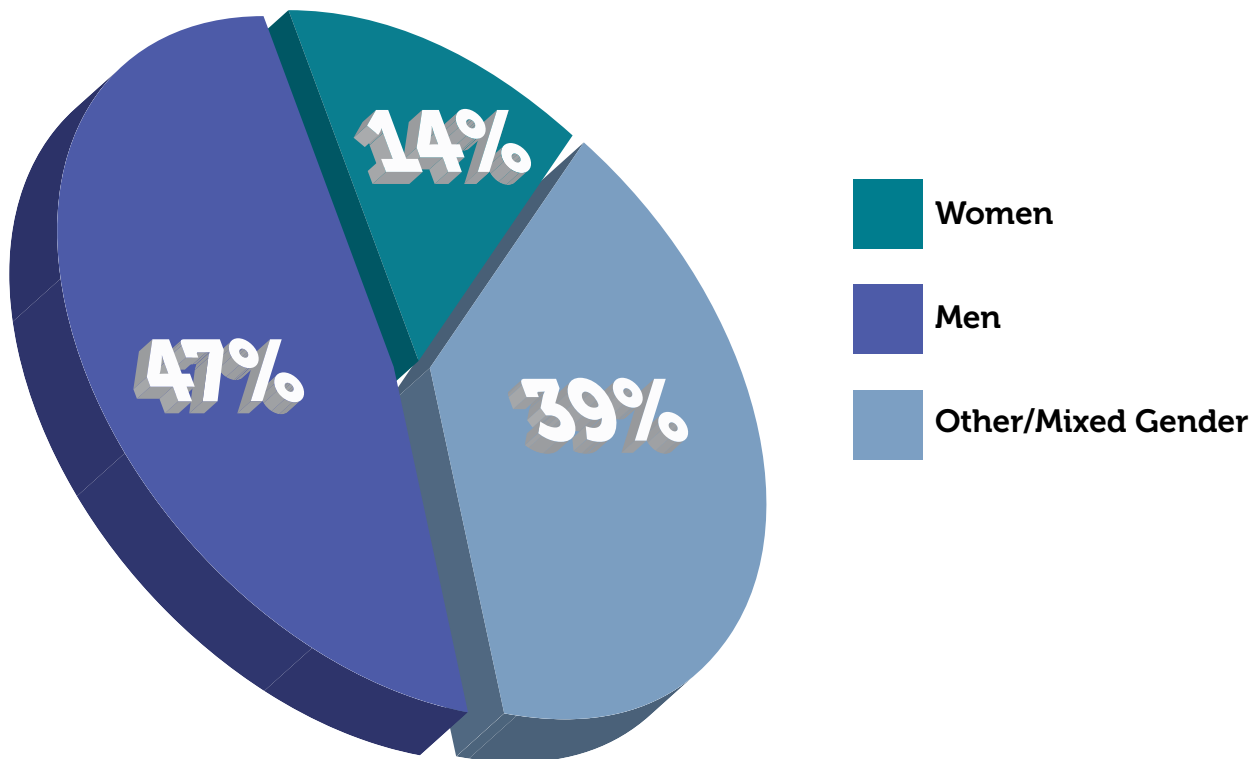
DDP recorded a total of 318 programs for the 2020-2021 season. "Programs" are defined as complete performances or presentations and one program can include one work (a full-length work) or multiple works (mixed bill works). If all works in a program were by choreographers of the same gender, the program was categorized under that gender. When a program contained works by choreographers of different genders, it was categorized as "other/mixed gender."

14% of programs contained only works by women.

47% of programs contained only works by men.

39% of programs contained works by people of other/mixed genders.

Programs | 2020 - 2021 Season
Gender Distribution of Choreographers



Type of Work | Full-Length

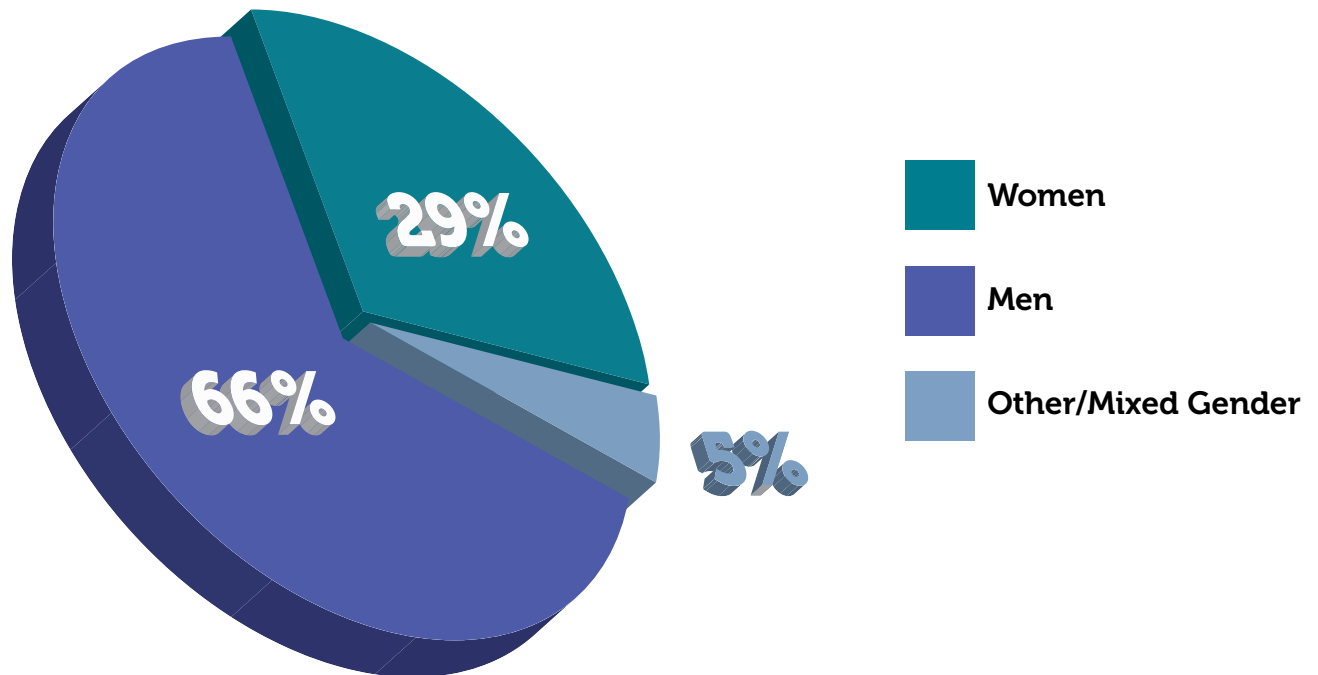
DDP recorded a total of 153 full-length works, defined as works that were presented alone, comprising a full program. "Full-length" does not necessarily represent a certain time length, but simply a work that was chosen to be presented by itself.

29% of full-length works were choreographed by women.

66% of full-length works were choreographed by men.

5% of full-length works were choreographed by people of other/mixed genders.

Full-Length Works | 2020 - 2021 Season Gender Distribution of Choreographers



In the unusual 2020-2021 season, 83% of full-length works were presented virtually, and an additional 7% were hybrid, presented both live and virtually. Only 10% were only presented live.

Type of Work | Mixed-Bill

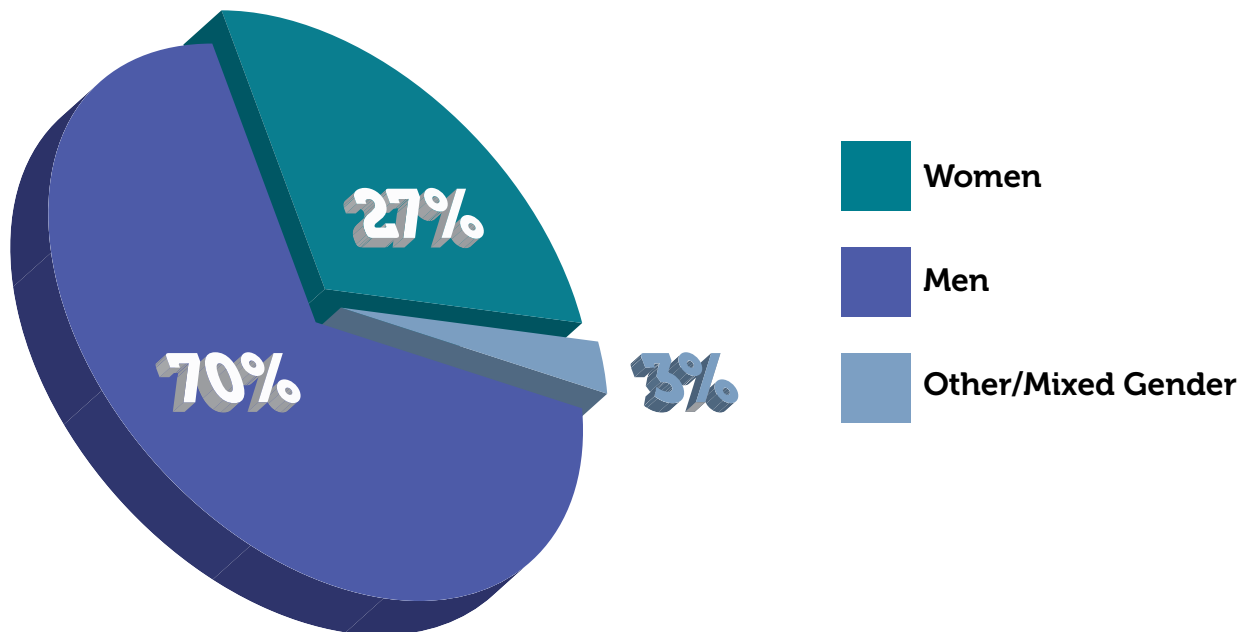
DDP recorded 913 mixed-bill works, defined as works that comprised part of a program, presented alongside other works of similar length.

27% of mixed-bill works were choreographed by women.

70% of mixed-bill works were choreographed by men.

3% of mixed-bill works were choreographed by people of other/mixed genders.

Mixed-Bill Works | 2020 - 2021 Season Gender Distribution of Choreographers



In the 2020-2021 season, 59% of mixed-bill works were presented virtually, 14% hybrid (both virtual and live), and 27% live.

World Premieres

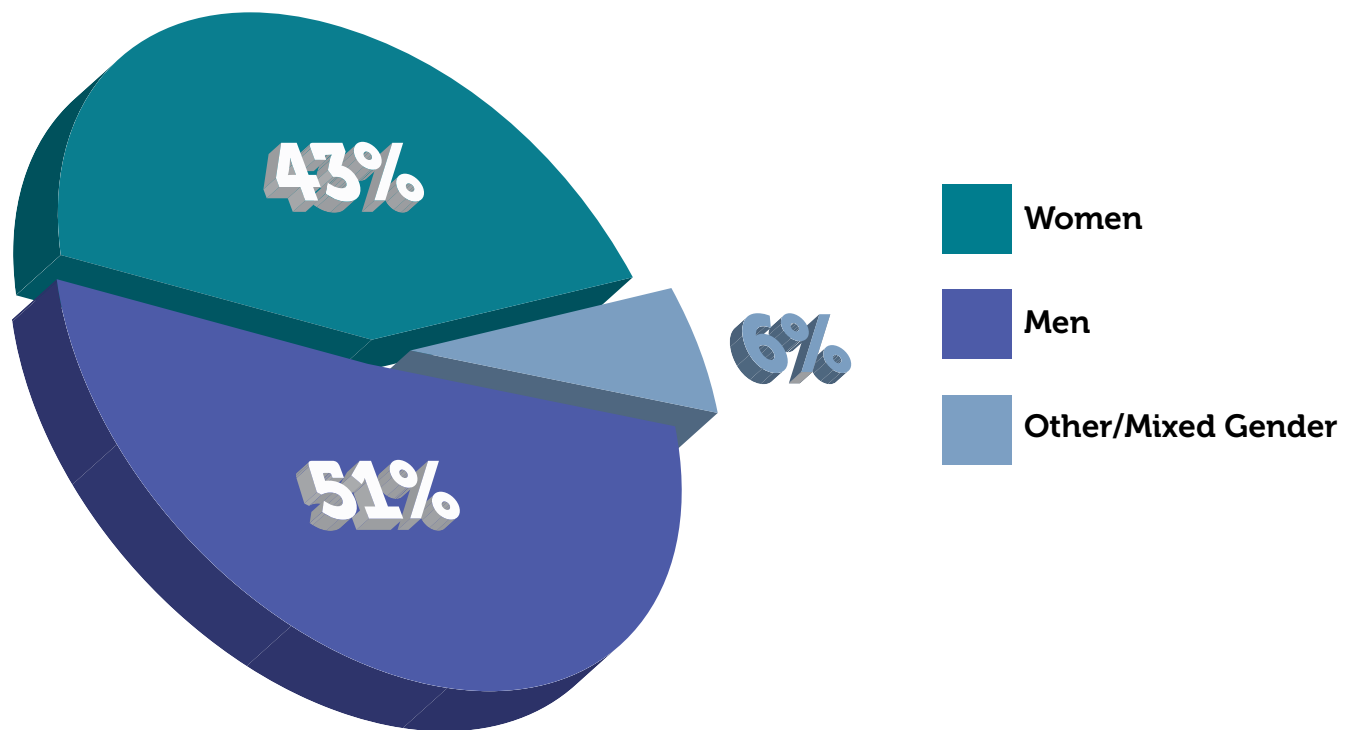
419 works, 39% of the total, were world premieres, performed for the first time this season. Note: for 11 works, DDP was unable to confirm whether they were world premieres. Those works were excluded for the statistics on premieres.

43% of world premieres were choreographed by women.

51% of world premieres were choreographed by men.

6% of world premieres were choreographed by people of other/mixed genders.

World Premieres | 2020 - 2021 Season
Gender Distribution of Choreographers



Non-Premieres

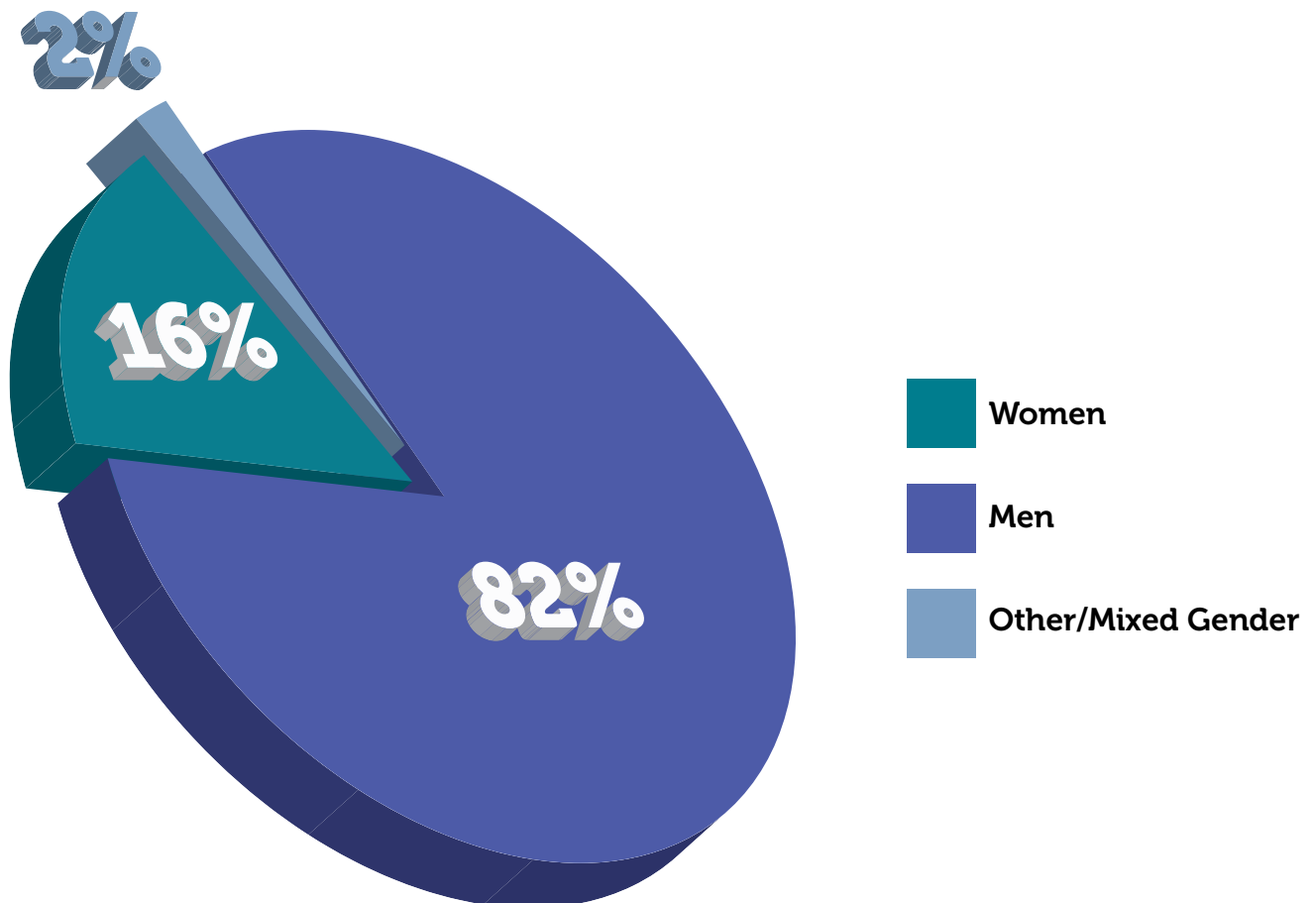
636 works, 60% of the total, were not world premieres, i.e. they had also been presented in past seasons, whether by the same companies or different.

16% of non-premieres were choreographed by women.

82% of non-premieres were choreographed by men.

2% of non-premieres were choreographed by people of other/mixed genders.

Non-Premieres | 2020 - 2021 Season Gender Distribution of Choreographers



Company Category | Main Company

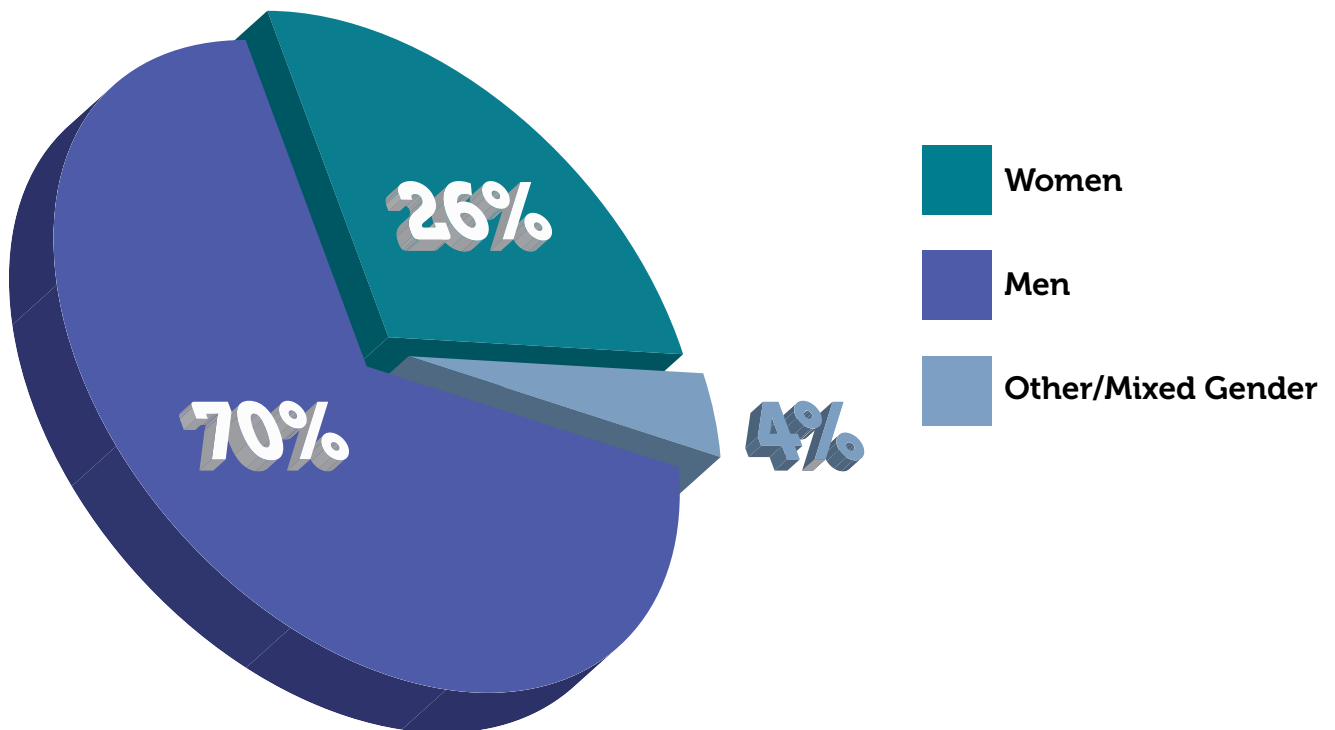
949 works, 89% of the total, recorded for the 2020-2021 season were performed by "main company" dancers. This metric includes works performed by professional dancers or professional guest artists and archived works shown virtually which featured former company members.

26% of main company works were choreographed by women.

70% of main company works were choreographed by men.

4% of main company works were choreographed by people of other/mixed genders.

Main Company Works | 2020 - 2021 Season Gender Distribution of Choreographers



Company Category | Second Company

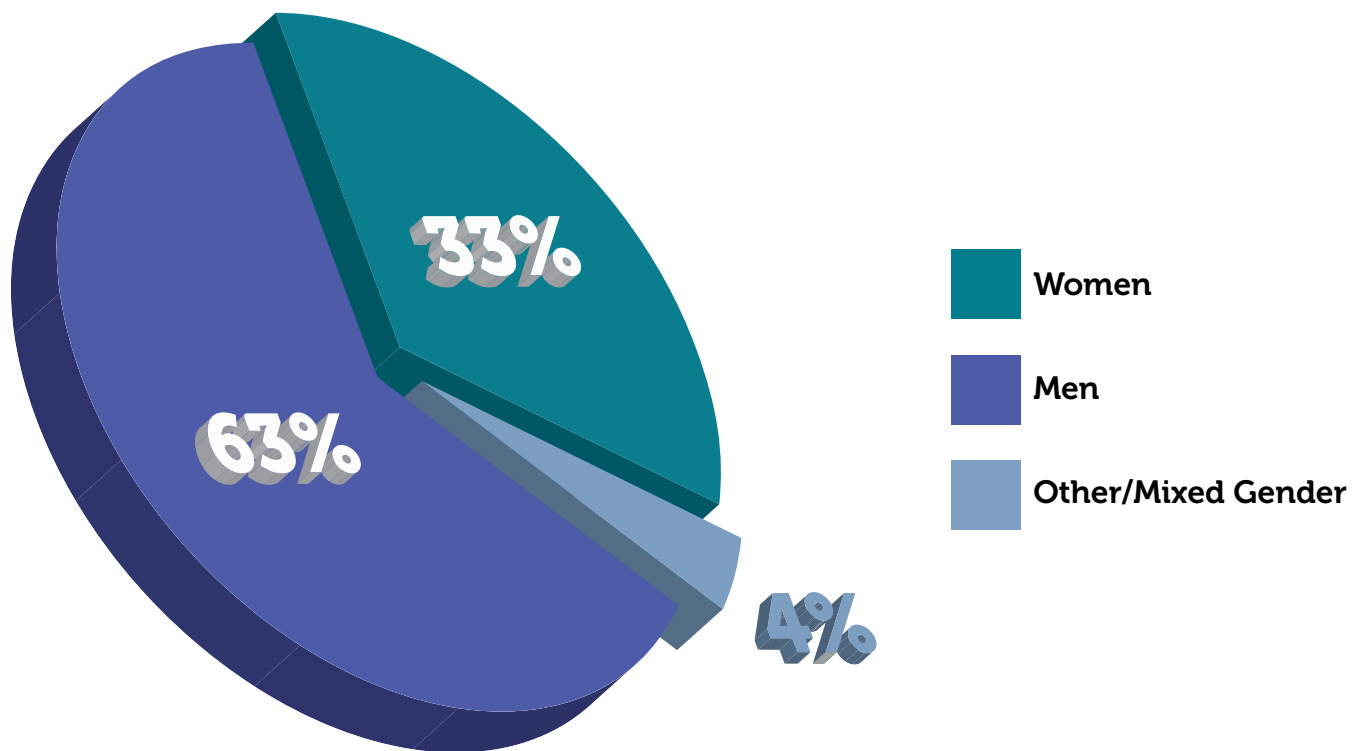
117 works, 11% of the total, were qualified as “second company.” This metric includes works performed by second company dancers, apprentices, trainees, and students. Note: DDP only included works performed by students when they were in the same program as works performed by main or second company dancers.

33% of second company works were choreographed by women.

63% of second company works were choreographed by men.

4% of second company works were choreographed by people of other/mixed genders.

Main Company Works | 2020 - 2021 Season Gender Distribution of Choreographers



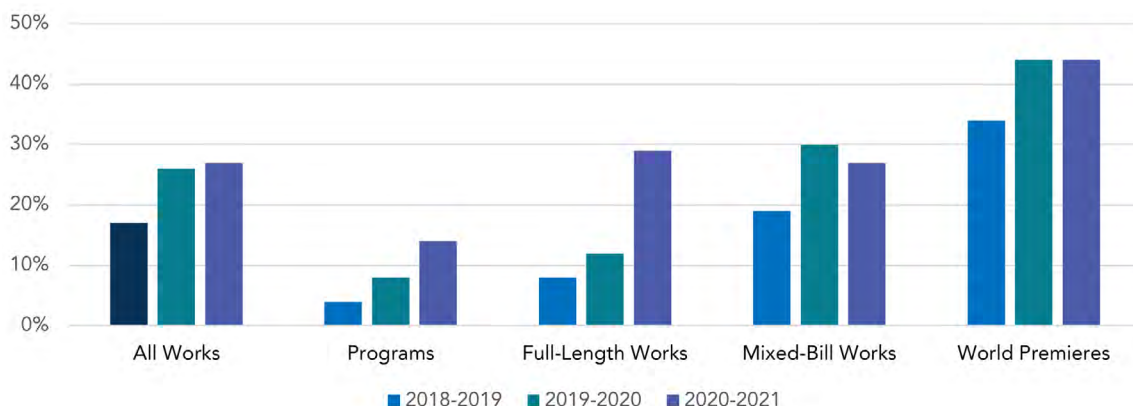
Section II: Year-to-Year Comparison

Year-to-Year Comparison of Work by Women

To examine the trend in programming works by women, the charts below show the percentages of programmed works by women in the three seasons which DDP has analyzed to date, as well as the total change.

YEAR-TO-YEAR COMPARISON - WOMEN				
	TOTAL CHANGE	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
All Works	+10%	27%	26%	17%
Programs	+10%	14%	8%	4%
Full-Length Works	+21%	29%	12%	8%
Mixed-Bill Works	+8%	27%	30%	19%
World Premieres	+9%	43%	44%	34%

Year-to-Year Comparison Works by Women in Season Programming



Of note, all categories have increased overall and works by women are up 10% between the 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 seasons. Programs, meaning entire shows featuring only work by women, are also up 10%.

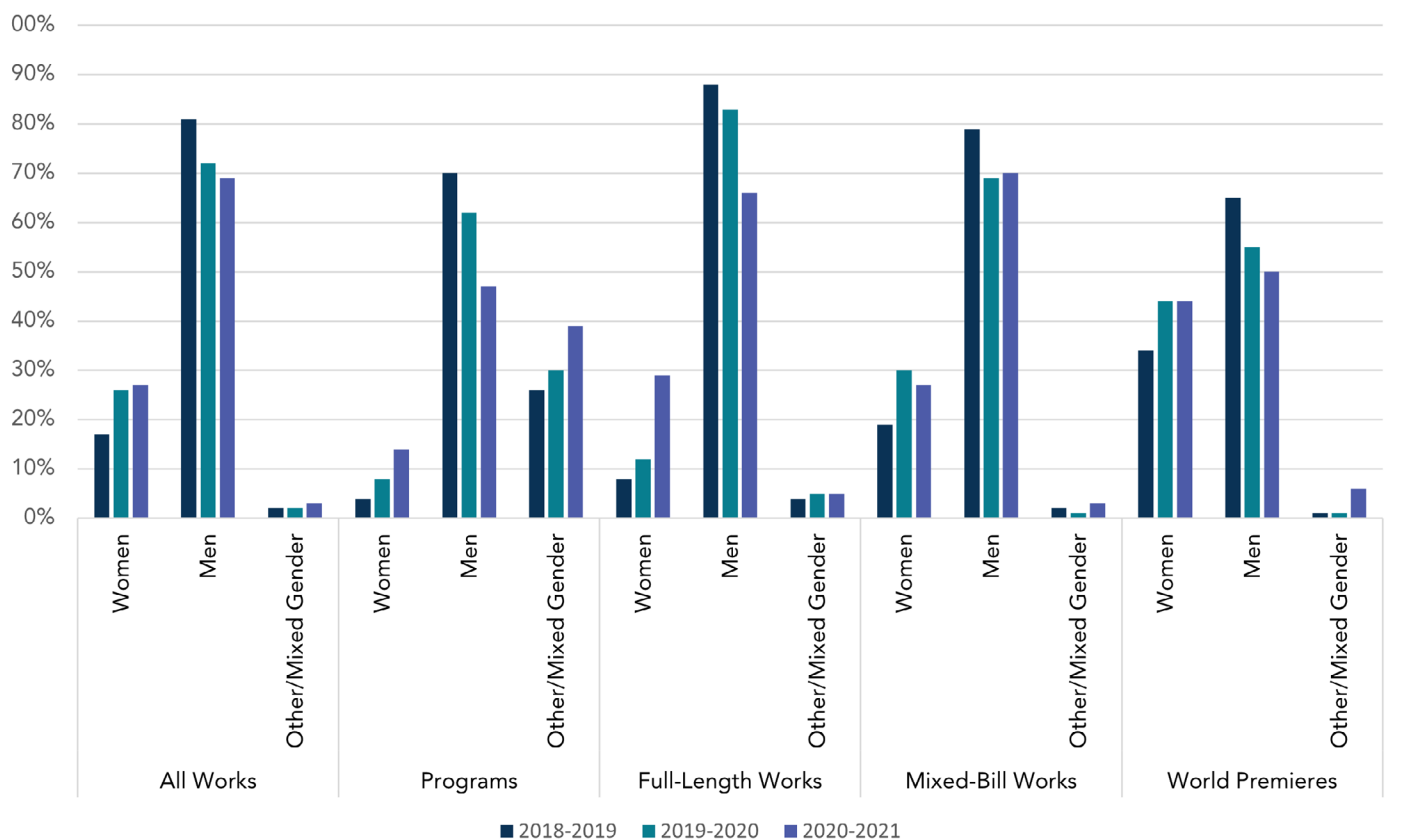
While this is an encouraging indicator of improvement in gender equity in company programming, it is important to note that the pandemic significantly affected both the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 seasons. In the 2020-2021 season, 63% of programmed works were virtual, and an additional 13% were hybrid, presented both virtually and live. The logistics and costs of presentation differ between live and virtual works. When considering year-to-year comparisons, this should be kept in mind.

Full Year-to-Year Comparison

The graphs below give the full year-to-year comparison.

YEAR-TO-YEAR COMPARISON					
		TOTAL CHANGE	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
All Works	Women	+10%	27%	26%	17%
	Men	-12%	69%	72%	81%
	Other / Mixed Gender	+2%	4%	2%	2%
Programs	Women	+10%	14%	8%	4%
	Men	-23%	47%	62%	70%
	Other / Mixed Gender	+13%	39%	30%	26%
Full-Length Works	Women	+21%	29%	12%	8%
	Men	-22%	66%	83%	88%
	Other / Mixed Gender	+1%	5%	5%	4%
Mixed-Bill Works	Women	+8%	27%	30%	19%
	Men	-9%	70%	69%	79%
	Other / Mixed Gender	+1%	3%	1%	2%
World Premieres	Women	+9%	43%	44%	34%
	Men	-14%	51%	55%	65%
	Other / Mixed Gender	+5%	6%	1%	1%

Year-to-Year Comparison Gender Distribution of Choreographers in Season Programming



Section III: Choreographer Analysis

For the first time, DDP has analyzed the number and gender distribution of unique choreographers whose work was programmed. In many cases, companies programmed more than one work by the same choreographer, and in other cases, choreographers had works presented at multiple companies. The statistics in this section count each unique choreographer and group of co-choreographers once. These counts include both current choreographers who have recently made work and retired choreographers whose works are in company or classical repertory, as far back as Marius Petipa and Jules Perrot. In the case of classical repertory and excerpts, DDP deferred to companies for choreographer credits.

All Unique Choreographers

The 2020-2021 season had works by 447 unique choreographers and groups of co-choreographers. This includes both living and deceased choreographers. Notably, the two choreographers whose work was performed by the highest number of companies were George Balanchine and Marius Petipa, both deceased.

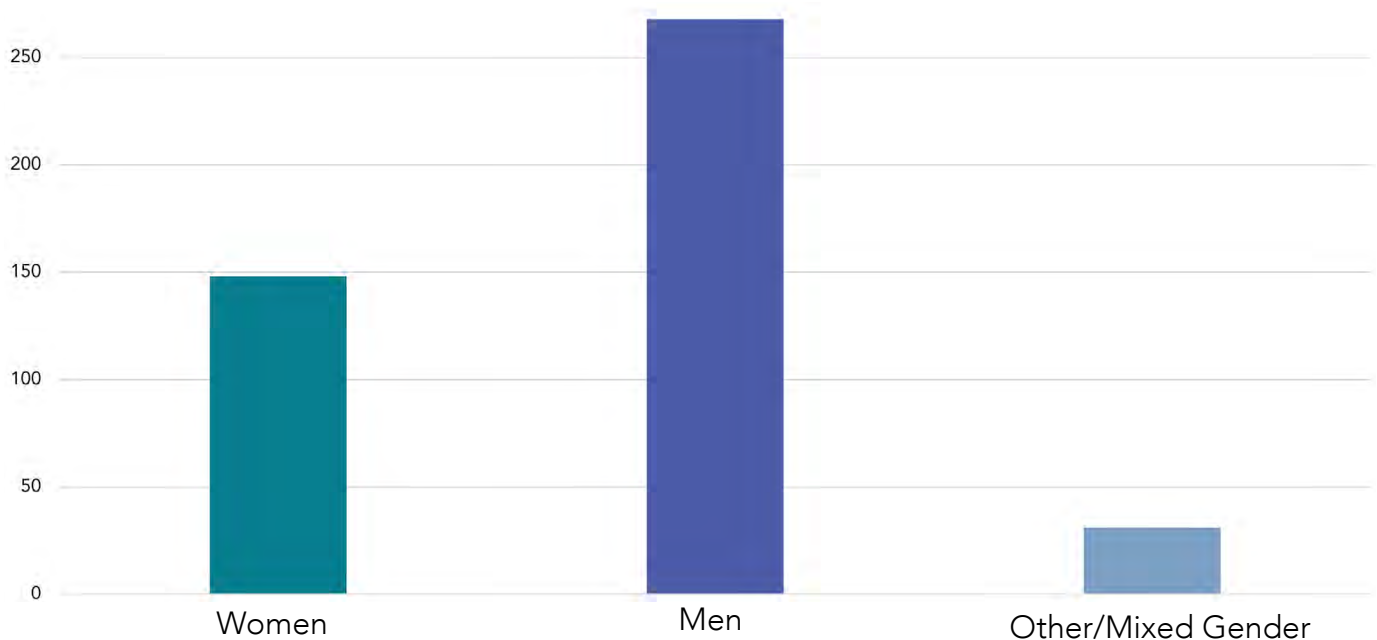
Of the total choreographers:

148 choreographers were women (33%).

268 choreographers were men (60%).

31 choreographers were other/mixed gender co-choreographers (7%).

All Choreographers in 2020 - 2021 Season Programming at Largest 50 U.S. Ballet Companies



All Unique Choreographers of Premieres

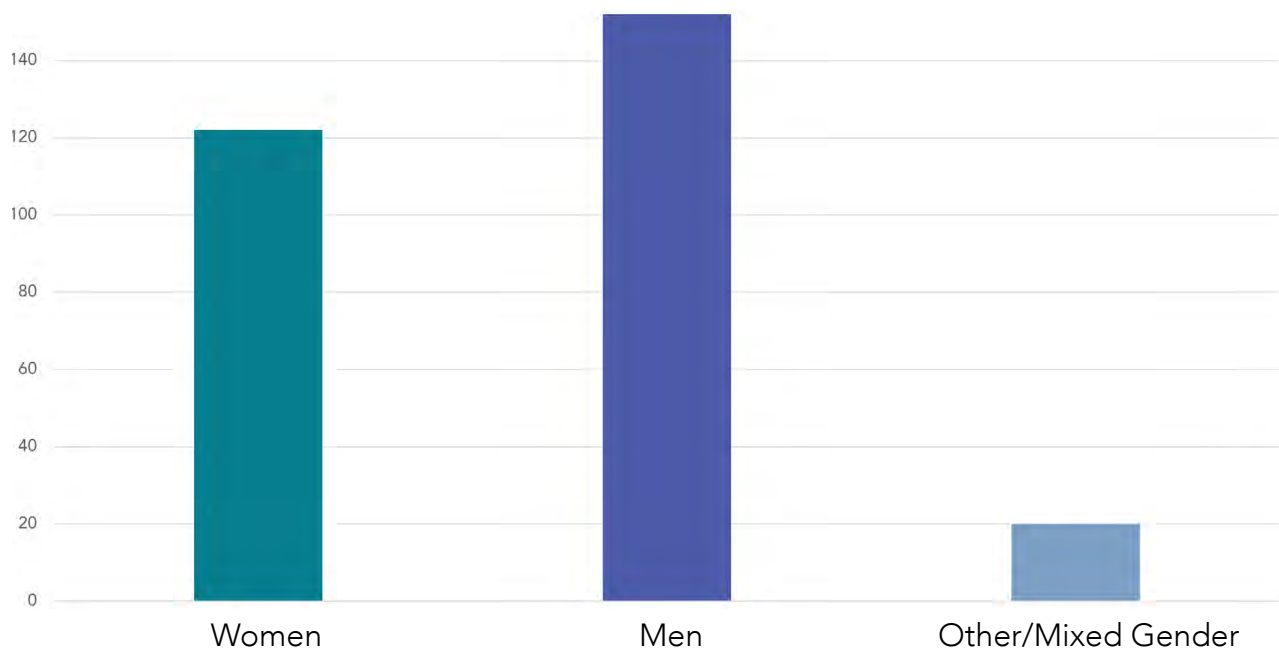
There were 419 world premieres recorded in the 2020-2021 season, choreographed by 294 unique choreographers and groups of co-choreographers. Of these:

122 choreographers were women (41%).

152 choreographers were men (52%).

20 were other/mixed gender co-choreographers (7%).

Choreographers of Premieres in 2020 - 2021 Season Programming at Largest 50 U.S. Ballet Companies



To see the full list of choreographers, as well as how often their work was programmed in the 2020-2021 season, please see the Appendix at the end of this Report.

Section IV: Methodology, Limitations, and Notes

Sources

Season programming data was sourced from primary sources including company websites, social media, and press releases, and from news and media coverage as secondary sources. DDP further contacted each company individually with the opportunity to verify, add, or alter information. 72% of companies responded to this outreach with verification and/or data alterations. Please note that this Report analyzes only works which were presented; performances which were cancelled or postponed have been excluded.

DDP has also included works that were performed by companies at festivals, including but not limited to the BAAND Together Dance Festival (Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theatre, Ballet Hispánico, Dance Theatre of Harlem, and New York City Ballet), Ballet Sun Valley (BalletX), Vail Dance Festival (BalletX and New York City Ballet), and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival (Dallas Black Dance Theatre and Dance Theatre of Harlem). Only works presented by the companies at festivals were included; DDP will separately publish a Report detailing the full gender distribution of choreographers at dance festivals.

We extend our gratitude to the following 36 companies who verified the season programming data:

Alonzo King LINES Ballet	Dallas Black Dance Theatre	Nashville Ballet
American Ballet Theatre	Dance Theatre of Harlem	Oklahoma City Ballet
Atlanta Ballet	Eugene Ballet	Oregon Ballet Theatre
Ballet Arizona	Festival Ballet Providence	Pacific Northwest Ballet
Ballet Austin	Grand Rapids Ballet	Philadelphia Ballet (formerly Pennsylvania Ballet)
Ballet Hispánico	Houston Ballet	Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre
Ballet Idaho	Hubbard Street Dance Chicago	Richmond Ballet
Ballet West	Joffrey Ballet	San Francisco Ballet
BalletX	Kansas City Ballet	The Sarasota Ballet
Boston Ballet	L.A. Dance Project	Smuin Contemporary Ballet
Carolina Ballet	Los Angeles Ballet	The Washington Ballet
Cincinnati Ballet	Miami City Ballet	
Colorado Ballet		

Largest 50 U.S. Ballet Companies

The sample of companies utilized for this Report is listed below and further defined and detailed in DDP's [2021 Largest 50 US Ballet Companies & Scope of the Industry Report](#). This sample represents the U.S. ballet companies who operate with the largest budgets.

Note: Aspen Santa Fe Ballet (listed as one of the Largest 50) has announced the dissolution of their professional company and produced no programming during the 2020-2021 season. Accordingly, for this study, DDP excluded Aspen Santa Fe and instead included Ballet Idaho (#51), so as to capture 50 companies who produced programming during the selected period.

The Alabama Ballet	Cincinnati Ballet	Nevada Ballet Theatre
Alonzo King LINES Ballet	Colorado Ballet	New York City Ballet
Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater	Dallas Black Dance Theatre	Oklahoma City Ballet
American Ballet Theatre	Dance Theatre of Harlem	Oregon Ballet Theatre
American Repertory Ballet	Eugene Ballet	Orlando Ballet
Atlanta Ballet	Festival Ballet Providence	Pacific Northwest Ballet
Ballet Arizona	Grand Rapids Ballet	Philadelphia Ballet (formerly Pennsylvania Ballet)
Ballet Austin	Houston Ballet	Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre
Ballet Hispánico	Hubbard Street Dance Chicago	Richmond Ballet
Ballet Idaho	Joffrey Ballet	Sacramento Ballet
Ballet Memphis	Kansas City Ballet	San Francisco Ballet
Ballet West	L.A. Dance Project	The Sarasota Ballet
BalletMet	Los Angeles Ballet	Smuin Contemporary Ballet
BalletX	Louisville Ballet	Texas Ballet Theater
Boston Ballet	Miami City Ballet	Tulsa Ballet
Carolina Ballet	Milwaukee Ballet	The Washington Ballet
Charlotte Ballet	Nashville Ballet	

Operational Definitions:

2020-2021 Season: The period August 2020 - August 2021

Gender: DDP has used the following categories for this Report in referring to the gender identities of choreographers: women, men, and other/mixed gender. Other/mixed gender encompasses non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals, as well as teams of individuals who are of different genders. DDP respects and has worked to accurately represent the gender identities of individuals.

Works: Individual pieces of choreography, presented either alone or alongside other works. Works which were presented more than once are counted more than once.

Programs: Complete performances or presentations; one program can include one work (full-length) or multiple works (mixed bill).

Full-Length Works: Works which comprised an entire program, presented alone.

Mixed Bill Works: Works which comprised part of a program, presented alongside other works of similar length.

Virtual Works: Works which were not performed live by dancers for an in-person audience. Includes drive-in performances and all performances in which the audience viewed dance on a screen.

Live Works: Works which were performed either indoors or outdoors for an audience. Includes all works in which the audience and dancers were in the same place, at the same time.

Hybrid Works: Works which were performed for a live audience and also available for virtual viewing.

Premieres: Refers to world premieres - works which were presented for the first time. If a premiere was presented more than once by a company within the same season, it was counted each time as premiere where applicable.

Non-Premieres: Programmed works which were also performed in previous seasons, either by the same company or different

Main Company: Professional dancers or guest artists of a company. Includes former main company dancers whose performances were shown via archived footage.

Second Company: Second company dancers, apprentices, trainees, and students of a company. Note: DDP only included works performed by students when they were in the same program as works performed by main or second company dancers.

Note: Main Stage vs Non-Main Stage: In previous Reports, DDP has analyzed season programming by examining "main stage" and "non-main stage" works. Due to the unique nature of the 2020-2021 season, the majority of companies were unable to perform at their home, or main, stages at all. DDP has thus omitted this variable altogether in this Report.

Please cite Dance Data Project® when utilizing the findings in this Report.

With any inquiries or comments, we invite you to contact DDP Research and Special Projects Lead Michayla Kelly at mkelly@dancedataproject.com.

APPENDIX: CHOREOGRAPHER LISTING

The following contains the complete list of choreographers whose work was recorded by DDP for the 2020-2021 season at the Largest 50 U.S. ballet companies. For each choreographer, the following variables are recorded:

- ◆ Name
- ◆ The number of companies who presented their work in 2020-2021 (within the sample of 50 companies)
- ◆ The number of their unique works that were featured (each work was only counted once, regardless of how many companies performed it)
- ◆ The number of programs in which their work was featured (each program was counted only once, regardless if they had more than one work featured in it)
- ◆ Gender

Please note that when multiple choreographers were credited to a single work, they have been listed together as one group of co-choreographers, and their gender was recorded either as their shared gender, if applicable, or as other/mixed gender. Thus, some choreographers appear both alone and in one or multiple groups.

[Click here to view the Choreographer Listing](#)