

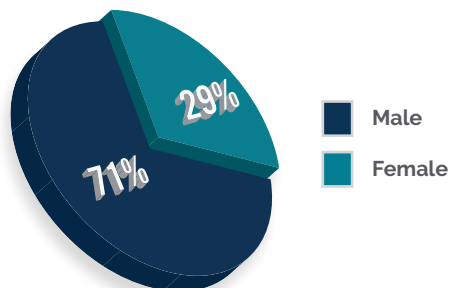
July 2021

# Dance Data Project<sup>®</sup> US Artistic Director History Data Byte



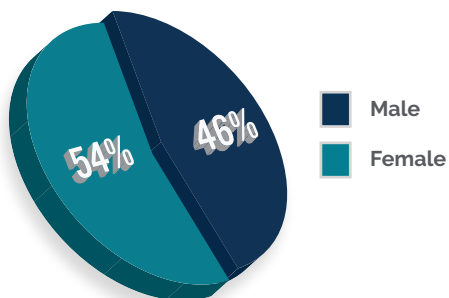
This Data Byte examines the gender distribution in artistic leadership among the 50 companies who comprise DDP's 2021 Largest 50 US ballet companies list.<sup>1</sup> There have been 207 Artistic Directors employed by the Largest 50 US ballet companies to date. Of the 207 Artistic Directors, only 60 have been women (29%), and the remaining 147 have been men (71%).

Artistic Directors at Largest 50 US Ballet Companies from founding to present

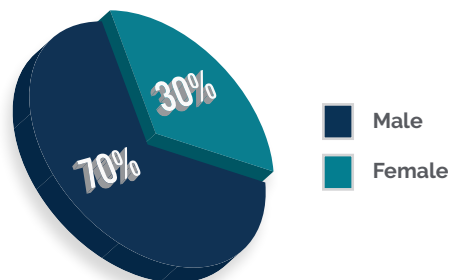


Of the companies studied, 36 were founded by women (72%), either as founding Artistic Directors (27 companies) or lead funders and/or other essential roles (9 companies). Of the 27 companies (54%) with female founding Artistic Directors, 19 are now led by male Artistic Directors (70%). 11 have not had a female Artistic Director since the founding Artistic Director (excluding companies in which the founding AD is still in leadership). There are 13 companies (26%) which have never had a female Artistic Director.

Founding Artistic Directors at Largest 50 US Ballet Companies



Current Artistic Directors at Companies with Female Founding Artistic Directors

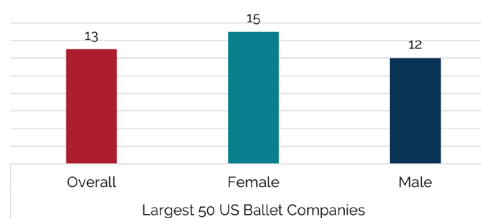


The average age of the Largest 50 US ballet companies is 52 years. The oldest (with origins prior to 1940) are Atlanta Ballet (est. 1929), San Francisco Ballet (est. 1933), New York City Ballet (affiliated School of American Ballet est 1934), and American Ballet Theatre (est. 1939). The youngest are Los Angeles Ballet, BalletX, and L.A. Dance Project, founded in 2004, 2005 and 2012 respectively.

From founding to present, the average number of Artistic Directors per company is 4. The average length of tenure for Artistic Directors amongst the 50 Largest US ballet companies is:

13 years overall  
 15 years for female Artistic Directors  
 12 years for male Artistic Directors

Average Tenure in Years for Artistic Directors from founding to present



DDP also examined the average length of tenure for the Largest 10, Largest 25, and Lower 25 US ballet companies.

Average length of tenure for Largest 10:

17 years overall  
 15 years for female Artistic Directors  
 17 years for male Artistic Directors

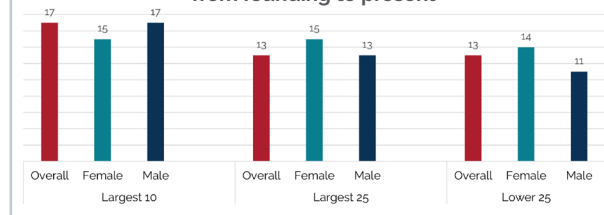
Average length of tenure for the Largest 25:

13 years overall  
 15 years for female Artistic Directors  
 13 years for male Artistic Directors

Average length of tenure for the Lower 25:

13 years overall  
 14 years for female Artistic Directors  
 11 years for male Artistic Directors

Average Tenure in Years for Artistic Directors from founding to present



Of the 33 companies that have employed both male and female Artistic Directors:

- 13 companies had a woman as their longest serving Artistic Director (39%)
- 14 companies had a man as their longest serving Artistic Director (42%)
- 6 companies had a tie between genders for the longest term served (18%)

**Facts of Note:**

- The longest serving Artistic Directors are:
  - Toni Pimble at Eugene Ballet (43 years to date) - Founding and current Artistic Director
  - Stoner Winslett at Richmond Ballet (41 years to date) - Founding and current Artistic Director
  - Arthur Mitchell at Dance Theatre of Harlem (40 years) - Founding Artistic Director
  - Tina Ramirez at Ballet Hispánico (39 years) - Founding Artistic Director
  - Alonzo King at Alonzo King LINES Ballet (39 years to date) - Founding and current Artistic Director

Although female Artistic Directors only account for 29% of the artistic leadership roles in the history of the Largest 50 companies, women often serve slightly longer terms than their male counterparts in this role. Even with the exclusion of the six longest-serving female Artistic Directors, the average tenure for women is still 12 years, equally matching the average tenure for male Artistic Directors.

<sup>1</sup>To see the full list of companies and their breakdown into Largest 10, Largest 25, and Lower 25, please refer to the [DDP Largest 50 US Ballet Companies & Scope of the Industry Report](#) (May 2021)

To learn more about the limitations and methodology, [click here](#)