## IVIaria Ialchief

(1925-2013)

Maria Tallchief was one of the most accomplished dancers of the 20th century and was the first Native American woman to hold the rank of prima ballerina. A member of the Osage Nation, Tallchief grew up proud of her Native American heritage and identity. She started dance classes at a young age and made her professional debut with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in New York City after graduating high school.



## America's First Prima Ballerina

Her skill and grace put American ballet on the world stage, and she originated many beloved roles—including the Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*. She empowered and inspired a younger generation, particularly women of color, to pursue their dance dreams. "Above all, I wanted to be appreciated as a prima ballerina who happened to be Native American."

Learn more here or scan this QR code:

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