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Ballet BC Kicks Off 2023/24 with 'HERE'

Fifty dancers on stage for the first time in company history highlights season opening program



Artists of Ballet BC. Photo by Marcus Eriksson.

Vancouver, BC - Following an east coast tour including sold-out performances at New York City Center's Fall for Dance Festival, Ballet BC returns to Vancouver's Queen Elizabeth Theatre with 'HERE,' Nov 2/3/4. Featuring a brand new creation from Netherlands-based Stephen Shropshire, Shahar Binyamini's epic *BOLERO X* featuring a cast of 50 dancers in collaboration with Arts Umbrella Dance, and the return of William Forsythe's powerful *Enemy in the Figure*, the program launches Ballet BC's most ambitious season yet.

"This is a really exciting program to kick off a big season of firsts," says Ballet BC Artistic Director Medhi Walerski. "I'm constantly seeking ways to not only delight but also challenge and surprise

audiences. Each of these works is distinct and meaningful for different reasons—from a new large-scale ensemble work that celebrates a revered piece of music, to a legendary piece that has stood the test of time, to an anticipated world premiere that continues the company’s commitment to creation above all else. It’s a unique opportunity to experience the world’s best dance right here in Vancouver.”

The first of five world premieres this season, the long-awaited new creation from Stephen Shropshire was originally commissioned by former Ballet BC Artistic Director Emily Molnar and delayed due to the pandemic. The inspiration for the work was Italian composer, guitarist and musicologist Angelo Gilardino’s cycle of guitar variations based upon “*Ah vous dirais-je Maman*,” a popular children’s song originating in 18th century France and adopted for the English language lullaby “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”. Shropshire’s movement language for the creation is dynamic, beginning with themes suggesting something child-like and playful, before evolving into something more intricate and complex.

For the first time in Ballet BC history and brought to life through a collaboration with Vancouver’s Arts Umbrella Dance, 50 dancers will take the stage for the world premiere of Shahar Binyamini’s *BOLERO X*. Set to Ravel’s 1928 masterpiece, the creation explores themes of unison and repetition, while still allowing for individuality and stand-out solo and duet performances. The choreography echoes the music, with a mesmerizing crescendo and powerful group formations. Says Binyamini of the creation, “I hope it enables audiences to reflect on how we grow and evolve, through the physicality and the sensations—how it all shapes our presence. In that sense I really enjoy the timeless feeling of the piece. This music is timeless for a reason—it has survived time.”

After wowing Ballet BC audiences in 2018, William Forsythe’s “thrilling” (*The Guardian*) *Enemy in the Figure* returns to the QET stage with a fresh new cast. Set to a brooding score by Thom Willems, the work is a highly acclaimed and beloved creation from one of the greatest choreographers of all time. The work involves a significant amount of improvisation—something Ballet BC’s classically-trained contemporary dancers are particularly well-versed in, making the performance new and exciting each time it’s performed. Forsythe’s work also famously explores extremities and intense physical commitment, making his ballets an unforgettable experience for both the dancers and the audience.

HERE takes place November 2/3/4 at 8pm at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre in Vancouver. Tickets starting at \$19 are now available at balletbc.com. For more information and to remain updated on upcoming Ballet BC performances and events, visit balletbc.com or follow them on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

ABOUT BALLET BC

Founded in 1986, Ballet BC is currently under the leadership of Artistic Director Medhi Walerski. Ballet BC is an acclaimed collaborative and creation-based company that is a leader and resource in the creation, production and education of contemporary dance in Canada. Based in Vancouver, the company’s distinctive style and approach has made a unique and valuable contribution to the development of dance both at home and around the world. Ballet BC presents a diverse repertoire of Canadian and international work from the late 20th and early 21st centuries, including choreography by William Forsythe, Cayetano Soto, Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar, Johan Inger, Medhi Walerski, Ohad Naharin, Crystal Pite, Emily Molnar and more, and is deeply committed to the creation and performance of new works.

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