BALLET
BALLE
BALL
BAL
BA
B C



Romeo + Juliet

Choreography **Medhi Walerski**

February 21 22 23 24

Queen Elizabeth Theatre

#bbcromeoandjuliet

JOIN THE BALLET BC E-LIST: balletbc.com

Ballet BC would like to thank **Beech Foundation** and **Diamond Foundation** for their steadfast support of Ballet BC's Student and Community Dress Rehearsals.

Ballet BC acknowledges the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia for Ballet BC's Outreach and Education Program.



Ballet BC thanks the TELUS Vancouver Community Board for their generous support of the *Romeo + Juliet* Live-Streaming Project.



Rehearsal Live-Streaming

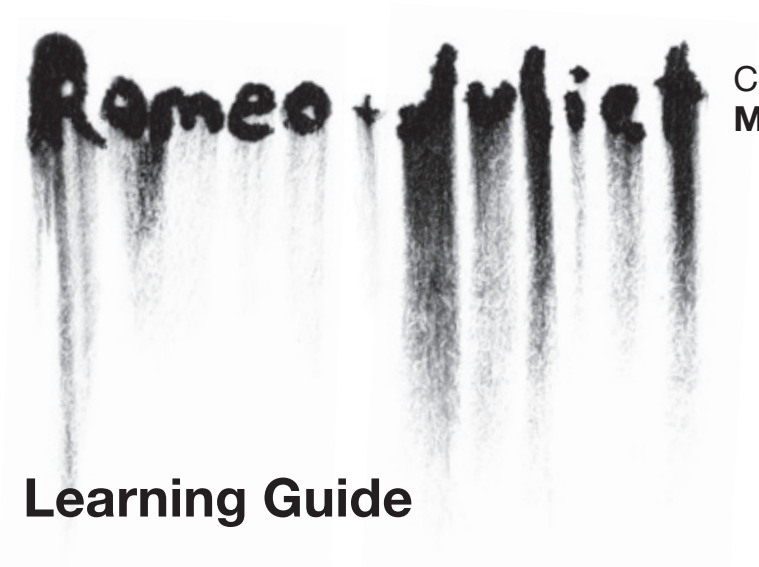
Touch point one:
Wednesday February 21, 2018 @ 1:00pm
Live-stream of dress rehearsal from the Queen Elizabeth Theatre

Touch point two:
Microsite within Ballet BC's main website for educator password protected access post rehearsal for the remainder of the school term

Touch point three:
Online platform for participants to submit questions post-rehearsal

Touch point four:
Friday February 23, 2018 @ 1:00pm
Live from the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, online Q&A session with our Artistic Director, choreographer and dancers

B A L L E T
B A L L E
B A L L
B A L
B A
B C



Choreography
Medhi Walerski

Learning Guide

The goal of this Learning Guide is to help students engage fully with the dance performance featured in Ballet BC's 2018 production of *Romeo + Juliet* premiered at The Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4… Welcome from Artistic Director
5… About Ballet BC
6… About Ballet BC's *Romeo + Juliet*
11… About the Artists
21… Before the Performance Lesson I - Dance
24… Before the Performance Lesson II - Music
25… Before the Performance Lesson III - Storytelling
26… After the Performance Lesson IV
27… Continue Your Exploration

B A L L E T
B A L L E
B A L L
B A L
B A
B C



A MESSAGE FROM BALLET BC

Welcome to *Romeo + Juliet,* Ballet BC's second program of the 2017/18 season. A first for Ballet BC's repertoire, Shakespeare's tragic tale of "star-crossed lovers" has inspired many an artist. Compelling in its timelessness, the work captures audiences with its deeply human story and enduring themes of love, fate and family.

"*Story is important to us as human beings—it connects us to each other, the past, enriches our present and moves us towards the future.*" –Medhi Walerski

Ballet BC is thrilled to have this iconic story expertly crafted by Medhi Walerski, one of the most original voices in international dance today. Set to Sergei Prokofiev's original score, this full-length commission showcases Walerski's signature style that brings together dazzling landscapes woven with poetic, unpredictable and complex imagery. Walerski brings a contemporary familiarity to the story of *Romeo + Juliet*, "the vision of love that Shakespeare gave us in this master work is very precious. It is like holding a jewel in your hand that needs to be protected."

His previous creations for Ballet BC, *Petite Cérémonie*, *Prelude* and *Natus*, were instant successes with audiences in Vancouver and on tour. *Romeo + Juliet* will be Walerski's second full-evening commission for Ballet BC, and his first full-length narrative work.

Our most sincere gratitude goes out to Medhi Walerski, Theun Mosk, Pierre Pontvianne, Heather Myers, Stephen Drover and the dancers and staff of Ballet BC, whose passion and dedication have helped make this momentous production possible. A special thank you to Paul Laroque, Arty Gordon and the Arts Umbrella graduate dancers and staff for their meaningful collaboration.

We would also like to thank Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity for their tremendous commitment and support of this commission through a two-week production residency. In addition, many thanks to Dance Victoria's Chrystal Dance Fund, index.studio and Xavier Bourdil, and Jerry J. Troy and Villa Magnolia Hotel Suite Studios for their generous support of the creation of *Romeo + Juliet*.

Ballet BC's 2017/18 performance season closes in May with a powerful evening of dynamic works: the return of Resident Choreographer Cayetano Soto's hauntingly beautiful *BEGINNING AFTER*; a new work by Artistic Director Emily Molnar in collaboration with conductor, Graeme Langager, and the Phoenix Chamber Choir; and the anticipated return of *Bill*, by collaborators Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar.

Our programming would not be possible without the help of many. Our deepest appreciation goes out to so many generous individuals and organizations helping us realize the artistic vision of Ballet BC. Thank you to our subscribers, Founders' Council members, government and private funding agencies, our Board of Directors, individual donors, in-kind contributors, Ballet BC Up, and volunteers who passionately support our work.

Finally, we are extremely grateful for our Production Sponsor, Assante Wealth Management, our Community Balcony Sponsor, Simons, our Hotel Sponsor, Rosedale on Robson Suite Hotels, and our Media Sponsors, Vancouver Sun, City Vancouver and OMNI BC.

Thank you for joining us for the world premiere of *Romeo + Juliet!*

—Emily & John

About Ballet BC

An internationally acclaimed collaborative and creation-based contemporary ballet company that is a leader and resource in the creation, production and education of contemporary dance in Canada.

Founded in 1986, Ballet BC has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Emily Molnar since 2009. Ballet BC is an internationally acclaimed collaborative and creation-based contemporary ballet company that is a leader and resource in the creation, production and education of contemporary dance in Canada. Bold and innovative, the Company's distinctive style and approach has made a unique and valuable national contribution to the development of dance.

Ballet BC's dancers are a group of open-minded and curious artists, each unique for their dynamic movement while sharing an intuitive passion for dance. Ballet BC is committed to its role as a leader in the community through dancer training opportunities, community and audience outreach, and professional development activities.

The Company presents a diverse repertoire of Canadian and international work from the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and is a hotbed for the creation and performance of new works. Since 2009, the Company has developed a repertoire of more than 45 new works by acclaimed Canadian and international choreographers including William Forsythe, Cayetano Soto, Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar, Medhi Walerski, Ohad Naharin, Crystal Pite, Johan Inger, Emanuel Gat, Gustavo Ramirez Sansano, Jacopo Godani, Company 605, Jorma Elo, Wen Wei Wang, Itzik Galili, Serge Bennathan, Walter Matteini, José Navas, Emily Molnar, Lesley Telford, Nicolo Fonte, Fernando Hernando Magadan, Kevin O'Day, Shawn Hounsell, Gioconda Barbuto, Simone Orlando, Robert Glumbek and Aszure Barton among others.

Under the artistic direction of Emily Molnar, former member of The National Ballet of Canada, Ballet BC and the Ballett Frankfurt, the Company actively fosters collaborations that support artists, choreographers and audiences alike, furthering the boundaries of contemporary dance. We embrace excellence in the practice of contemporary ballet, with its wide diversity of technique and style, honouring its roots and components. In our view, contemporary ballet is the ballet of today.

Performing at Vancouver's Queen Elizabeth Theatre and touring nationally and internationally.

Ballet BC regularly performs at Vancouver's Queen Elizabeth Theatre (QET) in the fall, winter and spring. We also tour provincially, nationally and internationally, and as a complement to the repertoire and activities of the Company, we present national and international guest companies as part of our subscription series. Including the QET and community performances, regional and national tours, audience engagement activities and programming for children and youth, more than 25,000 patrons see Ballet BC each season.

Ballet BC's outreach and education programs include: The Artist Salon, Alternative Space Program, Sneak Previews, Studio Visits, Pre-performance Chats and Student Dress Rehearsals. Our programs directed to the professional dance community include: The Choreographic Series, Choreographic Workshops, Professional Development Program, Artist-in-Residence Program and Apprentice Program, in addition to the Summer Dance Intensive, which is presented in collaboration with Arts Umbrella.

As a cultural institution, we bring value and opportunity to the life of the community that generously supports us. We are a creative place and we work in a collaborative environment. We are a company that aims to create dance at its most essential: visceral, powerful, thought provoking and transformative.

Program

Romeo + Juliet

World Premiere, February 22, 2018, Ballet BC

Concept, Choreography and Costume Design
Medhi Walerski

Set Design
Theun Mosk

Lighting Design
Theun Mosk in collaboration with Medhi Walerski and Pierre Pontvianne

Music
Sergei Prokofiev: *Romeo and Juliet*

Recording
Performed by London Symphony Orchestra (Conducted by André Previn)
Courtesy of Warner Classics UK. By arrangement with Warner Music Group Film & TV Licensing

Artistic Collaborator
Pierre Pontvianne

Assistant Costume Designer
Kate Burrows

Lighting Director
James Proudfoot

Video Projection
index.studio

Acting Coach
Stephen Drover

Dramaturgy Intern
Heather Myers

Sword Play Instructor
C.T. Roland Cooper

Stage Combat Instructor
Joshua Reynolds

Many thanks to the dancers for their creative spark and inexhaustible generosity.

PERFORMERS

Juliet	Emily Chessa (Feb 21, 22, 24)	Kirsten Wicklund (Feb 23)
Romeo	Brandon Alley (Feb 21, 22, 24)	Christoph von Riedemann (Feb 23)
Tybalt	Gilbert Small	
Mercutio	Scott Fowler	
Benvolio	Patrick Kilbane	
Nurse	Alexis Fletcher	
Friar Laurence	Peter Smida	
Mother Capulet	Makaila Wallace	
Father Capulet	Sylvain Senez	
Paris	Matthias Vaucher**	

ACT I

STREET SCENES

Montagues
Livona Ellis, Kiera Hill, Sophie Mueller-Langer**, Justin Rapaport, Peter Smida, Dex van ter Meij**, Nicole Ward, Shana Wolfe*, Zenon Zubyk**

Capulets
Justin Calvadores*, Zander Constant*, Parker Finley*, Madeleine Gilbert**, Kiana Jung**, Kierra Kelp**, Jordan Pelliteri**, Racheal Prince, Sophie Whittome**

4 Street Couples
Livona Ellis, Kiera Hill, Justin Rapaport, Peter Smida, Dex van ter Meij**, Nicole Ward, Shana Wolfe*, Zenon Zubyk**

BALL

Guests
Justin Calvadores*, Zander Constant*, Livona Ellis, Parker Finley*, Madeleine Gilbert**, Kiera Hill, Kiana Jung**, Kierra Kelp**, Jordan Pelliteri**, Racheal Prince, Justin Rapaport, Dex van ter Meij**, Nicole Ward, Sophie Whittome**, Shana Wolfe*, Zenon Zubyk**

ACT II

Shadow Figures
Justin Calvadores*, Zander Constant*, Livona Ellis, Parker Finley*, Madeleine Gilbert**, Kiera Hill, Kiana Jung**, Kierra Kelp**, Sophie Mueller-Langer**, Jordan Pelliteri**, Racheal Prince, Justin Rapaport, Dex van ter Meij**, Nicole Ward, Sophie Whittome**, Shana Wolfe*, Zenon Zubyk**

Thank you to Arts Umbrella dancers Adrian Maxwell-Campagna, Meilyn Kennedy, and Nasiv Sall for their work as understudies in this production.

* Ballet BC Apprentice
** Arts Umbrella Graduate Program

To complement our creative practice, this season we thought it would be interesting to ask the dancers of Ballet BC to offer reflections on the work in the manner of an artistic reply. Here is *Forbidden Fruit is Sweetest* by Brandon Alley, written during the creation of *Romeo + Juliet*.

I chase flowers through meadows
Full of enchanting melody swings
back and forth
Obsessively smelling melancholy
such love holds melted gold upon my chest
Burning eternally,
I stubbornly accept this missing flesh
Elevating my internal worth
A dark rose petal simile,
Constantly pricked from stem
I'm holding on, forgetting the scent
of open wounds dripping from my sleeves
rejecting impossibility
choking upon this grief,
I join masked brothers and enemies
for a dance to lure thine eye
but Jupiter falls into the room
perfection directed towards my instinct
countless moons colliding inside me
Sweet paragon ringing around my core
A new light has split the night
every opening slowly overflows
I breathe her in slow,
Origami heart folded into bloom,
Infinity sewn into holy palmer's kiss
Lips link in sinless bliss
snapping my despair like sticks
fire starter, wildfire dipped
A heavy heat dream
drips from every pore
Our names brought forward
A reality now torn
Two houses built to scorn
but dear Juliet, our perfect love
wears no warn
Rest your hands upon this truth
Forever grace, Forever swoon
both laced and cocooned
High above the arches
of Capulets and Montagues

Every purest edge unfinished
drifting into you
like sunset boats
moan for another minute or two
The wick dwindles
Consequences quickly approach
If we elope the feud might end
but peace eludes our fearless road
Now death and banishment take hold

Without you Juliet, I fall
dissolving into this soil of promise
broken as you stand tall
Sudden trickery, Our love deceived
resolving this loneliest lie
an ethereal chase begins
for weightless grief and perpetual height
like two perennial birds floating above pine
Come fly with me
away from ache and withered bone
Our love unmatched
Intact, in fact has grown
Far beyond a life untold

Interview with Medhi Walerski

by Janet Smith

Arts Editor/Dance Writer, The Georgia Straight

Janet Smith: Tell me your feelings about story ballet coming into this project.
Medhi Walerski: I've been trying to keep myself away from story ballet for so many years because it was not what I wanted to do. And also, how I developed as a choreographer was not related to telling a story; it was more abstract and I had different interests. But funny enough, and I said it just this morning, I am so happy that I got the chance, that I got offered a story ballet! First because it challenged me but also because I really enjoyed it!

I feel connected now. Maybe I didn't feel brave enough to enter that before—to talk about love, to talk about death, to talk about conflict. But now I see it is so relevant and I feel connected to it now, more than I could have in the past.

JS: You're coming at it in a different way, from the outside, then?
MW: Of course when I think of story ballet I think of classical ballet, but this piece is almost an *homage* to classical ballet. I've been watching *a lot of ballets of Romeo and Juliet* and the way that they've portrayed Shakespeare's play. But of course I find my own voice and interests in the story. It's almost like opening a door that hasn't been opened with what I've seen….So I wanted to stay close to the story but I wanted to develop certain parts that caught my interest.

JS: So what really spoke to you in the story?
MW: It's what happens to you when you know that the only way out is to die, and what happens to you when you die. Like that moment when Mercutio is dying and he's trying to contain himself because he's such a party guy. What happens to you in this time between being hurt and then the moment when you really die, when you separate from your physical body? It's like a time lapse in a way that I thought was interesting to look at. I connect to this because of the age I'm at. When I was in my 20s, people got married and had children, But now in my 30s people are dying around me. Death was not part of my journey before as a human being.

JS: Was the decision made early on that you wanted to use Prokofiev's lush romantic score?
MW: Yes. It was from day one and was from the first discussion of collaborating with Ballet BC on *Romeo + Juliet*. I didn't hesitate. I thought about adding a soundscape but it was not needed. This was like the gene, the DNA of the piece.

JS: You're going very sleek and black and white and geometric on the set.
MW: Yes, I knew that I wanted it to be timeless and not in a specific place—this was very clear to me. I wanted something pure, something universal so that you could connect with the emotions and psychology of the characters, more than being in Italy or Renaissance time. The look also relates to Shakespeare: what I connected to with him was this idea of dark and light, day and night. There's this constant duality in his work that I wanted to use in the aesthetics of this piece.

JS: You've integrated moving sets with the dancers moving among them. And there are so many dancers.
MW: I've never worked with sets like this. And I've never worked with so many characters! I am used to doing group pieces. But here they all belong to the same story, yet they all have a very specific role. So the way I'm going to choreograph and search for movement with someone that feels much more anger is going to be different than someone that is 14 and full of joy and hope. It's really demanding.

JS: Would you say this is the piece where you're bringing your past and your present together?
MW: I am classically trained—it is part of my heritage and it is part of my language, even though my movement is contemporary. And it is not something I reject; it's something I embrace. In a way this is an expression of all my past choreography but also opening some new doors.

Synopsis

Stories are important to us as human beings. They connect us to each other and to the past. They enrich our present and move us towards the future. The universality of the Romeo and Juliet story and its characters invites us to reflect on the many faces of our humanity. — Medhi Walerski

Shakespeare's time-honoured tale of *Romeo and Juliet* has been interpreted as a contemporary ballet by choreographer Medhi Walerski. Set to the music of Sergei Prokofiev, Walerski's adaptation presents a timeless space that examines the co-existence of love and hate, and the inevitability of the story's tragedy. The complexity of human nature reveals itself through the cracks of a distressed society as characters battle with violence, beauty, passion, integrity and conformity. Walerski explores the conflict that drives Juliet and Romeo's love affair to its destiny, that familiar fate that is an ending as well as an emblem of the story's repetition.

ACT I (71 minutes)

Two families, the Montagues and Capulets, have been embroiled in a deadly feud for as long as anyone can remember. Shakespeare's prologue opens the ballet, relating the fate of these circumstances and the story's heroes.

Scene 1
Enter romantic and impulsive Romeo, a Montague. The young Romeo confides in his cousin and friend Benvolio, telling him of his latest heartache. Benvolio comforts Romeo as usual, trusting that his romantic infatuation will soon pass.

Scene 2
Senseless, hate-fuelled clashes between the Montagues and Capulets are constantly erupting in the streets. Benvolio attempts to quell the violence but his efforts are thwarted by the charming and provocative Mercutio, a friend of Romeo and Benvolio's. The violent scene intensifies with the arrival of Tybalt, a powerful Capulet, and the fighting subsides only when the authorities arrive and order peace. Death is decreed as a punishment for anyone who initiates further conflict.

Scene 3
At the Capulets' estate, an exuberant teenaged Juliet enjoys the company of her doting nurse. Juliet's mother, Lady Capulet, arrives to announce the intention of Juliet's arranged marriage to Paris, who is presented and greeted by Tybalt and Juliet's father, Capulet. Juliet tolerates the introductions; however, she turns to her cousin Tybalt for the comfort of childhood familiarity. Despite her youth, Juliet is prepared for the upcoming ball at which Paris will attempt to win her affections.

Scene 4
Hoping to distract Romeo from his heavy heart, Mercutio and Benvolio convince Romeo to join them in sneaking into the Capulet ball.

Amid the spectacle of the ball, Romeo catches sight of Juliet and is captivated by her, forgetting his previous infatuations. Juliet is happy to escape her circumstances with a mysterious stranger, and steals a private moment with him. Once alone, Romeo and Juliet fall in love. They seal their new-found love with a kiss, only to learn afterwards of their opposing familial ties.

Tybalt recognizes Romeo, and is enraged by the presence of a trespassing Montague. He informs Capulet of the offense; however, Capulet forbids any conflict at his event. Tybalt vows to seek revenge on Romeo the following day.

Scene 5
Later that evening, Romeo seeks out Juliet on her balcony and overhears her professing her love for him. Romeo appears to her and reciprocates with his own declaration of love. They promise to marry the next day.

Scene 6
In the morning, while Mercutio and Benvolio are searching for him, Romeo visits his confessor and friend, Friar Laurence. Romeo requests that the Friar marry him and Juliet, and the well-meaning Friar agrees to a secret ceremony.

Scene 7
The recent order of peace is effective, and Mercutio and Benvolio are enjoying the pleasant mood in the streets. The Nurse arrives and delivers a note to Romeo, confirming Juliet's agreement to their marriage plans.

Scene 8
Friar Laurence marries Romeo and Juliet.

Scene 9
Keeping his vow from the previous evening, Tybalt disrupts a festive gathering, looking for a fight with Romeo. The newly married Romeo wishes only to make peace with Juliet's cousin, but Tybalt rejects his attempts at reconciliation. Mercutio provokes Tybalt and a fight ensues, resulting in Mercutio's accidental death at the hand of Tybalt. With the death of his friend, Romeo becomes possessed by grief and rage and kills Tybalt. As punishment for his act of revenge, Romeo is banished from the city.

INTERMISSION (20 minutes)

ACT II (40 minutes)

Scene 1
The Nurse explains to Juliet that Tybalt has been killed by Romeo and that Romeo has been banished. Despite Romeo's murder of her cousin, Juliet sends her wedding ring to Romeo as a symbol of her continued love for him. Meanwhile, Friar Laurence encourages Romeo to go to Juliet and consummate their marriage before he must leave the city.

Using the tragedy of Tybalt's death to delay answering her parents about Paris's wish to propose, Juliet refuses to agree to the marriage despite her mother's urging. Capulet, however, becomes enraged. He orders Juliet to marry Paris and leaves to make wedding arrangements for the coming days.

Caught in the conflict, the Nurse tells the devastated Juliet to marry Paris. Feeling betrayed by her Nurse, Juliet decides that she must find her way to Romeo on her own, and leaves to ask advice of Friar Laurence.

Scene 2
Paris is at Friar Laurence's cell discussing plans for his upcoming marriage to Juliet. Juliet encounters Paris upon her arrival and lies to him, telling him she has come for confession. After Paris leaves, Juliet bemoans her predicament to the Friar and threatens to take her own life if she cannot be reunited with Romeo.

Moved by Juliet's passion, the Friar offers her a plan: he will provide Juliet with a potion that will put her into a deep sleep, while giving the impression of death. With her perceived death, the sleeping Juliet will be mourned and placed in the family crypt. Meanwhile, the Friar will send a message to Romeo informing him of the plan, and Romeo will meet Juliet in the Capulet crypt as she awakens.

Desperate to be reunited with Romeo, Juliet agrees to the Friar's plan.

Scene 3
Once home, Juliet plays the obedient daughter, begging her father's forgiveness for not agreeing to marry Paris sooner. She then asks to be left alone and prepares a dagger, in case the Friar's plan should fail. Juliet overcomes the fears and doubts that fill her mind. She drinks the potion and falls into a deep sleep.

In the morning, the Nurse is devastated to discover the seemingly dead body of Juliet, and the Capulets and Paris are notified. Friar Laurence is also present at the grief-ridden situation, and sees that his plan is proceeding as desired.

Scene 4
In exile, Romeo has not yet received the message informing him of the Friar's plan. Benvolio, believing that Juliet is dead, arrives and tells Romeo of the tragic news. Overcome with grief, Romeo leaves for Juliet's tomb, now seeing his own death as the only way to be reunited with Juliet.

Scene 5
Romeo arrives at Juliet's tomb and meets Paris, who has come to grieve the loss of his betrothed. Paris is suspicious of a Montague in the Capulet crypt and picks a fight with Romeo. Romeo is reluctant, but kills Paris in his desperate desire to get to Juliet.

The devastated Romeo reunites with the sleeping Juliet and kills himself with poison.

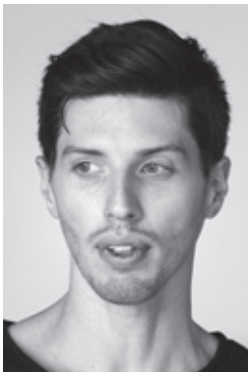
Juliet wakes up to discover the dead body of her Romeo and the extent of the catastrophe. In her despair, Juliet, too, kills herself.

2017/18 Dancers



BRANDON ALLEY

A North Carolina native, Brandon Lee Alley began his dance training at the Eastern Randolph High School when he was 14 under the direction of Britt Allen. He later attended the Greensboro Ballet's year-long program on a full scholarship and graduated from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts specializing in contemporary dance in 2012. Brandon has had the pleasure of attending many summer intensives including Ballet Austin, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and LINES Ballet. He has also worked with choreographers such as Crystal Pite, Sharon Eyal, Victor Quijada, Cayetano Soto and Stijn Celis among many others. Brandon began his professional career with Hubbard Street 2 and has been a member of BODYTRAFFIC. This year will be Brandon's 3rd season with Ballet BC. He would also like to thank his wonderful teacher, Britt Allen, for supporting him every step of the way and his family and friends for their guidance and love.



ANDREW BARTEE

Andrew Bartee is from Everett, Washington. He studied on scholarship at the Pacific Northwest Ballet School in Seattle, WA and attended summer courses at the School of American Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and the Pacific Northwest Ballet School. He was also the first recipient of the Fleming Halby exchange with the Royal Danish Ballet, a 2007 Princess Grace Award and was one of Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch" in 2015. From 2008–2014, Andrew danced with Pacific Northwest Ballet while also performing frequently with Whim W'Him and Kate Wallich + The YC. In 2014, he joined Ballet BC and is currently the Artist in Residence for the 17/18 season. In addition to performing, Andrew has had the opportunity to create his own dances for Pacific Northwest Ballet, PNB School, Grand Rapids Ballet Company, Whim W'Him, Wolf Trap Center for the Performing Arts, Velocity Dance Center, Seattle International Dance Festival, CHOP Shop, Arts Umbrella, and Dances for a Small Stage.



EMILY CHESSA

Originally from Richmond, BC, Emily began her professional dance training at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School at age 15 where she received the Arnold Spohr Scholarship and the Paddy Stone Scholarship for choreography. After graduating in 2010, she trained at Arts Umbrella in the graduate program under the guidance of Artemis Gordon. She participated in summer programs such as the Movement Invention Project in New York and Springboard Danse Montreal. Since joining Ballet BC in 2012 as an apprentice, she has performed works by Emily Molnar, Cayetano Soto, Johan Inger, Crystal Pite, and Sharon Eyal. This is Emily's 6th season with the company.



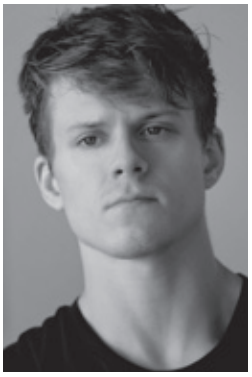
LIVONA ELLIS

Vancouver-born Livona Ellis started dancing at the age of 11 at Arts Umbrella under the direction of Artemis Gordon. After completing the Graduate Program in 2010, Livona was offered an apprenticeship with Ballet BC and joined as a full time member after one season. Since joining Ballet BC, Livona has been fortunate to work with world-renowned artists such as Sharon Eyal, Crystal Pite, Medhi Walerski, Emanuel Gat, Cayetano Soto, Johan Inger, Francesca Caroti (William Forsythe), Wen Wei Wang, Lesley Telford, Doug Letheren (Sharon Eyal), and Shahar Binyamini (Ohad Naharin). She has been a part of Springboard Danse Montreal, Movement Invention Project NYC, The Banff Professional Dance Program and the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance Summer Program. Last summer she created work for Live at the Bolt' Small Stage and choreographed and performed work at Dance Deck Trois. She is currently on faculty at Arts Umbrella and is the 2017 Mayor's Arts Award recipient in Dance as an emerging artist. This is her 8th season.



ALEXIS FLETCHER

Alexis Fletcher was raised on Vancouver Island where she received her early training before attending Arts Umbrella's Graduate Program. Alexis was a member of Arts Umbrella's Student Company and attended Springboard Danse Montreal. After graduating in 2005, she joined Ballet BC, where she has been fortunate to work with creative visionaries such as Crystal Pite, Emily Molnar, John Alleyne, Johan Inger, Stijn Celis, Jacopo Godani, Walter Matteini, Fernando Hernando Magadan, Serge Bennathan, Gioconda Barbuto, and Jorma Elo among many others. Independently she has worked collaboratively with creators such as Sidra Bell, James Gnam, Simone Orlando, Rob Kitsos and Wen Wei Wang. As well as beginning to choreograph, she has co-created a multidisciplinary performance space with her husband at their home in Vancouver. They also run a successful Bed and Breakfast business together. Alexis is fascinated by how exploring the movement potential of the human body becomes a way of accessing the inner landscapes of our spirits and psyches, and this is the primary motivation behind her own physical practice and choreographic interests. She believes that dance is a unique vehicle with which to share, research and discuss our collective humanity. Alexis is in her 13th season with Ballet BC.



SCOTT FOWLER

Born in Vancouver, Scott Fowler trained at Arts Umbrella under the direction of Artemis Gordon and attended summer intensive programs at American Ballet Theatre, the National Ballet School and Jacob's Pillow. He performed in Alberta Ballet's The Nutcracker, Ballet BC's Peter Pan and in the Opening Ceremony for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver. Scott received a scholarship grant from the BC Arts Council in 2010. In 2011, he toured the Netherlands, performing at Codarts and worked with Noord Nederlandse Dans. Scott was invited in 2013 by James Kudelka to perform See#3 as a guest artist for Coleman Lemieux & Compagnie. Scott has been privileged to work with choreographers Aszure Barton, Gioconda Barbuto, James Kudelka, Emily Molnar, Jacopo Godani, Wen Wei Wang, Medhi Walerski, Cayetano Soto and Lesley Telford. This is Scott's 6th season with the company.



KIERA HILL

Born in Vancouver, Kiera completed her professional training at Arts Umbrella under the direction of Artemis Gordon. She was a proud recipient of the BC Arts Council Scholarship Award for excellence in dance in 2011. After graduating in 2012 she apprenticed with Ballet BC for one season. In 2013 she joined Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal where she performed leading roles in pieces by Andonis Foniadakis, Itzik Galili, Rodrigo Pederneiras, Cayetano Soto, Barak Marshall and Wen Wei Wang. For four years she toured extensively with BJM performing in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Slovenia, China, Israel, Mexico, USA and across Canada. Kiera is thrilled to be returning to Ballet BC this season for this next chapter in her career.



PATRICK KILBANE

Patrick Kilbane is from Bainbridge Island, Washington. He discovered dance at age 14 and studied on full scholarship at San Francisco Ballet School. He continued his training at the School of American Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and with Suzanne Farrell at the Kennedy Center. Patrick has worked with Oregon Ballet Theater and Sarah Slipper's NW Dance Project in Portland as a performer, teacher, and choreographer. He most recently appeared on Seattle stages as a freelance artist and with Whim W'Him where he danced original roles in new works by many contemporary dancemakers. Patrick is thrilled to be embarking on his first season with the amazing artists of Ballet BC.



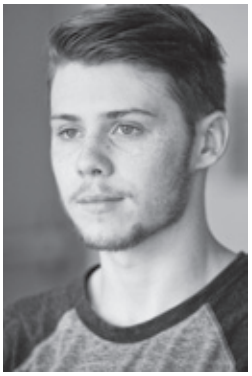
RACHEL MEYER

Rachel Meyer grew up in Collinsville, Illinois, trained with St. Louis Ballet and received her BFA at the University of Utah. She trained at the Northwest Professional Dance Project and the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, danced with Utah Regional Ballet and was a guest artist with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. From 2009-11, Rachel was a member of Dominic Walsh Dance Theater where she danced works by Dominic Walsh, Mauro Bigonzetti, Václav Kuneš, Jiří Kylián, and Mats Ek. She was awarded a Princess Grace Award in 2010. In 2011, she danced at the Tate Modern in London with the Michael Clark Company. With Ballet BC she has performed works by Sharon Eyal, William Forsythe, Jacopo Godani, Johan Inger, Emily Molnar, Crystal Pite, Cayetano Soto, Lesley Telford, Medhi Walerski, among others. This is Rachel's 7th season with Ballet BC.



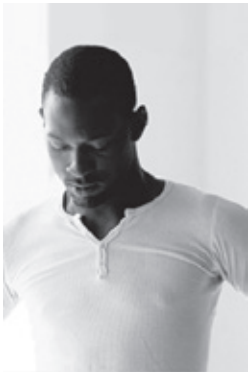
RACHEAL PRINCE

Racheal Prince was raised in Wasaga Beach, Ontario, and received her early training at the Quinte Ballet School under the direction of Brian Scott. She attended the School of Alberta Ballet's Pre Professional Program with Murray and Nancy Kilgour and received the prestigious Ali Pourfarrokh Scholarship. Racheal began her professional career with the Alberta Ballet Company where she danced for four years. She has performed works by William Forsythe, Crystal Pite, Itzik Galili, and Lar Lubovitch among many others. Her performance highlights include Jorma Elo's *1st Flash*, Emily Molnar's *between disappearing and becoming*, and William Forsythe's *Herman Schmerman*. In her spare time, Racheal enjoys working on handmade items for her online store as well as teaching and choreographing. She is excited to be in her 10th season with Ballet BC.



JUSTIN RAPAPORT

Justin Rapaport is from Miami, Florida, where he began dancing at the age of 8. He went on to formally train at New World School of the Arts and The Juilliard School. During his training, Justin had the opportunity to learn works by Jiří Kylián, Twyla Tharp, Kyle Abraham, Brian Brooks and many more amazing artists. Justin has also studied at various summer intensives such as Nederlands Dans Theater, Springboard Dance Montreal and Jacobs's Pillow Contemporary Program. While at Ballet BC, Justin has had the privilege to perform works by Crystal Pite, Ohad Naharin, Sharon Eyal, Emily Molnar, Emanuel Gat and Cayetano Soto. This is Justin's 2nd season with Ballet BC.



GILBERT SMALL

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Gilbert Small started his professional ballet training at the age of 10 at the Baltimore School for the Arts. He has studied at various summer programs, including Dance Theater of Harlem, Nutmeg Conservatory, Miami City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre and Springboard Danse Montreal. After graduating from the Baltimore School for the Arts, he continued his studies at the Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College. While at Purchase, Gilbert was given the opportunity to study abroad at the Hogeschool voor Muziek en Dans in Rotterdam, Netherlands. He has also performed with Toronto-based ProArteDanza. Prior to joining Ballet BC, Gilbert performed for New York-based Sidra Bell Dance New York. This is his 9th season with Ballet BC.



PETER SMIDA

Peter Smida was born and raised in Kingston, Ontario. A former tennis player, Peter studied on scholarship at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School and graduated in 2007. He also attended summer programs and festivals in Banff and Prague. After working with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and Ballet Victoria, Peter joined Ballet BC in 2008 and has since had the pleasure of performing works by Emily Molnar, Jorma Elo, Crystal Pite, Johan Inger and Medhi Walerski, as well as many others. In addition to his work at Ballet BC, Peter has also worked on independent projects with Donald Sales and has begun choreographing, showing his work at Dances for a Small Stage and the Shadbolt Centre for the Performing Arts. This is his 9th season with Ballet BC.



CHRISTOPH VON RIEDEMANN

Vancouver-born Christoph von Riedemann began his training at Arts Umbrella under Artemis Gordon and Lynn Sheppard. During his time there, Christoph worked with James Kudelka, Lesley Telford, Gioconda Barbuto, Crystal Pite, Walter Matteini, Francesca Carotti, Wen Wei Wang, Aszure Barton, Fernando Magadan and Stephen Shropshire. Christoph has participated in the Banff Summer Dance Program, the Nederlands Dans Theater Summer Intensive and the Movement Invention Project in New York. He is thrilled to be in his 4th season with Ballet BC and to continue working with the company's incredible artists.



NICOLE WARD

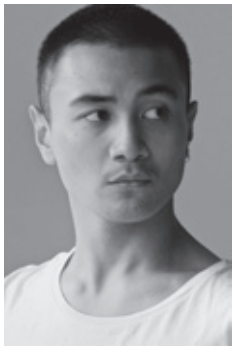
Nicole Ward was born in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia but raised in Vancouver, Canada. She began her professional training at Arts Umbrella, under the direction of Artemis Gordon and Lynn Sheppard. During her time there, she had the opportunity of working with Lesley Telford, James Kudelka, Crystal Pite, Stephen Sropshire, Francesca Carotti, Fernando Hernando Magadan and Azure Barton among others. After completing the Graduate Program in 2015 Nicole was offered an apprenticeship with Ballet BC and joined as a full time member after one season. Nicole is elated to be entering her 3rd season with Ballet BC.



KIRSTEN WICKLUND

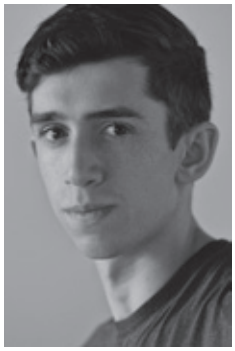
Vancouver-born Kirsten Wicklund studied at Goh Ballet Academy and toured extensively with Canada's Youth Ballet Company, performing principal roles in Giselle, Don Quixote and other classics. Kirsten received scholarships at American Ballet Theatre, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Boston Ballet, PNB, and Washington Ballet, as well as a Vancouver Foundation Arts Study Award and the Vancouver Ballet Society's Memorial Scholarship. In 2007, she won an artistry award at the Youth America Grand Prix in NY and was the only Canadian in the Top 12 Women. She has danced with The Washington Ballet, Alonzo King's choreographic workshop, created works for Dances for a Small Stage and collaborated with LUNGE Dance Collective. She toured with Rasta Thomas' Rock the Ballet, dancing the principal female role for the company of male ballet stars. Kirsten has been privileged to dance works by Lesley Telford, Medhi Walerski, William Forsythe, Johan Inger, Jacopo Godani, Gustavo Ramirez Sansano, Walter Mateini, Emily Molnar, Crystal Pite, Sharon Eyal, and others. This is Kirsten's 4th season with Ballet BC.

2017/18 Apprentices



JUSTIN CALVADORES

Born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Justin Calvadores began his dance training at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School in 2012. He moved to Vancouver to train at the Arts Umbrella Graduate program under the direction of Artemis Gordon and Lynn Sheppard in 2015. He has had the privilege to work with diverse artists such as Fernando Hernando Magadan, Crystal Pite, Aszure Barton, Michael Schumacher and Doug Letheren. Last June, Justin toured Europe with the Arts Umbrella Senior Dance Company, where he performed *Chorus* by Lesley Telford in the Nederlands Dans Theater's Shortcuts XL'17. Justin is grateful for the opportunity to apprentice with Ballet BC this season.



ZANDER CONSTANT

Born in Berkeley, California, Zander Constant began his dance training in 2010 at Arts Umbrella in Vancouver, where he continued into the Grad Program under the guidance of Artemis Gordon. He participated in summer schools including ChuThis Movement Intensive, Banff Creative Gesture, and AU International Summer Dance Intensive. Through Arts Umbrella Dance Company, Zander worked with artists such as Crystal Pite, Doug Letheren, Lesley Telford and Fernando Magadan. Zander performed with Ballet BC in Program 2 (2016), an evening of work by Medhi Walerski, as well as in Netherlands Dance Theatre's/Korzo's *Shortcuts* XL. He toured internationally with Aszure Barton and Artists in 2016. Zander is thrilled to be joining Ballet BC this year as an apprentice.



PARKER FINLEY

Parker Finley was born in Louisiana in 1997. In 2014, she began her professional training at the Houston Ballet Academy under the instruction of Sabrina Lenzi and Sally Rojas where she performed works by Stanton Welch, John Neumeier, Kenneth MacMillan, and Ben Stevenson. After graduating in 2016, she was an apprentice for Hubbard Street 2 during their 2016-2017 season. As their apprentice, she had the opportunity to learn works from Alice Klock, Terence Marling, Alejandro Cerrudo, Peter Chu, and Bryan Arias. She has participated in summer programs such as Houston Ballet Summer Intensive and Springboard Danse Montreal. Parker is thrilled to be joining Ballet BC as an apprentice this season.



SHANA WOLFE

Shana Wolfe was born in Vancouver BC, in 1997. She grew up and trained on Vancouver Island until 2014 when she joined the Arts Umbrella Professional Training Program under the direction of Artemis Gordon and Lynn Sheppard. She graduated from the Arts Umbrella Dance Diploma Program in 2017. During her time there, she has had the opportunity of performing works by Sharon Eyal, Crystal Pite, Azsure Barton, Mats Ek and Marie Chouinard, and was in the creative process of works by Lesley Telford, James Kudelka, Fernando Hernando Magadan, Tom Weinberger, and Wen Wei Wang, among others. Shana is grateful to have the opportunity to work with Ballet BC as an apprentice in their 2017/2018 season.

The Arts Umbrella Dance Company

Sophisticated, dedicated, and inspired. Arts Umbrella Dance Company (AUDC) is a Vancouver-based pre-professional repertory company that trains, rehearses, and performs new, innovative works by some of North America and Europe's leading choreographers. AUDC consists of more than 60 dancers — select members of the Arts Umbrella Professional Training Program and Post-Secondary Programs. AUDC performs many times each season throughout Metro Vancouver and around the province culminating in the company's Season Finale, three extraordinary performances staged in May at the Vancouver Playhouse. The company has toured to Montreal, Toronto, New York, Japan, and Holland, participating in exchanges and collaborations with groups such as Spellbound Contemporary Ballet in Italy, Yokohama Ballet in Japan, Noord Nederlandse Dans Studio Group in the Netherlands, Joffrey Ballet School in New York City, New Jersey Dance Theatre Ensemble, and École supérieure de ballet contemporain de Montréal. The broad-based performance and touring opportunities, along with rigorous technical training, prepare AUDC dancers for a career with professional dance companies. Dancers from AUDC have gone on to join companies in North America and Europe, such as Ballet BC, Nederlands Dans Theater I & II, Batsheva Dance Ensemble, Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montreal, among others.

"We do not delineate between a classical ballet dancer and a modern dancer," says Artistic Director Artemis Gordon. "We are trying to create a hybrid that takes the best of both, and creates something unique and different. What is most extraordinary about the Arts Umbrella Dance Company is the roster of international choreographers that come to Vancouver to create new works on the dancers."

Ballet BC and Arts Umbrella share a commitment to nurturing young dance talent. Through a newly announced partnership, the two organizations look forward to having a larger collective impact on the future of dance.



PHOTO BY CARA TENCH

Collaborators



EMILY MOLNAR, C.M.

Artistic Director, Ballet BC

As Artistic Director of Ballet BC, Molnar's vision has steered the unique company of 20 dancers into a celebrated era of innovation and collaboration. Since the start of her tenure in 2009, the Company has developed a diverse repertoire that includes more than 40 new works by celebrated Canadian and international choreographers.

Molnar is a graduate of the National Ballet School and formerly a member of the National Ballet of Canada, a soloist with the Ballett Frankfurt under director William Forsythe, and a principal dancer with Ballet BC. An internationally respected and critically acclaimed dance artist and choreographer, Molnar worked and toured extensively throughout Europe, Asia, Mexico, Canada and the US, where she created works for Alberta Ballet, Ballet Mannheim, Ballet Augsburg, Cedar Lake Dance, ProArteDanza and Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company and New York City Ballet's Choreographic Institute, among others. Molnar's most recent works for Ballet BC are *between disappearing and becoming, Aniel, 16 + a room, RITE*, and *Keep Driving, I'm Dreaming*, which premiered in April 2017.

Named The Globe and Mail's 2013 Dance Artist of the Year, Molnar is the 2016 recipient of the Vancouver Mayor's Arts Award, BC Community Achievement Award and the YWCA Women of Distinction Award in Art, Culture & Design. She was recently appointed to the Order of Canada for her artistic leadership of Ballet BC and creative contribution to advancing dance in Canada.

As an active mentor, advocate, and coach, Molnar follows her passion to nurture artists and choreographers, to educate and support the research and development of dance and artistic leadership, and explore the role of the artist in society. She currently serves as a Director on the Board of the BC Arts Council.

In addition to her work with Ballet BC, Molnar is also Artistic Director of Dance at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, a new position designed to guide and inform all Banff Centre dance initiatives throughout the year in collaboration with the Canadian and international dance community.



MEDHI WALERSKI

Resident Choreographer, Ballet BC
Choreographer,
Romeo + Juliet

Medhi Walerski danced at the Paris Opera Ballet before joining the Nederlands Dans Theater in 2001. For more than a decade at NDT, Medhi was an integral part of the company, contributing to the creative, innovative style that brought NDT world renown. He participated in the creation of numerous new works and danced in the company's existing repertoire. He was awarded the most important Dutch dance prize, VSCD Zwaan 2013, for his role in *School of Thought* (León & Lightfoot).

Medhi has worked closely alongside the creative forces of internationally established choreographers and performed works by Jiří Kylián, William Forsythe, George Balanchine, Paul Lightfoot and Sol León, Hans Van Manen, Crystal Pite, Emio Greco, Angelin Preljocaj, Jacopo Godani, Maurice Béjart, Johan Inger, etc., in prestigious theatres around the world.

It was with *Mammatus*, a work created for the Nederlands Dans Theater 2 in 2008 that Walerski made his official debut as a choreographer. *Mammatus* was part of NDT 2's touring repertoire and was performed in Germany and the UK. That same year he created *Underneath* for NDT 1. During his sabbatical year in 2009, Walerski delved full-time into choreography, creating for Bern Ballet and Göteburg Ballet.

Upon returning to NDT 1, his profile as a dancer stayed vital to the image of the company. He continued to create for NDT as well as other companies, such as Ballet BC. He created the highly successful *Petite Cérémonie*, which was toured throughout Canada and the US and has remained a highlight of Ballet BC's repertoire. In 2011, NDT remounted *Underneath* and Walerski created *Blink of an Eye*.

A year later, for the centenary of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Walerski created *Chamber*, a co-production commissioned by NDT, Carolina Performing Arts at the University of North Carolina, Den Norske Opera & Ballett and the Los Angeles Music Center. *Chamber* was broadcast to over 600 movie theatres worldwide and has toured to China and the US to critical acclaim.

Since then, Walerski has returned to Ballet BC with whom he has developed a close relationship. In 2014 he created *Prelude*, and a year later, his first full-length work *NATUS*, in celebration of Ballet BC's 30th anniversary. That same year, he created *Aureum* for NDT 2, followed by *Garden* in 2016 for NDT 1. *Garden* was made into a documentary for Mezzo TV. His latest creation, *SOON* for NDT 1, was premiered in September 2007 and was part of the Nederlandse Dansdagen Gala.



THEUN MOSK

Theun Mosk's work is characterized by his strong conceptual ideas in lighting design and spacious set designs. Mosk strives to create clear frameworks to manipulate the experience of the audience, increasing the physical experience of the spectator while leaving room for individual interpretation. Over the years, Mosk has shown an enormous diversity in his work — performance art, mime, opera, dance, musical theatre, contemporary music, installations, exhibition designs, fashion shows and site-specific works.

Mosk graduated from the Academy of Theatre and Dance in Amsterdam in technical theatre arts and spent an academic year at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in stage design. In 2007, he received the Charlotte Köhler Prize for young talent and was selected as a designer twice at the Prague Quadrennial.

Since attending Robert Wilson's workshops at the Watermill Center in New York, Mosk has continued to work with Wilson on numerous projects. Together they developed and realized the landscape performance *Walking* and the exhibition *Egypt's Sunken Treasures* in Italy. In 2012, Wilson and Mosk remade *Walking* at the Norfolk&Norwich Festival in the UK. A 2008 documentary, *Uur van de Wolf — Walking on Oerol*, was made by Dutch public broadcasting about Mosk and his collaboration with Wilson on *Walking*.

Mosk worked on *Sunken Garden* (music by Michel van der Aa and libretto by David Mitchell) for the English National Opera. The opera premiered at the Barbican Theatre in London in April 2013, followed by performances at the Dutch Holland Festival in June 2013 and in Lyon 2014.

Other collaborative partners include Medhi Walerski at the Netherlands Dance Theatre (2015, 2016); Het Concertgebouw Amsterdam's resident composer Huang Ruo's and the ASKOlschönberg ensemble (2016); de Veenfabriek/Paul Koek; Schweigman&/Boukje Schweigman; Toneelgroep Oostpool/Marcus Azzini and the Ro Theater/Jetse Batelaan.

Mosk has done lighting and stage design for performances by Lotte van den Berg, Ann Van den Broek, Roos van Geffen, Nicole Beutler & Mokhallad Rasem (Toneelhuis Antwerpen).



PIERRE PONTVIANNE

A graduate of the ESDC Rosella Hightower and winner of the professional prize at the Prix de Lausanne, Pierre Pontvianne joined the Nederland Dans Theater 2 under director Jiří Kylián in 1999. Since then, he has worked as a freelance artist throughout Europe, in particular for Frankfurt Ballet, Carte Blanche and, more recently, Maguy Marin's dance company. During the course of his dance career, Pierre Pontvianne has danced the works of accomplished choreographers such as Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, Hans van Manen, Johan Inger, William Forsythe, Tony Rizzi, Amanda Miller and Maguy Marin, among others.

In 2012, he took over the direction of the French-based company PARC to develop his personal work. Currently, a number of his creations are touring in several international dance festivals throughout Europe. Pierre Pontvianne also works as a dramaturge, music composer and lighting designer with other artists. He has been a regular collaborator of Medhi Walerski's since 2012.



MAKAILA WALLACE

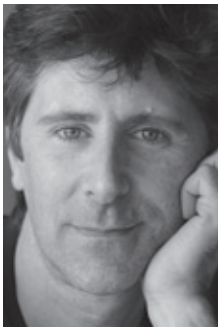
Makaila received her professional dance training at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School and Bolshoi Ballet summer programs. She danced with the RWB company as an apprentice before moving to Stockholm, Sweden to join the Royal Swedish Ballet. There she had the opportunity to perform many lead roles (including Myrtha in Giselle, staged and casted by Natalia Makarova).

After three years, she returned to Canada and joined Ballet BC where she danced for 11 years. Dancing nationally and internationally, her personal performance highlights have included works by choreographers Aszure Barton, Serge Bennathan, Jorma Elo, Johan Inger, Jiří Kylián, Crystal Pite, Wen Wei Wang and Medhi Walerski, among others. She has also worked with Roberto Campanella and Robert Glumbek (ProArte Danza) in Toronto, Canada.

In 2015, Makaila was asked to join the *Margie Gillis Legacy Project,* working intimately with Ms. Gillis and performing alongside her in *Florilege* at the Sechelt Arts Festival. She has also performed in Dances for a Small Stage and The Dance Deck Series. In 2016, she worked alongside Jorma Elo as his choreographic assistant with the Finnish National Ballet for a full length production of *Alice in Wonderland*.

In addition to dancing, Makaila is also very passionate about teaching. She has taught at a number of dance intensives, summer programs and, as part of Ballet BC's outreach program, has facilitated a number of creative exploration and ballet workshop classes.

In 2017, she joined the Ballet BC artistic staff as one of the rehearsal directors.



SYLVAIN SENEZ

Sylvain Senez has been active on the professional Canadian dance scene for nearly 40 years. He danced as a soloist with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and Judith Marcuse Dance Company and was a guest artist with Coleman Lemieux Company for their James Kudelka Tribute Program. Sylvain also appeared in *The Strange Adventure of Myself*, a full-length solo created for him by Serge Bennathan.

From 1991 to 2016, he worked for Ballet BC as a dancer, Ballet Master and Rehearsal Director where he has had the privilege of working and assisting the remounts and creations of many internationally renowned choreographers. He has choreographed for the Ballet BC choreographic workshop, Dancing on the Edge and the Vancouver Opera. He is also a photographer specializing in dance and portraiture. Currently, Sylvain devotes his time to teaching, rehearsal directing, photographing and running a bed & breakfast. He and his wife Alexis Fletcher are the Artistic Directors of *Casa Om Presents*. This series produces *The Dance Deck*, an annual multi disciplinary performance project that is presented in their backyard. Sylvain is thrilled to be joining Ballet BC again for the *Romeo + Juliet* creation.



STEPHEN DROVER

Stephen is the Artistic Director of Rumble Theatre in Vancouver where he has directed *Penelope, Cock, Indian Arm* (an original adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's *Little Eyolf*), and *The Society for the Destitute Presents Titus Bouffonius* (an original adaptation of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*). Elsewhere he has directed productions of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew, Hamlet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Richard III, Macbeth* and *Romeo & Juliet.* As founding Artistic Director of Pound of Flesh Theatre he directed *The Bond* (adapted from *The Merchant of Venice*), *DenmarK* (adapted from *Hamlet*), and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. He holds a BFA in Acting, a BA in English and an MFA in Directing and is an Adjunct Professor at UBC where he teaches Shakespeare Text Analysis and Performance. He's originally from Newfoundland, now lives in North Van, and likes to take photographs.

Before the Performance - Lesson I: Dance

Exploring What We Know About Dance

WHAT IS DANCE?

Bending, stretching, jumping, and turning are all activities dancers do. They work hard to transform these everyday movements into the language of dance, using each step as a word to compose first a phrase, second a sentence, then a paragraph, and finally a complete idea such as a poem or a story. Dance can also be a medium for expressing a feeling such as joy, sadness, anger, or love. This is one of the greatest forms of communication we have available to us. Through movement of the body, dancers learn to convey emotions, comments, and sometimes even entire stories, without needing to speak out loud. Because dance doesn't need the use of spoken word, people around the world who don't speak the same language understand and respond to it. This is why dance is sometimes called a universal language. Movement to music is a natural response to our enjoyment of sounds. Even young children respond physically to music they enjoy. There are many different types and variations of dancing: from tribal to swing, to the dancing you do at a party, and to classical ballet on an opera house stage. Dance is a wonderful way of expressing our joy and challenges in life. You might explore how to communicate an emotion through movement yourself. All dance is a valid form of expression.

HISTORY OF DANCE

People have always danced. The first dances were part of religious and community ceremonies, but by the time of the Ancient Greeks and Romans, dancing had also become a form of entertainment. In the Middle Ages, the Church in Europe claimed that dancing was sinful, but when the Renaissance arrived in the 1400's, dancing had become popular once again. It is in the European courts of the 16th and 17th centuries where the true origins of ballet lie.

BALLET

16th Century

The word Ballet comes from the Italian ballare, meaning 'to dance', and it was first used to describe elaborate music, dance, and mime performed for the nobility of Europe. In France and Italy, royalty competed to have the most splendid court. The monarchs would search for and employ the best poets, musicians, and artists. At this time, dancing became increasingly theatrical. This form of entertainment, also called the ballet de court (court ballet), featured elaborate scenery and lavish costumes, plus a series of processions, poetic speeches, music and dancing. The first known ballet, Le Ballet Comique was performed in 1581 at the wedding of the Queen of France's sister.

17th Century

The popularity and development of ballet can be attributed to King Louis XIV of France. He took dancing very seriously and trained daily with his dance master Beauchamp. One of his famous roles was the Rising Sun, which led him to become known as the Sun King. King Louis also set up the Académie Royale de Danse (Royal Academy of Dance) in 1661, where dance steps became structurally codified and recorded. These steps are the same steps that have been handed down through centuries, and which now form the basis of today's classical ballet style.

18th Century

By the end of the 17th century women were finally allowed to dance. One of the most famous ballerinas was Marie Camargo who shocked the audiences by shortening her skirt to just above the ankle and wearing flat shoes so that she could perform complex jumps. At this time, female dancers also began to dominate the stage over their male counterparts. Ballet companies were now being set up all over France to train dancers for the opera.

19th Century

By 1830 the Romantic movement was sweeping the world of art, music, literature and philosophy, and ballet took on a whole new look. The ballerina now wore calf-length, white bell-shaped tulle skirts. To enhance the image of the ballerina as light and elusive, the pointe shoe was introduced, enabling women to dance on the tips of their toes.

20th Century Ballet

Although the term "classical" is often used to refer to traditional ballet, this term really describes a group of story ballets first seen in Russia at the end of the 19th century. At this time, the centre of ballet moved from France to Russia. In Russia, the French choreographer Marius Petipa collaborated with the Russian composer Pyotr Tchaikovsky to create lavish story ballets that audiences around the globe still love today, such as *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and the holiday favourite, *The Nutcracker*.

In 1909, the Russian impresario Serge Diaghilev brought together a group of dancers, choreographers, composers, artists, and designers to create Les Ballets Russes. This company took Paris by storm, as it introduced short one act ballets such as *Scheherazade*, *Les Sylphides*, *The Rite of Spring*, *Firebird*, and *Petrushka*.

MODERN DANCE

In the early 1900s the American dancers Isadora Duncan and Ruth St. Denis and the German dancer Mary Wigman started to pioneer the beginning of modern dance by departing from the traditional formalized structure of ballet. In a response to removing themselves of the rigid constraints and authoritarian control of ballet technique, the tutu and the pointe shoe and technical virtuosity, these pioneers of modern dance were committed to self expression.

Classical ballet relies on an illusion of lightness and effortlessness through the articulation of line and technical precision. In opposition modern dance uses gravity and the weight of the body to enhance and develop movement, rather than fighting it. This tends to produce more natural and organic forms of movement in the body. Modern dancers will often slide across the space or fall to the floor only to rebound again in unexpected ways. It is not unusual for modern choreographers to invent personal techniques and styles instead of following structured forms and technique.

Alvin Ailey, Merce Cunningham, Martha Graham, José Limón, and Paul Taylor are a few examples of choreographers who developed styles that laid down the foundations of American modern dance as we know it today. Another difference between classical ballet and modern dance is simply the way it looks on stage. Classical ballet relies on ornate scenery and costumes but modern dance is often performed on a bare stage, in bare feet, with very simple costuming.

Furthermore, while the story is central to a classical ballet, modern dance does not always follow a traditional narrative. Rather, it encourages the expression of feelings, dreams or ideas of the individual experience.

CONTEMPORARY BALLET

Contemporary Ballet pushes the boundaries and form of classical ballet. It draws on some of the elements of modern dance while at the same time including ballet techniques to create a contemporary aesthetic. By integrating the classical articulation of line and technical virtuosity to the range of motion, use of space and sense of gravity of modern dance, contemporary ballet is able to bridge the value of both forms into a varied and sophisticated movement vocabulary that has a dynamic range of expression in the body.

Feet are bare or in socks, pointe shoes, or soft slippers. A range of turned-in and turned-out leg work and floor work are used extensively. The ballet of the early 20th Century relied on ornate costumes and scenery compared to that of contemporary ballet where the set design may be more engaged by the use of light and video and costumes that expose the body. George Balanchine (New York City Ballet) is considered one of the main pioneers of contemporary ballet. To follow would be some of the world's leading choreographers: William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Nacho Duato, Maurice Béjart, Twyla Tharp, Alonso King, Cayetano Soto to name a few.

WHAT IS A CHOREOGRAPHER?

A choreographer is someone who creates a work of dance and who crafts the sequences of movements. The word choreography literally means “dance-writing” from the Greek words χορεία γραφή. This process involves either the creation of movements by the choreographer only, or the use of improvisation during which dancers and a choreographer collaborate to create the movements. It may also be a combination of both. The choreographer may begin with a concept, idea, theme or emotion, which is further developed into a work of dance. Usually, at some point during the creation period, music will be included in the dance piece. Music styles used could be anything including classical, pop, jazz, hip-hop, electronic, etc. There is also collaboration between the choreographer and the other members of the artistic team such as the Composer, Lighting Designer, Set Designer, Costume Designer and Technical Director. The audience plays an active role because their response informs the choreographer whether his or her vision has been successfully communicated.

WHAT IS A COMPOSER?

A composer is someone who writes a piece of music. A good composer is creative, versatile, and not afraid of experimenting. In dance, choreographers may collaborate with a composer on an original composition, use existing music, or decide to use silence as part of the sound landscape.

The composer ensures that the music suits the project by working closely with the choreographer in the development of his or her ideas for the dance work. The music he or she writes may be instrumental, have lyrics, or be in various styles such as classical, electronic, jazz or pop, among others. What is a Dress Rehearsal?

The last step in the process before the opening night performance is the dress rehearsal. It is essentially a “dry run” where all the elements come together: choreography, lights, sets, costumes and music. Everything is in place and the dancers perform the work from start to finish as if it were a show with an audience. Up until the dress rehearsal, not all of the components have been put together so it is an opportunity for everyone to experience the show and make sure that everything is as it should be.

Elements of Dance

These are five recognized elements of dance, which include: body, action, space, time and energy. Students can develop or extend their understanding of the following elements through observing and/or participating in dance Experiences.

Body: refers to awareness of specific body parts and how they can be moved into different shapes; symmetric/asymmetric, geometric/organic, curved/angular.

Action: refers to the locomotor movements and non-locomotor movements. Locomotor action includes movement that travels through space such as leaping, darting, walking, running, hopping, skipping, galloping, sliding, etc. Non-locomotor action is where the body stays planted while the body parts initiate movement; bending, twisting, stretching, swinging, etc.

Space: refers to the space through which the dancer’s body moves, such as different levels, pathways, directions, shapes, the proximity of dancers to one another, various group formations and use of the performance/studio space.

Time: is applied as both a musical and movement element that includes rhythm, tempo, duration, beat, acceleration/deceleration, fast/slow, stillness and sometimes silence.

Energy: refers to the force applied to highlight the weight, strength and flow of a dancer’s movement.

Before the Performance - Lesson II: Music

Music Used in Ballet Bc's *Romeo + Juliet*

About Sergei Prokofiev

Sergey Prokofiev , in full Sergey Sergeyevich Prokofiev , (born April 23 [April 11, Old Style], 1891, Sontsovka, Ukraine , Russian Empire—died March 5, 1953, Moscow , Russia , U.S.S.R.), 20th-century Russian (and Soviet) composer who wrote in a wide range of musical genres , including symphonies, concert,, film music , operas, ballets, and program pieces.

ACTIVITY 1

Listen to the following excerpts from Sergei Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet with your students

1) Act 1: *Dance of the Knights*
What kind of movements might you expect to see to this music?
Write a list of your ideas together, or take a video of your students dancing to this music.

2) Act I: *Madrigal*
What kind of movements might you expect to see to this music?
How do you expect the dancing to be different from the first piece of music?

ACTIVITY 2

This activity uses the interpretation of music to explore a creative assignment. See how music can inspire a painting, poem, choreography, short story, song lyrics, animation, etc.

Objective: Making observations about and describing music that is then used as research to create a work of art.
Materials: A piece of music, sound system, materials for the creative assignment.

- Provide a piece of music (jazz, hip hop, classical, rock, etc.) for students to listen to.
- Students can work in small groups or individually.
- Have them listen to a piece of music quietly and list 20 words or images that describe what they hear.
- Give students time to listen to the piece of music multiple times with an effort on hearing something new each time.
- Once the list has been complied ask the students to share their ideas with the rest of their group thus compiling a larger list of ideas and thoughts.
- With the larger lists ask the students to use the ideas as a starting point for generating a work of art, eg: poem, short story, collage, choreography, song lyrics, animation, painting, drawing, etc.
- If possible, keep the music playing at a softer volume, as inspiration, while students develop their creative assignments.

Before the Performance - Lesson III: Storytelling

Storytelling Without Words

Together, brainstorm things a performer must do in order to communicate without words. Possible answers could include comments on facial expressions, gestures, exaggeration, working with others.
Explore what other elements in a performance (besides the actions of the performer/dancer) can help tell a story that has no words. Possible answers could include comments on the costumes, set and music.
Make a list of possible ways to storytell without words.

ACTIVITY 1

Embodying a character through gesture

Objective: To explore character development through the body
Materials: Space to move

Pick a character from the following list:
A happy and courageous young girl (Juliet)
An eager young boy (Romeo)
A stern father
A show off friend (Mercutio)
A silly old babysitter (The Nanny)

Create a gesture for your character that expresses something about their personality.
Take turns doing your gestures to create a "movement conversation".
For example, Person #1 does his/her gesture. Person #2 responds with his/her gesture. Person #1 repeats his/her gesture as a response to Person #2.
During the conversation, feel free to vary your gesture slightly based on what your partner has just "said" to you.
Think about the list you created in the Opening Activity.

Ask:
Can you add any of these to make your gesture more expressive?
What kind of story do you think could be behind the conversation you just had?

Option: Draw a costume! Think how the audience would nd out more about your character by looking at what this character wears.

After the Performance - Lesson IV

ACTIVITY 1

Objective: Creative Discussion
This activity uses dance, a non-verbal form of communication, to encourage students to become more articulate on how to express their opinions about what they have seen.

Objective: To build dance literacy among your students.
Upon your return to school engage the class in a group discussion.

Questions for discussion:
• Consider the work you observed
• What do you remember most vividly?
• How did the work make you feel?

Describe the work:
• Using the elements of dance describe the movement in terms of body, space, energy, time and action.
• Were there any sets used?
• How was the lighting used?

Expressing opinions:
• Did you enjoy the show? Why or why not?
• Would you recommend this performance to a friend or family member?
• How do you think the choreographer developed their interpretation of Shakepeare's Romeo + Juliet?
• How did the lighting, costumes and set help to convey the ideas or moods of the work?
• Could you imagine using another style of music?

ACTIVITY 2

This activity uses writing to help stimulate observation and creative critical thinking.

Objective: Write a review for the performance.
Materials: Have the students bring a journal and pen to the theatre.

Find some reviews of Ballet BC (or other companies) in the papers or online at www.balletbc.com. Read and discuss the reviews. From the reviews, make a list of questions that the students can think about when they view the performance.

Things to take note of while watching the Dress Rehearsal:
• The movement and emotions expressed by the dancers.
• The combination of patterns, shapes and dynamics on stage.
• The relationship between the movement and the music.
• The colours, textures and design elements used to enhance the movement.

Writing the Review

Ask the students to write a review of the show taking into consideration the following questions. It may be useful to do an initial brainstorm as a group, and then ask them to write their individual reviews.
• What is the title and who are the choreographers and collaborators?
• When and where was the work created?
• Describe the technical qualities of the work (movement, music, costumes, lighting and set).

Analyze

Analyze how the work is constructed taking into consideration choice of music, use of set, costume and lighting. Comment on how these elements relate to the choreography of each work.

- Identify some of the similarities and differences.
- Identify some of the focal points.

Interpret

Based on your experience of viewing the work, describe how it made you feel.

- Describe the expressive qualities you find in the work. What feelings or emotions did it evoke in you?
- Does the work remind you of something you have experienced, moments or events in your life?
- Why do you think the choreographer chose to make this work?
- How does the work relate to other ideas or events in the world and/or in your other studies?
- Would you recommend this work to others? Why?

The students can print their reviews in the school newspaper or on their blog. Ballet BC would love to receive copies of their reviews.

Please send them to Nina Patel at education-outreach@balletbc.com.

Continued Exploration

Sergei Prokofiev – Biography
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergei_Proko ev

Prokofiev Music Resource
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romeo_and_Juliet_%28Proko ev%29

William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*
Romeo and Juliet Summary
http://www.wikisummaries.org/Romeo_and_Juliet
Romeo and Juliet Play Summary
http://www.cli snotes.com/literature/r/romeo-and-juliet/play-summary
Kids Love Shakespeare's ROMEO and JULIET –A Quick Summary for Kids
http://www.kidsloveshakespeare.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/RJsummary.pdf
Shakespeare – Biography
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare

Book Suggestions
Romeo and Juliet for Kids http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=node%3D4&
eld-keywords=romeo+and+juliet

TED-Ed Videos
Dramatic Irony in Romeo and Juliet
http://ed.ted.com/on/nGf7ZKiN

Ballet BC Artist Profiles, Articles and More:

Please visit our blog for in-depth artist profiles, company articles, and reviews.
balletbc.com/category/news/

For more information, please contact:
Nina Patel, Outreach & Education Administrator
604-732-5003
education-outreach@balletbc.com