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## Ballet BC Strategic Plan: 2018-2025

### Background and Historical Context

In the past nine years, since the appointment of Emily Molnar as Artistic Director, Ballet BC has seen a steady increase in subscriber and ticket-buyer numbers, positive press coverage, and demand from national and international presenters for touring. Ballet BC has been lauded around the globe for the high artistic quality of the company and for its exemplary leadership in Vancouver's and British Columbia's arts and culture community, as well as in the international dance community. Following an extensive information gathering period with artists, staff, board, patrons, and community leaders, the consensus was unanimous that an ambitious growth trajectory is warranted and desired that would capitalize on this strong foundation. This growth will respond to growing demand, and include an increase in our level of excellence as a creation-based contemporary ballet company, increase in our operational capacity, and further our commitment to pushing the boundaries of collaborative dance making and community-building fostering a vital public dialogue on the transformative nature of dance. Planned growth will be supported through building audience engagement, increasing our visibility and enhancing revenue generation.

The 2013-16/18 Strategic Plan focused on the development of the company's vision, establishing outreach and training activities, and ensuring solid operations fueled by responsible governance and diverse revenue sources. With success in every area of this Plan, the company can now build on its position as a leader in the cultural community of the province and nation, further the national and international recognition for its artistic excellence and commitment to commissioning and creating new works, build capacity for its core operations, extend the reach of the company through the engagement of communities, as well as enhance the experience for our artists, staff, and volunteers, so that it is a model of a fulfilling workplace.

The recent transformative successes of the company have unfolded rapidly, propelling Ballet BC into the public consciousness to an unprecedented extent and the international dance community is taking note, as evidenced by our sold out performances at Sadlers Wells (UK), our headlining the Movimentos Festival (Germany), our invitation to perform at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) and being presented in Tel Aviv, to name only a select few. It is time to expand on this artistic success through a renewed vision for Ballet BC, one that recognizes our significant growth over the last decade and positions us to achieve even more over the next seven years than we could have imagined a few short years ago. Our artistic successes have been matched by recent financial successes, highlights of which include a generous contribution from the Vancouver Foundation, a 26% increase in operating support from the Canada Council over two years, the record-breaking ticket sales for *Romeo + Juliet*, and confirming the Platinum Season sponsorship from BMO for the 2018/19 season. Many years of fiscal prudence have allowed the company to post successive small surpluses, retire its accumulated operating deficit, pay off the money borrowed from the endowment housed at the Vancouver Foundation, and as of this year establish a small cash reserve to insulate against unforeseen future cash flow or financial challenges. This solid financial position supports the company's confidence to be ambitious in this seven-year plan.

Dance is a universal communication tool that traverses cultures, generations, and other social entities sometimes thought of as being in opposition. Like all art forms, dance can create space for dialogue across differences. Dance can be used not only to inspire, provoke, and energize, but also to challenge and build a

stronger community. Ballet BC is an ambitious organization that has a distinct focus and believes this focus can be used to enhance the community it lives in, as well as promote entrepreneurship, creation, and collaboration internationally.

### **Artistic Vision: creativity, collaboration, community, conversation**

Within Canada's vibrant arts and culture community, we are inspired to work as a collective force in making dance that brings together ideas that are shaping new perspectives on art. As a creation-based contemporary dance company Ballet BC is focused on investigating and developing a diverse repertoire of works at the forefront of contemporary ballet that communicates and contributes in meaningful ways to the future of dance, dance artists and audiences in Vancouver, Canada and internationally. We strive to be welcoming, collaborative and imaginative in a way that is relevant to our time, place and history.

Looking ahead at the next seven years, it is vital that we do so with the pioneering perspective we harnessed during the turnaround in 2009. It is important at this time, as we move from stability to long term planning, that we continue to learn in every aspect. We must work even closer together as a company and with our communities to help us expand our practice by digging deeper into the art form and enriching it through interdisciplinary work. In an exciting time of transition and change, we must continue to take creative risks and ask questions. Moving forward, we will further develop our horizontal, non-hierarchical approach to making dance allowing for multiple perspectives within our work culture that places priority on connection, creativity and excellence. For us artistic growth will include:

- diverse learning focused on experimentation and deepening and examining the edge of our practice;
- respectful and thoughtful collaboration;
- responsible and imaginative inquiry;
- clarity of intention and communication.

Over the next seven years we will: explore new artistic directions that push the quality and impact of our work; expand our research and programming; support new and existing Canadian and international voices; and broaden our conversation through touring, creative partnerships and community engagement. Throughout we will place attention on an inclusive and equitable approach that supports professional development and leadership.

### **Creation and Collaboration**

Over the past nine years, we have strategically focused on developing new relationships with a variety of voices in dance that have enabled us to create a unique identity for the company and add over 45 new works to our repertoire. This intentional approach helped us:

- build a meaningful conversation with a variety of emerging to established artists across Canada and internationally;
- be exposed to a diversity of perspectives and approaches in and to contemporary art making and performance;
- examine and tune our creative process;
- push the boundaries of our practice; and
- enhance our understanding of collaboration.

This commitment to dance making has garnered applause for the company around the world while introducing our audiences to a wide experience of contemporary dance. Going forward, our **mainstage** production programming will place a new emphasis on adding full-length (narrative and non-narrative based) work each

season for the next seven years with the intention of developing a distinctive full-length repertoire to complement our varied repertoire of shorter works. **Focus** will be placed on the refreshed telling of known stories and new narratives, integrating diverse voices and perspectives, particularly women's voices. To realize this vision, we will need to increase production budgets, including budgets for live music and to enhance our in-house wardrobe and technical efforts and teams. This vision will also be supported through the establishment of a **Creation Fund**, a dedicated fund for new work. Also connected to this initiative is the new **Associate Artists** program, an ongoing rotating platform for choreographers, designers and composers that will be invited to collaborate on a longer-term basis with Ballet BC.

The recently established **Emerging Artist** program, a more mature form of apprentice program, will be integrated into all company endeavors, including touring, and will keep expanding over the next seven years, including through additional mentoring, networking and career advancement opportunities. This program will lead toward the establishment of an extension company, **Ballet BC II**, which could tour in smaller communities, where it is not financially feasible to tour the main company and perform with the senior company on larger projects. Ballet BC II is envisioned as a younger, smaller company of 6-8 dancers which could be formed and operated in collaboration with Arts Umbrella, our official training institution, and their 3<sup>rd</sup> year Graduate Program.

Ballet BC will establish a **Choreographic Institute** to further support creation and collaboration in alternative ways that are complementary to our mainstage and touring focus. The Choreographic Institute will consist of various components: Choreographic Lab, Choreographic Series, Emerging Choreographer Award and Artist in Residence position.

- The **Choreographic Lab** will provide an opportunity for Ballet BC, Arts Umbrella and the local community to come together for 1 or 2 weeks of research culminating in a public informal studio showing and discussion. The **Choreographic Series** will be reignited after being dormant for several years and will involve the creation of 5-6 short works to be performed in a small stage environment. The works will be selected through a juried application process that is open to all professional choreographers. The focus of both the Choreographic Lab and Choreographic Series will be the inclusion of diverse ideas and local voices creating an opportunity for connection and exchange between Ballet BC and our Vancouver and BC community of artists. These two components are separate from our mainstage programming at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre and will operate over a three-year cycle: Lab, Lab, Series.
- In addition, every three years, Ballet BC will give out an **Emerging Choreographic Award** to an emerging choreographer who will be invited to create a short work for the company as part of our season programming at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. This award will be selected through a juried application process open to all professional national and international choreographers.
- The **Artist in Residence** will be a funded position for a freelance choreographer, dancer, or dance scholar/writer who will be supported by Ballet BC for one season to develop their work while they work alongside the company on creation activities, outreach, training, juries and advocacy work.

**Touring** will remain a priority with the goal of 7-10 weeks of touring per season offering both mixed programs and full-length works, branching out to a broader range of audiences in British Columbia, Canada and the world. We will build our relationships, outreach and touring of the province while we continue to expand in the European and US audiences and connect to new audiences e.g. Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Mexico, China and parts of South America.

### **Community**

Ballet BC will collaborate with and contribute to its local community through a range of outreach, training and advocacy. Our focus will be on our commitment to sharing the experience of dance and the arts. We will expand

on our existing **outreach and community engagement** programs, particularly through consistent programs throughout the year, where Ballet BC company members will devote a day to a wide range of activities in the Lower Mainland. Ideas for expanding existing programs include enhancing DanceXpress and adult dance classes, and increasing the audience for Artists Salons and pre/post-performance chats through podcasting. Other potential initiatives include visits to children in hospitals, senior homes, a program for individuals with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia and the KIDS LAB- a creation lab for dance, music, writing and video curated and run by Ballet BC dancers. Our community-focus will also be demonstrated by a reignited **Alternative Space Program** featuring pop up performances and site-specific creations. Ballet BC's contribution to **training** will continue to take the form of choreographic workshops, master classes, and open studio viewings and will be expanded through the planned Choreographic Institute. Over the next seven years, Ballet BC will build its **advocacy** efforts by systematically looking for opportunities to support the collective voice for arts and culture in BC, Canada and beyond. We will share the voice of dance, speaking on its behalf whenever possible by being informed, creating awareness, sharing information and asking questions.

Another important initiative will be to engage with Indigenous artists and leaders to help guide us in deepening our understanding of Indigenous culture and counseling us in ways we can build a long term and meaningful relationship. Being cognizant of the complex nature of these collaborations, our commitment is multi-dimensional and over-arching, and will be on the basis of reciprocity, with the intention of learning from an elder over a continuous period of time and ensuring that our artists, collaborators and staff understand and embrace all that inclusiveness means.

### **Conversation**

Ballet BC wants to foster dialogue about dance, and particularly its transformative nature, connecting it to a broader conversation around leadership and social value. We want people to know art can transform a room and move people to feel life in new and meaningful ways. Today, more than ever, we need channels of expression that examine life, society and a deeper consciousness.

We will seek to ignite informed conversation about our work and what it means through a larger range of vehicles including a **Talk Series** (e.g. quarterly essays, monthly podcasts, salons and chats), working with our Artist in Residence and Associate Artists and a web-only **IN/side Series** (e.g. monthly dialogue podcasts, weekly in studio video diary, connecting and partnership with a network of artists and arts organizations). We will expand our current digital communications program, consisting of newsletter, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and seek out additional avenues to advance this conversation.

### **Space, professional development and well-being**

Ballet BC can only accomplish this artistic vision if we meet our needs for revitalized **space** that reunites the artistic and administrative sides of the company under the same roof and by paying greater attention to the **professional development and well-being** of all members and staff. We are already moving through the planning stages toward a new home for Ballet BC, one that meets its growing needs for rehearsal and work space and will house the expanded creations and collaborations set out here, including the Choreographic Institute, Ballet BC II, Emerging Artist program, Artist in Residence and Associate Artist programs. Focus will be placed on continued improvement for salaries, benefits and working conditions, and on a range of professional development and well-being initiatives, particularly on expanding leadership and mentoring opportunities within the organization.

Stepping forward, Ballet BC will build possibilities that focus on community, how we are dancing and the larger collective awareness of our work and sharing it as citizens of the world.

## Mission

Ballet BC is Canada's leading contemporary ballet company committed to excellence and collaboration in dance, inspiring local, national, and international audiences. As a creation-based company with global recognition and perspective, Ballet BC serves as a cultural ambassador, inspires diverse communities through dance and promotes inclusion in and through all that we do.

## Strategic Goals and Initiatives

The background and history, artistic vision and mission discussed above provide the context for the Strategic Plan that follows. Based on our dialogue with key Ballet BC supporters and members of the local, national and international dance community, we have resolved to focus on the following five goals:

- 1) Create an innovative and diverse repertoire of new full length and mixed bill works at the forefront of contemporary ballet that contributes and communicates in important and meaningful ways to the future of dance, dance artists, and audiences in Vancouver, Canada, and across the globe;
- 2) Continually deepen the artistic experience for our artists, collaborators and the creative community through various avenues of connection at every level;
- 3) Engage with the community in which we reside and serve as a cultural community leader and Canadian arts ambassador that focuses on exceptional artistic quality;
- 4) Significantly build capacity of the company's operations by enhancing revenue generation, securing enhanced facilities, and maintaining sound financial management thereby expanding the company's reach and outreach, increasing its visibility, and deepening the artistic experience for all; and
- 5) Achieve distinction as a non-profit organization that is pushing boundaries, artistically and administratively, and with respect to governance - and is seen as a "best practices" company to work and volunteer for that fully reflects and advances the company's values.

The initiatives that follow each goal both support the goal and provide key actions that ensure the goal is met. Each initiative should be seen as a step the organization will take to advance itself towards each goal. Every initiative also includes a brief outline of its purpose and the motivation behind it.

**Goal 1: To create an innovative and diverse repertoire of new full length and mixed bill works at the forefront of contemporary ballet that contributes and communicates in important and meaningful ways to the future of dance, dance artists, and audiences in Vancouver, Canada, and across the globe.**

**Initiative 1: Build relationships with innovative collaborators who share our mission and perspective on dance making and community building through dance, while deepening our relationships with existing collaborators who are supporting the evolutionary role contemporary ballet plays in culture.** At the core of Ballet BC's mission is the desire to create new dance works that inspire and challenge our artists, audiences and collaborators. If we are to continue to be a leader in how contemporary ballet is evolving, not just participating in this evolution but leading the effort, we must constantly be identifying the best suited and effective partners, cultivating relationships with them, talking with them about our successes, challenges and ambitions, and commissioning new work for our audiences. The vitality of ballet is likely measured by growing audiences, and today's audiences require that companies stay relevant in our communities. Relevance is primarily determined by what audiences are interested, involved and engaged in, hence the more research, engagement, and

collaboration we do, the more we ensure our relevance, the ability to grow our audiences and lead the charge of putting contemporary ballet at the forefront of contributing to a cultural community – both local and international.

**Initiative 2: Commission at least one new full-length work (narrative and non-narrative), and one shorter work, annually beginning in year 2 of the Plan.** In the nine years since Emily Molnar became Artistic Director, Ballet BC has commissioned more than 45 new works that have been performed in Vancouver and abroad. These works make up an ever-expanding repertoire that is exemplary for any international dance company. Only two of these new works were full-length. With the majority of our repertoire consisting of shorter works, we will now begin to focus on additional full-length works, which we believe is the logical evolution of our creation process, as well as an appropriate response to public interest. Accessibility to a broad audience is important to us, and through consistent two-way conversations, education and engagement, we feel we have provided this in the past decade, showcasing what contemporary ballet means today to our patrons. We can now begin to explore how we apply our creation process to longer works, and confidently to a steadily increasing audience base. Key to continuing this vision is the establishment of a “creation fund” that would provide financial stability for the company’s mission. Full-length works come at a higher cost, but with proper planning and cultivation of patrons, this ambition can become a reality.

**Initiative 3: Consistently represent the province and nation while on tour for 7-10 weeks annually, expanding our presence and that of our province and Canada in target markets such as Europe and North America, while connecting to new markets such as Australia, New Zealand, Asia, and South America.** Artistic excellence and global relevance is enhanced by the company’s presence throughout the nation and around the globe through exposure to a wide variety of performance opportunities and interaction with diverse audiences. Consistent touring is also required if we are to continue being a leading contemporary ballet company. The ripple effect of presenting our work nationally and internationally is multifaceted; we not only give our artists this visibility, but we attract new artists, new audiences, grow in prestige, and advance our mission beyond the community in which we live, not to mention the effect of our cultural ambassadorship as we tour. Currently annual touring is taking place in Canada, the US, and Europe. Efforts are already underway to expand to the Australian, New Zealand, Asian, and South American markets. In order to continue this expansion, resources such as a touring manager as well as additional funding sources - public and private - are required.

**Goal 2: Continually deepen the artistic experience for our artists, collaborators and the artistic community through various avenues of engagement at every level.**

**Initiative 1: Continue the Emerging Artist program that would grow into a second company that provides elevated training and professional development opportunities and allows the company to further its touring and community engagement aspirations and its visibility in the city, province, country, and beyond.** Establishing a second company within Ballet BC’s auspices will provide us with the greater artistic resources and capacity needed to meet demand and increase our visibility and impact. We find ourselves in the fortunate position of being sought after for performances and workshops in the city and province we live, as well as around the globe. A second company will allow us to respond to demands for performances in smaller venues and to perform and tour works, such as Medhi Walerski’s *Romeo and Juliet*, that require a larger number of dancers. Establishing a second company will also allow us to further invest in and nurture a larger number of younger artists and create a pipeline of potential dancers for our core professional company. Once this initiative is achieved, our ability to embark in strategic collaborations, nurture new voices in dance making, enhance community programming, and expand upon our current national and international touring will increase.

**Initiative 2: Establish a mentorship program that engages Ballet BC dancers, participants in our Emerging Artist program, and dance students and broadens the training of our dancers and emerging artists via cross-disciplinary initiatives with a variety of coaches, trainers, and exchanges with strategic partners.** Ballet BC has a long-standing commitment to nurturing young talent. As we continue to be a leader in the evolution of contemporary ballet, the organization draws on talent from a multitude of generations, both in its dancers and its artistic collaborators. One aspect of being part of an evolutionary process is identifying emerging talent and supporting their fresh ideas while providing them with historical references in the field. Our partnership and Agreement with Arts Umbrella is an ideal starting point for us to deepen the experience for all of our artists but should not limit us from engaging with other training programs. An intentional and structured mentorship program will be designed and implemented that encourages our artists to learn from each other and strives to raise the level of collaboration even further.

We also acknowledge the many dynamics that go into supporting a gifted artist, and the importance of providing cross-disciplinary training for our artists; this not only enhances the artistic experience and product, but also increases the opportunities for our artists to grow not just as dancers, but as human beings and creative professionals. This includes work with dramaturges, theatre directors, and other artists and teachers in various art forms.

**Initiative 3: Establish initiatives that foster the creation process, including Associate Artist positions, an Artist in Residence position, and a Choreographic Lab and Choreographic Series.** The success of our artistic and production collaborations to date is undeniable. Over the next seven years, we will seek to explore new and sustainable avenues to invite partners, current and prospective, into our work space and provide opportunities for new voices to be heard on a consistent and dedicated basis. The core of our collaborations will always be between our dancers and production team, but the importance of collaborations beyond these cannot go unnoticed nor unexplored. These new initiatives will solidify our commitment to the broader dance community and expand our exchange with both our local community of artists as well as potential new international partners. Ballet BC has begun to establish a reputation for supporting a range of individuals engaged in making dance makers. These initiatives will strengthen this reputation by establishing ongoing programs that support professional development and exploration in choreography.

**Goal 3: Engage with the community in which we reside and serve as a cultural leader and Canadian arts ambassador that focuses on exceptional artistic quality.**

**Initiative 1: Increase the reach of our existing community outreach initiatives (community dress rehearsals, DanceXpress, adult classes) by gaining capacity for broader engagement via tools such as province-wide live-streaming, alternative space programs (pop-up performances and site specific works), community partnerships, and conversational podcasts.** Our sustainability and that of dance as an art form will be enhanced by becoming more accessible in at least two critical ways – physically or geographically, and digitally. With limited resources and funding, the company has had initial success in our community outreach initiatives. Our goal in this focus area is to capitalize on our current efforts to broaden our reach, mainly via live-streaming, pop-up performances, and additional avenues to bring dance and movement into Vancouver neighborhoods and community-based organizations. Though an anticipated outcome of these activities is new audiences for our mainstream programming which will lead to additional generated revenue, the driving force behind this initiative is to serve as a leader in contributing to a vibrant arts and cultural community, and ensuring that our artistic endeavors are accessible and relevant in Vancouver and BC. Broadening our reach is critical to our evolution as we attempt to transform the way people view the impact dance and the arts has in our lives as well

as proactively engaging individuals and communities who are currently unaware of our mission and programming.

**Initiative 2: Embark on consistently scheduled community outreach initiatives that involve segments of our community overtly interested in movement and dance, as well as communities who have been under-represented in, and under-served by, the arts.** We believe accessibility and inclusion are achieved not only by providing opportunities for the public to see our programs for free or at a reduced cost, but also by pro-actively venturing into our community to deepen our conversation with Vancouver and British Columbia. Specific initiatives could include dancer-led classes, workshops or speaking engagements in schools, community centres, and hospitals and care facilities. Carving out spans of time for our artists and administration to present our programs at the sites of various community organizations not only creates social impact, but also provides important professional development for our team, ensures that under-served markets experience dance, and engages prospective audiences on their home turf. Given that serving diverse communities is important to Ballet BC, we need to make the effort to go to new audiences. Tapping into funding sources for this initiative and using the resources we already have, along with supplementing our outreach resources are both necessary to logistically carry this out.

**Initiative 3: Nurture talented dance makers via an Emerging Choreographer Award, Choreographic Lab, and Choreographic Series, that promote dance in Vancouver and Canada.** These initiatives are designed to contribute to both Goal 1 and Goal 3. Being a leader at the forefront of contemporary ballet means investing in the newest voices in our field. Not only should we be deepening the experience and development of our dancers and audience, but we need to cultivate the next generation of choreographers, designers, collaborators and artistic leaders. Ensuring that British Columbia is a place for innovative dance making at the highest of standards requires Ballet BC to provide avenues, such as a Choreographic Lab, Choreographic Series, and an Emerging Choreographer Award which will be open to all professional choreographers and tied into our regular programming. We have long believed in the importance of training and supporting a diversity of talented and dedicated Canadian and international artists. These initiatives will raise the level of this endeavor and further the identity of this company as the leading company where contemporary dance is pushed to the next level.

**Initiative 4: Educate and engage audiences in the creation process through various digital avenues (blogs, social media platforms, short videos, web-series) by showcasing the pre-performance preparations that the company undergoes for any production.** Our goal to deepen the engagement of the artistic experience must reach beyond our artists to our audiences. From feedback provided in many settings, we've come to realize that the public has a hunger to understand more about the creation process. By providing digital and live experiences that show our process and reveal behind the scenes of a production, we will "lift the curtain" and expose the multitude of elements that goes into the final product on stage. Once created these digital resources could also be used in live experiences through integration with our in-person outreach activities under Initiative 2. These engagement opportunities will lead to more intimate conversations with the community and ultimately increase their "buy-in" and lead to greater generated revenue.

**Goal 4: Significantly build capacity of the company's operations by enhancing revenue generation, securing enhanced facilities, and maintaining sound financial management thereby expanding the company's reach and outreach, increasing its visibility, and deepening the artistic experience for all.**

**Initiative 1: Implement measures that maximize current revenue streams and ensure sustainability; further diversify revenue with a focus on acquiring additional single ticket buyers and subscribers, increased individual giving, increased corporate sponsorship, event revenue generation, and revenue from**

**merchandising.** The growth of the company that this Strategic Plan outlines requires identification and enhancement of a broad array of revenue streams, maximizing streams that have been vital to the company for years, and identifying new streams that will grow in time. Ballet BC has built up its development and marketing teams and is elevating Board engagement in these areas thereby sharpening our focus and energies on revenue growth. Data show that the company has been successful in retaining subscribers but that we have growth opportunities in this area of earned income. We are developing strategies to increase single ticket sales and subscriptions by working with a leading consultant and through a heightened sales culture, targeted marketing, and a range of value-added enhancements that offer our audience members more exclusive experiences.

The organization's growth in donations from individuals is a critical stream that needs to be constantly cultivated and broadened. Trends in Canadian giving show a sharp increase in this revenue stream for all non-profit organizations, and specifically for arts organizations. Ballet BC not only needs to steward its long-term patrons, but also engage prospective patrons to an extent that ensures contributions grow and maximizes the growth of this revenue stream. Financial data from other arts organizations detailing their successes in sponsorship and corporate support also reveal that Ballet BC has tremendous growth potential in corporate sponsorships and event revenue generation and also room to increase support from charitable foundations. Finally, our recent success in garnering increased support from the federal, provincial and municipal governmental funding sources needs to be continually stewarded, ensuring the relationships we have with government officials is strong and consistent. Our development plan encompasses new initiatives in each of these areas with a view to diversifying sources of contributed revenue. We are also in the process of exploring new merchandising opportunities.

**Initiative 2: Secure site and funding for the future home of Ballet BC that not only integrates artistic and administrative facilities but also leaves room for the planned company growth set out in Goals 1, 2, and 3.**

Ballet BC's current facilities are deficient in several important respects: the artistic and administrative are housed in separate buildings at some distance from each other causing inefficiency on a daily basis, studio space is insufficient for current needs posing serious barriers to achieving excellence, and there is inadequate space for informal performances. Realizing the aspirational goals and initiatives laid out in this Strategic Plan requires the company to have a space that promotes collaboration, engagement, and efficiency. Synergies are maximized when people are brought together, a space that invites the community to experience the creation process and provides the resources needed to nurture artists, administration, volunteers and patrons is ideal. The initial feasibility study for Ballet BC's new home provided a vision of what that could entail, while also outlining the resources needed to see this come to fruition. A new, or renovated building managed by Ballet BC and used primarily for the core and auxiliary programs of the company would allow us to achieve our mission effectively and efficiently, better serve our growing audience, and solidify the importance of the company in the cultural fabric of the city, facilitate a multitude of efficiencies not currently possible, and expand the company's ability to further its mission and serve its growing audience. Active steps are being taken to identify a site for the future home of Ballet BC and to examine the feasibility of a capital campaign.

**Initiative 3: Leverage the international success of the company to gain provincial and national recognition; explore avenues for revenue generation that capitalize on this recognition.** Ballet BC has experienced tremendous success in touring its home country as well as the US, UK, and parts of Europe. Not only does this national and international touring result in greater visibility, prestige, and notoriety, but it also garners high praise from critics and the media. The company is focused now on capitalizing on this visibility, prestige, and international reputation in the dance world to engage local and regional media as well as our strategic partners at a deeper level which will in turn generate greater ticket sales at home and attract additional and greater contributions. Ballet BC has built a strong brand, and is respected for supporting the creation process and holding true to its collaborative vision. Initiatives will be pursued to generate revenue from this powerful asset,

including increased merchandising, life style marketing partnerships, and increased visibility via media outlets affiliated with the arts, and outside the arts and culture arena

**Goal 5: Achieve recognition by our people, our stakeholders and our community as a great place to work – a place where one can grow and thrive both artistically and professionally. Our objective is to help accelerate personal transformation of skills, thinking and behaviours so that we can live our purpose and achieve our vision.**

**Initiative 1: Introduce leading edge work place policies that reflect and respect our colleagues as highly talented whole beings, passionately committed to our purpose.** If Ballet BC is to be a company from which artists and professionals seek employment, we need to look beyond the minimum to ensure our employees and volunteers are rewarded and fulfilled by their involvement. Once our team of professionals recognize Ballet BC as a great place to work, sharing the policies and procedures that got us this accolade would not only advance our leadership status in the arts community, but fuel a better standard of living and working in Vancouver. The company aspires to create a nurturing and highly productive work place that primarily serves to enhance and maximize workplace enjoyment, fulfilment, safety, development and satisfaction, but secondarily serves as an example to the corporate and non-corporate worlds. Our policy on zero tolerance for any form of exclusion, harassment, or bullying has recently been substantially revised and a first priority is on implementation measures and training. A newly established HR office will assist with carrying out these initiatives and a commitment to annual review of policies has been made. Options for an external work place evaluation and employee-led evaluations will be investigated.

**Initiative 2: Enable and empower an inclusive, collaborative and innovative culture.** By committing to shared leadership, we will promote opportunities for our people (dancers and administrative staff alike) to stretch their capability, engage in our business and together we will achieve more, faster, as a diverse and united team. We will support our colleagues to invest in their own professional development by establishing exciting goals and developing strong self-management skills and providing everyone with the opportunity to receive formal and informal feedback throughout the course of the year.

**Initiative 3: Be at least on par with compensation packages in the Canadian arts industry, and provide employee benefits that encourage sustainably fulfilling lives and employee retention.** Though the company has incrementally increased dancer salaries along with the length of their contracts, scanned the industry for administrative comparisons, and begun researching new employee benefits such as a retirement plan, we are aware that we are not at the level to attract and retain the best in the industry. In order to maintain a dedicated and hard-working staff and artistic team, we must increase compensation across all departments. The enterprising goals and initiatives outlined in the Plan require that the organization not only be on par, but be ahead of the curve with respect to compensation and benefits packages. To attract quality employees we will need to execute the Plan and retain the valued employees we currently have.

**Initiative 4: Be a leader in non-profit governance effectiveness and ensure that Directors have the support needed to leverage their skills and contribute their leadership.** Ballet BC's Board of Directors has grown and solidified over the past five years and has overseen expanded fundraising activities, revised policies and governance practices, and updated the Society's Constitution and Bylaws. A move to the next level of leadership will involve refining Board policies and practices to support an innovative, positive, collaborative organization with a strong development culture, mature committee structure, and effective succession planning. Continuing to build on our track record of sound financial stewardship, we will continue to evolve our budget planning and oversight, including through a move toward multi-year budgeting.

### **Implementation of the Plan**

With the exception of Initiative 4 of Goal 5, overall responsibility for implementation of the Strategic Plan rests with the Executive Director and Artistic Director of the company. The Plan will be intermittently reviewed by the Board of Directors, with a thorough mid-term progress report written at the end of year three and at the end of year five, following annual reports from management. Specific implementation strategies will be formulated with various directors, managers, committee chairs, and board members. Though the mission, vision, goals, and initiatives should not change, it is understood that this Plan is a living document and how we achieve these objectives may vary, as every organization must be adaptive to opportunities and challenges that arise over time, especially given the pace of change in our highly connected and technological world.