

For Immediate Release

Ballet BC Will Return this Fall in an Entirely New Way

The dance company welcomes new and returning dancers as they resume rehearsals for upcoming digital and live performances



September 29, 2020 - Vancouver, BC - [Ballet BC](#) is thrilled to welcome new Artistic Director Medhi Walerski as the company returns to the studio next month, to prepare for new productions set to debut this fall. The company will continue their commitment to create, innovate and inspire through the power of dance — both new talent and legacy dancers are working on live and digital performances that will unite them with Vancouver audiences, the details of which will be released soon. Always striving to create new ways to showcase the Ballet BC experience, the company is also welcoming a new filmmaker-in-residence, Kevin Fitzgerald, who will be following the dancers and providing both a new artistic and behind-the-scenes perspective throughout the season.

“The past few months have allowed all of us time to reflect as we have seen our lives upended,” said Medhi Walerski, Artistic Director of Ballet BC. “The role of art and how it shapes our world is ever present; it has the power to capture our aliveness while being a source of healing, inspiration and hope. Due to the pandemic, we’ve had to reimagine what the season would look

like and I'm excited to share the company's diverse and creative vision with the local, national and international dance world."

Returning to Ballet BC's roster of talent are long-time company dancers Livona Ellis and Brandon Lee Alley. Livona first began dancing with Ballet BC in 2010. In 2017, she received the Mayor's Arts Award for Emerging Artist and this past year she staged Medhi Walerski's Staatsoper Hannover in Germany and was a guest artist with Konzert Theater Bern in Switzerland. Brandon originally joined Ballet BC when he was 20-years-old and has worked with a handful of prestigious choreographers during his time at the company. He's an instructor at Lamondance, Richmond Academy and is the Co-Founder and Director of Dance//Novella.

Also joining Ballet BC for the 2020/21 season is dancer Rena Narumi. Originally from Tokyo, Japan, she trained at Centre d'art chorégraphique Franco-Japonais in Paris, France and the Arts Umbrella dance graduate program in Vancouver. After her graduation, she performed with ProArteDanza, Kidd Pivot, Hessischen Staatstheaters Wiesbaden, Royal Swedish Ballet, and Nederlands Dans Theater 1. At the Royal Swedish Ballet, she performed the main role of Juliet in *Juliet and Romeo* by Mats Ek, which played at Paris Opera Garnier in Paris and Sadler's Wells Theater in London.

As Ballet BC works to reimagine their 2020/21 season, they have brought in a new filmmaker-in-residence, Kevin Fitzgerald, to showcase the company and expand its digital presence through a new artistic lens. Dance lovers will get to experience Ballet BC in an entirely new way through both live and digital performances amongst the challenges presented by COVID-19.

Kevin Fitzgerald is an award-winning filmmaker of Indigineous descent and African heritage. He's known for his acclaimed documentary *Freestyle: The Art of Rhyme* that won several awards including the HBO Documentary Award and Kodak Maverick Award. Passionate about documenting the world of art and music, Kevin directed and produced a documentary on *Macy Gray* for Columbia Records and followed it up with *Seven Days in Paris* about musician Ben Harper and his band The Innocent Criminals recording their final album for Virgin Records. More recently, Kevin is the director and producer of the theatrically released documentary feature, *The Art of Dance*. He's a founding principal partner, creative director and executive producer at the Vancouver-based production company Hip Hop Films.

For more information and to remain updated on upcoming Ballet BC performances, visit balletbc.com or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

About Ballet BC

Founded in 1986, Ballet BC is currently under the leadership of Artistic Director Medhi Walerski. Combining classical integrity with a contemporary sensibility, Ballet BC is a creation-based company of talented dancers from Canada and around the world that is committed to exploration and collaboration in contemporary dance. Solidly grounded in the rigour and artistry

of classical ballet, with an emphasis on innovation and the immediacy of the 21st century, the Company presents a distinct and diverse repertoire by the most sought-after Canadian and international contemporary choreographers.

Ballet BC performs highly acclaimed productions on regional, national and international tours in addition to its regular performance season in Vancouver, and was nominated for an Olivier Award in 2019. Ballet BC is committed to being a leader in the community through its outreach and professional development activities, and actively fosters collaborations that support artists, choreographers and audiences alike, furthering the boundaries of contemporary dance.

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