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24
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ZENITH

Andrea Peña
Fernando Hernando Magadan
Johan Inger

SACRA
CAELUM
PASSING

Mar 6 / 7 / 8

Queen Elizabeth Theatre



Hello and welcome!

It's great to be back in the seats of the Queen Elizabeth Theatre for the second program in Ballet BC's 2024/25 season. Knowing what I do about how much work, creativity, and expertise goes into the curation and planning of evenings like this, I never tire of finally being here amidst the buzz of a full auditorium in anticipation.

The spring is upon us, which means so is our Ballet BC spring fundraising campaign, focused on Ballet BC's place on the world stage. The work of this company, including the incredible international talent you will witness tonight, would not be possible without the generous support of individual donors. If you enjoy the performance, I hope you will consider supporting the company further by making a contribution.

Tonight is largely focused on the act of creation, of bringing new dance works into existence for audiences to experience and be inspired by. The arts are not only a way for us to connect with one another—they allow us to make meaning of the world, and to be more thoughtful, kind, and empathetic. Which I think we all could argue is needed more than ever.

Thank you for joining us. Enjoy the show!

Bob Armstrong

CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Ballet BC is located on the traditional lands of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), s_kw_xwú7mesh (Squamish), and sə́lílwətaʔɬ (Tseil-Waututh) First Nations. We are grateful for the opportunity to live, work and learn together on unceded Coast Salish Territory.



Welcome to ZENITH, our second program of the 2024/25 season, and an evening that celebrates bold artistic voices and the power of dance to connect, transform, and inspire.

For this program, I am excited to bring together three exceptional choreographers, each offering a unique perspective on the human experience.

First, we are sharing a world premiere by Andrea Peña, the recipient of the Ballet BC Emily Molnar Choreographic Award. Andrea is an artist I deeply admire. She is a fearless creator whose work challenges both dancers and audiences with its unique, thought-provoking concepts. It has been incredible to witness our dancers engage with her process, pushing themselves to new artistic horizons.

Next, we introduce a new creation by Fernando Hernando Magadan. Having known Fernando for decades, I am proud he has taken on the challenge to create a brand new piece for us. Fernando's work is deeply poetic, blending powerful movement with striking imagery. His ability to craft intricate, emotionally charged worlds through dance makes this world premiere a thrilling addition to our season.

Finally, we close the evening with the epic *PASSING* by Johan Inger. Johan is a masterful storyteller, and *PASSING* is a work that has resonated deeply with many since its original creation for Ballet BC. Playful, poignant, and profoundly human, it invites us to reflect on change, transition, and the fleeting nature of time.

Together, these works highlight the depth and diversity of our company, offering an evening that is innovative, artistically rich, and full of heart.

Enjoy the performance!

Medhi Walerski

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Welcome to ZENITH! Tonight, you're in for a truly exceptional experience.

Over the past few months, Ballet BC has been working on a new strategic plan. Anyone who knows me understands how passionate I am about strategy, with a drive to constantly evolve and grow. I enjoy the challenge of finding ways to innovate artistically and deepen the connection with our community. Ballet BC is experiencing a period of remarkable growth. The challenge we face is deciding which opportunities to pursue, knowing there are so many exciting paths ahead.

We've been reflecting on our purpose: creating dance that delves into the depth and complexity of the human experience, and fostering meaningful connections — both with each other and with you, our audience. I hope that, as you leave here tonight, these pieces will stay with you in some way, sparking thoughts and emotions long after you depart. After all, isn't that the true power of art?

At our offices on Granville Island, we've been busier than ever. While preparing for next season's exciting plans, we're also gearing up for upcoming tours to Victoria and Toronto, followed by performances in the UK and Germany. We've also launched our spring fundraising campaign, with an ambitious goal of raising \$415,000. If you're able, please consider making a gift. Your generosity helps us bring the very best artists to Vancouver and share our work on the global stage.

A heartfelt thank you to our incredible Board of Directors, who provide invaluable guidance and give generously of their time. We are also thankful for our ticket buyers, subscribers, donors, sponsors, and public funders — your unwavering support is what makes all of this possible.

Kathy MacKenzie

MANAGING DIRECTOR

SACRA

WORLD PREMIERE | 28 minutes

Artistic Direction

Andrea Peña

Choreography

Andrea Peña in collaboration with the artists of Ballet BC

Rehearsal Director

Renée Sigouin

Choreographic Assistant

Frédérique Rodier

Music

Original composition by CIBER1A

Scenic Design

Andrea Peña

Lighting Design

Bonnie Beecher

Costume Design

Kate Burrows

Performers

Luca Afflitto, Sidney Chuckas, Emanuel Dostine, Imani Frazier, Michael Garcia, Joziah German, Orlando Harbutt, Eduardo Jiménez Cabrera, Kiana Jung, Emma Kuusela, Kelsey Lewis, Pei Lun Lai, Benjamin Peralta, Sarah Pippin, Vivian Ruiz, Rae Srivastava, Kaylin Sturtevant, Jacalyn Tatro

Weight, resilience, and interdependence—this creation transforms the body into a site of effort, adaptation, and agency. Moved by my Colombian Indigenous ancestry, with its histories of endurance and surrender, the work explores the body of labour, tethered to industry yet often unseen, invoking a universe where the laboring body is no longer invisible, but sacred—a force that moves the world forward. Harnesses become prosthetic extensions, binding performers in real-time negotiations within an

environment that frames a world where tension and collaboration shape movement and meaning. The work also queers strength and vulnerability, sculpting other possibilities of partnering, reimagining lifting and being lifted as acts of mutual dependency.

Set against a vast metal monument, informed by my background in industrial design—the performers move within its presence, as if negotiating with something greater than themselves. Accompanied by a score from Peruvian composer CIBER1A, whose soundscape echoes Indigenous resilience and the rhythms of labor, the work becomes a humble collective agreement—bodies tethering to one another in acts of negotiation and care, reflecting the urgent need to stand together in today’s shifting social landscape.

— Andrea Peña

Andrea Peña is the recipient of the 2024 Ballet BC Emily Molnar Emerging Choreographer Award. Selected through a juried application process every three years, the award supports a new generation of exceptional choreographic talent, providing recipients with a four-week residency at Ballet BC’s studios and access to resources that nurture the choreographer’s work—from the creation process to technical rehearsals to staging the final production at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

INTERMISSION | 20 MINUTES



Artists of Ballet BC rehearsing Andrea Peña's SACRA. Photos by Duy Le.

CAELUM

WORLD PREMIERE | 25 minutes

Choreography

Fernando Hernando Magadan

Rehearsal Director

Renée Sigouin

Music

Original composition by Ben Waters

Lighting Design

Bonnie Beecher

Costume Design

Fernando Hernando Magadan

Associate Costume Design

Kate Burrows

Set Design

Fernando Hernando Magadan

Associate Set Design

Matthew Piton

Performers

Luca Afflitto, Nathan Bear, Sidney Chuckas, Emanuel Dostine, Imani Frazier, Michael Garcia, Joziah German, Orlando Harbutt, Eduardo Jiménez Cabrera, Kiana Jung, Kelsey Lewis, Pei Lun Lai, Benjamin Peralta, Sarah Pippin, Vivian Ruiz, Rae Srivastava, Kaylin Sturtevant, Jacalyn Tatro

Caelum in Latin, refers to the “cosmos” as in the sky or heavens. It carries a more poetic and ethereal connotation, often associated with the vast expanse of celestial bodies and their enchanting beauty.

This work is inspired by the concept of space in its broadest meaning and by our relation to it. By the miracle of life with its vital driving pulse and by the fact that despite appearing so

trivial - perhaps insignificant - in the grand scheme of things, we are still able to contemplate, admire, and be inspired by the immensity of space and its colossal forces.

As we look up, we are simultaneously confronted with the limits of our knowledge, and a deep sense of mystery as we wonder about our connection to it all.

— Fernando Hernando Magadan

INTERMISSION | 20 MINUTES

Artists of Ballet BC rehearsing Fernando Magadan's *Caelum*. Photos by Duy Le.



PASSING

50 minutes

Choreography

Johan Inger

Choreographic Assistants

Yvan Dubreuil, Carolina Armenta, Fernando Hernando Magadan

Music

“The Joy of D. H. Lawrence”

Composed and performed by Erik Enocksson

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“Westward, Ho!”

“Barn Dance”

“Bumbo”

Written & performed by Louis T. Hardin. Published by and courtesy of Songs of Virtual o/b/o Managarm Musikverlag

“Harsh and Stubborn that River Bends”

Composed and performed by Erik Enocksson

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“Theme - Instrumental”

Written & performed by Louis T. Hardin. Published by and courtesy of Songs of Virtual o/b/o Managarm Musikverlag

Original composition by Amos Ben-Tal

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Alan Brodie

Costume Design

Linda Chow

Stage Design

Johan Inger

Performers

Luca Afflitto, Nathan Bear, Emily Chessa, Sidney Chuckas, Emanuel Dostine, Imani Frazier, Michael Garcia, Joziah German, Orlando Harbutt, Eduardo Jiménez Cabrera, Kiana Jung, Emma Kuusela, Kelsey Lewis, Pei Lun Lai, Benjamin Peralta, Sarah Pippin, Vivian Ruiz, Rae Srivastava, Kaylin Sturtevant, Jacalyn Tatro

Human beings. In the unstoppable flow of life and the multiple variations of connections, Inger seeks for the sensitive, the vulnerable and the intimate that makes every individual trajectory unique. The work dissolves itself in anonymities as the group emerges: individual behaviors influenced by the concrete or the imagined presence of the others; dynamics and potentials floating between the self, the others, us or them. Where will this unconscious fast paced and self-created environment, relentlessly overruled by an intangible source and force, lead our communities to?

— Johan Inger



Artists of Ballet BC rehearsing Johan Inger's *PASSING*.
Images by Millissa Martin.

CHOREOGRAPHERS



Andrea Peña

Originally from Bogota, Colombia, Andrea Peña is a multidisciplinary artist whose creative practice transverse the fields of art installation, choreography and design. Founded in 2014, Peña's company Andrea Peña & Artists is recognized within Canada and internationally for their creation of critical, alternative and spatial universes that rupture our notions of a sensible

humanity and engage in deep encounters between the physical body and the self. Peña's highly intricate, vulnerable and raw choreography is situated at a national and international scale presenting works in Hong Kong, Spain, India, Panama, Mexico, Dominican Republic and Canada. Her work has been highlighted with numerous awards for her conceptual and highly rigorous creations, including the 2018 The Banff Centre's Clifford E. Lee Canadian Choreography Award, the 2018 Hong Kong International Choreography Award, and the 2024 Ballet BC Emerging Choreographer Award.

CHOREOGRAPHERS



Fernando Hernando Magadan

Fernando Hernando Magadan is a freelance choreographer, teacher and stager with roots in professional gymnastics. Throughout his 15 seasons as a performer with the Nederlands Dans Theater, he created with and performed works by prominent choreographers such as Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, Mats Ek, Crystal Pite, Sol Leon, Paul Lightfoot, Johan Inger, and Hofesh Shechter, among others. He was also invited to perform at the Benois de la Danse Gala Performance at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow. He later went on to be rehearsal director and ultimately Artistic Leader of the prestigious junior ensemble NDT 2 between 2018 – 2021. As a choreographer, Fernando's movement vocabulary is known for his highly physical, inventive, and musical characteristics. He has created and presented works with companies worldwide, which include NDT 1 and NDT 2, Luna Negra Dance Theater in Chicago, Cross Connection Ballet Company in Copenhagen, Ballet Mainz and Ballett Saarländisches Staatstheater in Germany, Satore Studio in London, Compañía Lava in Tenerife, Ballet BC in Vancouver, Luzerner Theater in Switzerland, Korzo Theater in The Hague and BODYTRAFFIC in Los Angeles.

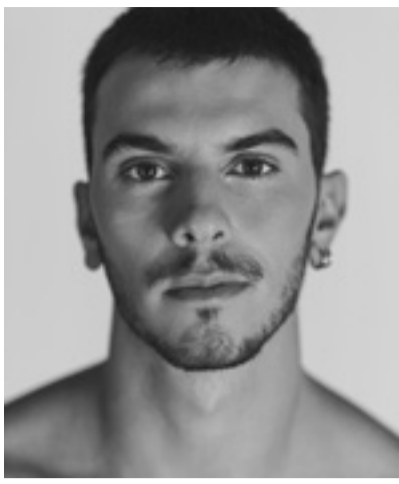
CHOREOGRAPHERS



Johan Inger

Johan Inger completed his dance training at the Royal Swedish Ballet School and at the National Ballet School in Canada. From 1985 to 1990, he danced with the Swedish Royal Ballet in Stockholm, the last year performing as a soloist. In 1990, fascinated by the works of Jiří Kylián, Inger joined NDT 1 (Nederlands Dans Theater 1) and was a high-profile dancer in the company until 2002. Inger produced his choreographic debut *Mellantid* for NDT 2 in 1995. He was subsequently awarded the Philip Morris Finest Selection Award in the Contemporary Dance category and received a Laurence Olivier nomination for Best New Dance Production. In 2001, he received the Lucas Hoving Production Award for his ballets *Dream Play* and *Walking Mad*. In 2003, he took on artistic leadership of Cullberg Ballet in Stockholm, leaving in 2008 to devote himself entirely to choreography. Between 2009 and 2016, Johan Inger was an Associate Choreographer with Nederlands Dans Theater, creating for both companies (NDT 1 + NDT 2) regularly, while continuing to collaborate and create with other companies including Ballet BC. In 2022, Inger became the artistic director of Take Off Dance, a training program for pre-professional dancers between the ages of 18 and 24 based in Seville, Spain.

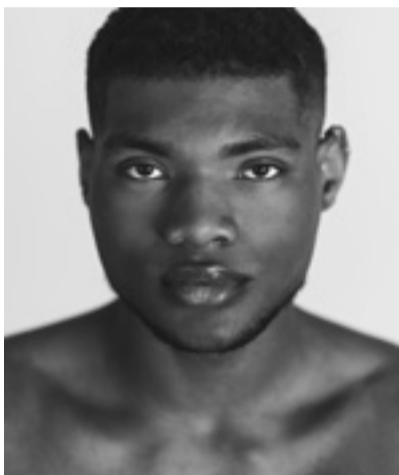
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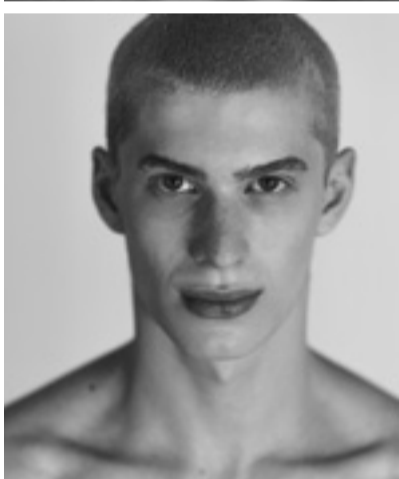
NAME: Luca Afflitto
HOMETOWN: Genoa, Italy
TRAINING: Academie de Danse Princesse Grace, Monte Carlo
PREVIOUSLY DANCED WITH: Ballett Zürich
JOINED BALLET BC: 2022



NAME: Emily Chessa
HOMETOWN: Richmond, British Columbia, Canada
TRAINING: Arts Umbrella
PREVIOUSLY DANCED WITH: Nederlands Dans Theater I
JOINED BALLET BC: 2012 - 2020 & 2021



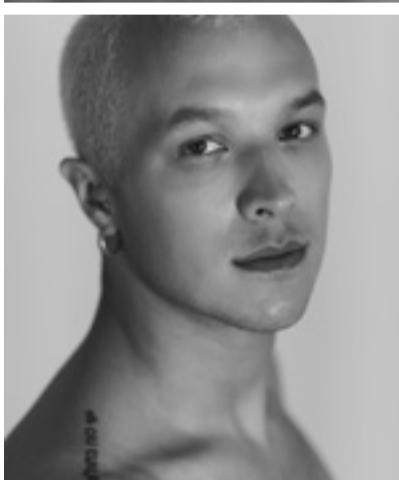
NAME: Sidney Chuckas
HOMETOWN: Evanston, Illinois, USA
TRAINING: USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance
JOINED BALLET BC: 2021



NAME: Emanuel Dostine
HOMETOWN: Detroit, Michigan, USA
TRAINING: Arts Umbrella
JOINED BALLET BC: 2022



NAME: Imani Frazier
HOMETOWN: Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA
TRAINING: NYU Tisch School of the Arts
JOINED BALLET BC: 2024



NAME: Michael Garcia
HOMETOWN: McAllen, Texas, USA
TRAINING: The Juilliard School
PREVIOUSLY DANCED WITH: Hubbard Street Dance Chicago
JOINED BALLET BC: 2022



NAME: Orlando Harbutt
HOMETOWN: Hudson, New York, USA
TRAINING: Manhattan Youth Ballet, The Juilliard School, Arts Umbrella
JOINED BALLET BC: 2022



NAME: Eduardo Jimenez Cabrera
HOMETOWN: Irapuato, Mexico
TRAINING: The University of the Arts, Philadelphia, PA
JOINED BALLET BC: 2023

COMPANY ARTISTS



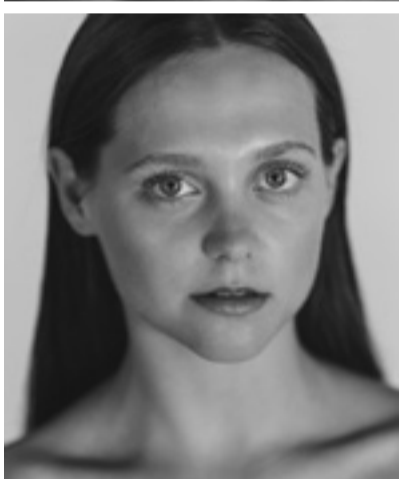
NAME: Kiana Jung
HOMETOWN: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
TRAINING: Arts Umbrella
JOINED BALLET BC: 2019



NAME: Pei Lun Lai
HOMETOWN: Kaohsiung, Taiwan
TRAINING: Taipei National University Of The Arts
JOINED BALLET BC: 2023



NAME: Benjamin Peralta
HOMETOWN: Jacksonville, Florida, USA
TRAINING: Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, USC
Glorya Kaufman School of Dance
JOINED BALLET BC: 2022



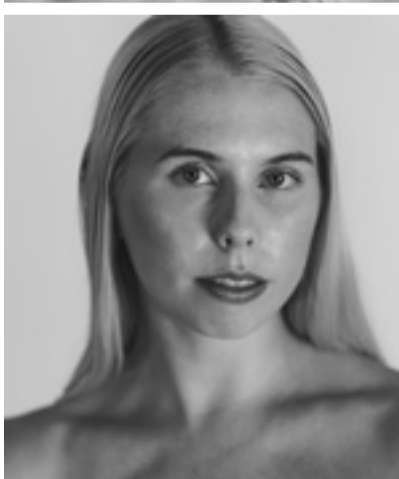
NAME: Sarah Pippin
HOMETOWN: Raleigh, North Carolina, USA
TRAINING: The Juilliard School
JOINED BALLET BC: 2020



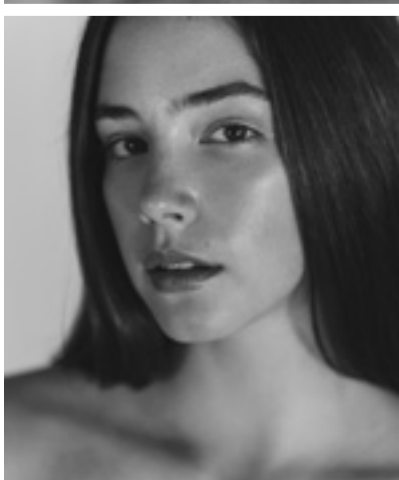
NAME: Vivian Ruiz
HOMETOWN: Miami, Florida, USA
TRAINING: Arts Umbrella
PREVIOUSLY DANCED WITH: Kidd Pivot
JOINED BALLET BC: 2022



NAME: Rae Srivastava
HOMETOWN: Austin, Texas, USA
TRAINING: USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance
JOINED BALLET BC: 2020



NAME: Kaylin Sturtevant
HOMETOWN: Plano, Texas, USA
TRAINING: USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance
PREVIOUSLY DANCED WITH: The DASH Ensemble
JOINED BALLET BC: 2021



NAME: Jacalyn Tatro
HOMETOWN: Naperville, Illinois, USA
TRAINING: The Juilliard School
JOINED BALLET BC: 2022

EMERGING ARTISTS



NAME: Nathan Bear
HOMETOWN: Langley, British Columbia, Canada
TRAINING: Arts Umbrella
JOINED BALLET BC: 2024



NAME: Joziah German
HOMETOWN: Frisco, Texas, USA
TRAINING: The Juilliard School
JOINED BALLET BC: 2024



NAME: Emma Kuusela
HOMETOWN: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
TRAINING: Arts Umbrella
JOINED BALLET BC: 2025



NAME: Kelsey Lewis
HOMETOWN: New York, New York, USA
TRAINING: The Juilliard School
JOINED BALLET BC: 2024

ON LEAVE



NAME: Jacob Williams
HOMETOWN: Vancouver, Washington, USA
TRAINING: Alonzo King Lines Ballet, Arts Umbrella
PREVIOUSLY DANCED WITH: dawsondancesf,
Oregon Ballet Theatre 2 (OBT2)
JOINED BALLET BC: 2020

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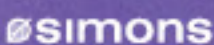
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