

# Sunset, 0639 Hours

by Matthew Neenan & Rosie Langabeer

ballet

Christine Cox  
ARTISTIC  
& EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR



FALL SERIES

AT THE SUZANNE ROBERTS THEATRE

**Sep. 9-12**

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BALLETX  
WORLD PREMIERES  
TO DATE:

105

#### COMPANY

Shawn Cusseaux  
Jonah Delgado  
Francesca Forcella  
Savannah Green  
Zachary Kapeluck  
Blake Krapels  
Skyler Lubin  
Ashley Simpson  
Pete Leo Walker  
Andrea Yorita



## Dear Friends,

We are thrilled to have you join us for BalletX's first-ever performance series at The Suzanne Roberts Theatre! It's been almost two years since we last performed on the Avenue of the Arts, and we are overjoyed to be here presenting Matthew Neenan's *Sunset, 0639 Hours*, featuring an unforgettable musical score by Rosie Langabeer, Andrew Mars, Josh Machiz, and Isaac Stanford.

This iconic story ballet truly celebrates the human spirit, beautifully capturing moments of love, loss, joy, sorrow, courage, and our innate desire for connection. Like so many of you, it was the experiences of connection and community that we missed most over the last 18 months, and we are so grateful for the opportunity to be here together again, sharing this wonderful ballet. In early August, BalletX returned to the Vail Dance Festival as Company in Residence. It was incredible to perform at this prestigious festival alongside some of the world's greatest dancers, and we were honored to be there representing our hometown of Philadelphia. We also recently made our first appearance at Ballet Sun Valley in Sun Valley, Idaho, which was absolutely unforgettable. And speaking of touring, California, North Carolina, Texas, New York, Florida, and Alabama are just a few of the places that BalletX will be visiting this season! Go to [www.BalletX.org/on-tour](http://www.BalletX.org/on-tour) to stay up-to-date on all of BalletX's pop ups and tour dates, and be sure to tell your friends if we're heading to their hometown. Mark your calendars for BalletX's first-ever collaboration with the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, happening January 8-9 at The Kimmel Center, where we will perform Matthew Neenan's *Increasing* (2014) and *Credo* (2017) alongside the Calidore Quartet and cellist Zlatomir Fung. Learn more at [www.pcmsconcerts.org/concerts](http://www.pcmsconcerts.org/concerts). I'm excited to announce that Basic-level membership to our digital streaming platform, **BalletX Beyond**, is now free for all BalletX supporters who donate \$150+ a year! BalletX Beyond members have exclusive access to over 20 dance films, behind-the-scenes content, and new projects released this season. For more information, visit [www.BalletX.org/join-balletx-beyond](http://www.BalletX.org/join-balletx-beyond). With a mixture of sadness and joy, we say a heartfelt farewell to company dancer Chloe Perkes, who retired from BalletX in 2021. A consummate artist, Chloe's generous spirit, endless curiosity, and innate love of movement leave an indelible mark on the entire BalletX community. We wish Chloe, her husband Ammon, and their baby Oscar love and happiness as they move to the West Coast to be closer to family. As always, I want to say a huge thank you to the incredible BalletX Board of Directors for their vision, support, and leadership, and I want to extend a very special welcome to our newest Board member, Bradley Frey. And of course, thank you to each and every one of you for your belief in BalletX. Your generosity and commitment to the arts and the city of Philadelphia inspire us daily. We couldn't do it without you!

With love and gratitude,

**Christine Cox**

Artistic & Executive Director

balletX

# BalletX

***BalletX, Philadelphia's premier contemporary ballet, commissions choreographers from around the world to create new ballets that are "fresh, inclusive, and connect to what people want."*** *Philadelphia Citizen*

Founded in 2005 by Christine Cox and Matthew Neenan, BalletX is led by Cox as Artistic & Executive Director and has produced 105 world premiere ballets by over 60 choreographers, a record "few companies can match," according to *The New York Times*. BalletX has been hailed as an "epicenter of creation" (*Dance Magazine*) and a "place of choreographic innovation" (*The New Yorker*), putting Philadelphia on the map as an international destination for contemporary ballet. The company has commissioned works by such world-renowned artists as Nicolo Fonte, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Jorma Elo, Darrell Grand Moultrie, and Jodie Gates, to name a few, and our repertoire includes five full-length, original story ballets that signal an exciting new direction for the field. With the support of our donors, subscribers, and ticket buyers, BalletX has grown to reach over 150,000 audiences nationwide through performance seasons, free Pop Ups across Philadelphia, and extensive touring to such prestigious venues as Vail Dance Festival, The John F. Kennedy Center, The Joyce Theater, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, New York City Center, and Belgrade Dance Festival, where the company had the honor of being hosted at the U.S. Embassy by the United States Ambassador to Serbia. BalletX has reached over 2,000 Philadelphia public school students through our in-school education program, Dance eXchange, and countless patrons through our audience engagement initiative, The X-Process. In spring of 2018, the company deepened our community impact with the opening of our first-ever artistic and administrative home, the Center for World Premiere Choreography, at 1923 Washington Avenue in Philadelphia. At the Center, we are finding new ways to inspire our community through choreographer workshops, artist Q&As, and open rehearsals. BalletX's impact is made possible by the generosity of our incredible supporters and donors, including the Alphadyne Foundation, William Penn Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, Shubert Foundation, Anne M. & Philip H. Glatfelter Family Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Barra Foundation, Princess Grace Foundation, Zeldin Family Foundation, Leo Model Foundation, Smukler-Lasch Lead Trust, Suzanne Roberts Cultural Development Fund, The Lida Foundation, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Philadelphia Cultural Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, and PECD, among many others.

***To learn more about BalletX's programming and dancers, named "among America's best" by The New York Times, follow us on BalletX.org and social media.***



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ARTISTIC & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
**CHRISTINE COX**



Christine Cox co-founded BalletX, Philadelphia's premier contemporary ballet, with Matthew Neenan in 2005. The BalletX team has produced over 100 world premiere ballets by renowned and emerging choreographers from around the world, reaching more than 150,000 dance patrons. ■■■■■

Under her leadership as Artistic & Executive Director, the company has performed at prestigious national stages including The Joyce Theater, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, The Kennedy Center, and Vail Dance Festival. ■■■■■ Throughout her tenure, Cox has committed BalletX to expanding dance's vocabulary for all audiences, promoting initiatives that make contemporary ballet accessible and welcoming to new audiences. In 2013, she and her team launched The X-Process, an engagement program that invites audience members to participate in pre-show conversations with choreographers, an interactive lecture series about contemporary ballet, and open rehearsals. Through the Dance eXchange education program, she has partnered with elementary schools from the Philadelphia School District to emphasize dance as a means to promote self-confidence and acquire valuable life skills, reaching more than 2,000 local students in its first six years. In December 2016, Cox led a TEDx Talk at the George School about innovation in the field of contemporary ballet, from the art form's historical traditions to today's world of evolving definitions and globalization. ■■■■■ Cox has prioritized making both artistic and civic connections as a leader in her Philadelphia community. As an arts leader, she has served on review panels for the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She currently sits on the Advisory Board of the Philadelphia Arts & Business Council, and is a member of the Forum of Executive Women. For her work as a choreographer, educator, and performer, Christine has been recognized with two Rocky Awards for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts, as well as fellowships from the Independence Foundation and Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. ■■■■■ Cox was a full-time company member with the Pennsylvania Ballet from 1993 until her retirement from the stage in 2006. She trained in classical ballet at the Pennsylvania Ballet School and continued at the Performing Arts School of Philadelphia, spending summer sessions at the Joffrey and San Francisco Ballet schools. Some of her featured roles included Rum and Coca Cola in Paul Taylor's *Company B*, Vortex in Alvin Ailey's *The River*; Choleric in George Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*, Eve in Margo Sappington's *Rodin*, Mis En Vie the Cowgirl in Agnes DeMille's *Rodeo*, and principal female roles in Jerome Robbins' *Fancy Free* and *The Concert*. During this time, Cox served for ten years as the rehearsal assistant of the children's corps for Pennsylvania Ballet's annual production of Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*. Prior to joining the Pennsylvania Ballet, she danced with BalletMet (Columbus, OH), as a guest artist with Ballet Hispanico (New York, NY), and with the American Repertory Ballet (Princeton, NJ). Cox is the proud mother of two young boys, Warren and Wesley.

ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR  
**TARA KEATING**



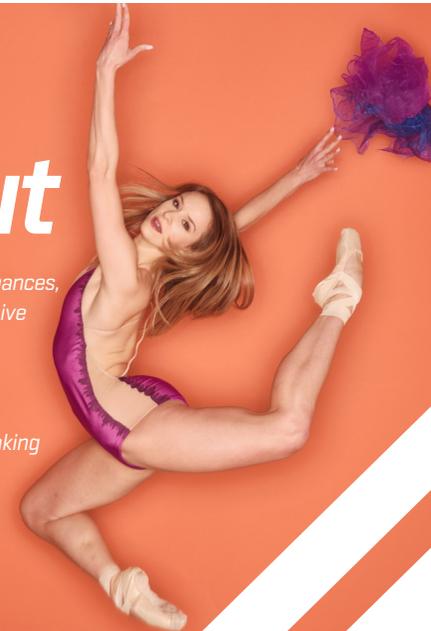
Tara Keating began her training at the age of seven at Pioneer Valley Ballet in Northampton, Massachusetts. She received her BFA in Dance at the Juilliard School, under the direction of Benjamin Harkavy. While there, she was awarded the Jerome L. Greene Fellowship and the 'Most Outstanding Dance Major' award from the National Dance Association. She has danced professionally with American Repertory Ballet, "Tharp!," and as a soloist with the Pennsylvania Ballet. Throughout her career she has originated roles in world premieres by such renowned choreographers as Jorma Elo, Jodie Gates, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Trey McIntyre, Matthew Neenan, Helen Pickett, Septime Webre, and Christopher Wheeldon, among others. In 2005, she became a founding member of BalletX, and danced in nearly every performance until her retirement in 2012. She has staged numerous ballets on BalletX, and has set Neenan's work on Pennsylvania Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Nevada Ballet Theatre, SUNY at Purchase College and Bucknell University. Tara was the Producing Director in 2006 and 2007 for Shut Up and Dance, an annual benefit for MANNA, created by the Dancers of Pennsylvania Ballet. She was also the recipient of a 2002 City Paper Choice Award. Tara served as BalletX's Artistic Coordinator and Ballet Mistress from 2011 to 2013, and was named Associate Artistic Director in February 2014.

# Don't Miss Out

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## DANCE PROGRAM

# SUNSET, 0639 HOURS

BALLETX PREMIERE, 2014

**CHOREOGRAPHER AND CO-CREATOR:** Matthew Neenan

**COMPOSER, LYRICS, AND CO-CREATOR:** Rosie Langabeer

**COMPOSITION AND LYRICS:** Andrew Mars

**COMPOSITION AND PEDAL STEEL GUITAR:** Isaac Stanford

**COMPOSITION AND BASS:** Josh Machiz

**SET DESIGNER:** Maiko Matsushima

**ASSOCIATE SCENIC DESIGNER:** Colin McIlvaine

**LIGHTING DESIGNER:** Drew Billiau

**SOUND DESIGNER:** Nick Kourtides

**COSTUME DESIGNER:** Christine Darch

**INSTRUMENT INVENTOR:** Neil Feather

**SCENERY FABRICATION:** Steven Weber / Method Craft Design

**DANCERS:** Shawn Cusseaux, Jonah Delgado, Francesca Forcella, Savannah Green, Zachary Kapeluck, Blake Krapels, Skyler Lubin, Ashley Simpson, Pete Leo Walker, Andrea Yorita

### MUSICIANS:

Josh Machiz | *Composition, Bass, Sousaphone, Synth, Percussion, Magnapooters, Vibrawheel, Anaplum, Vocals, Voice of George*

Alexandra Day | *Vocals, Piano, Synth, Clarinet, Percussion, Magnapooters, Anaplum, Baritone Ukulele, Samplers, Voice of Sir John Thomas*

Isaac Stanford | *Composition, Steel Guitar, Guitar, Trumpet, Drums, Soprano Ukulele, Vocals*

Tara Middleton | *Vocals, Piccolo, Violin, Synth, Cabasa, Kazoo, Bird Whistle, Magnapooters, Samplers, Voice of Francis Elizabeth*

*Archival recording provided by Sound Archives NGA Taonga Korero*

*Piano Rental by Cunningham Piano Company, King of Prussia, PA*

*Support for BalletX is provided in part by the Philadelphia Cultural Fund and National Endowment for the Arts.*

*BalletX receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.*

## SYNOPSIS

On January 2, 1938, American pilot Captain Edwin Musick embarked on a historic flight - the inaugural airmail service between New Zealand and the United States. Piloting the Samoan Clipper, one of Pan American's Sikorsky S-42B flying boats, Musick and six crew members traversed 4,000 miles of open ocean. From Auckland they stopped in Pago Pago in American Samoa, and again at Kingman Reef, then on to Honolulu, where a connecting flight completed the mail run to San Francisco. On June 11, 1938, Captain Musick and his crew departed again for New Zealand, carrying mail from the United States. Shortly after taking off from Pago Pago, the last point before New Zealand, the Samoan Clipper tragically exploded mid-air in a blast that could be heard for miles. The ocean was littered with oil, burnt mail, and wreckage. The bodies of the captain and his crew were never recovered, and the airmail service was suspended until July 1940. *Sunset, 0639 Hours* brings to life this obscure, significant story in a dreamlike narrative that follows each leg of Musick's journey. It is a story of bravery, love, loss, and longing set in the pre-World War II cabaret days of the South Pacific, celebrating the daring accomplishments of an early aviation hero and his crew who sacrificed their lives for human connection.

## SCENES

### ACT ONE

- I. December 26, 1937: The Samoan Clipper flies to Auckland, New Zealand
- II. The Prime Minister of New Zealand welcomes Captain Musick and his Crew
- III. Letter from Francis Elizabeth in San Francisco, CA to William in Auckland, NZ
- IV. December 31, 1937: New Year's Eve
- V. People, Birds, and Planes
- VI. January 2, 1938: The Inaugural Cross-Pacific Airmail Flight Departs for Samoa
- VII. Letter from The Native Land Titles Administration in New Zealand to Mrs. Ele'ele Hinatea Huihana Tuitama in Samoa
- VIII. January 2, 1938: Landing in Pago Pago, Samoa

### 15 MINUTE INTERMISSION

### ACT TWO

- I. January 3, 1938: Crew Refuels in Samoa
- II. January 4, 1938: Flight to Honolulu, Hawaii
- III. January 5, 1938: A Week Off in Honolulu
- IV. Captain Musick Yearns for his Wife
- V. Letter from George in Honolulu, HI to Shirley in New Zealand
- VI. January 11, 1938: Captain Musick's Final Flight
- VII. An Ocean of Ghosts



**CHOREOGRAPHER AND CO-CREATOR**

# MATTHEW NEENAN

Matthew Neenan began his dance training at the Boston Ballet School and with noted teachers Nan C. Keating and Jacqueline Cronsberg. He later attended the LaGuardia High School of Performing Arts and the School of American Ballet in New York. From 1994-2007, Matthew danced with the Pennsylvania Ballet where he performed numerous principal roles in the classical, contemporary, and Balanchine repertoire. From 2007-2020, Matthew was named Choreographer in Residence at the Pennsylvania Ballet where he created 20 ballets. Matthew's choreography has been featured and performed by The New York City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, The Washington Ballet, Ballet West, Ballet Met, Colorado Ballet, Ballet Memphis, Milwaukee Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Tulsa Ballet, OKC Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, BODYTRAFFIC, Juilliard Dance, and USC Kaufman School of Dance, among many others. He has received numerous awards and grants for his choreography, including from the National Endowment of the Arts, Dance Advance funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Choo San Goh Foundation, and the Independence Foundation. In 2006, Matthew received the New York City Ballet's Choreographic Institute's Fellowship Initiative Award. In 2008, he received a fellowship from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, marking his fourth time receiving the PCA fellowship. He was also the first recipient of the Jerome Robbins NEW Program Fellowship for his work *At the border* for Pennsylvania Ballet. In June 2019, he directed the Contemporary Ballet Program at Jacob's Pillow. In 2005, Matthew co-founded BalletX with fellow dancer Christine Cox.



**COMPOSER AND CO-CREATOR**

# ROSIE LANGABEER

Rosie Langabeer is a composer, pianist, and band leader from Aotearoa, New Zealand. With an output as eclectic as ranging from composing for string quartet, to ballet music, to free improvisation, to experimental big band, and much much more, her wonderfully honest voice will make you want to cry, and then sprinkle in some robot-bird-monsters. *The New York Times* has praised her surrealism and time-bending abilities, which she earned through collaborations with many incredible musicians and companies including BalletX and Pig Iron Theatre Company. Her recent projects include a score for the invented instruments of Neil Feather and chamber ensemble to be premiered by Wellington's new music heavyweights STROMA in July 2021, and a monthly variety show in Wellington, New Zealand hosted by experimental artists called "the best most happiest fun sexy cabaret of good fortune and prosperity 2021."



**COMPOSITION AND LYRICS**

# ANDREW MARS

Andrew Mars is a songwriter, anthropologist, and addiction outreach activist. They are a pioneer of singing in non-gendered ways and their work as Settled Arrows has been called elegiac and wisdom pop by WXP. They are a published essayist discussing ableism in the arts, equity, and the creative process as resistance and spiritual practice. Their music has been featured in film and radio around the world. They have worked with Pauline Oliveros, The Meredith Monk Ensemble, and many other luminaries of improvised classical music. They hold a degree in Anthropology and Comparative Religion from Ithaca College as well as a degree in Neuromuscular Therapy. They love this piece and are glad the world is still discovering this beautiful work. They dedicate this music to the memory of their grandparents, George and Shirley Tkach.



**COMPOSITION AND PERFORMER**

# JOSH MACHIZ

Josh Machiz is a Philadelphia-based musician, comedian, and composer who's been confusing and delighting audiences across North America for over two decades. He's a two-time Barrymore Award Winner and co-recipient of an American Composers Forum Grant. He's collaborated with Mickey Roker, Uri Caine, Bearded Ladies Cabaret, Wilma Theater, BalletX, Opera Philadelphia, and Pig Iron Theatre Company. He's currently a member of TJ Kong & the Atomic Bomb, Arcana New Music Ensemble, and Dirty Dollhouse. *The New York Times* described his music as "What the mail sounds like." CBS called TJ Kong "entertainingly unhinged." *dosage Magazine* calls him "Philadelphia's giant musical force." The Charm City Comedy Festival describes him as "Surrealist Stand-up Comedy." Josh's music has been featured on NPR's Jazz Night in America, and his comedy is featured on Amazon Prime. He's performed at Lincoln Center, Joyce Theater, 92nd Street Y, and the Guggenheim.



**COMPOSITION AND PERFORMER**

# ISAAC STANFORD

Isaac Stanford plays the pedal steel, lap steel, and dobro in several projects around the Philadelphia area. His instrumental Hawaiian-inspired quintet, Slowey and the Boats, keeps an active playing schedule and can be found at tiki bars and luaus throughout the region. Isaac also works as a 7th grade teacher in the Cheltenham School District, where he has taught social studies for the past 15 years.



**PERFORMER**

# ALEXANDRA DAY

Alexandra Day studied classical piano at Messiah College, and classical voice at Temple University. She received the honor of singing the national anthem and the alma mater at Temple's 2006 Commencement Exercises. Since then, she has had a diverse and vibrant performance career: As a pianist-singer-songwriter, she has released three albums, and has toured from Boston to New Orleans, as well as in the Caribbean. She also sings regularly with jazz combos, and is in her 18th year as a wedding singer, performing all genres of popular music. This is her first production with BalletX.



**PERFORMER**

# TARA MIDDLETON

Tara Middleton is a 2019 Pew Fellowship nominated vocalist, violinist, and lyricist, and winner of the 2021 A2IM Libera Award. Currently, she is the vocalist for the world-renowned Sun Ra Arkestra. She also leads her own ensemble, Jupiter Blue. In the 1990s, Tara co-founded The Foundations Singers, an African folk a cappella trio that garnered wide acclaim. Since then, she has performed as a featured vocalist incorporating a broad range of styles, from straight-ahead jazz, Portuguese Brazilian, Afro-Cuban/Caribbean, and Operatic avant-garde. Most recently she has worked as a vocalist, instrumentalist, and recording artist with Bowerbird's Arcana New Music Ensemble and Philadelphia Jazz Project. In 2019 Tara was commissioned by BalletX to co-compose the ballet *Twelve Bells*, and she has collaborated with Nick Millevoi's Desertion Trio to rave reviews in Rolling Stone magazine. Tara's most recent work can be heard on the newly released Grammy-acknowledged Sun Ra Arkestra album, *Swirling*, in which she wrote the lyrics for the title track.

#### LIGHTING DESIGNER

## DREW BILLIAU

Drew Billiau's lighting designs include *Red Eye to Havre de Grace* at New York Theater Workshop; *Zombie Strippers* for NYMTF; *Cherokee* and *Bootycandy* for The Wilma Theater; *Tea: A Mirror of Soul* for Vancouver Opera; *The Magic Flute* for Pittsburgh Opera; *The Train Driver*, *Hamlet*, and *Henry V* for Lantern Theater Company; *La Boheme*, *Carmen*, *Turandot*, *Fidelio*, *Porgy and Bess*, and *Madame Butterfly* for Opera Philadelphia; *The Melting Bridge*, *Flamingo Winnebago*, and *Whale Optics* for Lucidity Suitcase; *Abduction of Seraglio* for Teatri di Treviso; *Red Speedo*, *Cock*, *Iron*, and *The English Bride* for Theatre Exile; *Fatebook* and *Prom* for New Paradise Laboratories; *Charlotte's Web*, *Frog and Toad*, and *All My Sons* for Arden Theatre Company; and *Sunset*, *o639 Hours*, *Beautiful Decay*, *Instant God*, *The Last Glass*, *Risk of Flight*, and *Silt* for BalletX. Drew is the Technical Project Manager at Opera Philadelphia and an Associate Designer in the corporate lighting firm Fine Design Associates.

#### COSTUME DESIGNER

## CHRISTINE DARCH

Christine Darch designs and builds costumes for choreographers Jorma Elo, Nicolo Fonte, Gabrielle Lamb, Edwaard Liang, Amy Seiwert, and many more. Ms. Darch has been commissioned by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ballet West, Atlanta Ballet, Houston Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Israel Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, and Washington Ballet, among others. She is the resident costume designer for Complexions Contemporary Ballet. Current projects include Julia Adam's new work for Colorado Ballet, Dwight Rhoden's new work for Atlanta Ballet, Matthew Neenan's new work for Parsons Dance, and Yin Yue's new work for Philadelphia Ballet.

#### SOUND DESIGNER

## NICK KOURTIDES

Nick Kourtides designs for musical theatre and creates sound environments for collaborative ensemble works. New York: *The Object Lesson* (BAM Next Wave), *Elephant Room* (St. Ann's), *Dur Aeneid* (Red Bull), *Carson McCullers Talks About Love* (Rattlestick), *Jomama Jones \* RADIATE* (Soho Rep), *Chekhov Lizardbrain* (Ohio). International: Lublin Konfrontacje Teatralne, Paris Quartier d'Ete, London Barbican, Edinburgh Festival. Regional: McCarter Theatre, Wilma Theater, Center Theatre Group, Folger Theatre, Milwaukee Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Walnut Street Theatre, Prince Music Theater, 1812 Productions, Azuka Theatre, Inis Nua, Passage Theatre, Arden Theatre, and many others. Ensemble works with Pig Iron Theatre Company: *Cankerblossom*, *Isabella*, *Chekhov Lizardbrain*, *Mission to Mercury*. With Rainpan43: *The Object Lesson*, *Elephant Room*, *Flesh and Blood & Fish and Fowl*. Nick was the Visiting Instructor in Sound Design at Swarthmore College in 2010, and received Philadelphia's Barrymore Award in 2006.

#### SET DESIGNER

## MAIKO MATSUSHIMA

Maiko Matsushima designs for theatre, dance, opera, and film in New York and regional theatres. Most recently her designs have been seen at The Wilma Theater: *My Wonderful Day*, *Proliferation of the Imagination*, and *The Understudy*. Her other recent designs include *Twelfth Night* (Pig Iron Theatre Company) in 2011, *Takes* (Nichole Canuso Dance Company), *Chicken* (Charlotte Ford) in 2010 at Philadelphia Live Arts Festival, *THIS* (Playwrights Horizons, NY), *Rescue Me* (Ohio Theatre, NY), *Enjoy* (59E59, NY), *Welcome to Yuba City* (Pig Iron Theatre Company), *More* (Headlong Dance Theatre), *The Children of Vonderly* (Classic Stage Company, NY), *Adding Machine*, *Suitcase*, or those that resemble *flies from a distance* (La Jolla Playhouse, CA), *Brooklyn Bridge* (Children's Theatre Company, MN), *Bomb-itty of Errors* (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, MO), *So Close, Year of the baby*, *Cat's Paw* (Soho Rep, NY), *El Paso Blue* (Theatre Row, NY), *We Sink As We Run* (Dixon Place, NY), and many others. She has also worked as an associate costume designer on Broadway productions such as *Spring Awakening*, *Radio Golf*, *Lestat*, *Assassins*, *Good Body* and *Pacific Overtures*, and *Wicked* in Japan.

#### INSTRUMENT INVENTOR

## NEIL FEATHER

Sound Mechanic Neil Feather has been creating radical and unusual musical instruments since 1970 and is increasingly known as one of the most original musical thinkers of his day. His instruments each embody uniquely clever acoustic and engineering principles, and are visually arresting. The music he plays on the instruments is equally original, embodying new principles and resulting in a nearly alien idiom of music. Feather was a founding member of the Red Room Collective and the High Zero Foundation, a group committed to the presentation of experimental and improvised music. Some of his major music projects are The Official Project, Thus, Aerotrain, Elephantitans, and Mugwump. Feather's work has always been fully rooted in art and music together in concept, execution, and performance. His deep involvement with Baltimore's experimental music community complements his wide international acclaim. He won the 2014 Sondheim Art Prize and the 2014 Trawick Art Prize. He was included in a major exhibition "Art or Sound" in the 2014 Venice Biennale.



Shawn Cusseaux is an emerging performing artist hailing from Tampa Bay, Florida, where he attended Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School. He continued his studies in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at the Conservatory of Performing Arts at Point Park University, where he received his Bachelors of Fine Arts in Dance. During this time, he was given opportunities to perform works by Garfield Lemonius, Jae Man Joo, Kiesha Lalama, Jennifer Archibald, Jose Limon, Jason Mcdole, Amy Hall Garner, Robert Priorie, Edwaard Liang, and Camille A. Brown. Shawn joined BalletX in 2020.



Jonah Delgado graduated from Marymount Manhattan College in 2019. His formative dance training began with The Academy of Dance Arts, in Illinois. During his time in college he guested with Visceral Dance Chicago, Martha Graham Dance Company, and Illinois Ballet Theatre. After graduating from college, Jonah joined Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. Jonah joined BalletX in 2021.



Francesca Forcella began her training with her aunt, Gina Forcella, at Dance Stop Education Center in New Jersey, and then later focused on her ballet training with Risa Kaplowitz and Susan Jaffe at Princeton Dance and Theater in Princeton, New Jersey. Prior to joining BalletX, she worked with Houston Ballet II, Washington Ballet Studio Company, and Los Angeles' American Contemporary Ballet. In 2011, she represented Houston Ballet at the International Youth Dance Festival in Budapest, Hungary, and in 2012, she was a recipient of a Helen Hayes Award for her work in Imagination Stage's production of *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*. In 2015, Francesca briefly returned to guest with the Washington Ballet in *Swan Lake* under her former artistic director, Septime Webre. Francesca joined BalletX in 2013.



Savannah Green was born and raised in New York City, where she attended LaGuardia High School for Performing Arts as a Dance Major and Manhattan Youth Ballet on a full merit scholarship. She studied at Manhattan Youth Ballet on a full merit scholarship, performing featured roles in professional level repertoire including George Balanchine's *Stars & Stripes*, *Emeralds*, and *Serenade*, as well as Jerome Robbins' *Interplay*. Savannah graduated from University of California, Santa Barbara in 2017 with a BFA in Dance and a minor in Political Science. In her final year at UCSB, she was a member of the Student Dance Company and spent the year touring internationally and performing works by José Limón, Andrea Miller, and Anna Halprin, among others. Savannah worked with Buglisi Dance Theater, performing new works in New York City and the Kaatsbaan International Dance Center. Savannah joined BalletX in 2020.



Zachary Kapeluck hails from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he received his early training at Southwest Ballet and Pittsburgh Ballet Theater. He trained at The Juilliard School and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's Summer Intensives, and in the summer of 2011, he worked as a guest artist with Mary Miller Dance in Pittsburgh in a project titled *Confluence*. He graduated with a BFA in Dance from Point Park University, where he had the opportunity to perform works by such choreographers as George Balanchine, Gerald Arpino, Toru Shimazaki, Kevin Iega Jeff, Val Caniparoli, Jessica Lang, and Alejandro Cerrudo. He received training there from Doug Bentz, Kiesha Lalama, Garfield Lemonius, and Dana Arey. Zachary joined BalletX in 2013.



Blake Krapels, a 2011 United States Presidential Scholar in the Arts, trained in New Jersey under the tutelage of Billy Larson and Jamie Salmon. In 2015, Blake graduated with a BFA in dance from The Juilliard School, where he performed repertoire by William Forsythe, Merce Cunningham, Elliot Feld, Jose Limon, and Peter Chu. In addition to his core training at school, Blake participated in Summer Intensives at Nederlands Dans Theatre (2014, 2016) and Springboard Danse Montreal (2013). Since graduating, he has danced for The Metropolitan Opera, Keigwin & Company, GroundWorks Dance Theatre, Emery LeCrone Dance, and Konverjdans. Blake launched Alpha, a dance theater company, with two of his Juilliard classmates Michael Marquez and Gemma Bender. They curated their world premiere as a part of Cleveland DanceWorks 2017. Blake joined BalletX in 2018.



Skyler Lubin is originally from Miami Beach, Florida, also growing up in the New Jersey and Philadelphia area. She received her early training from The Rock School for Dance Education in Philadelphia, PA, then continued her training at the Miami City Ballet School. Skyler also attended summer programs at The School of American Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, and American Ballet Theatre. From 2010-2014, Skyler danced as a member of the Corps de Ballet with Miami City Ballet, under the direction of Edward Villella and Lourdes Lopez. She has performed in featured roles, including *Flower Festival pas de deux*, *Swan Lake pas de trois*, and Jerome Robbins' *Afternoon of a Faun*, and has premiered pieces by Alexei Ratmansky and Liam Scarlett. Skyler joined BalletX in 2015.



Ashley Simpson is originally from West Palm Beach, Florida and trained at A.W Dreyfoos High School of the Arts and School of Ballet Arts. Ashley graduated Magna Cum Laude from the Ailey/Fordham BFA program as a Dance major and Communications minor. During her time in college, Ashley performed the works of such choreographers as Dwight Rhoden, Alvin Ailey, Bradley Shelver, Nijawwon Matthews, Janice Rosario, Ebony Williams, Troy Powell, and Hope Boykin. Additionally Ashley was awarded the Denise Jefferson Memorial Scholarship; performed with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre; and was a trainee/apprentice for Complexions Contemporary Ballet, performing with the company during their Joyce season. In 2020 she joined the dance ensemble for the movie production of Lin Manuel Miranda's *In The Heights*, and was most recently a company member with Collage Dance Collective. Ashley joined BalletX in 2020.



From Jacksonville, Florida, Pete Leo Walker began his training at The Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts. In 2010 Pete joined Charlotte Ballet under the direction of Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux and Patricia McBride, performing a diverse repertoire including works by George Balanchine, William Forsythe, Twyla Tharp, Jiri Kylian, Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux, Dwight Rhoden, Sasha Janes, and Jiri Bubenicek. In 2011 Pete received the prestigious Princess Grace Dance Fellowship Award and in 2012 was promoted to Principal Artist with the Charlotte Ballet. The following year he was listed in Dance Magazine's "Top 25 to Watch," and in December 2014, he performed *Who Cares* at the Kennedy Center Honors Awards, as tribute to Patricia McBride. Following his tenure with the Charlotte Ballet, Pete joined Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, touring nationally and internationally and performing works by artists such as Gerald Arpino, Jorma Elo, Cayetano Soto, Alejandro Cerrudo, Alexander Ekman, Nicolo Fonte, and Cherice Barton. While a company member with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Pete had the privilege of performing Gerlad Arpino's *Light Rain pas de deux* at the Jacob's Pillow 2016 Season Opening Gala. Pete has been fortunate to return annually as a guest artist at Chautauqua Institution's Alumni All-Star Ballet Gala. Pete joined BalletX in 2021.



Andrea Yorita is from Irvine, California, where she received her classical ballet training at Academy of Dance, under the direction of Merle Sepel, Rebecca Tsivkin, and Mignon Furman. In 2012, she graduated as a Gillespie Scholar with a BFA in Dance Performance from the University of California, Irvine, where she studied under Jodie Gates, Molly Lynch, and Donald McKayle. Originally trained under the R.A.D. syllabus, Andrea has completed all Vocational R.A.D. exams with Distinction, as well as received the Solo Seal Award. In 2008, Andrea competed as a finalist in the Genée International Ballet Competition in Toronto, Canada. She has participated in the National Choreographers Initiative as an apprentice and the Traverse City Dance Project, and she was a 2016 Dance Finalist for the Clive Barnes Award. Andrea joined BalletX in 2012.

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## DANCE FELLOWS

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Taraaja Hudson trained at San Antonio Metropolitan Ballet under the direction of Susan and Karin Connally, and graduated with a BFA in Dance from The Boston Conservatory at Berklee in 2020, where she studied with renowned choreographers such as Ronald K. Brown, Darrell Grand Moultrie, and Dam Van Hyun.



Annika Kuo trained at Princeton Ballet School, also known as American Repertory Ballet, where she studied classical ballet, pointe, and pas de deux for 12 years. In 2018, Annika attended The Boston Conservatory at Berklee, where she performed works by distinguished choreographers such as Daniel Pelzig, Ruka Hatua-Saar White, and William Isaac.



Alexandra Policaro trained at The Ailey School and Professional Performing Arts School. Under the direction of Jodie Gates, Alexandra graduated with a BFA from the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance in Los Angeles, CA. During her time at USC, she performed works by William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Alejandro Cerrudo, Matthew Neenan, Barak Marshall, and more.



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