

JOFFREY ★ BALLE
CHICAGO

ASHLEY WHEATER MBE
THE MARY B. GALVIN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

CELEBRATING
70 YEARS

AMERICAN
ICONS

FEBRUARY 19–MARCH 1 | 2026





JOFFREY ★ BALLE

CHICAGO

ASHLEY WHEATER MBE
THE MARY B. GALVIN
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

GREG CAMERON
PRESIDENT
AND CEO

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AMERICAN ICONS

2025–2026 SEASON

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ASHLEY



Welcome to American Icons!

I am frequently asked, “What is the common thread connecting the dances in a mixed repertory program?”

In this case, the parallels are striking and significant for the Joffrey. Each of the choreographers in American Icons celebrates a one-hundred-year anniversary. Each was instrumental to the establishment of the Company. Robert Joffrey and Gerald Arpino co-founded the Joffrey and were Artistic Directors and choreographers from its infancy. Glen Tetley was a founding dancer with the Joffrey in 1956 and went on to have an international career as dancer and choreographer. Martha Graham pioneered modern American dance, but her influence spread to classical ballet, and her work influenced the trajectory of the Joffrey. Graham contributed several dances to the Joffrey repertoire, especially her iconic “Appalachian Spring”. Rudolf Nureyev went to the studios of Martha Graham, knowing that her training would inform and expand his own classical technique. Nureyev’s advice to me... “Dance with as many teachers as possible.”

This has been the Joffrey philosophy since inception. Though based in classical ballet, Joffrey has always taken pride in its “hybrid,” eclectic, repertoire. Technique is, of course, important. But in the words of Martha Graham, “Great dancers are not great because of their technique, they are great because of their passion.”

Joffrey has always danced with passion, sharing the love of the art form with their audience. I believe this is as evident during a performance today as it was when these works were created, half a century ago.

I hope you enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley".

Ashley Wheeler MBE
The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director
The Joffrey Ballet

GREG



“First we *have* to believe, and then we believe.” — Martha Graham

Believing begins as an act of courage—a willingness to move forward without guarantees, to commit before the outcome is clear. It takes courage to believe, and even more to continue.

Co-founders Robert Joffrey and Gerald Arpino, founding alum Glen Tetley, and visionary artist Martha Graham practiced a rigorous belief in what ballet could be and dared to redefine it. Their early choices shaped everything that followed. In our 70th Anniversary season, it feels especially meaningful to gather at the Lyric Opera House, connected by their distinct voices and a shared conviction that dance must evolve, challenge, and endure.

Ambition of this magnitude finds its way forward. I am fortunate to witness it each day in the studios of the Grainger Academy, in classrooms across Chicago Public Schools, and in the generations of Joffrey artists and collaborators who have defined the stage for seven decades. These artistic, educational, and community commitments give the Joffrey its purpose.

That same belief is sustained by those who stand behind the work. It is both a personal and professional honor to thank longtime supporters, Board Director Ron Waters and his wife, Ann, for their generosity as Major Sponsors. I am grateful to Production Sponsor Jeanette Stevens for her continued support from the West Coast, and proud to celebrate Generation J Leadership Committee members Sarah Shu and Peter Wasik, who champion the future of arts advocacy.

Thank you for joining us for American Icons. I hope this program inspires you to see that believing in something is, in itself, icon-making—the determination to look at the impossible and call it a beginning.

It is exactly what makes The Joffrey Ballet unmistakably **iconic**.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Greg Cameron
President and CEO
The Joffrey Ballet

SARAH & PETER



When we think of American Icons, it brings to mind how lucky The Joffrey Ballet is to have the iconic 70-year lineage of Robert Joffrey and Gerald Arpino carried forward today by the leadership of The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director Ashley Wheater MBE and President and CEO, Greg Cameron.

As co-chairs of Generation J, the young patrons' organization, we look ahead—ensuring this legacy continues for future generations. Our passion for ballet is fueled by our desire to help bring the Joffrey's artistry to the young professional community of Chicago. Vibrant support from young patrons, both in attendance and generosity, is essential to advancing the Company's legacy.

For us, neither of our stories began in the professional ballet world. Peter was properly introduced by attending the Joffrey's performance of *Swan Lake* with a close friend and former dancer. Sarah's connection has been lifelong—attending performances since childhood, sitting on a booster seat beside her mother. We highlight this as a reminder that dance belongs to everyone, regardless of exposure or background.

The dynamic movement, the inspired music, and the grandiose production together create art that resonates across all walks of life. It creates a civic virtue and pride in the arts that are the lifeblood of our great city.

If you love dance, the Joffrey, or simply want to support the vibrancy of the arts here in Chicago, we welcome you to join Generation J. Learn more about joining us on page 33.

We hope to see you soon!

Sarah Shu
Co-Chair of Generation J

Peter Wasik
Co-Chair of Generation J

THE JOFFREY BALLET

ASHLEY WHEATER MBE
The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director

GREG CAMERON
President and CEO

JAMES D. MCDONOUGH
Board Chair

ROBERT JOFFREY
Founder

GERALD ARPINO
Founder

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General Manager

CATHERINE EBY
Company Manager

AMANDA HEUERMANN
Stage Manager

CHRIS MARAVICH
Lighting & Video Supervisor

KATHERINE SELIG
Principal Stage Manager

JOSHUA STENGER
Artistic and Production Fellow

SHANDEE VAUGHAN
Production Manager

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Assistant to the Artistic Director**

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Rehearsal Director

ADAM BLYDE
Rehearsal Director

CROZET DUPLANTIER
Music Librarian

JORGE IVARS
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CHRISTINE ROCAS
Rehearsal Director

SCOTT SPECK
**Music Director and
Principal Conductor**

JARED WRIGHT
Company Pianist

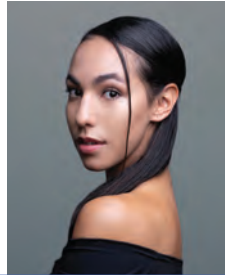
Patrons are requested to turn off pagers, cellular phones, and signal watches during performances. The taking of photographs and the use of recording devices are not allowed in this auditorium. Program and artists subject to change.



ARTISTS OF THE COMPANY



Coco Alvarez-Mena
Miami, Florida



Amanda Assucena*
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



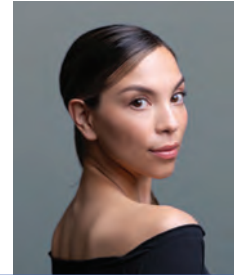
Edson Barbosa
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



Evan Boersma*
Chicago, Illinois



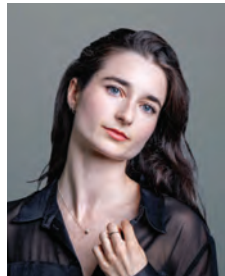
Dayla Bowman*
Youngtown, Australia



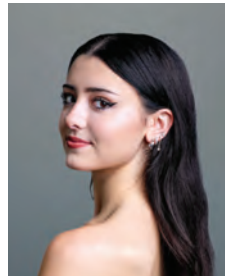
Anais Bueno
Córdoba, Mexico



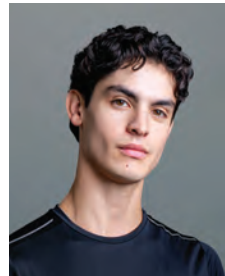
Guillem Cabrera Espinach*
Manresa, Spain



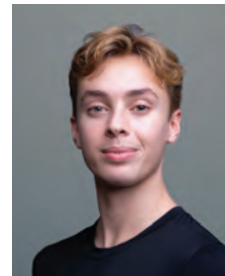
Lucia Connolly
Los Angeles, California



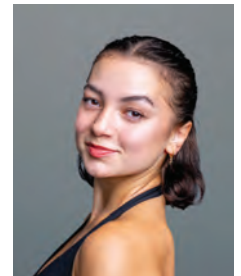
Tenley Connors
Hutchinson, Kansas



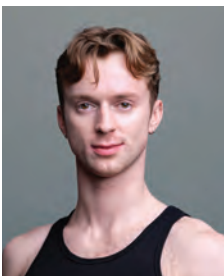
José Pablo Castro Cuevas*
Queretaro, Mexico



Maxwell Dawe*
Dorset, United Kingdom



Anabelle de la Nuez
Cincinnati, Ohio



Jonathan Dole*
Sacramento, California



Derek Drilon*
Vancouver, Washington



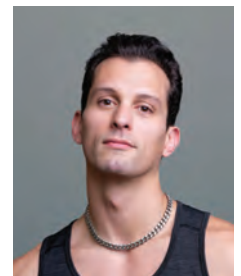
Fernando Duarte*
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



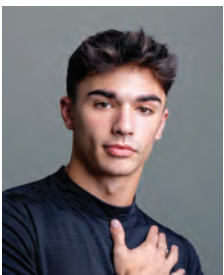
Olivia Duryea*
Haslett, Michigan



Stefan Gonçalves
São Paulo, Brazil



Dylan Gutierrez
Los Angeles, California



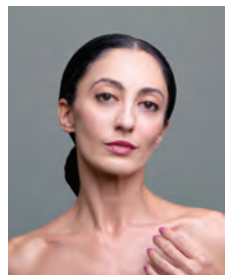
Reed Henry
Princeton, New Jersey



Dara Holmes*
Wilmington, North Carolina



Amanda Illuminati*
Monterrey, Mexico



Victoria Jaiani
Tbilisi, Rep. Of Georgia



Hansol Jeong
Namyangju, South Korea

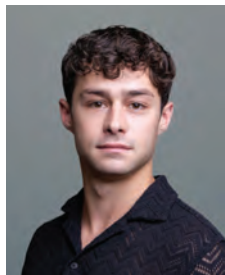


Gayeon Jung
Seoul, South Korea

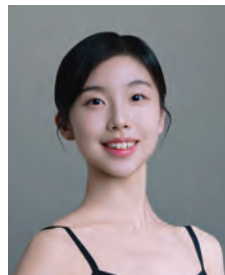
ARTISTS OF THE COMPANY



Yumi Kanazawa
Los Angeles, California



Blake Kessler
Jacksonville, Florida



Minjoo Kim
Incheon, South Korea



Seehyun Kim*
Siheung-si, South Korea



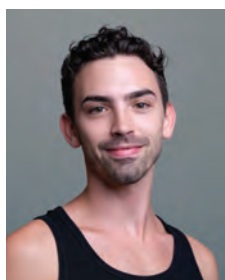
Hyuma Kiyosawa
Nagano, Japan



Nae Kojima*
Gold Coast, Australia



Laila Madison*
Los Angeles, California



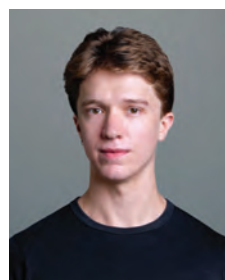
Zachary Manske
St. Paul, Minnesota



Jeraldine Mendoza
San Francisco, California



Lindy Mesmer
Blacksburg, Virginia



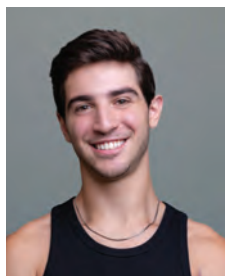
Jackson Miles
Denver, Colorado



Valentino Moneglia Zamora*
Murcia, Spain



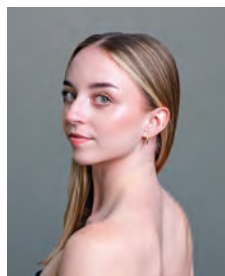
Xavier Núñez
Caguas, Puerto Rico



Davide Oldano*
Turin, Italy



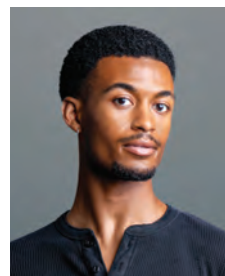
Wictor Hugo Pedrosa
Uberlândia, Brazil



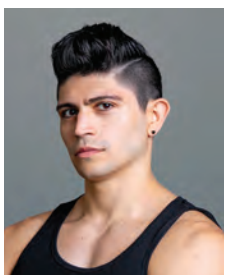
Lauren Quinn*
Fort Wayne, Indiana



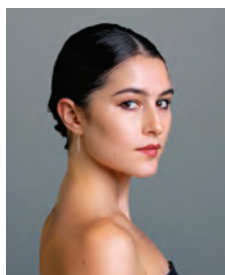
Paolo Randon
Valdagno, Italy



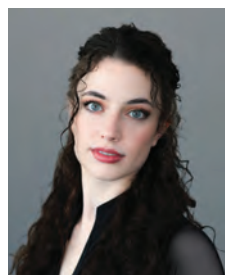
Scott Reed
Marietta, Georgia



Aaron Renteria
Corona, California



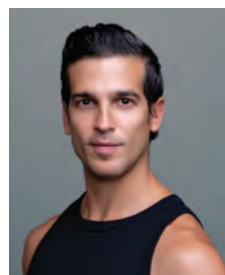
Basia Rhoden
Fresno, California



Julia Rust
Noblesville, Indiana



Natali Taht
Tallinn, Estonia



Alberto Velazquez
Havana, Cuba



Ao Wang
Beijing, China

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DANCERS, VISIT: [JOFFREY.ORG/ARTISTS](https://www.joffrey.org/artists)

AMERICAN ICONS

LIVE ACCOMPANIMENT BY LYRIC OPERA ORCHESTRA
Music Director and Principal Conductor SCOTT SPECK
Guest Conductor ROBERT MCCONNELL

Kettentanz

Choreography by GERALD ARPINO
Music by JOHANN STRAUSS SR. and
JOHANN MAYER
Set Design and Lighting Design by JACK MEHLER
Original Costume Design by JOE EULA
Original Lighting Design by THOMAS SKELTON
Staged by SUZANNE LOPEZ
World Premiere: September 7, 1971 performed by
The Joffrey Ballet at the City Center in New York City

INTERMISSION (15 MINUTES)

Secular Games

Choreography by MARTHA GRAHAM
Music by ROBERT STARER
Original Set Design by MARION KINSELLA
Original Costume Design by MARTHA GRAHAM
Original Lighting Design by THOMAS SKELTON
Lighting Design Recreation by CHRIS MARAVICH
Staged by ANNE O'DONNELL PASSERO and
LORENZO PAGANO
World Premiere: August 17, 1962 at the American Dance
Festival at Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut
Joffrey Premiere: February 19, 2026 at The Lyric Opera
House in Chicago, IL

PAUSE

Postcards

Choreography by ROBERT JOFFREY
Music by ERIK SATIE
Set Design by JOE BRAINARD and
HERBERT MIGDOLL
Original Costume Design by JOHN DAVID RIDGE
Original Lighting Design by JENNIFER TIPTON
Lighting Design Recreation by CHRIS MARAVICH
Staged by SUZANNE LOPEZ and CHRISTINE ROCAS
World Premiere: June 12, 1980 at City Center in New York,
New York

INTERMISSION (20 MINUTES)

Voluntaries

Choreography by GLEN TETLEY
© GLEN TETLEY LEGACY
Music by FRANCIS POULENC
Set Design by ROUBEN TER-ARUTUNIAN
Original Costume Design by
ROUBEN TER-ARUTUNIAN
Original Lighting Design by JOHN B. READ
Lighting Design Recreation by CHRIS MARAVICH
Staged by PETER OTTMANN
World Premiere: December 22, 1973, Stuttgart Ballet;
Württembergischer Staatstheater, Stuttgart
Joffrey Premiere: February 19, 2026 at The Lyric Opera
House in Chicago, IL

RUN TIME 2 HOURS

Casting details for performances of American Icons can be found online at [JOFFREY.ORG/ICONSCAST](https://www.joffrey.org/iconscast)

SPECIAL THANKS

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PRODUCTION SPONSOR

Jeanette Stevens



BALLET NOTES

Kettentanz

A classical salute to Old Vienna's balls and weingartens. A signature work of Arpino showcasing a diversity of technique in nine sections.

Arpino has blithely soared above the music to create a suite of tender miniatures..."

—Doris Hering, *Dance Magazine*

Secular Games

With a nod to Graham's affinity for ancient Greece, *Secular Games* is performed in three sections: on a "Socratic Island," an "Utopian Island" and on "any Island." The setting is a beach, and the onstage set references islands in the distance. This dance is a comedic look at the universal antics of humans trying to impress each other, falling in and out of love, competing and indulging in pursuits that are entirely human. The audience may want to imagine they are watching these characters and random interactions while reclining on their own beach towel.

Over 50 years later, we can still enter this vintage idyllic world and recognize the timeless foibles of men and women playing together.

Postcards

A ballet depicting vignettes of Paris in the early 1900s, evoking fleeting relationships and whimsical memories, with challenging maneuvers and luscious classical movement.

Voluntaries

The ballet, created as a memorial to the choreographer John Cranko, who had died suddenly, is set to Poulenc's *Concerto in G minor for Organ, Strings, and Timpani*. According to Tetley, 'Voluntaries'—by musical definition—are free-ranging organ improvisations, often played before, during and after religious service. The Latin root of the word can also connote flight or desire, and the ballet is conceived as a series of linked voluntaries.

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Foundation
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Jeanette Stevens

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and J. Douglas Gray
The Marina and Arnold Tatar Fund
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2026 WINNING CHOREOGRAPHERS

5 WORLD PREMIERES

★
**GRAINGER ACADEMY
OF THE JOFFREY BALLET**

WINNING WORKS

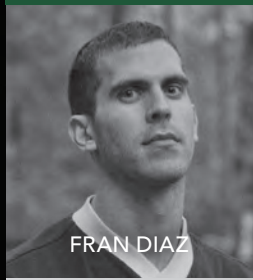
MARCH 13–22, 2026

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\$35

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JULIA FELDMAN



DAYOUNG JUNG



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Ashley Wheeler MBE, The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director
Greg Cameron, President and CEO
Suzanne Lopez, Abbott Academy Director

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Grainger Academy of The Joffrey Ballet is the only training program owned, operated or endorsed by The Joffrey Ballet. The Joffrey Ballet is not affiliated with any other dance training or school program, including the Joffrey Ballet School in New York. Grainger Academy of The Joffrey Ballet, located in the Exelon Education Center at Joffrey Tower in Chicago, Illinois is the only school that follows the organizational mission, training syllabi, and artistic vision of The Joffrey Ballet. No other program, including those holding the Joffrey name, is sanctioned by The Joffrey Ballet. For more information, please contact Academy Reception at 312.784.4600. Lead photo by Katie Miller.

BIOS



ASHLEY WHEATER MBE The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director

Ashley Wheater has dedicated his life to dance. He was born in Scotland and trained at The Royal Ballet School in England. He worked with Frederick Ashton, Kenneth MacMillan, and Michael Somes in numerous ballets at Covent Garden, including *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Giselle*, *Manon*, *Anastacia*, and *The Dream*. Wheater danced with Rudolf Nureyev in *Nureyev* and *Friends* at the London Coliseum.

On Nureyev's advice, Wheater joined the London Festival Ballet and danced in his *Romeo and Juliet* and *Sleeping Beauty*. He danced in Glen Tetley's *Sphinx* and *Greening* and in Festival Ballet's large repertoire of classics and new creations. Under the artistic direction of John Field, he was promoted to Principal Dancer at the age of 20.

In 1982, he joined the Australian Ballet where he continued dancing principal roles in both classical and contemporary work, especially in the John Cranko full-length ballets.

In 1985, at the invitation of Gerald Arpino, Wheater joined The Joffrey Ballet. For the next four years, he performed various works by American choreographers including William Forsythe, Gerald Arpino, Mark Morris, Paul Taylor, and Laura Dean, as well as repertoire by Ashton and Cranko.

Joining the San Francisco Ballet in 1989, he continued his creative career working under Helgi Tomasson, and with choreographers James Kudelka, David Bintley, and many more. In 1997, he retired from dancing and was appointed Ballet Master and, later, Assistant to the Artistic Director at the San Francisco Ballet.

Since his appointment in 2007 as artistic director of The Joffrey Ballet, his passion and commitment to the Joffrey have been evident in the quality that he has brought to the dancing and to the repertoire. He has invited world-renowned choreographers, as well as fresh young talent, to create new work for the company. Wheater has added new full-length works to the Joffrey's repertoire, including Lar Lubovitch's groundbreaking *Othello*, Ronald Hynd's *The Merry Widow*, and Yuri Possokhov's *Don Quixote*.

In 2008, Wheater was the recipient of the Boeing Game-Changer Award in recognition of his commitment to community engagement in Chicago and to the celebration of diversity through dance. He sits on the Advisory Board for *Dance Magazine*, serves as the Artistic Advisor for ChiArts, and is the Advisor to the Arts for the Lincoln Academy of Illinois. In 2010, Wheater, representing The Joffrey Ballet, was named Lincoln Academy Laureate, the highest honor presented by the State of Illinois, and in 2013 the *Chicago Tribune* named him "Chicagoan of the Year." In 2015, Wheater received the University of Chicago Rosenberger Medal for Outstanding Achievement in the Creative and Performing Arts. In December 2019, he was appointed to be a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

BIOS



GREG CAMERON President and Chief Executive Officer

Driven by his lifelong love for the arts, for his hometown, and for connecting with people from every background, Greg Cameron leads The Joffrey Ballet as President & CEO, responsible for organization-wide administration and strategy. Under Greg's partnership with The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director Ashley Wheeler MBE, the Joffrey has set new records at the box office and built the strongest financial foundation in its history.

His 2013 appointment was the culmination of three decades of work in arts administration and philanthropy. "I always loved art, but I wasn't a great artist," he says. "I could paint by numbers, or I could connect the dots. I realized early on I was a good dot connector. I could connect people to each other and help them get involved with the things they believe in."

As a child in suburban Chicago, Greg ran a makeshift theater out of his garage and sold more mints than anyone else for his local YMCA. And as an adult, he turned those passions into a career raising funds for the cultural organizations he loves. At the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Contemporary Art, where he rose to the role of Deputy Director and Chief Development Officer; and WTTW/WFMT, where he served as COO, Greg dedicated himself to supporting art and artists and to creating meaningful experiences for others.

"The Joffrey brings it all together for me," he says. "It's about collaboration, partnership with the community, honoring and supporting artists, and telling stories that truly move people."

Today, Greg leads the Joffrey's efforts to support unforgettable productions and new commissions, reach out to organizations and communities across Chicago, and open up world-class ballet for audiences from all backgrounds. Throughout the span of his 40-year career as an arts administrator in Chicago, Greg has volunteered for a wide range of nonprofit organizations and civic committees. He currently serves on the Facing History and Ourselves Chicago Advisory Board and the State Street SSA Commission. Greg was recently honored by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Chicago Chapter with their Benjamin Franklin Award, in recognition of the significant achievements throughout his long career, serving as a role model for his profession.

BIOS



SCOTT SPECK Music Director & Principal Conductor

With recent performances in London, Paris, Moscow, Beijing, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Washington, Scott Speck has inspired international acclaim as a conductor of passion, intelligence and winning personality.

Scott Speck is one of the most active conductors on Chicago's cultural scene. In addition to his many Joffrey performances, he is Artistic Director of the Chicago Philharmonic, and he has become a frequent guest for the Chicago Symphony's family concerts. He is currently the Illinois Council of Orchestras' Conductor of the Year.

Speck's concerts with the Moscow RTV Symphony Orchestra in Tchaikovsky Hall garnered unanimous praise. His gala performances with Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, Joshua Bell, Renée Fleming, Midori, Evelyn Glennie, and Olga Kern have highlighted his recent seasons as Music Director of the Mobile Symphony. He has collaborated with Carnegie Hall as Music Director of the West Michigan Symphony. He was invited to the White House as former Music Director of The Washington Ballet.

In recent seasons, Speck has conducted at London's Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, the Paris Opera, New York's Lincoln Center, Washington's Kennedy Center, Chicago's Lyric Opera House, San Francisco's War Memorial Opera House, and the Los Angeles Music Center. He has led numerous performances with the symphony orchestras of Baltimore, Houston, Chicago, Paris, Moscow, Shanghai, Beijing, Vancouver, Romania, and Slovakia, among many others.

Previously, he held positions as Conductor of the San Francisco Ballet; Music Advisor and Conductor of the Honolulu Symphony; and Associate Conductor of the Los Angeles Opera. During a tour of Asia, he was named Principal Guest Conductor of the China Film Philharmonic in Beijing.

Speck is the co-author of two of the world's best-selling books on classical music for a popular audience, *Classical Music for Dummies* and *Opera for Dummies*. These books have received stellar reviews in the international press and have garnered enthusiastic endorsements from major American orchestras. They have been translated into twenty languages and are available around the world. His third book in the series, *Ballet for Dummies*, was released to great acclaim as well.

Speck has been a regular commentator on National Public Radio, the BBC, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and Voice of Russia, broadcast throughout the world. His writing has been featured in numerous magazines and journals.

Born in Boston, Speck graduated *summa cum laude* from Yale University. There he founded and directed the Berkeley Chamber Orchestra, which continues to perform to this day. He was a Fulbright Scholar in Berlin, received his Master's Degree with highest honors from the University of Southern California, served as a Conducting Fellow at the Aspen School of Music, and studied at the Tanglewood Music Center.

Scott Speck can be reached at scottspeck.org, and on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @ScottSpeckMusic.

BIOS



ROBERT MCCONNELL

Guest Conductor

Robert McConnell has built a dynamic career as a conductor, composer, and organist, and is thrilled to return to the Joffrey Ballet as a guest conductor for Christopher Wheeldon and Joby Talbot's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. McConnell has previously appeared with the Joffrey as a guest conductor for Cathy Marston and Laura Rossi's *Atonement* (2024), Cathy Marston and Philip Feeney's *Jane Eyre* (2019), and Christopher Wheeldon's *Nutcracker* (2016–19). McConnell has conducted Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* with the Peoria Ballet, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the Calyx Vocal Ensemble, the *St. John Passion* with the Oregon Bach Festival, and has appeared as a guest conductor with Lyric Opera of Chicago's Opera in the Neighborhoods Program, Door County's Peninsula Music Festival, the Skokie Valley Symphony, the DePaul School of Music Opera Theater, and the Northwestern Opera Theater.



GERALD ARPINO

Joffrey Co-Founder | Choreographer of *Kettentanz*

Gerald Arpino was born in Staten Island, New York in 1923 and died in Chicago in 2008. He co-founded The Joffrey Ballet with Robert Joffrey in 1956 and served as Associate Director. Upon Joffrey's death in 1988, Mr. Arpino succeeded him as Artistic Director. Mr. Arpino choreographed his first work, *Ropes*, in 1961. Shortly thereafter, he became the company's resident choreographer. He created more than one-third of the company's repertoire. His ballets are in the repertoires of companies around the world. Mr. Arpino was the first choreographer commissioned to create a ballet to honor the office of the American presidency; he was the first American commissioned by a city, San Antonio, to do a ballet. In 1993, he produced America's first full-evening rock ballet, *Billboards*, set to the music of Prince. Mr. Arpino received numerous awards and honors over his long and prestigious career. In 1995 he moved The Joffrey Ballet to Chicago. Prior to that move, no ballet company had ever successfully been transplanted from one part of the country to another.

BIOS



MARTHA GRAHAM Choreographer of *Secular Games*

Martha Graham was an influential American dancer, teacher, and choreographer of modern dance whose ballet and other works were intended to “reveal the inner man.” Over more than 50 years she created more than 180 works, from solos to large-scale works, most of which she herself danced. She gave modern dance new depth as a vehicle for the intense and forceful expression of primal emotions, creating a dance technique that became the first significant alternative to the idiom of classical ballet. As the dancer Alma Guillermoprieto pointed out, Graham was “the first creator of modern dance to devise a truly universal dance technique out of the movements she developed in her choreography.”

For her themes she almost always turned to human conflicts and emotions. Many of her creations were rooted in and inspired by Classical Greek dramas, as well as biblical themes and religious figures. A few being *Clytemnestra* (1958), *Cave of the Heart* (1946), *Errand into the Maze* (1947), *Alcestis* (1960); *Phaedra* (1962); *Circe* (1963), *The Witch of Endor* (1965), *Cortege of Eagles* (1967), *The Archaic Hours* (1969), *Mendicants of Evening* (1973), *Lucifer* (1975), *The Owl and the Pussycat* (1978), and *Frescoes* (1980), and many more. In the early 1980s she created neoclassical dances, beginning with *Acts of Light* (1981). In 1970 she announced her retirement as a dancer, but she restructured her company into the Martha Graham Dance Company in 1973 and continued to create dances and to teach. Her autobiography, *Blood Memory*, was published in 1991.



ROBERT JOFFREY Joffrey Co-Founder | Choreographer of *Postcards*

Robert Joffrey was an American dancer, choreographer, and director, founder of The Joffrey Ballet in 1956. Early in life Joffrey began studying ballet with Mary Ann Wells, at whose school in Seattle he met Gerald Arpino, who would one day become his company’s co-director. Joffrey formed his first small company, the Robert Joffrey Ballet Concert, in 1954, and in 1956 he formed the Robert Joffrey Ballet with Arpino as chief choreographer. In 1966 the company became the City Center Joffrey Ballet and thereafter grew to international fame. Its name was later changed to simply The Joffrey Ballet.

Joffrey’s works of note include *Pas des Déesses* (1954), *Gamelan* (1962), *Astarte* (1967), *Remembrances* (1973), and *Postcards* (1980). Joffrey commissioned many new ballets from new or untried choreographers. His company was noted for its eclectic repertoire that drew upon the classics, new works, and fusions of modern dance and ballet. Joffrey was also noted for his choreographic work on operatic productions.

BIOS



GLEN TETLEY Choreographer of *Voluntaries*

Tetley was an American dancer, choreographer, and ballet director, whose performances and compositions integrated elements of modern dance and classical ballet. Between 1946 and 1962 he danced in musical productions on Broadway—including *Kiss Me, Kate* (1948) and *Juno* (1959)—and performed for television, as well as with dance companies such as the Joffrey Ballet, the Martha Graham Company, and the American Ballet Theatre.

Having achieved critical acclaim as a performer, Tetley shifted his attention to choreography. In 1962 he formed his own company and created *Pierrot Lunaire*, a piece that launched Tetley's choreographic career. In addition to serving as the director of the Stuttgart Ballet in Germany, he often worked as a freelance choreographer, staging several innovative works most of the major dance companies in the world.



JOHANN STRAUSS SR. Composer for *Kettentanz*

Johann Strauss Sr., often simply referred to as Johann Strauss II, was one of the most renowned and influential figures in the music history of the 19th century. Known as the “Waltz King,” he played a pivotal role in shaping the development of the Viennese waltz, and his works are still considered the pinnacle of dance music today. Strauss was not only a composer of waltzes but also of operettas, polkas, and other orchestral works that brought him worldwide fame.

BIOS



ROBERT STARER Composer for *Secular Games*

Robert Starer was an Austrian-born American composer, pianist and educator. His stage works include three operas with libretti by Gail Godwin and several ballets for Martha Graham. His orchestral works have been performed by major orchestras here and abroad under such conductors as Mitropoulos, Bernstein, Steinberg, and Mehta. Interpreters of his music include Janos Starker, Jaime Laredo, Paula Robison and Leontyne Price. The recording of his Violin Concerto (Itzhak Perlman with the Boston Symphony under Seiji Ozawa) was nominated for a Grammy. Excerpts from his book *Continuo: A Life in Music* have appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Musical America*, and the *London Times*. In 1997 the Overlook Press published *The Music Teacher*, his first work of fiction. The opening chapter was excerpted in *The Keyboard Companion*. CD recordings of his music are available from CRI, VOX, Albany Records, Transcontinental and MMC.

For all his excellent artistry he was elected a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1994, awarded the Medal of Honor for Science and Art by the President of Austria in 1995, given an Honorary Doctorate by the State University of New York in 1996, as well as a Presidential Citation by the National Federation of Music Clubs in 1997.



ERIK SATIE Composer for *Postcards*

Satie was a French composer whose spare, unconventional, often witty style exerted a major influence on 20th-century music, particularly in France. Satie's music represents the first definite break with 19th-century French Romanticism. Closely allied to the Dada and Surrealist movements in art, it refuses to become involved with grandiose sentiment or transcendent significance, disregards traditional forms and tonal structures, and characteristically takes the form of parody, with flippant titles, such as *Trois morceaux en forme de poire* (1903; *Three Pieces in the Shape of a Pear*) and *Embryons Desséchés* (1913; *Desiccated Embryos*).



FRANCIS POULENC Composer for *Voluntaries*

Poulenc was a composer who made an important contribution to French music and whose songs are considered among the best composed during the 20th century. His early compositions, *Rapsodie Nègre* (1917), *Trois Mouvements Perpétuels* and *Sonata for Piano Duet* (1918), as well as his later works in life, *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (1947), all maintained important characteristics of humor and wit.

BIOS



JOE EULA Costume Designer for *Kettentanz*

A legendary fashion artist and costume designer from New York, Eula's dynamic impressionistic watercolors captured the essence of each fashion trend with a freeness of line that expertly gave his drawings a sense of importance with a lighthearted elegance. His first commissions came from *Town & Country* magazine and Saks Fifth Avenue in the late 1940s and in the *New York Herald Tribune* under Eugenia Sheppard for which he illustrated her Inside Fashion column. He also worked in London with Ernestine Carter, fashion editor of *The Sunday Times* during the 1950s covering the European couture collections. He was a favored house artist for Chanel, Givenchy, Versace, Dior, Lagerfeld, YSL and Halston. His work could regularly be seen in *The New York Times*, *American Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Life* magazine. In the 1970s he was appointed Creative Director at Halston, a post he maintained for over 10 years.

As an accomplished set and costume designer, Eula worked with the New York City Ballet under the direction of George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins and on Broadway shows including Noël Coward's *Private Lives* which earned him a Tony Award in 1968. Later in the 1970s, he assisted Diana Vreeland, head of the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. At the infamous Battle of Versailles in 1973 it was Eula's swift and minimal designs for the staging of the American Designer's sets that perfectly launched US fashion onto the world stage. His last work was published in *The New York Times* in 2003 shortly before he died.



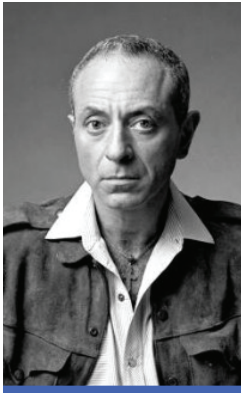
JOHN DAVID RIDGE Costume Designer for *Postcards*

John David Ridge has designed for Broadway, ballet, opera and television. Amongst some of the highlights are *Ring 'Round The Moon* for the Lincoln Center Theater, for which he received a Tony nomination, Robert Joffrey's seminal *Nutcracker* and David Mamet's *A Life In The Theatre*, both the original New York production and on television for PBS. Outside of New York, he designed, amongst many, for the Santa Fe Opera and the Goodman Theatre in Chicago.

In addition to costume design, Ridge has had an extensive career executing costumes in Los Angeles, New York and London for stage and film, and from 1993 at his own studio in Los Angeles. Amongst his film creations are the *Spiderman* costume for Toby Maguire and Uma Thurman's costume for *Kill Bill*.

In fashion, Ridge designed HALSTON for six years after Halston retired in 1984. He has also been Head of the Costume Department at the Juilliard School at Lincoln Center and Costume Supervisor for the National Theatre in London.

BIOS



ROUBEN TER-ARUTUNIAN Costume and Set Designer for *Voluntaries*

Rouben Ter-Arutunian (1920–1992) was a scenic and costume designer for ballet, dance, opera, theater, film, and television productions, though he is widely known for his long association with the New York City Ballet.

In 1952, he was commissioned to create scenery for a double bill of *Bluebeard's Castle* and *L'heure Espagnole* at the New York City Opera. This collaboration led him to work with ballet choreographer George Balanchine. Ter-Arutunian became most famous for the set design and lighting for Balanchine's *The Nutcracker* with costumes by Barbara Karinska, which are still used today. Among the many other ballets he designed were *Seven Deadly Sins*, *Swan Lake*, *Souvenir*, *Harlequinade*, *Coppélia*, *Union Jack*, *Robert Schumann's Davidsbündlertänze*, *Ballet Imperial*, and *Mozartiana*.

Aside from ballet, Ter-Arutunian also worked extensively with modern choreographers in the mid-twentieth century. He designed sets and costumes for Martha Graham's *Visionary Recital* in 1961 and Glen Tetley's *Pierrot Lunaire* (1962), *Sargasso* (1965) and *Ricercare* (1966), among other productions.



THOMAS SKELTON Original Lighting Designer for *Kettentanz* and *Secular Games*

One of America's most distinguished lighting designers, Thomas Skelton (1928–1994), enjoyed a long career in which he created the lighting for many important Broadway productions, as well as landmark dance works. Skelton briefly studied dance technique with Martha Graham and José Limón, and composition with Doris Humphrey. Soon enough Robert Joffrey had invited Skelton to work as stage manager and lighting designer for his newly formed company. In addition to his work with the Joffrey Ballet, Skelton had successful professional associations with Martha Graham, José Limón, New York City Ballet, and Paul Taylor. Dance pieces for which he designed the lighting include: the original productions of Paul Taylor's *Aureole* (1962), Robert Joffrey's *Astarte* (1967), and Jerome Robbins' *Dances at a Gathering* (1969), as well as revivals of Kurt Jooss' *The Green Table*, José Limón's *The Moor's Pavane*, and Leonide Massine's *Parade*. Among his most notable Broadway productions were the revivals of *Brigadoon* (1980), *Death of a Salesman* (1975 and 1984 productions), *Guys and Dolls* (1976), *The King and I* (1977), and *Oklahoma!* (1979). Skelton received Tony Award nominations for the original production of *Indians* (1967) and the revival of *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (1975).

BIOS



CHRIS MARAVICH
Revival Lighting Designer

Chris Maravich is a Chicago based Lighting Designer for Opera, Theater and Dance. Maravich has spent most of his career on the West Coast where he served as Lighting Director of San Francisco Opera as well as designed lighting for various companies in California. During his 14 years with the San Francisco Opera he worked on over 150 different productions. His design work has included *Cyrano de Bergerac* directed by Petrika Ionesco, *Idomeneo* with John Copley, *Don Giovanni*, *Il Trittico*, *Simon Boccanegra*, and many others. Worldwide credits include *Tannhauser* for the Greek National Opera in Athens, *The Makropulos Case* for the Finnish National Opera. Other credits include designs of *Salome* for San Diego Opera, *Tosca*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Cenerentola* all for Opera Colorado.



JACK MEHLER
Lighting and Set Designer for *Kettentanz*

For over thirty years, critically-acclaimed, international award-winning theatrical lighting and scenery designer Jack Mehler has been creating unique performance environments for theatre, dance, and related events. Jack develops specific designs which support the intentions, needs and aspirations of each project which create environments that transport an audience. His work has been recognized by *The New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Boston Globe*, *New York Magazine* and many others. In 2012 and 2013, he received the Korean Musical Theatre Award for Lighting Designer of the Year (The Korean version of the Tony).



JENNIFER TIPTON
Lighting Designer for *Postcards*

Jennifer Tipton is an internationally recognized lighting designer whose distinctive designs have redefined the relationship between lighting and performance. Tipton has been an important presence throughout her prolific career in dance, drama, and opera productions of all scales, and she is regarded as one of the most versatile designers working today. Best known for her work in dance, Tipton's painterly lighting evokes mood and defines and sculpts movement. Preferring a small but powerful palette of colors, she pioneered the use of white light in theatre and dance. Many of her designs have brought to life pieces such as Twyla Tharp's *In the Upper Room* (1986) and *Fait Accompli* (1983), and Eugene O'Neill's *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (2005).

BIOS



JOHN B. READ
Lighting Designer for *Voluntaries*

John B. Read is considered as one of the most outstanding lighting designers working internationally in dance, opera, theater, and music stage. From 1992 to 2005 he was consultant lighting designer to The Royal Opera, The Royal Ballet and BRB. He has worked with many major choreographers such as Sir Frederick Ashton, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Antony Tudor, Glen Tetley, Jerome Robbins, Rudolf Nureyev, Anthony Dowell, and David Bintley. Some of his most notable designs have been for productions such as *Papillon*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Median*, *The Snow Queen*, For The Royal Ballet, *Field Figures*, *Laborintus*, *Voluntaries*, *Isadora*, *The Tempest*, *The Nutcracker*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and the televised ballet tribute to H.M. Queen Elizabeth II, *Fanfare for Elizabeth*.

MARION KINSELLA
Set Designer for *Secular Games*

A sculptor, interior designer and lighting designer, Mickey worked on many Broadway shows with her partner Jean Rosenthal, including *West Side Story*, *Cabaret*, *Hello Dolly* and *Barefoot in the Park*. Following Jean's death in 1968, Mickey's work took her to the Metropolitan Opera and American Ballet Theatre with partner Nananne Porcher.

Her art — driftwood assemblies and sculptures — has been shown at Vineyard galleries (Old Sculpin, The Flea Market and Red Barn Emporium), Capricorn Gallery in New York, the New Britain Museum of American Art, Bushnell Museum and a one-woman show at Bucknell University.

In a Vineyard Gazette article in 1971 Mickey told reporter Phyllis Meras, "That pile of wood is my alphabet, and I have to string the pieces together to make my statement. They're something by themselves, of course, but making them work as language is a fascinating problem." Her bronzes are exquisite studies of the grace and power of the human form.



JOE BRAINARD
Set Designer for *Postcards*

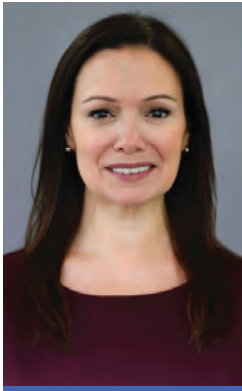
Brainard's visual art, which ranges from painting to collage to drawing, is often situated in the ephemeral; he engaged popular culture with wit as well as a classical attention to light. His work has been shown at the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Brainard published more than a dozen books, including the lyrical prose-poem memoir series *I Remember* (1975) and *The Nancy Book* (2008), which contains 15 years' worth of his artworks and collaborations incorporating Ernie Bushmiller's classic comic strip character, Nancy.

BIOS



HERBERT MIGDOLL
Set Designer for *Postcards*

Herbert Migdoll was an installation artist, painter and world-renowned photographer serving as the company photographer for The Joffrey Ballet since 1968. In 1973 he orchestrated a seminal moment in New York graffiti by connecting members of UGA—the first graffiti-writing collective—to dancer/choreographer Twyla Tharp, leading them to paint live onstage in a performance with her troupe in the Joffrey Ballet. Migdoll's photographs and videos of this time period serve as rare documents of the birth of American graffiti. He studied at Pratt Institute, Cooper Union, the University of California, Berkeley and on a Fulbright scholarship to Denmark before documenting numerous pioneers of New York's avante-garde movement.



SUZANNE LOPEZ
Stager for *Kettentanz* and *Postcards*; Abbott Academy Director

Head of the Grainger Academy of The Joffrey Ballet since 2023; formerly a Company Artist with The Joffrey Ballet.

Suzanne Lopez was born and raised in Summit, New Jersey, to Cuban parents. She first began training at the Garden State Ballet School under Fred Danieli and later studied at the New Jersey School of Ballet. Her introduction to the Joffrey Ballet started at age 12 when she attended her first summer intensive audition taught by Robert Joffrey. From that moment on, her training was steeped in his founding traditions and methodology taught to her by Robert Joffrey himself and his team of former Joffrey dancers, who became his protégés and her mentors.

After starting her professional career for a year and a half with the Joffrey II Dancers, Lopez joined The Joffrey as a Company Artist in 1991 and moved to Chicago with the company in 1995. During her nineteen-year career, Lopez danced principal roles in ballets by such choreographers as Robert Joffrey, Gerald Arpino, George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Alonzo King, John Cranko, José Limón, Antony Tudor, Twyla Tharp, Lar Lubovitch, and Sir Frederick Ashton. She was featured on the cover of *Pointe* magazine as the Sugarplum Fairy in Robert Joffrey's *The Nutcracker*. In addition to dancing, Lopez assisted Gerald Arpino in rehearsals for his ballets. She taught classes for the Arpino Apprentice Program and was one of the first instructors to begin teaching at the inception of the Grainger Academy of The Joffrey Ballet.

After retiring from dancing in 2010, Lopez continued teaching and coaching at the Grainger Academy, among other Chicago-area schools. In 2016, she was thrilled to return to The Joffrey as a Rehearsal Director, where she worked on a diverse repertoire, including new creations with John Neumeier, Yuri Possokhov, and Christopher Wheeldon. She has also been a guest teacher, répétiteur, and coach at schools and companies worldwide. As the Abbott Academy Director, Lopez embraces all her experiences as a student, dancer, educator, and rehearsal director and imbues Robert Joffrey's vision into every facet of the Grainger Academy's specialized curriculum. With her unique lineage and perspective, Lopez sets a firm foundation for the next generations of dancers.

BIOS



ANNE O'DONNELL PASSERO

Stager for *Secular Games*

Passero is a freelance artist, celebrated performer, and beloved teacher to the next generation of dancers around the world and at home in Chicago at The Joffrey Academy. During her ten years spent as a Soloist with the Martha Graham Company, she performed Martha Graham's own roles in *Appalachian Spring*, *Dark Meadow Suite*, *El Penitente*, *Every Soul is a Circus* and solos in *Diversion of Angels*, *Embattled Garden* and *Cave of the Heart*. A great range of choreographers have created roles for her including Mats Ek, Hofesh Shechter, Bobbi Jene Smith, Pam Tanowitz, Annie-B Parson and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. She was awarded full scholarship at The Ailey School prior to an invitation into Ailey II. She danced for Buglisi Dance Theatre, Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Program, Glimmerglass Opera Festival, and SpringboardDanse Montreal. Anne graced the cover of Dance Spirit's February 2016 Issue "Young and Modern".



LORENZO PAGANO

Stager for *Secular Games*

Lorenzo Pagano is an international award-winning contemporary performer whose career has spanned across concert dance, theatre and opera. He started his career by joining the Martha Graham Dance Company in 2012, becoming a Principal Guest Artist and Assistant Rehearsal Director in 2023. He has embodied the most iconic male roles of the repertory and originated starring roles for new works by Lucinda Childs, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Nacho Duato, Andonis Foniadakis, Pontus Lidberg, Hofesh Shechter among others. In addition, Pagano is a regisseur for the Martha Graham Center and has restaged ballets for UNCSA, Rome Opera Ballet School, and Joffrey Ballet in Chicago. Pagano was honored with the Italian International Dance Award as "Male Rising Star" in 2016 and the Premio Nazionale La Sfera d'Oro in 2022.



CHRISTINE ROCAS

Rehearsal Director and Stager for *Postcards*

Christine Rocas was born in San Diego, California, and grew up in the Philippines. She performed with Ballet Manilla from 1998 to 2005, dancing principal (or lead, leading) roles in ballet including *The Nutcracker*, *Le Corsaire*, *La Bayadère*, *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Don Quixote*. In 2005, she was a silver medalist at the New York International Ballet Competition where she received the Arpino Award, garnering her a one-year contract with The Joffrey Ballet.

During her Joffrey career, Christine danced leading roles in ballets by Gerald Arpino (*Light Rain*, *Reflections*, *Round of Angels*, *Sea Shadow*, *The Nutcracker*); Sir Frederick Ashton (*Cinderella*, *The Dream*); George Balanchine (*Apollo*, *Prodigal Son*, *The Four Temperaments*, *Stravinsky Violin Concerto*); William Forsythe (*In the Middle*, *Somewhat Elevated*); Ronald Hynd (*The Merry Widow*); Kurt Jooss (*The Green Table*); Cathy Marston (*Jane Eyre*); Wayne McGregor (*INFRA*); Krzysztof Pastor (*Romeo & Juliet*); John Neumeier (*Sylvia*); Marius Petipa, staged by Lola D'Avila (*Giselle*); Justin Peck (*In Creases*, *The Times Are Racing*, *Year of the Rabbit*); and Jerome Robbins (*In the Night*, *Interplay*).

BIOS

Christine originated roles in world premiere works from Nicolas Blanc (*Beyond the Shore, Evenfall, Under the Trees' Voices*); Val Caniparoli (*Incantations*); James Kudelka (*Pretty BALLET*); Jessica Lang (*Crossed*); Edwaard Liang (*Age of Innocence, Woven Dreams*); Annabelle Lopez-Ochoa (*Mammatus*); Ashley Page (*Tipping Point*); Yuri Possokhov (*Anna Karenina, Bells, Don Quixote*); Stanton Welch (*Son of Chamber Symphony*); and Christopher Wheeldon (*The Nutcracker*). Other notable roles include *Romeo and Juliet* balcony pas de deux by Augustus Damian III, a world premiere by Martin Lawrence, and an originating role in the ballet/opera *Orphée and Eurydice* by John Neumeier. She was also featured in the short film *Bertha* choreographed by Cathy Marston, and two music videos (*Red Violin Caprices, Valse Triste*) with internationally acclaimed violinist Philippe Quint.



PETER OTTMANN Stager for *Voluntaries*

Ottmann is a Canadian dancer, teacher and choreographer who studied at Canada's National Ballet School in Toronto. He later joined The National Ballet of Canada, quickly ascending to First Soloist in 1983. Ottmann performed roles such as Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, The Prince in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Albrecht and Hilarion in *Giselle* and James and Gurn in *La Sylphide*. He also created key roles in ballets by Glen Tetley, William Forsythe and James Kudelka. He was eventually appointed Senior Répétiteur at The National Ballet of Canada, though he has recently retired after 48 years with the company.



CAMILLE ROBLES Vocalist for *Postcards*

Camille Robles is a Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano and an emerging young artist. She was recently selected to be part of the Ryan Opera Center Ensemble 2025/26 at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, starting in May 2025. In November 2024, she was a Puerto Rico District Winner in the Metropolitan Opera's Laffont Competition, where she was awarded the Culturarte Prize, the Propuesta Clásica Foundation Prize, and the Audience Favorite Prize sponsored by Teatro de la Ópera de Puerto Rico.

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Joffrey Company Artists Jeraldine Mendoza and Stefan Gonçalves in *Yonder Blue*. Photo by Cheryl Mann.



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7-11PM

SEE YOU ON THE DANCE FLOOR
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Joffrey Company Artists Anais Bueno and Stefan Gonçalves. Photo by Todd Rosenberg.



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For more information on joining the Star Society and leaving your legacy at Joffrey, please contact



KRISTEN BIGHAM
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Joffrey Company Artists Anais Bueno and Stefan Gonçalvez. Photo by Todd Rosenberg.