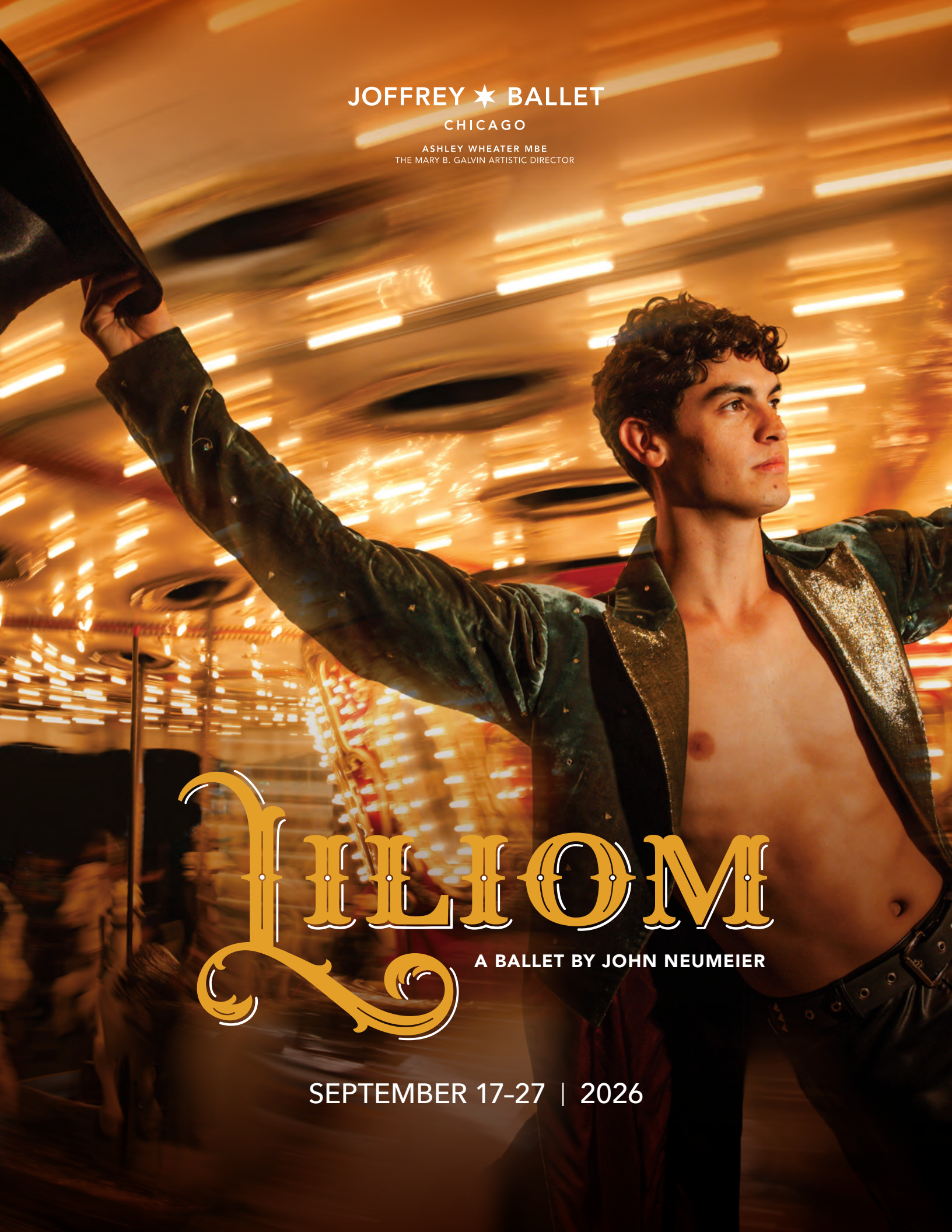

JOFFREY ✶ BALLET

CHICAGO

ASHLEY WHEATER MBE
THE MARY B. GALVIN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

LILIOM

A BALLET BY JOHN NEUMEIER

SEPTEMBER 17–27 | 2026

JOFFREY ✶ BALLET
CHICAGO

ASHLEY WHEATER MBE
THE MARY B. GALVIN
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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2026–2027
SEASON

LILIOM

A BALLET BY JOHN NEUMEIER

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Cover + Above: Joffrey Company Artists Victoria Jaiani and José Pablo Castro Cuevas. Photos by Kyle Flubacker.

PERFORMS AT LYRIC OPERA HOUSE
20 N. WACKER DR. | CHICAGO, IL

ASHLEY

Welcome to *Liliom,*

When I first saw John Neumeier's *Liliom* in Hamburg, I knew the Joffrey audience must experience this ballet. Though the original play was written by Ferenc Molnár in Hungary in 1909, John has set the ballet in a city very much like Chicago during the Great Depression. For anyone knowing John's personal history, this is no surprise. He was born in Milwaukee and studied dance in Chicago. I am reminded of this passage from Carl Sandburg's *Chicago:*

City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.
And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the faces of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I give them back the sneer and say to them:
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;

I believe you will see Chicago in John Neumeier's *Liliom.* Chicago is a city of grit and hustle, a city of the Jazz Age. Chicago is a city of immigrants and dreamers, of tragedy and redemption.

I am grateful to John and his creative team for sharing this story with us. I hope you enjoy...

Ashley

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

Photo by Cheryl Mann.

GREG

Chicago has long given artists something to respond to. Writers have put it on the page, musicians into sound, architects against the skyline, and dancers into motion.

Before the Joffrey called Chicago home, a young dancer from Milwaukee came to the city to study with the legendary Sybil Shearer. Those formative years prepared John Neumeier for a career that would span more than half a century.

Decades later, the Joffrey brings his Liliom to Chicago for the first time. The ballet carries traces of the Midwest, while its choreographer's artistic life took root here—a meeting of place and history that gives Liliom's arrival to the Lyric Opera House special resonance.

I often wonder: *who might be beginning their story with us today?*

Take the story of Houston Thomas. Houston discovered dance through a Joffrey Community Engagement summer program at Tuley Park on Chicago's South Side. In 2024, he returned as a Winning Works choreographer to create a world premiere for the Grainger Academy of The Joffrey Ballet, and, in February, the Joffrey Company will give his newest work, *Dear Chicago: A Love Letter,* its world premiere as part of the Notes on Love program. You can witness Houston's inspiring journey in the new Winning Works documentary, *Joffrey Ballet: The Next Movement,* premiering September 18 on PBS.

A life in dance can lead to the stage, the studio, the classroom, or somewhere yet unimagined. Our responsibility is to give young people the opportunity to discover their way.

And beginnings need believers. Every first chance starts with someone willing to invest in potential. I am especially grateful to the generous sponsors of *Liliom,* whose support helped bring this production to the Joffrey, and to everyone who makes our work possible. Please join me in celebrating our supporters listed throughout this program.

As we open a new season, Chicago continues to give artists something to respond to. Thank you for being part of what begins here.

Greg

Greg Cameron
President and CEO
The Joffrey Ballet

FARISSA

Twenty-five years calls for a celebration, and the Joffrey Women's Board plans to make the most of it.

Since 2002, Women's Board members have championed the Joffrey and its ambitions. They have supported artists and opened the world of dance for countless young people across Chicago.

Their impact takes many forms. Women's Night welcomes new audiences into the theater, while the En Pointe fundraiser supports mainstage productions. Scholarships and stipends through the Tribute Fund offer even more ways to invest in the Joffrey's future.

The Board's dedication to education has created opportunities that can change the course of a life. Each year, the Maureen Dwyer Smith Scholarship gives a talented student a place at the Grainger Academy of The Joffrey Ballet, and the Kathy Smith Scholarship brings dance into a Chicago classroom through Fund a School. Our sponsorship of a female Winning Works choreographer empowers an emerging artist to carry her vision from the studio to the stage.

Add those opportunities to a quarter century of service, and the reach is extraordinary.

So this season, we intend to celebrate accordingly.

We will share the stories of the members whose leadership helped shape the Joffrey's course, toast the partnerships forged along the way, and gather around the astounding work their generosity continues to make possible.

Liliom opens a season defined by artistic ambition, making it exactly the right place to begin. As you experience this larger-than-life production, I hope you feel some of what has kept the Women's Board so devoted to the Joffrey for all these years.

There is much to celebrate, even more to look forward to, and a full season ahead of us.

Farissa

Farissa Knox
President
Joffrey Women's Board

THE JOFFREY BALLET

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The Mary B. Galvin Artistic Director

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CATHERINE EBY
Company Manager

AMANDA HEUERMANN
Stage Manager

CHRIS MARAVICH
Lighting and Video Supervisor

KATHERINE SELIG
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Production Administrator

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Associate Artistic Director

JORGE IVARS
JARED WRIGHT
Company Pianists

SCOTT SPECK
Music Director

THOMAS EDWARDS
CHRISTINE ROCAS
Rehearsal Directors

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.

Joffrey Company Artists Victoria Jaiani and José Pablo Castro Cuevas. Photo by Kyle Flubacker.

LILIOM

A BALLET BY JOHN NEUMEIER

LILIOM PRODUCTION CREDITS

LIVE ACCOMPANIMENT BY LYRIC OPERA ORCHESTRA AND ROB PARTON BIG BAND

Music Director and Principal Conductor SCOTT SPECK

Guest Conductor NATHAN BROCK

Cover Conductors ELI CHEN and NICHOLAS KOO

Choreography by JOHN NEUMEIER

Music by MICHEL LEGRAND

Costume Design by JOHN NEUMEIER

Set Design by FERDINAND WÖGERBAUER

Lighting Design by JIM FRENCH and JOHN NEUMEIER

Staged by NIURKA MOREDO, MARIJN RADEMAKER, and KONSTANTIN TSELIKOV

World Premiere: December 4, 2011, Hamburg Ballett, Hamburg State Opera, Germany

Joffrey Premiere: September 17, 2026, Lyric Opera House, Chicago, IL

Sets, properties and costumes courtesy of Czech National Ballet.

Joffrey Company Artists Reed Henry and Evan Boersma. Photo by Carolyn McCabe.

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Image Courtesy of Czech National Ballet. Photo by Sergei Gherciu.

SYNOPSIS

PROLOGUE | Playland in ruins
The Balloon Man. After sixteen years in purgatory, Liliom is allowed to briefly return to Earth to perform a good deed. He brings a star, stolen from heaven, for his son Louis, who does not recognize his father and refuses the gift. Angry and frustrated, Liliom strikes his son. Louis' mother Julie appears. Julie remembers Liliom, who was once a barker for a carousel in Playland.

SCENE 1 | Playland
The amusement park is dominated by Liliom's presence. He is employed by the owner of the carousel, Mrs. Muskat, and is also her lover. Julie and her friend Marie, waitresses in a café in Playland, visit Mrs. Muskat's carousel once again. Julie is wooed by a shy young man, but is, in fact, searching for Liliom. A drunken sailor barges into the crowd and harasses Julie, who is defended by Liliom. Ficsur, a character of the underworld, slips the sailor a knife, but Liliom wins the fight and lets the sailor free. Mrs. Muskat is jealous of Julie. Confrontation — Mrs. Muskat fires Liliom.

SCENE 2 | A lonely place
Marie and Julie are waiting on a park bench. Marie's boyfriend, Wolf, appears — later, Liliom. Julie and Liliom are alone. They stay together — but are unable to confess their love.

INTERLUDE
Ficsur tries to persuade Liliom to join him in his criminal dealings.

SCENE 3 | Men looking for work
A crowd of unemployed men, including Liliom and Ficsur, compete for the few available jobs.

SCENE 4 | At home
Preparations for Marie and Wolf's wedding. Liliom appears, unemployed, unhappy and angry. Julie and Liliom are alone. Frustrated, Liliom lashes out at Julie. Mrs. Muskat appears. She tries to persuade Liliom to return to the carousel. Liliom hesitates. Alone again, Julie reveals to Liliom that she is carrying his child. Liliom dreams of a future with his son.

SCENE 5 | Marie and Wolf's wedding
The wedding guests celebrate Marie and Wolf's marriage. Ficsur and Liliom withdraw from the party, while the shy young man dances with Julie. Liliom and Ficsur naively try to commit a robbery, but the crime goes wrong. Liliom tries to flee. As the police arrives, he recognizes the hopelessness of his situation and stabs himself. Julie mourns Liliom. She professes her love for him.

SCENE 6 | In the beyond
The Balloon Man accompanies Liliom on his journey into the beyond. Liliom appears before the gatekeeper and must admit that he has struck Julie. Devils appear. In defense, the Balloon Man recalls the fight with the drunken sailor, in which Liliom, clearly the victor, did not harm the sailor. Consequently, Liliom is not irrevocably damned. During the following sixteen years in purgatory, Liliom's son grows up.

SCENE 7 | Louis
Now sixteen years old, Louis lives near the ruins of Playland. Marie and Wolf are very wealthy and move to a finer neighborhood with their son Elmer. The Balloon Man leads Liliom to his son. Louis does not recognize his father. Liliom tries to give him a star, stolen from heaven, but his son refuses the gift. Frustrated and angered by the rejection, Liliom lashes out at Louis. Julie appears. Picking up the star, she feels Liliom's presence. It is as if he is whispering to her: "Know that I love you."

RUN TIME | *2 hours and 20 minutes including a 20 minute intermission*

BALLET NOTES

A BALLET OF LOVE, DEATH, AND REDEMPTION

The metaphysical level is deeply woven throughout *Liliom*, dealing with the theme of death — one of the cornerstones of Neumeier's choreographic and dramaturgical concept. The entire story is framed by the notion that Liliom is already dead. In Neumeier's version, we witness his life and deeds through memory rather than as a straightforward narrative.

Unlike Ferenc Molnár's original play, Neumeier did not approach *Liliom* as a realistic social drama, although he retained its social themes. Instead, he saw the work's potential in its dreamlike, metaphysical dimensions.

Despite its tragic ending, *Liliom* also contains elements of comedy in the style of Johann Nestroy, alongside influences of naturalism, Freudian psychology, and subtle eroticism.

CHARACTERS

CONTRAST, DUALITY, AND INTEGRITY OF CHARACTERS

JULIE AND LILIOM

Liliom, after whom the ballet is named, is a carnival barker—a handsome, attractive young man who belongs wholeheartedly to the carousel and the fairground. He is a womanizer who loves women yet never hesitates to leave them. He is dominant, sensitive, rough, and gentle all at once: both a seducer and a lover.

His character is deeply troubled. Little is known about his origins. Even "Liliom" is not his real name but rather a nickname. In Molnár's play, he refers to himself at one point as Andreas Zavoczki. In a sense, he invented himself. To truly understand him, one must consider his past, which appears to have been lonely and sorrowful.

Liliom is an antihero. As a showman, he is sensual, expressive, and full of self-confidence in his dancing—the fairground world lies at his feet.

His life oscillates between carefree enjoyment and the harsh reality of unemployment, poverty, and hopelessness. The turning point comes when this "supermacho" meets Julie. Her fragility and gentleness awaken something within him. Yet he is terrified that if he truly opens himself to another person, he will ultimately be disappointed, abandoned, and lose everything. In his relationship with Julie, he protects himself by refusing to admit or express his feelings.

Julie is his opposite. She loves Liliom sincerely and completely. More emotionally mature than he is, she is willing to walk life's path alongside him. At the beginning, both give up their previous lives in order to be together.

When Liliom discovers that Julie is pregnant with his child, he experiences a profound moment of realization. For perhaps the first time, he believes he may be able to give someone what he himself has always lacked. He wants to provide for his family and offer unconditional love. Yet despite these intentions, he fails. In a desperate attempt to support them, he commits an amateur robbery that ends in tragedy.

Although Liliom cares deeply for Julie, he cannot express his emotions. Unable to care for her in the way he wishes, he becomes overwhelmed by helplessness, frustration, and anger.

One of the emotional highlights of the ballet is Julie's dance monologue after Liliom's death. She confesses that although he may not have been the best man, she loved him throughout his life and continues to love him after his death.

In the fairy-tale finale of the ballet, Liliom is allowed to return to Earth for the sake of his child. Whereas Molnár's original play centers on Liliom's sixteen-year-old daughter, Neumeier instead gives him a son named Louis (similar to the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical adaptation).

Liliom's self-projection becomes most evident through his son. At first, audiences might mistake the lonely, aimless boy seen at the beginning of the ballet for Liliom himself—a memory of youth. The message is that a thread of innocence, longing, and hope continues from father to son.

CHARACTERS

JULIE AND LILIOM (continued)

An element of innocence runs throughout the entire story. Molnár writes with humor and compassion, suggesting that fate—whatever name we choose to give it—brings people like Julie and Liliom together.

In the 1930 film adaptation of *Liliom* by Frank Borzage, a carpenter courts Julie at the beginning of the story, inviting her to a beer garden and later to the amusement park. The character recalls Count Paris from *Romeo and Juliet:* an ideal partner for Julie, if only she had wanted him.

MRS. MUSKAT

In Molnár's play, Mrs. Muskat owns the carousel where Liliom works as a barker. She is an authoritative and pragmatic woman who exercises considerable power over him.

John Neumeier further develops this relationship by portraying Mrs. Muskat not only as Liliom's employer, but also as a classic femme fatale. She becomes the embodiment of social power and temptation—a seductive figure who ultimately controls Liliom's fate.

THE BALLOON MAN

In Neumeier's *Liliom,* the Balloon Man is far more than a secondary character. He serves as a guide between worlds—between life and death—as well as a judge and an ironic reflection of Liliom's destiny.

The balloons symbolize both lightness and the fragility of human existence. The Balloon Man accompanies souls through the transition from life to death. At the moment of Liliom's death, he appears as a mediator who introduces him to the afterlife, where his actions are examined and his life is replayed. Rising lightly into the air, the balloons symbolize transcendence and an ascent to another plane of existence.

One cannot help but notice similarities between Neumeier's Balloon Man and Tadeusz Kantor's "theatre of death" (teatr śmierci). In Neumeier's work, the Balloon Man is a liminal being—someone "from elsewhere" who guides Liliom through the space between life and death. He is not alive in the ordinary sense of the word.

Similarly, in Kantor's theatre, the dead return among the living as figures who exist between memory and oblivion, between past and present. Both Kantor and Neumeier therefore explore characters who exist outside conventional reality—beings who are "no longer of this world."

Liliom's grounded, rough personality provides a striking contrast to the Balloon Man's playful, light, almost weightless presence. This juxtaposition allows audiences to view Liliom's life as both a tragedy and, paradoxically, something touched by hope.

The balloons themselves also evoke childhood—symbols of innocence, purity, joy, and wonder. Through them, the Balloon Man introduces into the story everything Liliom either lost or never managed to grasp during his lifetime.

CHARACTERS

THE CAROUSEL AS A SYMBOL OF LIFE

In Neumeier's ballet, the fairground represents both promise and illusion. Lonely people arrive while couples depart; the carousel becomes the symbolic center of suburban life and a metaphor for life itself.

Like life, there is not enough room for everyone on the carousel. The strongest survive while others are left behind. The carousel becomes a symbolic stage where dreams, ambitions, and identities are constantly performed. The world of fantasy transforms into a catwalk—a platform for self-presentation and self-assertion.

During times of severe poverty, the desire to escape into fantasy is understandable. A carousel with its dazzling lights offers a temporary refuge from hardship.

Calling Liliom an artist, comedian, entertainer, magician, or even a sorcerer may be an exaggeration, yet within the magical world of the fairground he embodies all of these roles. His charisma dominates the carousel and captivates everyone around him.

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Joffrey Company Artist Gayeon Jung in *The Sleeping Beauty.* Photo by Carolyn McCabe.

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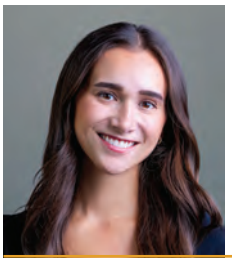

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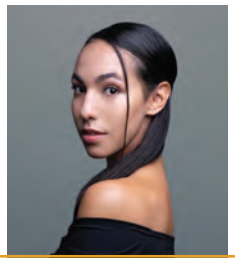

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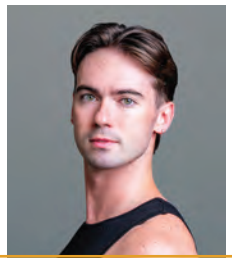
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



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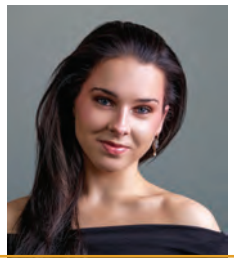

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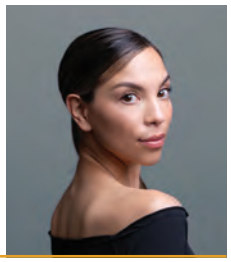

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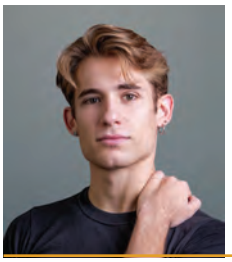

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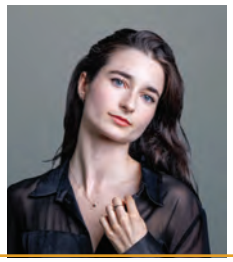

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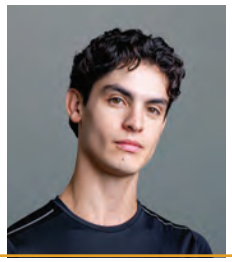

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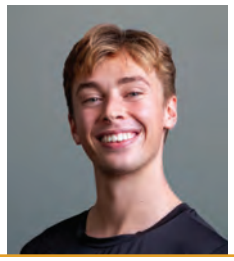

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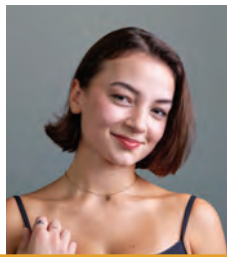

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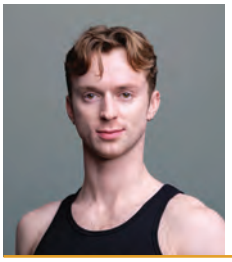

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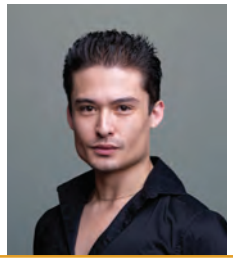

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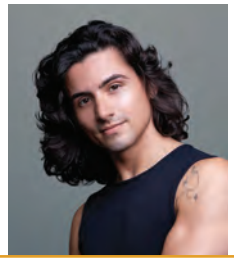
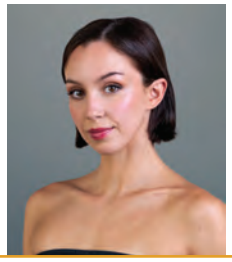
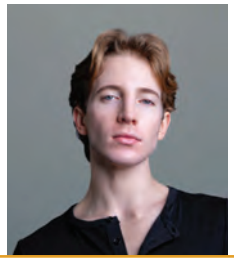


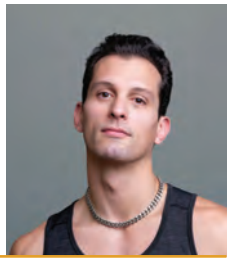
Fernando Duarte*
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



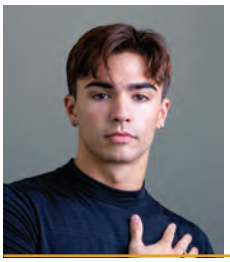
Olivia Duryea*
Haslett, Michigan



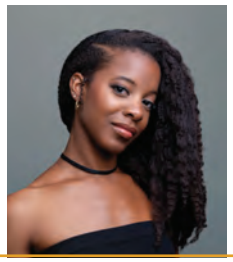
Stefan Gonçalvez
São Paulo, Brazil



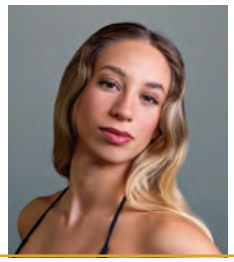
Dylan Gutierrez
Los Angeles, California



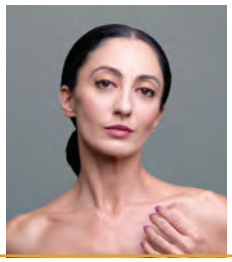
Reed Henry
Princeton, New Jersey



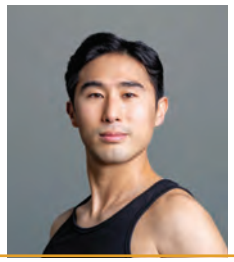
Dara Holmes*
Wilmington, North Carolina



Amanda Illuminati*
Monterrey, Mexico

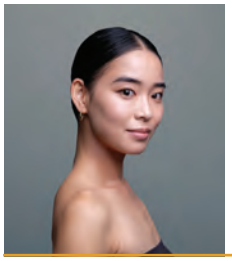


Victoria Jaiani
Tbilisi, Rep. Of Georgia



Hansol Jeong
Namyangju, South Korea

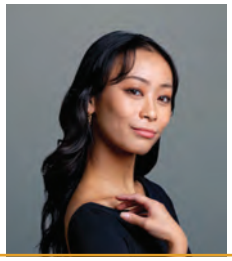
Gayeon Jung
Seoul, South Korea



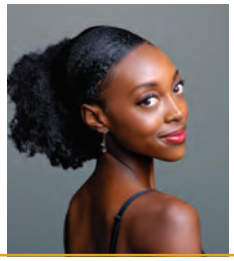
Yumi Kanazawa
Los Angeles, California

Seehyun Kim*
Siheung-si, South Korea

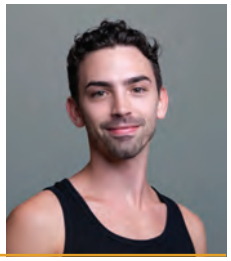
Hyuma Kiyosawa
Nagano, Japan



Nae Kojima*
Gold Coast, Australia



Laila Madison*
Los Angeles, California



Zachary Manske
St. Paul, Minnesota

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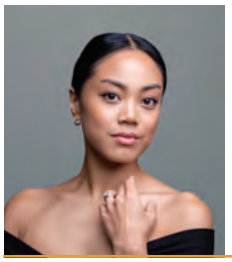
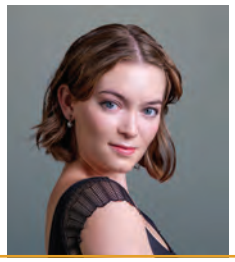
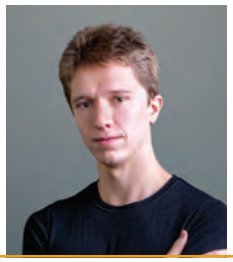


Jeraldine Mendoza
San Francisco, California

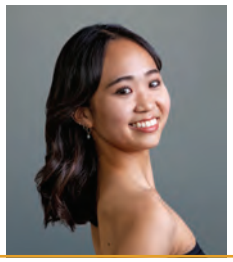


Lindy Mesmer
Blacksburg, Virginia

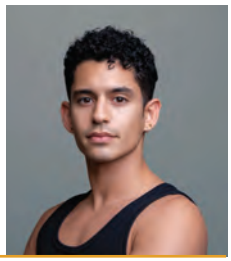


Jackson Miles
Denver, Colorado

Valentino Moneglia Zamora*
Murcia, Spain



Aoi Morohashi*
Kanagawa, Japan



Xavier Núñez
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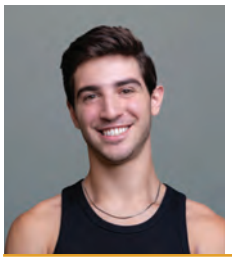
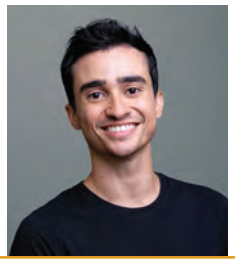


Davide Oldano*
Turin, Italy



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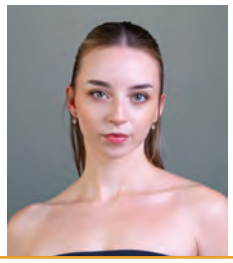
Uberlândia, Brazil



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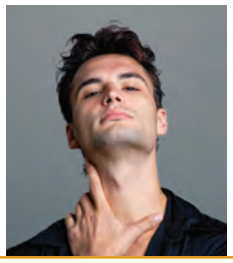
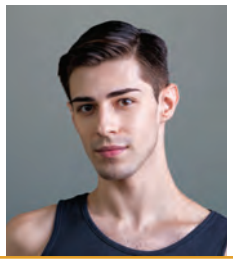
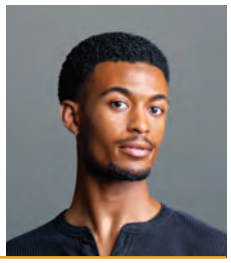
Fort Wayne, Indiana



Paolo Randon
Valdagno, Italy



Fabian Raschitor
Bucharest, Romania



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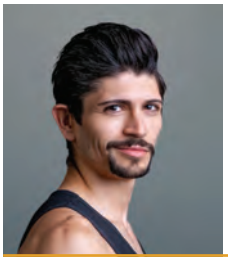
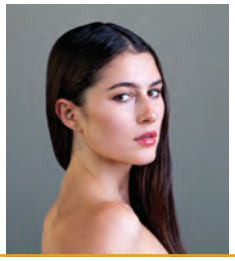
Marietta, Georgia



Aaron Renteria
Corona, California



Basia Rhoden
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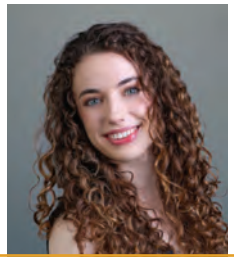
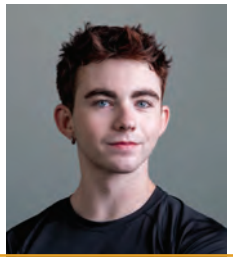


Julia Rust
Noblesville, Indiana



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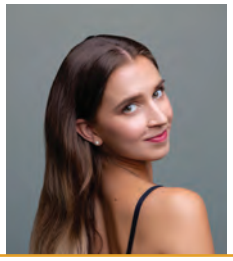
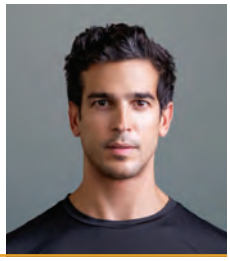
San Francisco, California



Natali Taht
Tallinn, Estonia



Alberto Velazquez
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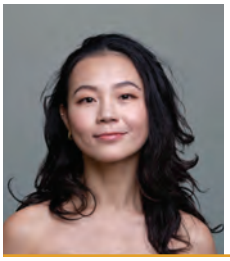

Ao Wang
Beijing, China

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NEW JOFFREY ARTISTS | *GRAINGER ACADEMY OF THE JOFFREY BALLET ALUMNI

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 Rehearsal Director 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.

Photo by Cheryl Mann.

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 Wheater MBE, the Joffrey has set new records at the box office and built the strongest financial foundation in its history.

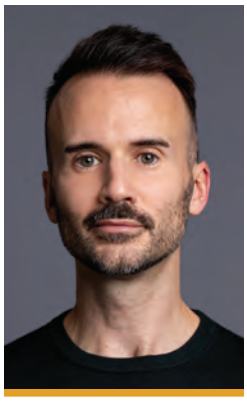
His 2013 appointment was the culmination of three decades of work in arts administration and philanthropy. "I always loved art, but I wasn't a great artist," he says. "I could paint by numbers, or I could connect the dots. I realized early on I was a good dot connector. I could connect people to each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

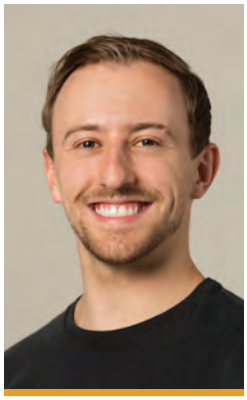


ADAM BLYDE

Associate Artistic Director

Adam Blyde trained at The Royal Ballet School, graduating in 2001. He has appeared with The Royal Ballet and joined the Scottish Ballet in 2003, where he was promoted to Principal in 2008. While there, he danced in Ashley Page's *Cheating, Lying, Stealing, 32 Cryptograms, Soft Underbelly, Nightswimming into day, The Nutcracker, Walking In the Heat, The Pump Room, Fearful Symmetries, Cinderella, The Sleeping Beauty, Pennies From Heaven*, and *Alice*. He also performed in Siobhan Davies' *White Man Sleeps;* Stephen Petronio's *MiddleSexGorge* and *Ride the Beast;* Richard Alston's *Dangerous Liaisons* and *Carmen*, Krzysztof Pastor's *In Light And Shadow*, and *Romeo & Juliet;* Hans van Manen's *Five Tangos;* George Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments, Episodes, Agon*, and *Rubies;* Diana Loosmore's *Chasing Ghosts;* Peter Darrell's *Five Rückert Songs*, and *Othello;* William Forsythe's *Artifact Suite* and *Workwithinwork;* Frederick Ashton's *Façade* and *Scenes de Ballet;* Paul Liburd's *From Where;* Val Caniparoli's *Still Life;* Jorma Elos' *Kings 2 Ends;* Kenneth MacMillan's *Song of the Earth;* Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *A Streetcar Named Desire;* and Martin Lawrance's *Run For It.*

Blyde joined Rambert Dance Company in 2013, dancing Mark Baldwin's *The Comedy of Change, What Wild Ecstasy*, and *The Strange Charm of Mother Nature;* Christopher Bruce's *Rooster;* Merce Cunningham's *Sounddance;* Richard Alston's *Dutiful Ducks;* Ashley Page's *Subterrain;* Lucinda Childs' *Four Elements;* Barak Marshall's *The Castaways;* Shobana Jeyasingh's *Terra Incognita;* and Itzik Galili's *A Linha Curva.* He joined The Joffrey Ballet as Rehearsal Director in June 2016.



THOMAS EDWARDS

Rehearsal Director

Originally from Worcester, Thomas trained at Harlequin Stage School before moving to London at 16 to begin his vocational training at Central School of Ballet. During his training, he was awarded the Central Friends Trust Award and was a finalist in both Young British Dancer of the Year 2012 and the prestigious Prix de Lausanne 2013.

Alongside his performing career, Thomas developed an extensive body of work as a rehearsal director, stager and assistant choreographer. He has staged productions for the Paris Opera, Opera Wrocławska, Scottish Ballet, Ballet Central and Rambert School, while also serving as the long-time assistant and stager to Scottish Ballet's Resident Choreographer, Sophie Laplane.

Passionate about dancer development, Thomas also holds an MSc in Strength and Conditioning with Distinction and a First Class BA (Hons) in Professional Dance and Performance. Through combining his experience as a professional dancer with his knowledge of performance science, he has developed a unique approach to supporting dancers' technical, artistic, and physical development.

Thomas is excited to begin this new chapter as Rehearsal Director at The Joffrey Ballet and looks forward to supporting the artistic growth of the Company, helping bring its diverse repertoire to life, and meeting everyone in person while working closely with the artists and staff.

BIOS

CHRISTINE ROCAS

Rehearsal Director

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, remaining as a Company Artist for 19 seasons.

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*).

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.

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.

Photo of Scott by Cheryl Mann.

BIOS

JOHN NEUMEIER

Choreographer, Costume Designer, and Lighting Designer

John Neumeier was born in 1939 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he received his first dance training. He continued his dance studies in Chicago as well as at Marquette University in Milwaukee where he created his first choreographic works. After further ballet study both in Copenhagen and at The Royal Ballet School in London, John Cranko invited him in 1963 to join Stuttgart Ballet, where he progressed to soloist and continued his choreographic development.

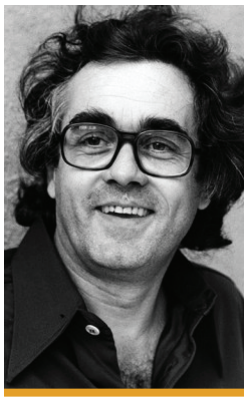
In 1969, Ulrich Erfurth appointed Mr. Neumeier Director of Ballet Frankfurt, where he soon caused a sensation with his new interpretations of such well-known ballets as *The Nutcracker* and R*omeo and Juliet.* In 1973, August Everding invited him to become Director and Chief Choreographer of the Hamburg Ballet. Under his direction, The Hamburg Ballet became one of the leading ballet companies on the German dance scene and soon received international recognition. As a choreographer, Mr. Neumeier has continually focused on the preservation of ballet tradition, while giving his works a modern dramatic framework. His ballets range from new versions of full-length story ballets to musicals and to his symphonic ballets, especially those based on Gustav Mahler's compositions, as well as his choreographies to sacred music. His latest creations for the Hamburg Ballet: *The Sleeping Beauty* (new version, 2021), *Hamlet 21* (2021), *Beethoven Project II* (2021), *Dona Nobis Pacem* (2022) and *Epilogue* (2024). In 1975, John Neumeier conceived the Hamburg Ballet Days as a climax and end to each season. In 1978, he founded the School of the Hamburg Ballet. In 1989 the school, together with the company, moved into its own "Ballettzentrum" provided by the city of Hamburg. Its facilities include nine studios and a boarding school for over 30 students. Today almost 80 % of the company's dancers are graduates from the school.

John Neumeier has worked as guest choreographer with many companies, including The Royal Ballet in London; The Vienna, Munich and Dresden State Operas; The Stuttgart Ballet (for which he has created several works); The Royal Danish Ballet; The Ballet of the Paris Opera; The Tokyo Ballet; American Ballet Theatre in New York; San Francisco Ballet; Joffrey Ballet; Boston Ballet; The National Ballet of Canada; The Ballet of the Mariinsky Theater; Moscow Bolshoi and Stanislavsky Ballet; and The National Ballet of China, among others.

John Neumeier established the John Neumeier Foundation in February 2006 with the aim of preserving and eventually making available to the public his collection of dance and ballet-related objects. The Foundation will maintain and secure his repertoire and related materials for the city of Hamburg.

In 2011, John Neumeier founded Germany's National Youth Ballet. The young company of eight dancers is based at the Ballettzentrum in Hamburg but finds its performing spaces away from the Hamburg Opera. In addition to international touring this creative young company dances in schools, retirement homes and various social projects.

BIOS



MICHEL LEGRAND

Composer

Michel Legrand, native and resident of Paris, was one of the most successful foreign-born composers ever to grace the American best-seller lists. From his very first success in the United States with the memorable album *I Love Paris* in 1954, his productivity continued unabated throughout his life. He garnered three Oscar Awards, three GRAMMY Awards and an Emmy nomination along the way to prove it.

One of his most unforgettable works is the score for the classic 1964 film *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg,* which marked his first recognition from the Motion Picture Academy. He won his first Academy Award for Best Song for "The Windmills of Your Mind," which appeared in the 1968 film *The Thomas Crown Affair.* He later picked up the Oscar for Best Original Dramatic Score, for the movie *The Summer of '42,* and years later, in 1984, he won for Best Original Song Score for the Barbra Streisand movie *Yentl,* a work which *Time* magazine called, "the most romantic, coherent and sophisticated movie score since *Gigi* a quarter century ago."

In addition to his prodigious writing skills, Legrand was a conductor of renown and a virtuoso jazz pianist. He has conducted and appeared with such ensembles as The Pittsburgh Symphony, The Minnesota Orchestra, The Buffalo Philharmonic and the symphony orchestras of Atlanta, Denver, New Orleans, Montreal and Vancouver. He had made well over 100 albums and has collaborated with such major stars as Maurice Chevalier, Miles Davis, Kiri Te Kanawa, Sarah Vaughan, Stan Getz, Jack Jones, James Galway, Ray Charles, Lena Horne along with the afore-mentioned Barbra Streisand, whose album *Till I Loved You* features the Legrand song, "On My Way to You," (which was written for Maureen McGovern) with lyrics by frequent Michel Legrand collaborators, Marilyn and Alan Bergman.

His last credited work before his death was for the 2018 French film *J'ai Perdu Albert.* Legrand also recently contributed the score to Orson Welles' posthumously released *The Other Side of the Wind.*

BIOS

FERNIDAD WÖGERBAUER

Set Designer

Born in Salzburg, Austria, Ferdinand Wögerbauer began his formal education in sculpture and continued his studies in set and costume design at the Universität Mozarteum in Salzburg. Since 1985, until May 2003, he was a regular contributor to the Salzburg Festival, serving as assistant designer, deputy head of design, and later as head of design. His creative work spans multiple media, including stone, wood, paper, and mural painting. He has also taught as a lecturer at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Lecce and Urbino.

His extensive stage design work encompasses opera, theater, and ballet, collaborating with acclaimed directors and choreographers such as Achim Benning, Jürgen Flimm, Klaus Metzger, Andrea Moses, Christian Nickel, Peter Stein, Bob Swaim, Stefano Vizioli, and Stephen Wadsworth. Productions include classics such as *Alpenkönig und Menschenfeind, Faust 1, Wallenstein Trilogy, I Demoni, Troilus and Cressida, Zio Vanja, Don Giovanni, Eugene Onegin, Macbeth, Věc Makropulos, Jenufa, Die Zauberflöte, Le Nozze di Figaro, La Damnation De Faust, Boris Godunow, Don Carlos,* and numerous contemporary premieres and international collaborations across major venues from Hamburg, Berlin, Wien, Milan, Rome, Paris, Moscow, London, Lyon, Helsinki, Zürich, Athens, Warszawa, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York to Salzburg, and Edinburgh. With John Neumeier (Hamburg Ballet) he is associated with the work on *Messiah, Orpheus, Weihnachtsoratorium I–III, Weihnachtsoratorium IV–VI* and *Liliom.*

Recognized for his visionary designs, he has received multiple awards, including the Premio Le Maschere del Teatro Italiano for Best Scenographer, and has been repeatedly nominated for the Golden Mask.

JIM FRENCH

Lighting Designer

Jim French is an acclaimed lighting designer whose artistry has illuminated stages and captivated audiences worldwide. With a career spanning over two decades, Jim's designs have graced performances in 25 different countries and across 36 U.S. states.
As a scholar as well as an artist, Jim holds a Master of Fine Arts in Lighting Design from Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama (2002) and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of California at Berkely (1999). Jim's contribution to the arts includes lighting more than15 world premieres for San Francisco Ballet and serving as the Resident Designer for Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet for nine dynamic seasons. He lives in Oakland, California, and often volunteers for Dancers Responding to AIDS, DanceFAR, and Bike East Bay.

BIOS

NATHAN BROCK

Guest Conductor

Born in Canada, conductor Nathan Brock is fluent in the style and aesthetic of the traditional European masterworks in all disciplines — opera, concert and ballet — having trained and spent most of his career working on the continent.

Brock completed his conducting studies at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Zürich with Johannes Schlaefli in 2008. Other important influences came during his two summers as a conducting fellow at the Academy of Conducting, Aspen Music Festival, from David Zinman and at the Lucerne Festival from Bernard Haitink, as well as in masterclasses in Finland with Jorma Panula.

Brock began his career in 2009 as assistant conductor with the Montreal Symphony and shortly thereafter was promoted to Resident Conductor. During his 5-season tenure, he was instrumental in establishing the orchestra in their new hall La Maison Symphonique and was recognized with multiple awards for his programming, concerts and outreach activity by the Quebec, Ontario and Canadian arts councils respectively. In this period, he performed with the orchestra over 125 times and shared the stage with many renowned artists, such as Maxim Vengerov and Stephen Hough.

In 2015, he returned to Europe to join the music staff at the Hamburgische Staatsoper as Kapellmeister. During his four seasons in Hamburg, he conducted an extensive repertoire ranging from popular revivals such as *L'Elisir d'Amore, Il Barbieri di Siviglia, Le Nozze di Figaro, Hänsel und Gretel, La Belle Hélène, Eugene Onegin* etc. to new productions such as *Erzittre, Zauberflöte, Sweep*. He also regularly worked with legendary choreographer John Neumeier and the Hamburg Ballet performing new ballets *Eleonora Duse, Anna Karenina* as well as revivals of *Giselle, Chopin Dances, Don Quixote, Kameliendame, Liliom.*

As a guest conductor, he has performed with Orchestre National d'Ile de France, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, Edmonton Symphony, Orchestre National Pays de la Loire, Symphony Nova Scotia, Victoria Symphony, Hamilton Philharmonic, Filarmonica di Torino and in theaters such as the Komische Oper Berlin, the Royal Swedish Opera, New National Theater Tokyo, Four Seasons Centre Toronto, Koch Theater, Kennedy Center.

Brock recently recorded the World Premier of the opera BOUND, by Canadian composer Kevin Lau, with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra which is due to be released March 2022.

Upcoming performances include debuts with the Royal Ballet, Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden, Norwegian National Ballet, Danish National Ballet Copenhagen, Orquesta Filarmonica de Concepcion, Neubrandenburger Philharmonie and return engagements in Toronto, Hamburg and Stockholm.

In addition to his accomplishments as a musician he also has a keen interest in history, with a degree in History and International Relations from the University of Toronto. During the CORONA lockdowns he completed an Executive MBA at The Rotmann School of Management, Canada's premier business school. Follow him @nathanbrock.conductor

BIOS

ELI CHEN

Guest Conductor

Noted for "polished and atmospheric performance" (Chicago Classical Review) as well as "bracing precision and subtlety" (The Classical Review), Eli Chen is a firm believer in the transformative power of music for individuals and communities, and his work has established him as a thoughtful musician, versatile artist, and avid collaborator.

Eli has served as the Principal Conductor of the Ravenswood Community Orchestra since 2017 and as the Assistant Conductor and Pre-Concert Lecturer at the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra since 2021. He has also conducted several productions at Chicago Opera Theater, including Mark Adamo's *Becoming Santa Claus* and two new operas as part of the Vanguard Initiative. Eli has been a cover conductor at the Chicago Philharmonic and a guest lecturer at DePaul University. He has conducted multiple genre-crossing collaborations with Fifth House Ensemble, including a nationwide tour with violinist Robert McDuffie and Mike Mills of REM. Guest engagements include Chicago-based groups such as the Lakeview Orchestra and Lake County Symphony, as well as ensembles abroad such as the Lviv National Philharmonic and Berlin Sinfonietta.

Eli received his Bachelor's degrees in Biochemistry and in Music at the University of Virginia, where he began his conducting studies with Music Director Laureate Kate Tamarkin. He went on to receive his master's degree in conducting in 2014 from Northwestern University Bienen School of Music under the tutelage of Victor Yampolsky. Eli has also received additional mentorship and influential work with Mark Gibson, Larry Rachleff, Donald Schleicher, and Carl St. Clair.

NICHOLAS KOO

Guest Conductor

Nicholas Koo is a Korean-American conductor whose career spans major orchestras and festivals across the United States. He has worked with the Minnesota Orchestra, Colorado Symphony, Utah Symphony | Utah Opera, and San Diego Symphony, and made his debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in March 2025 as part of its MusicNOW series. Most recently, he returned to Minneapolis to lead a series of concerts with the Minnesota Orchestra in partnership with the Minnesota Zoo, reaching more than 13,000 families across the Twin Cities. He was featured with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra as part of its Leonard Slatkin 80th Birthday Celebration. During summer, past festival engagements include the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, Festival Mozaic, the Peninsula Music Festival, the Atlantic Music Festival.

A 2023 recipient of the Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award, Koo has collaborated with leading conductors and artists across the orchestral world such as Donald Runnicles, Thomas Søndergård, Fabien Gabel, and Marin Alsop, as well as soloists Hilary Hahn, Emanuel Ax, and the Royal Concertgebouw's Jörgen van Rijen. In 2022, he was selected from over 300 international candidates to participate in the Riccardo Muti Italian Opera Academy in Ravenna, culminating in a performance of Verdi's Messa da Requiem. Following the Academy, Koo's mentorship with Muti continued through the conclusion of his tenure as Music Director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

BIOS

Originally from the Bay Area, California, Nicholas studied Molecular Cell Biology and Music at UC Berkeley before earning master's and doctoral degrees in orchestral conducting at Northwestern University.

NIURKA MOREDO

Stager

Born in Puerto Rico, Niurka Moredo began her ballet training in San Juan with Nana Hudo. She continued her dance education at the School of Southern Ballet Theater in Orlando, Florida and later joined that company. In 1990 she became a member of the Royal Danish Ballet, dancing solo roles in the Bournonville repertoire as well as in the ballets of George Balanchine and John Neumeier among others. In 1995 Ms. Moredo joined the Hamburg Ballet and was promoted soloist in 2000. She danced numerous solo roles in important Neumeier ballets such as *Nijinsky, The Odyssey, The Lady of the Camellias, As You Like It, Le Sacre, Vaslav, Saint Matthew Passion,* and the Third and Fifth Symphony of Gustav Mahler. With John Neumeier she created the roles of Polina Andreyevna in *The Seagull,* Heather in *Preludes CV,* and leading roles in his *Messiah* and *Winterreise*. In the course of her career, she also danced the works of John Cranko and Jiří Kylián and worked with choreographers such as Stephan Thoss, Kevin Haigen, Gustavo Sansano, and Petr Zuska. Ms. Moredo danced Aurora and created the role of Ruby Fairy in Mats Ek's *Sleeping Beauty.* She was featured in Donya Feuer's dance film *The Working of Utopia,* and in the year 2000 Ms. Moredo was awarded the Dr. Wilhelm Oberdörffer Prize. Having retired as a dancer in 2007, Niurka became a Rehearsal Director of the Hamburg Ballet working on nearly the entire repertoire in the choreographer's catalogue. Apart from her work with the company in Hamburg, she has staged many of Neumeier's ballets throughout the world for the San Francisco Ballet, the Stanislavsky Ballet Moscow, the Bavarian State Ballet, the National Ballet of China, the Polish National Ballet, the Joffrey Ballet, the Royal Danish Ballet, the Houston Ballet, the Vienna State Ballet, the Finnish National Ballet, and the Korean National Ballet.

MARIJN RADEMAKER

Stager

Marijn hails from Nijmegen, The Netherlands. Born in 1981, he trained in Amsterdam, Arnhem and The Hague and joined the Stuttgart Ballet as a group dancer in 2000. He was promoted to Demi-Soloist in 2004, and, skipping the Solits rank, to Principal Dancer in 2006. In Stuttgart, he danced numerous leading roles in works by John Cranko, including Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet,* Onegin and Lenski in *Eugene Onegin,* and Petruchio and Lucentio in *The Taming of the Shrew.* Numerous leading choreographers created roles for him, such as Mauro Bigonzetti (*Rocco in I fratelli)*, Edward Clug (*Ssss...*) and Christian Spuck (*Leonce in Leonce and Lena, Cardillac in Das Fräulein von S.*), For his performance in Marco Goecke's solo *Äffi*, Marijn Rademaker received the German Theatre Prize 'Der Faust' in 2016 in the category 'Best Male Dancer'. From 2015 to 2018, he was Principal Dancer with the Dutch National Ballet and subsequently worked there as a ballet master. As a choreographer, he has worked for the Bundesjugendballett and the NRW Juniorballett, amongst others. Together with Sue Jin Kang, he staged John Neumeier's ballet *The Lady of the Camellias* on the Korean National Ballet in 2025.

BIOS

KONSTANTIN TSELIKOV

Stager

Konstantin Tselikov received his dance education at the Dnipro Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, the State Conservatory of Prague, and the School of the Hamburg Ballet under John Neumeier. He joined the Hamburg Ballet as a member of the corps de ballet in 2004, became a soloist in 2011, and performed in this capacity until 2020. Since 2020, he has served as a teacher and ballet master at both the Hamburg Ballet and its School, sharing his extensive knowledge with the next generation of dancers. As a performer, Tselikov contributed to numerous world premieres and created roles in many of John Neumeier's ballets. His repertoire also includes leading roles in works by Frederick Ashton, Rudolf Nureyev, August Bournonville, and Jerome Robbins. He has choreographed pieces for young choreographers' showcases, solos for Hamburg Ballet dancers, and folklore pieces for the School of the Hamburg Ballet, presented in Nijinsky Gala performances and school productions. Additionally, he performed at the Tanya Pearson 80 Years Anniversary Gala, directed by Paul Boyd, and worked as ballet master in the creation of Edvin Revazov's *Shakespeare Sonnets,* which premiered at the Hamburg State Opera.

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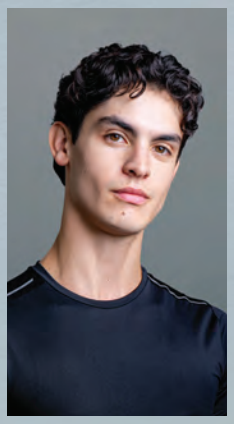

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Liliom, Photo by Sergei Gherciu, courtesy of Czech National Ballet.

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Joffrey Company Artist Jonathan Dole. Photo by Carolyn McCabe.

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Members of Joffrey's Star Society receive exciting benefits each Season including:

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

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JOFFREY ✶ BALLET
CHICAGO

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JOFFREY ✶ BALLET
CHICAGO

SUPPORTING OUR FUTURE

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By making a planned gift to The Joffrey Ballet, you create a legacy that extends far beyond your lifetime.
Through the Joffrey's Bequest Fund, estate gifts are invested alongside the organization's long-term portfolio, generating annual revenue that supports every aspect of the Joffrey's work. This enduring source of funding helps ensure that the Joffrey's artistic excellence, educational programs, and community engagement initiatives continue to thrive for generations to come.

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The Joffrey is incredibly grateful for the following legacy gifts received within the past three years. These individuals are remembered for their remarkable generosity and commitment to the Joffrey's mission.

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