

# JACOB'S PILLOW

PRESENTS

## **BALLET BC**

**Ted Shawn Theatre  
June 19-23, 2019**

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR	Emily Molnar
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	John Clark
DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION AND OPERATIONS	Derek Mack
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER	Kimberly Plough
HEAD OF WARDROBE	Kate Burrows
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR	Elliot Banner
RESIDENT LIGHTING DESIGNER/DIRECTOR	James Proudfoot
PRODUCTION ELECTRICIAN	Patrick Smith
THE COMPANY	Brandon Alley Emily Chessa Parker Finley Alexis Fletcher Scott Fowler* Kiera Hill Patrick Kilbane Racheal Prince Justin Rapaport* Gilbert Small Peter Smida Nicole Ward Kirsten Wicklund
EMERGING ARTISTS	Anna Bekirova Miriam Gittens Dex van ter Meij Sophie Whittome Zenon Zubyk

\*Alumni of The School at Jacob's Pillow

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## PROGRAM

### *Bedroom Folk*

CHOREOGRAPHY Sharon Eyal

CO-CREATOR Gai Behar

ASSISTANT TO THE  
CHOREOGRAPHER Tom Weinberger

SOUND ARTIST  
AND MUSIC Ori Lichtik

LIGHTING DESIGNER Thierry Dreyfus

LIGHTING DIRECTOR Alan Cohen

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR Baruch Shpigelman

COSTUME DESIGN Rebecca Hytting

PERFORMERS  
Brandon Alley  
Anna Bekirova\*\*  
Emily Chessa  
Parker Finley  
Scott Fowler  
Miriam Gittens\*\*  
Patrick Kilbane  
Justin Rapaport  
Peter Smida  
Dex van ter Meij\*\*  
Nicole Ward  
Sophie Whittome\*\*  
Kirsten Wicklund  
Zenon Zubyk\*\*

\*\*Ballet BC Emerging Artist

*North American Premiere, May 2019, Ballet BC  
World Premiere, April 2015, Nederlands Dans Theater*

*Ballet BC's realization of Bedroom Folk is generously supported by the  
Charlotte and Sonya Wall Arts Fund.*

## **- INTERMISSION -**

**Jacob's Pillow is committed to providing an environment that cultivates the celebration of  
the art of dance and its positive impact on community.**

While in our theaters, please refrain from behavior that could disturb other patrons and performers during the performance. We ask that you: silence your cell phone; do not photograph or video record performances; keep your ticket with you at all times; observe that, other than water, food and beverages are not allowed in the theaters; and please let a staff member know if you need help.

Thank you for observing these House Rules so that everyone can have an enjoyable experience.

We are so glad you are here. Enjoy the show!

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## ***To this day***

- CHOREOGRAPHY Emily Molnar in collaboration with the artists of Ballet BC
- MUSIC "Once I Had A Woman" and "Voodoo Chile Blues"  
Words and Music by Jimi Hendrix  
Published by Experience Hendrix, L.L.C. (ASCAP)  
Master Recording Courtesy of Experience Hendrix, L.L.C. under exclusive license by Sony Music Entertainment  
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DO NOT DUPLICATE.
- "Born Under A Bad Sign"  
Words and Music by Booker T. Jones and William Bell  
Performed by Jimi Hendrix  
© UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING CANADA ON BEHALF OF IRVING MUSIC, INC./ 75% Cotillion Music Inc. (BMI)  
Master Recording Courtesy of Experience Hendrix, L.L.C. under exclusive license by Sony Music Entertainment  
Not for broadcast transmission. All rights reserved.  
DO NOT DUPLICATE.
- LIGHTING DESIGN James Proudfoot
- COSTUME DESIGN Kate Burrows
- ASSISTANT TO THE CHOREOGRAPHER Alexis Fletcher
- PERFORMERS Brandon Alley  
Anna Bekirova\*\*  
Emily Chessa  
Parker Finley  
Scott Fowler  
Miriam Gittens\*\*  
Kiera Hill  
Patrick Kilbane  
Racheal Prince  
Justin Rapaport  
Peter Smida  
Dex van ter Meij\*\*  
Nicole Ward  
Sophie Whittome\*\*  
Zenon Zubyk\*\*

\*\*Ballet BC Emerging Artist

*World Premiere, November 2018, Ballet BC*

**- INTERMISSION -**

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## *Petite Cérémonie*

### CHOREOGRAPHY & SCENIC DESIGN

Medhi Walerski

### MUSIC

Musical selections by Mozart, Bellini, Rodgers & Hart, and Vivaldi, compiled by Medhi Walerski

"Blue Moon"

Composed by Lorenz Hart and Richard Rodgers

Performed by Benny Goodman & His Orchestra with Helen Ward

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Courtesy of Columbia Records

By arrangement with Sony Music Entertainment

"The Serenade N 10 in B Flat Major" (Gran Partita)

Composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Performed by Jean Jacques & Tapiola Sinfonietta

Used by permission of BIS Records, Sweden

"Winter"

Composed by Antonio Vivaldi

Performed by Bournemouth Sinfonietta

Used by permission of Chandos Records Ltd, CHAN 6697

### LIGHTING DESIGN

Bonnie Beecher

### COSTUME DESIGN

Linda Chow

### STAGING

Sylvain Senez

### PERFORMERS

Brandon Alley

Anna Bekirova\*\* (6/20, 6/22 matinee)

Emily Chessa

Parker Finley (6/19, 6/21, 6/22 evening, 6/23)

Alexis Fletcher

Scott Fowler

Miriam Gittens\*\*

Kiera Hill

Patrick Kilbane

Racheal Prince

Justin Rapaport

Gilbert Small

Peter Smida

Dex van ter Meij\*\* (6/19, 6/21, 6/22 evening, 6/23)

Nicole Ward

Sophie Whittome\*\* (6/20, 6/22 matinee)

Kirsten Wicklund (6/19, 6/21, 6/22 evening, 6/23)

Zenon Zubyk\*\* (6/20, 6/22 matinee)

\*\*Ballet BC Emerging Artist

*World Premiere, February 2011, Ballet BC*

A group of people searching for the right space, the perfect balance. Men and Women.

Different brains. Boxes and wires trying to connect, to create a congruent image.

As a starting point I asked the dancers to tell me what "life in a box" meant to them. This is what came out.

I would like to thank the dancers for their work, creativity and positivity, as well as Sylvain Senez and Emily Molnar for their support.

-Medhi Walerski

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## COMPANY

### ABOUT BALLET BC

Founded in 1986, Ballet BC has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Emily Molnar since 2009. Ballet BC is an internationally acclaimed collaborative and creation-based contemporary ballet company that is a leader and resource in the creation, production, and education of contemporary dance in Canada. Bold and innovative, the Company's distinctive style and approach has made a unique and valuable national contribution to the development of dance. Ballet BC's dancers are a group of open-minded and curious artists, each unique for their dynamic movement while sharing an intuitive passion for dance. Ballet BC is committed to its role as a leader in the community through dancer training opportunities, community and audience outreach, and professional development activities. The Company presents a diverse repertoire of Canadian and international work from the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and is a hotbed for the creation and performance of new works. Since 2009, the Company has developed a repertoire of more than 45 new works by acclaimed Canadian and international choreographers including William Forsythe, Cayetano Soto, Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar, Medhi Walerski, Ohad Naharin, Crystal Pite, Johan Inger, Emanuel Gat, Gustavo Ramirez Sansano, Jacopo Godani, Company 605, Jorma Elo, Wen Wei Wang, Itzik Galili, Serge Bennathan, Walter Matteini, José Navas, Emily Molnar, Lesley Telford, Nicolo Fonte, Fernando Hernandez Magadan, Kevin O'Day, Shawn Hounsell, Gioconda Barbuto, Simone Orlando, Robert Glumbek, and Aszure Barton, among others. Under the artistic direction of Emily Molnar, former member of The National Ballet of Canada, Ballet BC, and the Ballett Frankfurt, the Company actively fosters collaborations that support artists, choreographers, and audiences alike, furthering the boundaries of contemporary dance. The Company embraces excellence in the practice of

contemporary ballet with its wide diversity of technique and style, honouring its roots and components.

**EMILY MOLNAR, C.M.** (Artistic Director) has steered the unique company of 18 dancers into a celebrated era of innovation and collaboration. Since the start of her tenure in 2009, the Company has developed a diverse repertoire that includes more than 45 new works by celebrated Canadian and international choreographers. Molnar is a graduate of the National Ballet School and a former member of the National Ballet of Canada, a soloist with the Ballett Frankfurt under director William Forsythe, and a principal dancer with Ballet BC. An internationally respected and critically acclaimed dance artist and choreographer, Molnar worked and toured extensively throughout Europe, Asia, Mexico, Canada, and the U.S., where she created works for Alberta Ballet, Ballet Mannheim, Ballet Augsburg, Cedar Lake Dance, ProArteDanza, Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company, and New York City Ballet's Choreographic Institute, among others. Molnar's most recent works for Ballet BC are *between disappearing and becoming*, *Aniel*, *16 + a room*, *RITE*, *Keep Dreaming*, *I'm Driving*, *when you left*, and most recently, *To this day*, which premiered in November 2018. Named *The Globe and Mail's* 2013 Dance Artist of the Year, Molnar is the 2016 recipient of the Vancouver Mayor's Arts Award, BC Community Achievement Award, and the YWCA Women of Distinction Award in Art, Culture & Design. She was recently appointed to the Order of Canada for her artistic leadership of Ballet BC and creative contribution to advancing dance in Canada. As an active mentor, advocate, and coach, Molnar follows her passion to nurture artists and choreographers, to educate and support the research and development of dance and artistic leadership, and explore the role of the artist in society. For six years she served as a Director on the Board of the BC

Arts Council. In addition to her work with Ballet BC, Molnar is also Director of Dance at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, a new position designed to guide and inform all Banff Centre Dance initiatives throughout the year in collaboration with the Canadian and international dance community.

**JOHN CLARK** (Executive Director) has built a career in non-profit administration, focused on fund-raising, for 20 years. Most recently he was the Vice President of Development at the National YoungArts Foundation in Miami, FL. His career has spanned both the performing arts and higher education, building development teams raising upwards of \$20 million annually. Before joining YoungArts, he spent nine years at Georgia State University (GSU) in Atlanta, where he was promoted from Senior Director of Development for the College of Arts & Sciences to Associate Vice President of Development, where he oversaw the Annual Fund, Corporate & Foundation Relations, Planned Giving, and Central Major Gifts offices. Prior to GSU, Clark was Director of Development for the Atlanta Ballet where he started the "Sponsor a Dancer Program," oversaw the 75th Anniversary Gala, and established an endowment challenge to the Atlanta community. Clark has also raised funds for The Atlanta Opera, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Atlanta, and the North Carolina Dance Theater. A classically trained pianist as a teenager, Clark's passion for the arts is also evident by his volunteer commitments and impact in the communities where he's resided. Those volunteer engagements have included serving as board chair of Synchronicity Performance Group, a tutor through the Literacy Volunteers of Atlanta, and as a big brother at BBBS of Metro Atlanta. Clark holds his Masters in English Literature from Georgia State University, and is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate from the University of Rochester.

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## COMPANY

**SHARON EYAL** (Choreographer) was born in Jerusalem. She danced with the Batsheva Dance Company from 1990 until 2008 and began choreographing within the framework of the company's Batsheva Dancers Create project. Eyal served as Associate Artistic Director of Batsheva between 2003-2004 and House Choreographer of the company between 2005-2012. In 2009, Eyal began creating pieces for other international dance companies: *Killer Pig* (2009) and *Corps de Walk* (2011) for Carte Blanche Dance of Norway; *Too Beaucoup* (2011) for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago; and *Plafona* (2012) for Tanzcompagnie Oldenburg, Germany. In 2013, Eyal launched L-E-V with her long-time collaborator Gai Behar. In the past four years since L-E-V was founded, the company had more than 150 performances, some in the most exclusive venues around the world such as: The Joyce Theatre – NYC; Jacob's Pillow – Becket, Massachusetts; Sadler's Wells – London, UK; The Montpellier Danse Festival – France; and Julidans – Amsterdam. Alongside their work with L-E-V, Eyal and Behar have also been commissioned to create for external companies: the Nederlands Dans Theater's *Sara* (2013); *Bedroom Folk* (2015); *Salt Womb* (2016); *Half-Life* for the Royal Swedish Ballet, and more. Eyal is the recipient of numerous awards, including the 2004 Ministry of Culture Award for young dance creators and the 2009 Landau Prize for the Performing Arts in the dance category. In 2008, she was named a Chosen Artist of the Israel Cultural Excellence Foundation. Most recently, Eyal was awarded the prestigious Fedora Prize (2017), and was the recipient of the 12th Belgrade Dance Festival's Jovan Ćirilov Award (2017). Eyal is currently an Associate of Sadler's Wells.

**GAI BEHAR** (Choreographer) was a wide influence of Tel Aviv's live music, art, and nightlife scenes from 1999 to 2005. He produced live music, underground artistic events, and techno raves. Between

1999-2005, Behar also curated and produced the event *Man Without a Shirt* in Tel Aviv. The event was co-curated by Uri Katzenstein, among others, and included works by Ohad Naharin and Sharon Eyal. Behar produced the second round of Ohad Naharin's *Playback*. In October 2012, Eyal and Behar premiered *Untitled Black* in collaboration with the GöteborgsOperans Danskompani in Gothenburg, Sweden. In May 2013, they created the ethereal piece *Sara* for NDT 2 and launched their dance company L-E-V. In the past four years, the company had more than 150 performances in some of the most exclusive venues around the world, such as: The Joyce Theatre – NYC; Jacob's Pillow – Becket, Massachusetts; Sadler's Wells – London, UK; The Montpellier Danse Festival – France; and Julidans – Amsterdam. Alongside their work with L-E-V, Eyal and Behar have also been commissioned to create for external companies: the NDT's *Sara* (2013); *Bedroom Folk* (2015); *Salt Womb* (2016); *Half-Life* for the Royal Swedish Ballet, and more.

**MEDHI WALERSKI** (Choreographer) danced at the Paris Opera Ballet before joining the Nederlands Dans Theater in 2001. For more than a decade at NDT, Walerski was an integral part of the company, contributing to the creative, innovative style that brought NDT to world-renown. He participated in the creation of numerous new works and danced in the company's existing repertoire. He was awarded the Dutch dance prize, VSCD Zwaan, in 2013 for his role in *School of Thought* (Léon & Lightfoot). Walerski has worked closely alongside the creative forces of internationally established choreographers and performed works by Jiří Kylián, William Forsythe, George Balanchine, Paul Lightfoot and Sol Leon, Hans Van Manen, Crystal Pite, Emio Greco, Angelin Preljocaj, Jacopo Godani, Maurice Béjart, Johan Inger, and in prestigious theatres around the world. It was with *Mammatus*, a work created for

NDT 2 in 2008, that Walerski made his official debut as a choreographer. *Mammatus* was part of NDT 2's touring repertoire and was performed in Germany and the UK. That same year he created *Underneath* for NDT 1. During his sabbatical year in 2009, Walerski delved full-time into choreography, creating for the Bern Ballet and Göteborg Ballet. Upon returning to NDT, his profile as a dancer stayed vital to the image of the company. He continued to create for NDT as well as other companies such as Ballet BC. He created the highly successful *Petite Cérémonie*, which was toured throughout Canada and the U.S. and has remained a highlight of Ballet BC's repertoire. In 2011, NDT remounted *Underneath* and Walerski created *Blink of an Eye*. A year later, for the centenary of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Walerski created *Chamber*, a co-production commissioned by NDT, Carolina Performing Arts at the University of North Carolina, Den Norske Opera & Ballet, and the Los Angeles Music Center. *Chamber* was broadcast to over 600 movie theaters worldwide and has toured to China and the U.S. to critical acclaim. Since then, Walerski has returned to Ballet BC, whom he has developed a close relationship with. In 2014, he created *Prelude*, and a year later, his first full-length work *NATUS*, in celebration of Ballet BC's 30th anniversary. That same year he created *Aureum* for NDT 2, followed by *Garden* in 2016 for NDT 1. *Garden* was made into a documentary and broadcast on Mezzo TV. His latest creation for NDT 1, *SOON*, premiered in September 2017 and was part of the Nederlandse Dansdagen Gala. Walerski also created his first full-length narrative work, *Romeo + Juliet*, which premiered with Ballet BC in February 2018.

**BRANDON ALLEY** (Dancer) is a North Carolina native. Alley began his dance training at the Eastern Randolph High School when he was 14 under the direction of Britt Allen. He later attended the Greensboro Ballet's year-long program on a full



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## COMPANY

scholarship and graduated from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts specializing in contemporary dance in 2012. Alley has had the pleasure of attending many summer intensives including Ballet Austin, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and LINES Ballet. He has also worked with choreographers such as Crystal Pite, Sharon Eyal, Victor Quijada, Cayetano Soto, and Stijn Celis, among many others. Alley began his professional career with Hubbard Street 2 and has been a member of BODYTRAFFIC. This year will be his fourth season with Ballet BC. Alley would also like to thank his wonderful teacher, Britt Allen, for supporting him every step of the way and his family and friends for their guidance and love.

**EMILY CHESSA** (Dancer) is originally from Richmond, BC, and began her professional dance training at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School at age 15, where she received the Arnold Spohr Scholarship and the Paddy Stone Scholarship for choreography. After graduating in 2010, she trained at Arts Umbrella in the graduate program under the guidance of Artemis Gordon. She participated in summer programs such as the Movement Invention Project in New York and Springboard Danse Montreal. Since joining Ballet BC in 2012 as an apprentice, she has performed in works by Emily Molnar, Cayetano Soto, Johan Inger, Crystal Pite, and Sharon Eyal. This is her seventh season with the company.

**PARKER FINLEY** (Dancer) was born in Louisiana in 1997. In 2014, she began her professional training at the Houston Ballet Academy under the instruction of Sabrina Lenzi and Sally Rojas, where she performed works by Stanton Welch, John Neumeier, Kenneth MacMillan, and Ben Stevenson. After graduating in 2016, she was an apprentice for Hubbard Street 2 during their 2016-17 season. As their apprentice, she had the opportunity to learn works from Alice Klock, Terrence Marling, Alejandro Cerrudo, Peter Chu, and Bryan

Arias. She has participated in summer programs such as the Houston Ballet Summer Intensive and Springboard Danse Montreal. Finley is thrilled to be joining Ballet BC as a full-time company member this season.

**ALEXIS FLETCHER** (Dancer) was raised on Vancouver Island where she received her early training before attending Arts Umbrella's Graduate Program. Fletcher was a member of Arts Umbrella's Student Company and attended Springboard Danse Montreal. After graduating in 2005, she joined Ballet BC, where she has been fortunate to work with creative visionaries such as Crystal Pite, Emily Molnar, John Alleyne, Johan Inger, Stijn Celis, Jacopo Godani, Walter Matteini, Fernando Hernando Magadan, Serge Bennathan, Gioconda Barbuto, and Jorma Elo, among many others. Independently, she has worked collaboratively with creators such as Sidra Bell, James Gnam, Simone Orlando, Rob Kitsos, and Wen Wei Wang. As well as beginning to choreograph, she has co-created a multidisciplinary performance space with her husband at their home in Vancouver. They also run a successful bed and breakfast business together. Alexis is fascinated by how exploring the movement potential of the human body becomes a way of accessing the inner landscapes of our spirits and psyches, and this is the primary motivation behind her own physical practice and choreographic interests. She believes that dance is a unique vehicle with which to share, research, and discuss our collective humanity. Fletcher is in her 14th season with Ballet BC.

**SCOTT FOWLER** (Dancer) was born in Vancouver and trained at Arts Umbrella under the direction of Artemis Gordon and attended summer intensive programs at American Ballet Theatre, the National Ballet School, and The School at Jacob's Pillow. He performed in Alberta Ballet's *The Nutcracker*, Ballet BC's *Peter Pan*, and in the

Opening Ceremony for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver. Fowler received a scholarship grant from the BC Arts Council in 2010. In 2011, he toured the Netherlands, performing at Codarts and worked with Noord Nederlandse Dans. He was invited in 2013 by James Kudelka to perform *See#3* as a guest artist for Coleman Lemieux & Compagnie. He has been privileged to work with choreographers Aszure Barton, Gioconda Barbuto, James Kudelka, Emily Molnar, Jacopo Godani, Wen Wei Wang, Medhi Walerski, Cayetano Soto, and Lesley Telford. This is his seventh season with the company.

**KIERA HILL** (Dancer) is from Vancouver and completed her professional training at Arts Umbrella under the direction of Artemis Gordon. She was a proud recipient of the BC Arts Council Scholarship Award for excellence in dance in 2011. After graduating in 2012, she apprenticed with Ballet BC for one season. In 2013, she joined Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal where she performed leading roles in pieces by Andonis Foniadakis, Itzik Galili, Rodrigo Pederneiras, Cayetano Soto, Barak Marshall, and Wen Wei Wang. For four years she toured extensively with BJM, performing in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Slovenia, China, Israel, Mexico, USA, and across Canada. Hill returned to Ballet BC in 2017 and is thrilled to be back for another season.

**PATRICK KILBANE** (Dancer) is from Bainbridge Island, Washington. He discovered dance at the age of 14 and studied on full scholarship at San Francisco Ballet School. He continued his training at the School of American Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and with Suzanne Farrell at The Kennedy Center. Kilbane worked with Oregon Ballet Theater where he danced ballets by George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins. He spent five seasons with Sarah Slipper's NW Dance Project in Portland, Oregon, as a performer, teacher, and choreographer. There he

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## COMPANY

danced original roles in new works by Ihsan Rustem, Wen Wei Wang, Danielle Agami, Maurice Causey, Noam Gagnon, Lucas Crandall, Didy Veldman, Olivier Wevers, Patrick Delcroix, and many others. Before moving to Vancouver, he danced with Whim W'Him and worked as a freelance artist in Seattle and internationally. During his time with Ballet BC, he has had the privilege of performing works by Emily Molnar, Medhi Walerski, Cayetano Soto, Sharon Eyal, William Forsythe, and Crystal Pite. This is Kilbane's second season with the company.

**RACHEAL PRINCE** (Dancer) was raised in Wasaga Beach, Ontario, and received her early training at the Quinte Ballet School under the direction of Brian Scott. She attended the School of Alberta Ballet's Pre Professional Program with Murray and Nancy Kilgour and received the prestigious Ali Pourfarrokhi Scholarship. Prince began her professional career with the Alberta Ballet Company where she danced for four years. She has performed works by William Forsythe, Crystal Pite, Itzik Galili, and Lar Lubovitch, among many others. Her performance highlights include Jorma Elo's *1st Flash*, Emily Molnar's *between disappearing and becoming*, and William Forsythe's *Herman Scherman*. In her spare time, Prince enjoys working on handmade items for her online store as well as teaching and choreographing. She is excited to be in her 12th season with Ballet BC.

**JUSTIN RAPAPORT** (Dancer) is from Miami, Florida, where he began dancing at the age of eight. He went on to formally train at New World School of the Arts and The Juilliard School. During his training, Rapaport had the opportunity to learn works by Jiří Kylián, Twyla Tharp, Kyle Abraham, Brian Brooks, and many more amazing artists. He has also studied at various summer intensives such as NDT, Springboard Danse Montreal, and The School at Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Program. While at Ballet BC, he has

had the privilege to work with choreographers such as Crystal Pite, Ohad Naharin, Sharon Eyal, Johan Inger, Medhi Walerski, and Cayetano Soto. This is his third season with Ballet BC.

**GILBERT SMALL** (Dancer) is from Baltimore, Maryland. Small started his professional ballet training at the age of 10 at the Baltimore School for the Arts. He has studied at various summer programs, including Dance Theatre of Harlem, Nutmeg Conservatory, Miami City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and Springboard Danse Montreal. After graduating from the Baltimore School for the Arts, he continued his studies at the Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College. While at Purchase, Small was given the opportunity to study abroad at the Hogeschool voor Muziek en Dans in Rotterdam, Netherlands. He has also performed with Toronto-based ProArteDanza. Prior to joining Ballet BC, Small performed for Sidra Bell Dance New York. This is his 11th season with Ballet BC.

**PETER SMIDA** (Dancer) was born and raised in Kingston, Ontario. A former tennis player, Smida studied on scholarship at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School and graduated in 2007. He also attended summer programs and festivals in Banff and Prague. After working with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and Ballet Victoria, Smida joined Ballet BC in 2008 and has since had the pleasure of performing works by Emily Molnar, Jorma Elo, Crystal Pite, Johan Inger, and Medhi Walerski, as well as many others. In addition to his work at Ballet BC, Smida has also worked on independent projects with Donald Sales and has begun choreographing and showing his work at Dances for a Small Stage and the Shadbolt Centre for the Performing Arts. This is his 11th season with Ballet BC.

**NICOLE WARD** (Dancer) was born in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, but was raised in Vancouver. She began her professional training at

Arts Umbrella, under the direction of Artemis Gordon and Lynn Sheppard. During her time there, she had the opportunity of working with Lesley Telford, James Kudelka, Crystal Pite, Stephen Shropshire, Francesca Carotti, Fernando Hernando Magadan, and Azure Barton, among others. After completing the Graduate Program in 2015, Ward was offered an apprenticeship with Ballet BC and joined as a full-time member after one season. She is elated to be entering her fourth season with Ballet BC.

**KIRSTEN WICKLUND** (Dancer) was born in Vancouver and studied at Goh Ballet Academy and toured with Canada's Youth Ballet Company. Wicklund received scholarships at American Ballet Theatre, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Boston Ballet, PNB, and Washington Ballet, as well as a Vancouver Foundation Arts Study Award and the Vancouver Ballet Society's Memorial Scholarship. Wicklund received contemporary training through Tiffany Tregarthen & David Raymond of M.O. In 2007, she won an artistry award at the Youth America Grand Prix Finals in NYC and earned the only Canadian placement in the Top 12 Women. She has danced with The Washington Ballet, Alonzo King's choreographic workshop, LUNGE Dance Collective, and toured extensively with Rasta Thomas' Rock the Ballet. She has created works for Dances for a Small Stage, the Dance Deck Series, and Arts Umbrella. Wicklund has been privileged to dance works by Lesley Telford, Medhi Walerski, William Forsythe, Johan Inger, Jacopo Godani, Gustavo Ramirez Sansano, Walter Matteini, Wen Wei Wang, Company 605, Cayetano Soto, Emily Molnar, Crystal Pite, Sharon Eyal, Ohad Naharin, and others. This is her fifth season with Ballet BC.

**ANNA BEKIROVA** (Emerging Artist) was born in Amsterdam and started dancing at the Dutch National Ballet Academy at age 10, where she graduated in 2016. After her graduation she moved to Vancouver to study at



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## COMPANY

Arts Umbrella under the guidance of Artemis Gordon. Here she had the opportunity to work with world-renowned artists such as Crystal Pite, Wen Wei Wang, Lesley Telford, Tom Weinberger, and Cayetano Soto. She is excited and grateful to be one of Ballet BC's emerging artists for the 2018-19 season.

**MIRIAM GITTENS** (Emerging Artist) was born and raised in Fresno, California. She grew up training at The Dance Studio of Fresno where she received a diverse dance education. In May 2017, Gittens graduated from The Juilliard School with a B.F.A in dance. During her time at Juilliard, she performed in works by Merce Cunningham, Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, Richard Alston, Mathew Neenan, Zvi Gotheiner, Loni Landon, and Takehiro Ueyama. She furthered her training during summer intensives at chuthis., Bodytraffic, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Springboard Danse Montreal, and Nederlands Dans Theater. Gittens has been involved in many outreach programs and fellowships, which have allowed her to share her love for dance with audiences and students across New York City and California. She has most recently performed with chuthis. under the direction of Peter Chu. Gittens is thrilled to be joining as an emerging artist with Ballet BC for this upcoming season.

**DEX VAN TER MEIJ** (Emerging Artist) is originally from Amsterdam and started his professional dance training at the age of 10 with the Dutch National Ballet Academy for eight years. Continuing his training in 2016 at Arts Umbrella under the directorship of Artemis Gordon, he had the opportunity to work with several brilliant artists such as Crystal Pite, Lesley Telford, Emanuel Gat, Doug Letheren, Eric Beauchesne, Rafael Sady, Lukas Timulak, Tom Weinberger, Wen Wei Wang, and Cayetano Soto. Van ter Meij joined Ballet BC's Program 2 for *Romeo + Juliet* by Medhi Walerski and feels very excited

to join as an Emerging Artist for the 2018-19 season.

**SOPHIE WHITTOME** (Emerging Artist) was born in Edmonton, Alberta. Whittome attended Victoria School of the Arts for 12 years. In 2015, she began her professional training at Arts Umbrella in Vancouver under the direction of Artemis Gordon. During her time there she had the privilege to perform works by choreographers such as Sharon Eyal, Crystal Pite, and Mats Ek and was able to work with artists such as Lesley Telford, Tom Weinberger, and Wen Wei Wang. Whittome performed in Nederlands Dans Theater/Korzo's *Shortcuts XL* with Arts Umbrella Dance Company in 2017 and performed with Ballet BC in Medhi Walerski's *Romeo + Juliet* in 2018. She is hugely grateful for the opportunity to join Ballet BC this year as an apprentice.

**ZENON ZUBYK** (Emerging Artist) is from Toronto, Ontario, where he began his dance training at the age of 11. In 2016, he joined the Arts Umbrella Graduate Program under the direction of Artemis Gordon. During his time there, Zubyk had the opportunity of performing works by Crystal Pite, Sharon Eyal, Mats Ek, Aszure Barton, Lesley Telford, Fernando Hernando Magadan, James Kudelka, Emanuel Gat, and more. In 2017, Zubyk performed in the ITS Festival and Nederlands Dans Theater's *Shortcuts XL'17*. He also performed in Medhi Walerski's *Romeo + Juliet* in Ballet BC's Program 2. Zubyk is thrilled to work with Ballet BC as an Emerging Artist this season.

*Ballet BC extends sincere thanks to the Y.P. Heung Foundation, RBC Emerging Artists Project through RBC Foundation, as well as Connor, Clark & Lunn Financial Group for their commitment to Ballet BC's Emerging Artist Programs.*

## ARTIST REPRESENTATIVE AND BOOKING INFORMATION:

Margaret Selby  
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Thank you!

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## PILLOWNOTES

by Maura Keefe

*The PillowNotes series comprises essays commissioned from our Scholars-in-Residence to provide audiences with a broader context for viewing dance.*

“Just because it’s called contemporary ballet, that doesn’t mean it won’t call on things that haven’t existed already. Going forward doesn’t mean you erase the past.” - *Emily Molnar*

George Balanchine loved ballerinas. He loved them as a group and he loved them individually. His fascination with the dancing female body inspired some of the greatest roles for women on the concert dance stage of the twentieth century. When venerating ballerinas in words, Balanchine compared them with other icons. He declared, “Ballet is woman. In sports, it’s Mickey Mantle. In politics, it’s Eisenhower. In ballet, it’s woman. Women are lighter, more flexible. They move more beautifully. He is not the King, but she’s the Queen.” Put back into the context of Eisenhower and Mantle: is the ballerina still the queen? It turns out she may still reign.

Since its inception, Ballet BC has been confirming Balanchine’s equation of ballet and women not just on stage but at the helm as well. Founded in 1986 by Jean Orr, David Y. H. Lui, and Shelia Baggs, Ballet BC became Vancouver’s signature ballet company, coming after Ballet Horizons and Pacific Ballet Theatre. Founding artistic director Annette av Paul had trained with the Royal Swedish Ballet and performed with Les Grands Ballet Canadiens before leading Ballet BC. Her experience and connections with both the Canadian and international ballet world served the emerging company well. Subsequent artistic directors included John Alleyne, whose own choreography and imaginative commissions helped to bring a contemporary feel to the company. It was during Alleyne’s tenure as artistic director that the company first appeared at Jacob’s Pillow, in 1993 and 1995. (Then dancing with the company was future Jacob’s Pillow Award winner Crystal Pite, whose company Kidd Pivot has been seen at the Pillow.)

Ten years ago, in 2009, Emily Molnar stepped into the role of artistic director and re-imagined what a ballet company might look like in the 21st century. She had already made the transition from ballerina to choreographer, a rare success story in the ballet world. That said, it was not an easy time to take on a leadership role of an arts organization. Financial difficulties had resulted in layoffs of both artistic and administrative staff. It seemed that Ballet BC might not survive. Molnar, however, had other ideas. As a dancer and choreographer, Molnar’s connections to the ballet world were both internationally impressive and regionally celebrated. After ten years under her leadership Ballet BC has a fabulous roster of dancers, an increasingly impressive reputation internationally, and has added a stunning 45 new works to its repertory. In her role as artistic director, Molnar is one of a handful of women to lead a major ballet company. (It seems counterintuitive that there would be such a small number of women in leadership roles in the U.S. ballet world, as girls outnumber boys by an enormous proportion in the serious study of dance.)

For Molnar, ballet in the 21st century doesn’t look the way it did in the 20th century—even under Balanchine’s watch. Right from the beginning of her tenure, Molnar had a clear vision for the company under her leadership. She promised Vancouver, and subsequently the rest of Ballet BC’s audience, “contemporary ballet rooted in classicism, and pushed to the boundaries.” In the Canadian paper *The Star*, Molnar stated a goal to make the dancers “full collaborators in the creative process, to feel a sense of responsibility for the quality of the work onstage.” This is a very different model from ballet companies of yore in which dancers, especially women, were trained to be obedient and to conform to a singular identity, rather than to develop creativity and individuality.

In making choices as artistic director, Molnar has taken risks, seeking works from a diverse roster of choreographers to demonstrate the dancers’ versatility. For the company’s return to the Berkshires, Pillow Director Pamela Tatge selected three dances by artists who have a relationship to the Pillow. Medhi Walerski’s *Petite Cérémonie* was called “an absurd and sublime dance, every component seemingly incongruous yet part of a satisfying whole” by *Boston Globe* dance writer Janine Parker when Ballet BC presented it here in 2013. Israeli contemporary dancemakers Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar, artistic directors of L-E-V, presented the U.S. debut of their company at the Pillow, and their *Bedroom Folk* now has its U.S. premiere. The evening rounds out with Molnar’s own *To this day*.

A striking common denominator of the works that the company performs at the Pillow is the free-ranging nature of the choreographers’ dance training. Some of the choreographers studied ballet, developing strengths in contemporary dance, improvisation, and choreography alongside their classical training. Eyal, on the other hand, danced with Israel’s Batsheva, with its idiomatic training in Ohad Naharin’s Gaga movement style.

As Molnar recently said in an interview with the *Edmonton Journal*,

I think a great classical dancer is a contemporary dancer because they’re living the work today, and the greatest dancers are always testing what the classical form could be. To me, that’s a contemporary dancer inside the classical form. So there is a certain flexibility of ideas open to choreographers now, but it’s really up to the performer and how much they’re living the piece in the present and testing the boundaries.

Ballet’s roots go deep, with traditions that could keep us looking ever backward, recalling the riches of the past. As an institution, Ballet BC builds on its past and looks to future, but in the dancing? Ballet is in the most present moment.

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*Dance writer Maura Keefe has led audience programs at various venues around the country and is the Associate Director of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she was named the Dorothy G. Madden Professor of Dance in 2018.*