

Corporate Spotlight:
*Blue Cross Blue Shield
of Arizona*

Donor Spotlight:
*John and Oonagh
Boppart*

**Letter From the
Executive Director:**
Samantha Turner

Q&A:
*Artistic Director
Ib Andersen*

TURNING POINTE

An Exciting New Season of Ballet

How your participation
and generosity shape
what's to come



Ballet Arizona dancers Arrijani Martin and Nayan Iovino.
Photo by Alexander Iziliaev.



We are honored to consider each and every one of you family.

Welcome to Ballet Arizona's 2016-2017 season! This year, we travel back in time and visit the warriors and princesses of ancient India with *La Bayadère*. We ring in the holidays with the family classic *The Nutcracker*, and together, we embrace the romance and heartbreak of *Romeo & Juliet*. Additionally, our creative repertoire of *Today's Masters*, *All Balanchine* and the highly-anticipated return of *Topia* will delight the senses and showcase the artistry and athleticism found in modern ballet.

In the spirit of welcome, I'd like to take a moment and introduce you to Ballet Arizona's new Executive Director, Samantha Turner. Samantha has been a valued member of Ballet Arizona for more than three years as our Director of Marketing and Communications. In August, Samantha transitioned her role to Executive Director, building on her expertise in marketing and business management to focus on the management and development of Ballet Arizona as we enter our next chapter.

I would also like to introduce our newest Ballet Arizona Company members. This season we welcome dancers Erick Garnica from Mexico, Alberto Penalver from Spain, and Ricardo Santos from Brazil. Additionally, I'm honored to welcome former Studio Company members from The School of Ballet Arizona Ava Cobb, Katherine Loxtercamp, Ethan Price and Ana Maria Spear to our Company family. To learn more about each of them, please visit the Company page at balletaz.org.

In this report, we feature long-time Prima Circle members John and Oonagh Boppart, shining our spotlight on their 14 years of generosity and support. Additionally, we feature our corporate partner, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, highlighting their commitment to Arizonan's health, longevity and their support of Ballet Arizona's education and community outreach programs.

Your participation and generosity have shaped Ballet Arizona into the incredible organization we are today. We are honored to consider each and every one of you family. Your support has a tremendous impact on our productions, dancers, students and the work we accomplish in our community. We look forward to sharing this new season of ballet with you.

Gratefully,

Ib Andersen, Artistic Director

BEHIND THE SCENES with Ib Andersen

Q: Let's discuss the review of *Round in The New York Times* from last season. What does it feel like to be considered "one of the most enterprising ballet companies today"? I certainly don't want to embarrass you by this question but just want to know how you feel.

A: Well ... I was very happy of course. He is a such a great writer, and was able to review and critique something that was very difficult, and I was pleased to see the way he did it. It is great to have such acknowledgement from one of the best ballet critics in the world right now and that was truly amazing. To be enterprising ... what does that say to me? It says that maybe we are doing something special, something different, and that makes me happy.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about this season. What should we expect and what are you most excited for? Any surprises?

A: I am actually re-choreographing parts of *The Nutcracker*. I am changing quite a few things – it will make it much better. Much of the new choreography will be seen during Act II. Then of course we have *Romeo @ Juliet* which we have not produced in about 4 years or so. I am really looking forward to that ballet. That score is one of the best of all time. It is so moving and so powerful – so I am excited for that one in February. I have asked Nayo Iovino to choreograph again for *Today's Masters*. He will be doing a ballet set to a Stravinsky piece of music called *Jeu de Cartes*, or *Game of Cards*. I thought it would be a great challenge. It is a difficult piece of music and I have been thinking about that piece for him. I suggested that he listen to it and see if he liked it. If he did, he could do a ballet. If not, then no. And he actually went with it, so that should be interesting. I will be choreographing a new ballet for *Today's Masters* also, but I can't tell you about it yet – I am not ready to talk about it! Then of course, we are bringing *Topia* back for our Desert Botanical Garden production, which everyone seems pretty happy about.



Q: Let's talk about *La Bayadère*. What is the theme or moral behind the story? How does it compare to other classical full-length story ballets?

A: This is a story ballet in three acts. It was originally by Marius Petipa, who was considered by many to be the most important founder of classical ballet. He was a Frenchman working in St. Petersburg – many would say he is the Shakespeare of ballet. I am not sure I would go that far, but many say that. My choreography is after Petipa's original. *La Bayadère* premiered in St. Petersburg in 1877 by the Imperial Ballet. And of course, the storyline involves tragedy and love triangles. Nikiya, a poor temple dancer falls in love with a warrior but they are not destined to be together. Each act is so distinctly different. Act I is all about the story. Act II has a divertissement and a lot of dancing, then she ends up being poisoned by a snake and dies. Act III is the most extraordinary – it is really what makes this ballet a masterpiece. Solor the warrior realizes how much he loves her, smokes opium, and sees his lost love in a vision. This dream-like world is called the Kingdom of Shades. The movement in this 3rd Act is so beautiful and abstract. By abstract I mean there is a minimalist effect that makes you transfixed on the movement. The dancers – 24 of them – are repeating the same step endlessly and it has such a hypnotic effect. In terms of a moral or a theme, it is not so literal. Perhaps it is more about the philosophy of what love is or what love means.

It has survived more than 100 years so you know it must be good. And like all good ballets, you can see it many times and each time you will see something new and become more informed.

Q: I heard that you had to choreograph stronger roles for the men in *La Bayadère*? Is that accurate?

A: Yes, the original did not have as much choreography for the men. So I added one full dance because otherwise, you would not see them dancing at all! But also throughout the ballet I had to give them stronger roles and add to the choreography. We have such talented strong men right now, it would be a pity not to see them perform in this ballet.



Ballet Arizona dancers Arianni Martin, Nayon oino and Amber Lewis. Photo by Alexander Iziliaev.

**BALLET ARIZONA 2016-2017 SEASON
UPCOMING DONOR EVENTS**

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Prima Circle Intermission Receptions during La Bayadère – Symphony Hall

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November 12

Dancer's Choice at Dorrance Theatre (benefiting Artist Relief Fund)

November 19 – 20

Cinderella Performance by The School of Ballet Arizona – Dorrance Theatre

December 8

The Nutcracker Angel Night

December 9 – 24

The Nutcracker at Symphony Hall

January 20

Dance With Me Gala – honoring Carol and Randy Schilling

January 27

Prima Circle Evening & Studio Spotlight Performance

We would love to hear from you! Please send any comments or suggestions to Annual Fund Manager Dana Manners at dmanners@balletaz.org or call **602.343.6510**.

All Tendu+ Donors (\$125+) receive Turning Pointe Donor Impact Report mailed three times annually to their home.



Donor Spotlight

John and Oonagh Boppart

You are such longstanding supporters of the arts in Arizona.

What inspired such generosity specifically to Ballet Arizona?

Yes, we are longstanding supporters of the arts because we believe that the community needs diverse arts and culture to be truly successful.

Why do you continue to give?

We give to non-profit institutions that show progress and are evolving to meet the challenges of our changing society.

What ballets, contemporary or classical, have inspired you the most?

We love contemporary dance; the shapes and the form are what excite us, although *Giselle* will always be a favorite.

What are you looking forward to this season?

We always look forward to New Works. We love the program where the dancers do the choreography.

What is your favorite memory that involves Ballet Arizona?

The first *Ballet Under the Stars* that we attended, and watching people who have never experienced ballet before, particularly the children, respond to this beautiful art form.

Why do you think it's important to be a donor and support the arts community?

Without art and culture in our lives, living would be miserable.

Any other comments you'd like to contribute?

Ballet Arizona has grown to become one of the top ballet institutions in America. It has been a great experience to witness the development.

Corporate Spotlight



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Improving the quality of life for the people of Arizona is a goal Ballet Arizona shares with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona (BCBSAZ). We are proud of our partnership with BCBSAZ which has supported many of Ballet Arizona's educational programs and performance offerings over the years.

BCBSAZ is committed to helping Arizonans get healthier faster and stay healthier longer. With a focus on connecting people with the care they need, BCBSAZ offers health insurance and related services to nearly 1.5 million customers. BCBSAZ, a not-for-profit company, is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. The company has been in business for nearly 80 years and employs nearly 1,500 people in its Phoenix, Chandler, Flagstaff

and Tucson offices. Through advanced clinical programs and community outreach, BCBSAZ is moving health forward.

As a local company BCBSAZ takes its commitment to Arizona seriously; donations go directly to the communities in Arizona, creating a better place for everyone to live and work. BCBSAZ prides itself in aligning its success with the success of the communities they serve.

Every year BCBSAZ is honored to support many worthwhile charities and organizations through contributions, talents and resources of its employees. Their employees are encouraged to volunteer, and support many organizations throughout the state.

BCBSAZ focuses on the initiatives listed below:

- Arts and cultural programs
- Economic development and civic initiatives
- Youth and education
- Health, wellness and human services initiatives

To learn more about Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, please visit their website at azblue.com.

The Nutcracker Angel Night

On December 8, Symphony Hall will be filled with the laughter and smiles of over 2,000 children and families participating in our Nutcracker Community Angel Night performance. For some, this will be their first time attending a professional ballet and their only holiday celebration.

This is just one example of your contributions at work! A large part of Ballet Arizona's mission is to serve the people of Arizona through education and community outreach programs, which touch the lives of more than 35,000 children each year.

Thank you for your participation and we look forward to another great evening serving those in our community.

If you are interested in witnessing the magic of our Angel Night first hand, please contact Dana Manners, Annual Fund Manager at **602.343.6510** or via email at dmanners@balletaz.org. It is a great way to see your gifts in action.



Photo by Rosalie O'Connor.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Samantha Turner

It is an honor and a pleasure to welcome you to our 2016-2017 season as the new Executive Director of Ballet Arizona. I cannot wait to share in the rich artistic experiences that the ballet gives to each and every one of us. We feel fortunate to serve a mission that brings joy to so many individuals through the beauty of dance.

I look forward to meeting you at the ballet and having a conversation about the importance of the arts in Arizona and what it does for our community. But mostly I would like the opportunity to first say ... **thank you**. I am delighted that the first article I write in my new role is a piece that highlights all of you – a piece that showcases your impact and your investment in us; because truly, without you, our work would not be possible. We are deeply grateful to you and I hope to have an opportunity to thank you in person throughout our season together.

I am not new to Ballet Arizona. In fact, I joined the organization in 2013 as the Director of

Marketing and Communications. Over the last three years, I focused on building and expanding the organization’s marketing and box office efforts, resulting in record performance sales. Prior to my role at Ballet Arizona, I served in leadership roles at both non-profit performing arts organizations in New York and Fortune 500 companies serving as head of either business operations or marketing. I hold tremendous passion for the arts and am happy that my career has offered me the opportunity to serve as the Executive Director providing strategic management and fund development to support the mission of our crucial work in Arizona.

My goal and my vision are to continue building on the successes of my predecessor, David Tompkins, who was able to bring financial stability and a solid foundation for growth during his tenure. As you may have learned in the previous issue of our Donor Impact Report we have no debt, we are building up our endowment, and we ended our fiscal year in June with an operating surplus. These

are wonderful achievements for any arts organization, but our work is far from over. We need to work even harder to maintain that positive momentum so that we can support the vision of Ib Andersen with funding for strategic initiatives. We will be seeking funding for new works, our satellite school, and to establish a fund that permanently endows live music. In addition to art and education, we want to continue making ballet accessible for all through our outreach programs. We are launching a new Creative Aging pilot program this season through a partnership with Benevilla Senior Day Care Services as just one example of those efforts.

Thank you for your tremendous support and generosity. See you at the ballet!

Gratefully,

Samantha Turner, Executive Director

2016-2017 SEASON WELCOME EVENT

In September, Ballet Arizona’s Circles of Support kicked off the 2016-2017 season with the annual Season Welcome Happy Hour.

The Dancer’s Lounge was filled with both new and familiar faces as guests and dancers enjoyed some light appetizers and refreshments catered by our neighbors at Fabulous Foods and Phoenix Ale Brewery.

The emcee, Kate Groves, kicked off the evening by introducing Ballet Arizona’s new Executive Director, Samantha Turner, as well as introducing our new Company members: Ava Cobb, Erick Garnica, Katherine Loxtercamp, Ethan Price, Ricardo Santos, Ana Maria Spear, and returning dancer Jillian Barrell. Missing from the festivities was new dancer Alberto Penalver, who was back at home awaiting approval for his work visa. He has since safely arrived to Phoenix and is eager to dance on stage with the Company and meet all of you at our next event.

The evening would not be complete without a few words from Artistic Director Ib Andersen, who spoke about the upcoming season, his “love” for Minkus’ music and also announced that dancer Nayon Iovino would return to choreograph a new original work for Ballet Arizona’s performances of *Today’s Masters* at the Orpheum Theatre.

This donor appreciation event was held as a Thank You to all of you for your continued support of all of Ballet Arizona’s activities. Cheers to a new and exciting season!



Company dancer Michelle Vagi with Kate Groves



Philip Haggerty, Jillian Barrell, Edith Goble and Nayon Iovino

The School of Ballet Arizona presents

CINDERELLA

November 18 – 20, 2016 at Dorrance Theatre



THE SCHOOL OF BALLET ARIZONA

Over the last five years, The School of Ballet Arizona has grown into one of the finest institutions for dance in the Southwest! Building on the past production successes of *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty*, we will premiere a new production of *Cinderella* this holiday season.

School Director Carlos Valcárcel, and Ballet Arizona Company member Nayon Iovino are taking this classic ballet back to its storybook roots. Drawing inspiration directly from the book, Carlos and Nayon have developed new choreography and incorporated the high performance standards expected from the students at The School of Ballet Arizona.



“Cinderella is about magic and imagination. Everyone can relate to it. The level of the School performances during Swan Lake and The Sleeping Beauty were pretty high. They were professional level productions. You often forget that they are students dancing on stage, but the level of performance standards expected is that of the Ballet Arizona Company.”

– Carlos Valcárcel, School Director

Cinderella is a tremendous challenge and a learning process for the students at the School. It involves everyone enrolled, from the youngest of dancers to the Studio Company. Casting and placement were determined by the production’s needs, so each student had an equal opportunity. Each dancer learned the new choreography, accepted the challenge and saw just how vast their capabilities are.

Carlos hopes that *Cinderella* will be a rich and rewarding experience for everyone involved, students and parents alike. Ballet is not just a commitment on behalf of the student, but it takes very dedicated parents and family. *Cinderella* will give students the opportunity to become a part of the story, and physically and emotionally participate in the telling of it. Parents will revel in watching their children on stage in a full-length production, seeing all their hard work and dedication come to fruition.

Come join us November 18, 19 and 20 and experience the magic of *Cinderella* and The School of Ballet Arizona for yourself!

CREATIVE AGING

Pilot Program

On September 22, Ballet Arizona launched a six-week Creative Aging ballet workshop in partnership with Benevilla Senior Day Care Services. This pilot program offers curriculum that welcomes seniors as active participants in the dance community through Arizona's premiere ballet company.

“Today, we’re living the longest we’ve ever lived before. When we’re young, we’re encouraged to move, exercise, grow, and mature. Then somehow it stops being a focus. We become watchers instead of doers. Energy in motion tends to stay in motion. Let’s keep moving.”

– Joseph Cavanaugh, *Community Education and Outreach Manager*

Studies show that movement and dance produce not only strong physical benefits, but cognitive ones too. Coordination is required to take in the notes of the music and translate them into movement. This requires all the parts of your body to work in unison, connecting the body and mind in synchrony.

Under the expertise of The School of Ballet Arizona teachers, Fabiola Ambrosio and Kay Murray-Price, Benevilla members are led through a ballet class. The movement is modified as many of the participants have physical limitations. Instead of a barre, the class begins in chairs. The dancers are then taken through a routine that emphasizes connection to body, mind and spirit. This social and creative workshop emphasizes the need for movement, regardless of age, and provides a welcoming environment where seniors can actively participate with their peers to experience the joy of dance. The Creative Aging workshop will culminate with a class demonstration for family, friends and other Benevilla visitors.

Ballet Arizona is able to provide this opportunity free of charge to Benevilla, thanks to the generosity and support of people like you! For more information about our Creative Aging programming, please contact Joseph Cavanaugh at jscavanaugh@balletaz.org.

COMPANY CONNECTION *Meet dancers Kaelyn and Roman*



Kaelyn Magee

Hometown: Carmel, CA
Joined Ballet Arizona: 2014

What is your favorite thing about dancing at Ballet Arizona?

All Balanchine! Definitely *All Balanchine*. The program we have as a part of our annual repertoire is something that originally attracted me to this Company. There is something so liberating about

the movement and the way it makes sense with the music. To be able to dance a Balanchine ballet and have that rewarding sense of accomplishment afterwards is really gratifying.

What advice would you give to young aspiring dancers?

So often we get carried away with what we see in the mirror and what we're dissatisfied with. You can always strive for perfection, but in reality, it doesn't exist. Instead, push yourself to do better and work

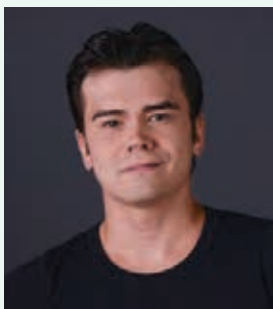
harder. Ballet is always going to be challenging. If it's ever easy, then you are not pushing yourself enough. You should never settle for complacency. There's always more to strive for.

What do you do when you're not training or performing on stage?

I recently enrolled in school and love to read in my spare time. Additionally, I teach ballet. I love working with young, aspiring dancers, passing on what I have learned so far and my experiences. It is so fun to see their growth; to see areas where I'm able to give them advice and have them apply it and see their progress. It's really rewarding.

What is your greatest challenge as a dancer?

As a dancer, we must deal with the knowledge that our career is really limited and we're only on the stage for a short time. It's a bittersweet reality. I put in so much energy, work, time, and so much of myself into what I'm doing. And yet it's not something I'm going to be able to do forever. My challenge is to enjoy every day I have the opportunity to dance, no matter what it's like, because I know it won't last forever.



Roman Zavarov

Hometown: Almaty, Kazakhstan
Joined Ballet Arizona: 2007

Why do you dance?

I come from a family of professional dancers in Russia. Dancing is in my blood. It's what I love. There's such excitement and pleasure in bringing joy to others by what we do on stage. I really like

performing on stage in front of the audience. I like hearing the applause at the end. I enjoy when people respond to what I do on stage, especially when I do something funny.

Who is your greatest dance inspiration?

Mikhail Baryshnikov. I haven't had the opportunity to see him perform, but he is an icon on and off stage. His technique is incredible and he is a great inspiration for so many dancers.

Do you prefer modern or classical ballets?

I prefer classical, storybook ballets. They are my strength and the base for my early training. I love the choreography and the storylines that go along with them.

What do you do outside of dancing? Do you have any hobbies?

I like to sketch and draw superheroes. I'm kind of a nerd. And I play with my cats. I have two cats named Bella and Voodoo. I also love to hike and work out at the gym.

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Ballet Arizona dancers Arianni Martin and Amber Lewis. Photo by Alexander Ziliaev.

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