

ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

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PHOTO: ROSALE O'CONNOR

ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

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PHOTO: JANA CRUDER



Dear Friends,

It is with great anticipation and excitement that we ring in 2016. The new year marks the official start of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's 20th anniversary season! We honor this milestone with a year of celebration and great dance featuring new ballets, new dancers, new audiences, and lots of fun events. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to engage with us during this anniversary season as we continue to move onward and upward, keeping ASFB at the forefront of American dance.

ASFB's upcoming home performances in Aspen and Santa Fe feature a brand new commissioned ballet by audience favorite Cayetano Soto. Using popular music from the 1950's and '60's, Soto's fresh and spirited new work celebrates our 20th anniversary and aptly shows off our dancers' personalities. (pg. 8) Our newest discovery, Brazilian choreographer Fernando Melo, debuts his first ballet for the company, titled *Re:play*. This provocative new work has a cinematic feel and a unique lighting design. It is truly unlike anything we have ever done before!

A highlight of this anniversary season is the thrilling debut of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet in Venice, Italy! We are beside ourselves with excitement at this prestigious invitation from the famed Teatro La Fenice. We invite you to join ASFB on tour and witness this historic moment for the company. (pg. 7)

On April 16, ASFB makes its debut at the new Valley Performing Art Center in Northridge, CA—the beginning of a three-year partnership with this important arts venue as its first "company-in-residence." This rare collaboration allows ASFB to develop a long-term presence in the Los Angeles area. (pg. 4)

Our dancers continue to impress us with their talent and commitment to excellence. Jenelle Figgins, one of our newest dancers who recently joined us from Dance Theater of Harlem, was just named one of this year's "25 to Watch" by *Dance Magazine*! Congratulations Jenelle on this great honor! (pg. 18)

The upcoming season also promises to be an extraordinary one for Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe, as the company tours coast-to-coast from California to Hawaii, winding up in New York City for a week-long engagement at the Joyce Theater. This cross-country debut tour will help propel JSFSF into the national spotlight. (pg. 19)

As the company looks ahead to all the excitement that our anniversary year has to offer, we must also pause to reflect on the recent passing of our dear friend and longtime ASFB board member Betty Weiss, an incredible advocate for our company. We hold her memory near as we embark on this anniversary season, forever keeping her enthusiastic spirit in our hearts. (pg. 13)

On behalf our dancers and staff, we wish you a happy and healthy new year filled with love, peace, prosperity, and lots of great dance!

Tom Mossbrucker
Artistic Director

Jean-Philippe Malaty
Executive Director



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VPAC

ASFB Takes Los Angeles

A prestigious residency relationship begins

by Debra Levine

A valued artistic partnership with a prominent Los Angeles performing arts center synchronizes sweetly with the company's 20th anniversary, according to Aspen Santa Fe Ballet co-directors Jean-Philippe Malaty and Tom Mossbrucker. In a rare long-term commitment stretching over three seasons, the Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC) has named ASFB as its first-ever dance company-in-residence. The architecturally distinguished, jewel-box theater at California State University, Northridge, serves as a gateway to the abundant Los Angeles dance market.

The first of three annual visits rolls out soon, on April 16, 2016. For the start-up splash, ASFB has fashioned a new program—*Cerrudo, Melo, and Soto: Three New Works*—a specially curated showcase of works by choreographers who have a Latin heritage in common.

The unusual collaboration was initiated by Thor Steingraber, VPAC's energetic executive director, who not only chose ASFB from numerous candidates, but is co-commissioning a major new work with ASFB over the course of the relationship.

"If there were a company I would present repeatedly, ASFB perfectly fits the bill," said Steingraber in a phone interview. "I watched them in New York and in Aspen, and saw their precision and beauty. They embody two qualities I like to see on the stage. They are incredibly accomplished as technical artists while being engaging personalities in the service of a choreographer."

The dance company in-residence arrangement offers important benefits for both parties. The venue, a sparkling 1,700-seat theater designed and built by female architect Kara Hill, has been in strong ascendance as it marks its fifth anniversary. Its unusual approach to highly customized, creative programming holds dance as a key component. For ASFB, a dance leader of the American West, the relationship gives access to arguably the nation's hottest dance market, Los Angeles.



The current dance boom taking place in L.A. has not escaped the attention of ASFB executive director Jean Philippe Malaty. "To be where there is so much happening is exciting," he says. Artistic director Tom Mossbrucker, who has observed the L.A. market since performing there often with the Joffrey Ballet in the 1980s, adds: "L.A. has a completely new identity as a dance town—there's much more energy there than any place. First dance was New York; then it was Europe. Now there's a thing going on that is uniquely L.A. We're delighted to be part of it."

The first-year program for the residency includes works by two Spaniards: *Silent Ghost* by Alejandro Cerrudo and *Huma Rojo*, the latest ASFB commission by Cayetano Soto. *Re:play*, a ballet by a dance maker new to ASFB—the Brazilian-born Fernando Melo—will round out the L.A. repertoire.

For Mossbrucker, the Latin theme evolved organically. "We set out to do an evening of all-commissioned work. We didn't pursue a Latin theme specifically; it's a continuation of the global approach we've practiced from the get-go," he says.

New commissions, the lifeblood of ASFB, are part of the VPAC promise. According to Steingraber: "Creating new work is not daunting to me. I bring a producer's mindset to my presenter's role. I think that my willingness to enter that equation probably sealed the deal for all of us."

Steingraber's vision takes an adventurous approach. "The current conversation is that in year two we will present a world premiere by a Los Angeles commercial choreographer. That is a big decision, which alone has a lot of meaning."

Who will be the lucky choreographer? "Tom, Jean-Philippe, and I have had multiple conversations. They have created a short list. All the art-making is in their court. I plan to announce the commission at our April performance," says Steingraber.

Malaty notes that long-term commitments have become an unfortunate rarity. "It's something that doesn't happen much with presenters these days. We see a lot of one-night stands, and then you move on. After three or four years, they cycle you out. So this is very refreshing and different from the norm."

Building audiences over time underlies the VPAC residency. "We have been very disciplined in building audiences in our home cities, as well as in key markets, performing at the Joyce every other year, Jacob's Pillow the same. We aspire to do that in L.A. as well," says Malaty.

Beyond the initial concept, the extended brainstorming and dialogue, and cementing of business details, the success of the venture ultimately rests with the ASFB dancers. Steingraber says: "These are exceptionally outward-facing, congenial, public-minded performers, and not just on the stage. When I first met them, their full investment in their company—beyond their individual performances—came across. They are an ensemble both on and off stage. I eagerly await the moment when I will introduce these dancers to my audience."

Dance writer Debra Levine is curator of "All That Jack (Cole)" a film retrospective at The Museum of Modern Art in January 2016.

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet

Cerrudo, Melo, and Soto: Three New Works

April 16, 2016 | 8:00pm

Valley Performing Arts Center

Northridge, CA

For more information:

www.aspensantafeballet.com

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JOIN ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET IN VENICE!

As Aspen Santa Fe Ballet begins its 20th anniversary celebrations, we invite you to join the company on tour in Venice, Italy!

This trip to Venice, a highlight of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's celebratory season, promises to be a memorable, once-in-a-lifetime event. Our exclusive Venice package, designed by ASFB trustee and travel expert John Galante, will allow you to experience Venice like never before.

Our five-night package includes luxury accommodation at the famed Gritti Palace on the Grand Canal, a sumptuous dinner at the stunning Aman Venice, a guided visit to the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, a private glass-making tour of the island of Murano, a tour of the bustling and historic Rialto Food Markets followed by a cooking class, a private art and shopping tour, and VIP seats to the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet performance at the historic Teatro Malibran. There will be other surprises as well, and enough free time for you to enjoy this magnificent city on your own.

Arrive in Venice: **Wednesday, March 9**

Depart Venice: **Monday, March 14**

Package includes:

- Deluxe or Prestige Room at the Gritti Palace with daily breakfast
- Dinner in a private dining room at the Aman Venice Canal Grande, with transfer by private water taxi
- Dinner at a landmark Venetian restaurant
- Guided art and antique shopping tour
- Private, guided tour of the Rialto Food Market
- Cooking class at the Hotel Gritti Palace's epicurean school, led by Chef Daniele Turco, followed by a gourmet lunch
- VIP tour of the famed Murano Island glass factory, followed by a private visit to one of Venice's most beautiful palazzos
- Private guided tour of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, among the most important museums of 20th century art in Italy
- VIP ticket to the ASFB performance at Teatro Malibran, with transfer by water taxi

This trip is highly customizable and John Galante is available to design a Venice travel package that fulfills your individual wishes.

Price:

\$2,800 per person in a Gritti Palace Deluxe Room
(based on double occupancy; \$1,000 single-occupancy supplement)

\$3,250 per person in a Gritti Palace Giglio Prestige Room
(based on double occupancy; \$1,400 single-occupancy supplement)

Airfare not included.

Space is limited. This special trip to Venice is open to all those who currently support Aspen Santa Fe Ballet at the National Council level (\$2,500) and above.

To reserve your space contact Kaitlin Windle in the ASFB office: 970-925-7175, ext. 110. For further trip details, contact travel advisor John Galante of SmartFlyer at 970-300-4880 or john@smartflyer.com



Cayetano Soto Builds Another Ballet from Barcelona's Bricks

by Alexandra Villarreal

Imagine: you go for a late-night stroll. It's maybe one or two in the morning. Suddenly, you find yourself in front of a towering edifice of stained glass and tinted tiles — Antoni Gaudí's Casa Batlló. Now only ghosts walk the streets, cleared thanks to the hour, and it's just you and Barcelona melding into one. You gaze up at Gaudí's masterpiece with child-like eyes, wondering at its magnitude.

That is where choreographer Cayetano Soto goes on restless eyes, when he takes the one-minute jaunt from his apartment to Casa Batlló. The building matches his personality: bubbly, bristling with enthusiasm for life. Like an architect, Soto wants to look at what lies around him— really look and see — and discover what he can through his art.

"I am a choreographer because it is just a very important part of me," he said. "Why? I am still trying to answer this question. And this is why I am going again and again to the studio: to try to understand this world, the people, this planet. To try to communicate with dance what I cannot do with my own words. To research my own world."

Originally from Barcelona, Soto trained at the Instituto del Teatro before moving to the Netherlands to study at the Royal Conservatorium in The Hague. He has set repertoire on some of the West's most acclaimed contemporary ballet companies, including Ballet BC in Vancouver, where he's currently resident choreographer. His pieces vary in mood, running the gamut from strange and brooding to sweet like maraschino cherries. After all, to research the world is an expansive project with both blinding light and pitch darkness.

Since 2009, Soto has set four ballets on Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, two of which were commissions. The works have tended toward a hard-edged and aggressive tone, contemplative in their melancholy. However, when ASFB Artistic Director Tom Mossbrucker invited Soto to conceive of a new piece, he wanted "a different approach."

"As a person, he's very playful and very funny," Mossbrucker said of Soto. "We commissioned a work in celebration of our 20th anniversary. We really wanted him to be a part of that. So we said, could he switch courses and do something more celebratory, or playful, or maybe witty? I wasn't too specific, but I asked if he could try to keep that in mind as he plans



PHOTO COURTESY OF ASFB

the ballet. Something that would really celebrate all that we've done and be an uplifting experience."

Soto agreed, eager for the challenge. It was not the first time an artistic director requested that he try a more ebullient flavor, and he loved the taste of it. He would create something whimsical, energized like *Casa Batlló*. The change in pace should offer a nice contrast, as the ballet sits on a February 13th program alongside *Re:play*, a new piece in black and white by Brazilian choreographer Fernando Melo, and Alejandro Cerrudo's meditative *Silent Ghost*.

Before Soto entered the Aspen studio on January 11, he had a selection of 50 upbeat tunes to narrow down to six or seven — everything from Bach to Judy Garland, from the Rat Pack to Perez Prado. Musical choices alone require extensive investment: Soto listened to approximately 300 songs in preparation for the commission. He also has a "picture" in mind, an image that he'll translate into movement once he re-meets the company. But all of these threads must come together when they please, whether on the airplane to Aspen, or once he hits the ground.

"I have to listen always to my heart, and I do not want to make decisions before my heart speaks to me," he said. "There is always a 'why?' for every single time I make a move."

The costumes will be a smoking red to match *Huma Rojo*, the name of one of Pedro Almodóvar's protagonists that doubles as a title for Soto's debut. This allusion seems apt given Soto's alleged inspiration: "Strong women. Love them ... I respect and admire them so much."

Soto's respect for strong women — and men — is partly why ASFB was intent on having him return a fifth time for the 20th anniversary season. According to Mossbrucker, Soto has always "had a really nice rapport with the company."

"He pulls out the strengths of the dancers and challenges them to get better," he continued. "After working with him for four weeks, they were better than they were four weeks ago."

Humbly, Soto explained his philosophy on the dancer-choreographer relationship. Dance aficionados often describe the dancer as the paint-

brush, the choreographer as the painter, and the stage as the canvas. However, Soto seems to depart from this hierarchy, imbuing his dancers with importance and individuality.

"In every company I work with, I always try to make an environment where every single dancer will have his or her place, where we all could develop as artists with respect and integrity," he said. "A choreographer without dancers is nothing. They are one of the reasons why I love to create and be in the studio."

Soto also acknowledges ASFB's contribution to his career and the connection that has emerged between him and the ensemble. ASFB was first to feature his work in the United States, and he's confident and comfortable when he walks through its doors.

"I always feel free to create my own personal environment with them," he said. "I always have a *carte blanche* to do my thing and I am never questioned during my process."

In some ways, this cohesion has allowed the company to become another home for Soto, the constant traveler who finds shelter in his choreographic voice.

"I feel no difference because I'm in another country. I am the same person in Barcelona, or in Aspen, or in Vancouver, or in Den Haag," he said. "Every time I am back in Aspen it feels like we were always together, like the time did not pass by."

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet

Aspen

February 13, 2016 | 7:30pm

Dedicated to the memory of Betty Weiss

ENCORE! - March 26, 2016 | 7:30pm

Santa Fe

April 1, 2016 | 7:30pm

2016 WINTER SEASON

TWENTY YEARS OF



ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET



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PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

February 13 | 7:30pm

Generously underwritten by Carolyn Powers

Dedicated to the memory of Betty Weiss

Join Aspen Santa Fe Ballet as it officially kicks off its 20th anniversary season with a program that celebrates the company's commitment to pushing the boundaries of contemporary dance. ASFB unveils two new company commissions: *Re:play* by the Brazilian choreographer Fernando Melo and *Huma Rojo* by Cayetano Soto, his third work for ASFB. Recent commission and last summer's audience favorite, *Silent Ghost*, by Alejandro Cerrudo, completes the program. Spanning a range of moods and styles, this innovative, diverse program is sure to have something for everyone!

"An abundance of riches from Aspen Santa Fe Ballet."

– Boston Globe



PHOTO: MICHAEL ALVAREZ

ENCORE! - ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

March 26 | 7:30pm

Generously underwritten by Bebe and David Schweppe

In case you missed it, or if you just can't get enough! Aspen Santa Fe Ballet brings back the trio of choreographic works performed in February to kick off the company's 20th anniversary season. The program features three ASFB-commissioned works by the Brazilian choreographer Fernando Melo, Cayetano Soto of Spain, and the return of last summer's audience favorite, *Silent Ghost*, by Alejandro Cerrudo. Don't miss this special encore performance and winter season finale!

"Aspen Santa Fe Ballet delivers with pulse-quickening power."

– Ottawa Citizen

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All shows take place at the Aspen District Theatre
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320 E. Hyman Street, Aspen, CO



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

JUAN SIDDI FLAMENCO SANTA FE

CELEBRATE OUR UPCOMING NEW YORK CITY DEBUT!

March 18 | 7:30pm

Join Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe for a special gala performance to celebrate their upcoming Joyce Theater debut in New York City! Support this exciting company milestone with a silent auction in the lobby of The Lensic! Lead dancer and Artistic Director Juan Siddi infuses his choreography with the flavor of his artistic roots in Barcelona and Granada. This fiery ensemble of 14 dancers and musicians—many hailing from Spain—delivers a bold theatrical experience for aficionados and flamenco newcomers alike.

"For all the pain inherent in the tradition of flamenco, there is also comfort on display here, sweat and joy."

– Culture Vulture



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

April 1 | 7:30pm

Join Aspen Santa Fe Ballet as it officially kicks off its 20th anniversary season with a program that celebrates the company's commitment to pushing the boundaries of contemporary dance. ASFB unveils two new company commissions: *Re:play* by the Brazilian choreographer Fernando Melo and *Huma Rojo* by Cayetano Soto, his third work for ASFB. Recent commission and last summer's audience favorite, *Silent Ghost*, by Alejandro Cerrudo, completes the program. Spanning a range of moods and styles, this innovative, diverse program is sure to have something for everyone!

"An abundance of riches from Aspen Santa Fe Ballet."

– Boston Globe

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PHOTO: JANA CRUDER



Remembering Betty Weiss

by Tom Mossbrucker and Jean-Philippe Malaty

In 2014 Betty was named Trustee Emeritus in recognition of the extraordinary support she gave to ASFB.

Betty was one of the first people we met when we moved to Aspen from New York City. We had a small studio next to Betty's at the Red Brick. She knocked on the door of the studio, introduced herself, and welcomed us to town! Hearing that we offered classes for adults, Betty immediately signed up for Tom's tap classes. This was the beginning of an extraordinary 20-year friendship.

You all know Betty as an artist, but before she painted, she had studied dance for many years in Chicago. She loved the art form and was quick to support our fledgling company, becoming one of our first board members. We once asked her why she took such an interest in ASFB in our early years; "I just had a feeling," she replied.

Betty shared her enthusiasm for ASFB with her large circle of Aspen friends. When she painted a backdrop for one of our ballets, we had record attendance at the theater. More people came to see Betty's painting than for the ballet! We met many wonderful people through Betty, many of whom remain friends and ballet patrons to this day.

Not only was she an exemplary ambassador for the company, but she was also a true friend to both dancers and choreographers. The dancers considered her their 'ballet mom.' On the day of her passing, we reached out to choreographers and former dancers around the world to share the sad news. They all knew Betty from the hours she spent observing rehearsals or graciously entertaining them during their stay in Aspen.

In her later years, Betty became frail and fragile, but it was not always that way. There was a time when keeping up with Betty was not easy. In the earlier days of the company she often traveled with us, attending performances. Once, on a company tour to France, we spent hours on foot sightseeing in the town of Biarritz; while the rest of us were exhausted, when we got back to the hotel the ever-energetic Betty asked, "Well, what time shall we meet for dinner?" This is how we will remember her.

Betty loved dance and never missed a performance, sometimes seeing the same program several times from her usual spot in row J. For Betty's

80th birthday, her family commissioned a ballet to be created in her honor by choreographer Dwight Rhoden. The ballet was performed as a surprise during her birthday party in the Hotel Jerome ballroom.

Betty had an incredible sense of humor and could throw down a one-liner like a pro. During one board meeting, after Jean-Philippe had been going through countless numbers and financial reports in detail for over 20 minutes, Betty finally exclaimed: "I sure as hell would hate getting a divorce from him!"

Most of all, we will miss our weekly dinners with Betty at L'Hostaria, her favorite Aspen haunt. She was always dressed to the nines, hair coiffed, nails done, and wearing a brooch! The meal always began with calamari and Ketel One. We would spend hours talking about everything; nothing was off limits. And we laughed. We laughed and laughed.

The wait staff showed her such kindness. They were family too. She knew each one by name and they beamed when they saw her. At the end of the evening, as we thanked her and said goodnight, she always said the same thing: "It's just nice being together, it's a good life."

Betty taught us so much about life and living it fully, exactly as she did until the very end. She taught us to see the good things in life, and not to dwell on the bad things.

One day we called her to ask if she wanted to have dinner together. "I better not, I am feeling low today," she replied. Not five minutes later she called back and said "let's do go out because, you know, the less you do, the less you do!" This was Betty.

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's February 13 performance in Aspen will be dedicated to the memory of Betty Weiss.

At The School of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, we believe that no child with a desire to dance should be turned away from a ballet class. Our scholarship program awards \$30,000 each year to deserving students in need of tuition assistance. Recipients have thrived from this opportunity, receiving high quality instruction and all the benefits that go along with studying dance including discipline, perseverance, self-confidence, and artistry. Students have gone on to study at such prestigious schools as Bolshoi Ballet Academy, Ailey/Fordham University program, Joffrey Ballet School, and American Ballet Theatre Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School. Some have pursued careers at New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Shen Wei Dance Arts, Polish National Ballet, Royal New Zealand Ballet, and Aspen Santa Fe Ballet.

The School of Aspen Santa Fe congratulates our scholarship recipients for 2015-16. Here are a few expressions of gratitude from the students and their families:

"Ballet is a very important part of my life and I am so grateful for this gift."
-Lily Grogan

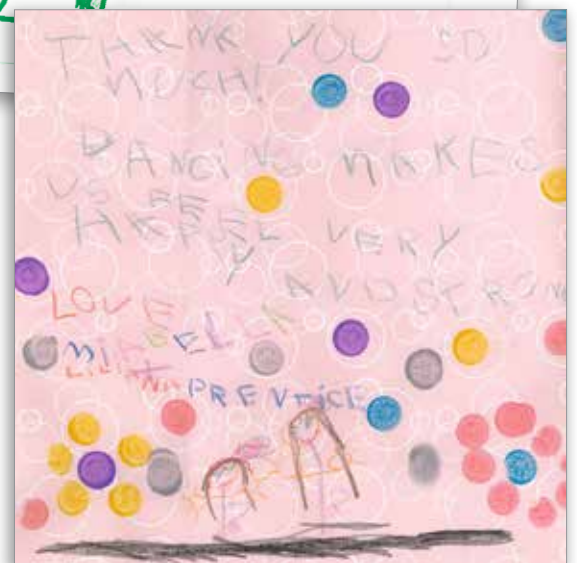
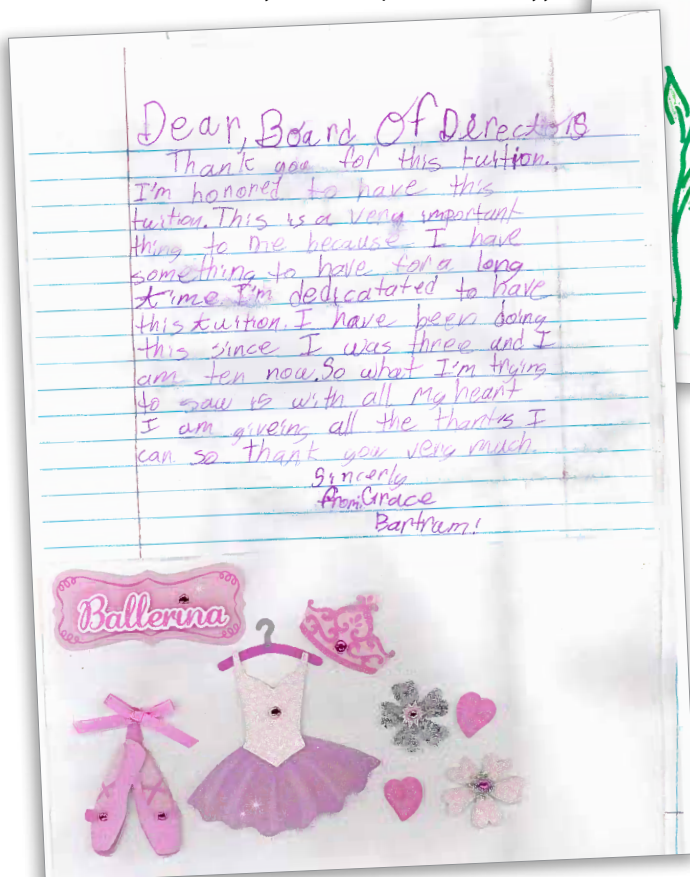
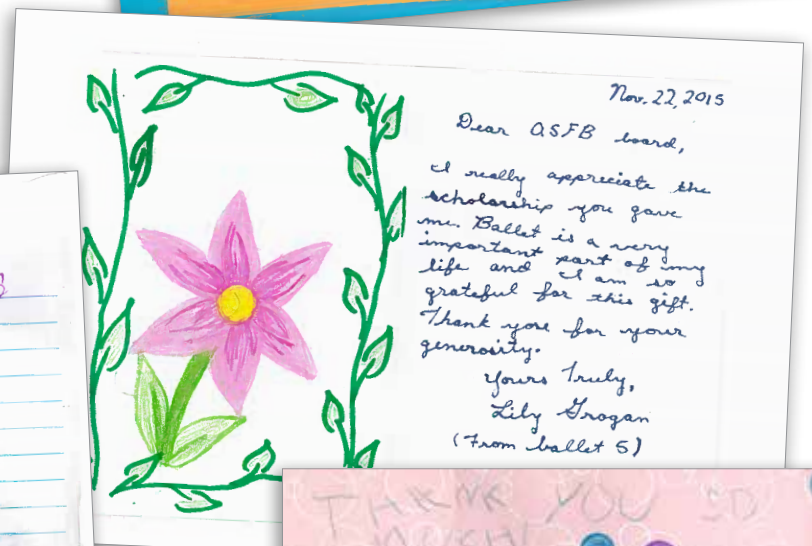
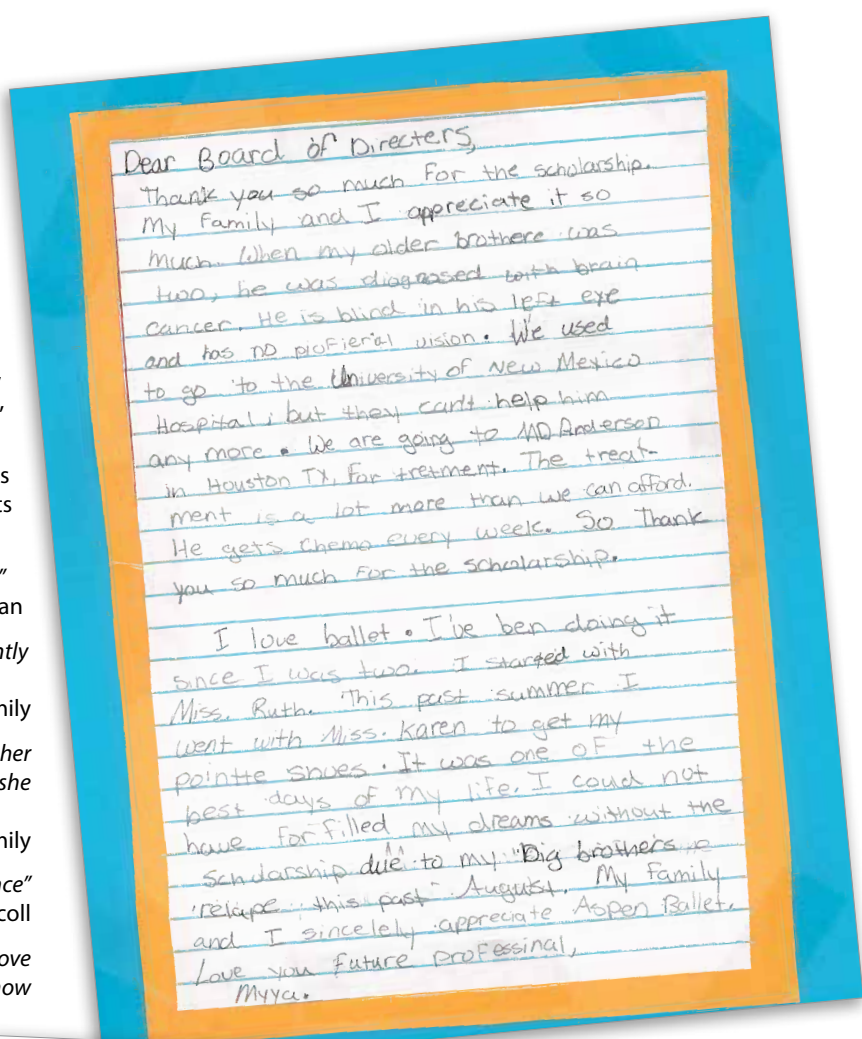
"Dance makes (my daughters) feel happy, strong and most importantly builds confidence."
-The Prentice Family

"...thank you for your help and support on her education. Ballet is one of her favorite things to do. She loves to dance. This is now a discipline for her, she does her best effort every class..."
-Ramirez Family

"Thank you for the classes you have given me. I get stronger. I love to dance"
-Tessa Helene Driscoll

"This scholarship is important to me because I love being in ballet and I love to dance. I want to be a ballerina when I am older. I want to be the Snow Queen in the Nutcracker."
-Ariana Romero

"This past summer I went with Miss Karen to get my pointe shoes. It was one of the best days of my life. I could not have fulfilled my dreams without the scholarship..."
-Love, your future professional, Myya





From Russia, With Love

A School of ASFB
student studies abroad

by Emily Ridings

My first experience in Moscow was for a six-week exchange program as part of the National Security Language Initiative for Youth. I was then invited to come back to the Bolshoi Academy to study for the year, so this past October I returned to Moscow. I was nervous and already questioning traveling across the world to pursue my dream of becoming a dancer. Even though I knew some Russian it was still hard to communicate with people, but I got some help from other students and I started attending a language course six days a week, which helped a lot. I've since become much better at the language, so it's no longer an issue.

My ballet teachers push me to my limits, even past them, because they know I'll improve faster by giving my all, every day. They are very hands-on with corrections, not hesitating to actually move your leg or arm into the correct position. The teachers are also more blunt, but they do it because they know you can handle it and it will make you better in the end.

Along with ballet I take modern, character (folk dancing), variations, historical dance, and gymnastics. Gymnastics is intense stretching and strengthening; variations are where we get to work one-on-one with our teacher on individual dances. I have been loving all my classes and my teachers because I learn and grow as a dancer each class, each day.

I'm in class six days a week, but it often feels like seven since there are few moments when I'm not working; there is always something to improve! In my free time I go out with my friends in Moscow, exploring places like the Red Square or small coffee shops. There have been a few times where I miss my family, or had a bad day in my classes, but it happens to everyone; not every day is going to be perfect. When those days come around you just have to pick yourself up, dust yourself off, pull up your tutu, and try again. There are kids as young as age six and as old as age 23 living away from their homes, but it's a small sacrifice to make when you are pursuing the dream of becoming a professional dancer.

I have this feeling of needing to work hard not just for myself, but for my teachers for putting so much effort into helping me improve, my family for giving me the opportunity to travel across the world, and the Aspen community for its support. I want to make them all proud. I also work hard for myself because the things that I'm accomplishing here are things that I once thought to be impossible.

One last thing...I'm sick of potatoes.

Emily Ridings has studied at The School of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet since age four.



In October 2015, Mayor Javier Gonzales presented Aspen Santa Fe Ballet the Santa Fe Mayor's Award for Excellence in the Arts. The award honors the contributions that individuals, organizations, and businesses have made to the Santa Fe arts community. ASFB was nominated by artist James Posch, with the support of actress Ali MacGraw, Bob Martin from The Lensic Performing Arts Center, and Ivan Barnett of Patina Gallery. "As a Santa Fe resident, artist, and gallery owner for more than two decades, I have personally watched the evolution of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet with pride," wrote Barnett. He continued: "Watching the company spread its wings in a way that serves our community at large is stunning; its outreach programs have enriched our lives and contributed to the well-being of us all."



ASFB Directors Jean-Philippe Malaty and Tom Mossbrucker accepting the Santa Fe Mayor's Award on behalf of ASFB



City of Santa Fe Arts Commission Director Debra Garcia y Griego, Santa Fe Mayor Javier Gonzales, and ASFB directors Tom Mossbrucker and Jean-Philippe Malaty



Trustee Charles Forte, Charles Dale, and Trustees Leah Paalman and Leigh Moiola



Trustee Laurie Farber-Condon and Artistic Director Tom Mossbrucker



Ricardo Sanchez, Jane Alexander, and Trustees Leah Paalman and Keith Gorges



Executive Director Jean-Philippe Malaty with City of Santa Fe Arts Commission Director Debra Garcia y Griego



In celebration of
Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's
upcoming debut in Venice, Italy
you are invited to a

Venetian Masquerade
including cocktails, a Venetian-inspired menu,
entertainment & dancing

March 1, 2016
6:00 pm

L'Hostaria Ristorante
620 East Hyman Avenue, Aspen, CO

\$275 per person
(single tickets & tables of 6 or 8 available)

Attire: Festive - Venetian mask encouraged

This evening is graciously underwritten by L'Hostaria.

Wines generously donated by Of Grape & Grain

For more information, contact:
Kaitlin Windle at 970-925-7175 ext. 110
or kaitlin@aspensantafeballet.com



JUAN SIDDI FLAMENCO SANTA FE

CELEBRATE OUR UPCOMING NEW YORK CITY DEBUT!

MARCH 18, 7:30pm

Join Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe for a special performance to celebrate their upcoming New York City debut, March 22-27 at the Joyce Theater! Support this exciting company milestone with a silent auction in the lobby of The Lensic.

Lead dancer and Artistic Director Juan Siddi infuses his choreography with the flavor of his artistic roots in Barcelona and Granada. This fiery ensemble of 14 dancers and musicians—many hailing from Spain—delivers a bold theatrical experience for aficionados and flamenco newcomers alike.

Tickets:

www.aspensantafeballet.com
or 505-988-1234

Spotlight: Jenelle Figgins

by Jessica Moore

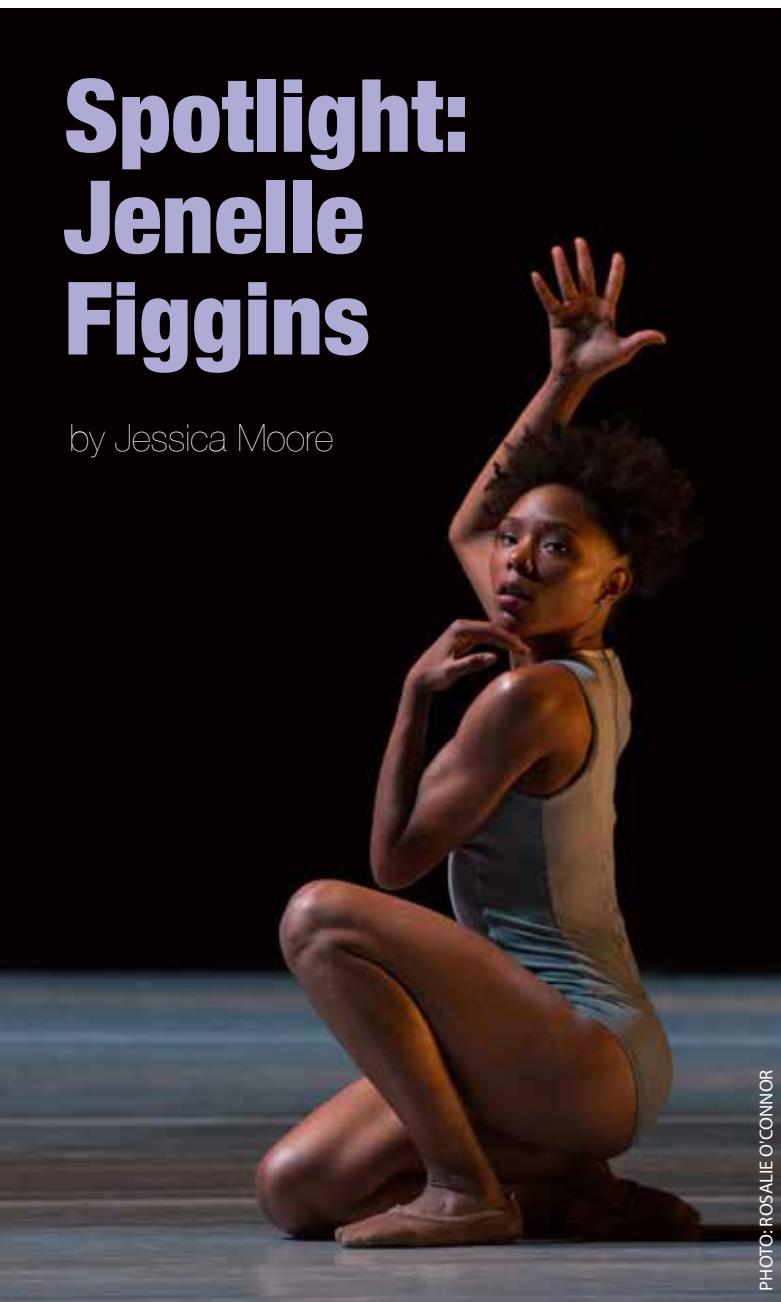


PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

"One look at Jenelle Figgins in motion and you feel as though you're watching your old friend. Her interpretations, technically and artistically, are refreshingly clean and clear; onstage, she feels sincerely human. But that's not to say she dances without glamour, spirit, or smolder."

– Kristin Schwab, *Dance Magazine*

Recently minted one of this year's "25 to Watch" in *Dance Magazine*, Jenelle Figgins has already made her mark at Aspen Santa Fe Ballet in only her first season with the company. A transplant from Dance Theatre of Harlem in New York City, Figgins hit the ground running with stellar summer performances in Jorma Elo's *1st Flash* and this winter as both Dew Drop and Sugar Plum in ASFB's *The Nutcracker*. Originally from Washington D.C., Figgins began training at the historic Jones-Haywood School of Ballet and Duke Ellington School of the Arts, winning a full scholarship to Dance Theatre of Harlem's Kennedy Center residency. She earned her BFA with honors from SUNY Purchase and is a 2014 recipient of the Princess Grace Award. As the company prepares for its upcoming performances, let's take a moment to learn more about this talented dancer.

What is your earliest memory of dance?

I vaguely remember my earliest memory of dance, but it's my absolute favorite. I must have been about three or four years old and the youngest level at my ballet school performed in a recital as bumble bees. I remember buzzing around the stage pretending to be a bee and having the time of my life! I think that's when I fell in love with being on stage as something other than myself. I think of this often when I need to tell myself to just enjoy being out there on stage or in a role. Little did I know that I'd grow up to be Dew Drop Fairy in the ASFB production of *The Nutcracker* being chased by little bumble bees! It was perfect!

When did you decide you wanted to pursue dance, specifically ballet, as a career?

I firmly decided to pursue a career in ballet when I was 14 years old upon seeing my older sister, Dionne Figgins, return from a tour in China. She was a soloist in Dance Theatre of Harlem and when she came home she brought a few of her friends from the company to our house, fresh off the plane. I was young and gushing over these beautiful ballerinas standing there in my living room. Hearing about their travels and performances first sparked my sense of wanderlust, but most importantly cemented my thirst to be a ballet dancer and travel the world. Spending that particular moment with them showed me all the possibilities available to you in this career. I learned what grace looked like and where art can take you, so that's what pushed me even harder to get to that place.

What first drew you to ASFB?

I was first introduced to the company by a ballet teacher while a junior in college. I attended a performance of ASFB at the Joyce Theater in New York and the company was exquisite. I was so impressed with the physicality of the dancers and the caliber of repertoire they were performing. I was drawn to the opportunity to create work, the choreographers the company commissioned, and the environment. ASFB's reputation precedes them, and I was drawn to quality of life and art available here.

What has the transition from Dance Theatre of Harlem to ASFB been like?

Moving from one company to another can present a lot of challenges. What's been the most helpful thus far is the general atmosphere in the studio and interactions between the dancers. Everyone is there striving, working toward the same goal, but they haven't forgotten to enjoy the process and each other. I grew up in DTH, so I have roots there that I just don't have here. While that's been the hardest part, I'm even more interested in really trying to branch out and build a community and life here. I came here to become a more intelligent, efficient, and thoughtful artist and person. ASFB has presented me with a respectful, yet lighthearted environment to work and create in, and joining a group of dancers that's so kind and in tune excites me every day. Overall, this transition has been pretty smooth because I respect both where I was and where I am now.

What profession do you think you would pursue if not dancing?

I'd probably still be in the arts, but maybe as a visual or creative director for a magazine or arts publication. My mother always said I should be a lawyer; maybe one day we'll see if she was right!

What's currently on your playlist?

D'angelo and The Vanguard; Madlib; Little Dragon; Ahmad Jahmal; Lorez Alexandria; Claude Debussy; Kendrick Lamar; Erykah Badu; and Alexandre Tharaud.

Where do you see yourself 20 years from now?

In 20 years I see myself healthy, happy, and in good company. I want to be a producer, presenter, choreographer, anthropologist, maker of beautiful things, thrill-seeker, world traveler, master of comfort and leisure, and the engine behind anything I will to happen. I hope to be doing these things both with the support and for the support of my community.

ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

ON TOUR

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Teatro La Fenice / Teatro Malibran
March 10 - 12, 2016

LA CROSSE, WI

Viterbo University Fine Arts Center
March 18, 2016

PARK CITY, UT

Eccles Center for the Performing Arts
April 9, 2016

ESCONDIDO, CA

California Center for the Arts
April 14, 2016

NORTHRIDGE, CA

Valley Performing Arts Center
April 16, 2016

LIVERMORE, CA

Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center
April 21, 2016

HUMBOLDT, CA

CenterArts - Humboldt State University
April 23, 2016

BECKET, MA

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival
June 22 - 26, 2016



Juan Siddi FLAMENCO SANTA FE

ON TOUR

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HILO, HI

UH Hilo Performing Arts Center
March 1, 2016

KAHULUI, HI

Maui Arts and Cultural Center
March 3, 2016

HONOLULU, HI

Hawaii Theatre Center
March 8, 2016

NEW YORK CITY, NY

The Joyce Theater
March 22 - 27, 2016

BECKET, MA

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival
June 23 - 26, 2016



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

www.aspensantafeballet.com

PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

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March 26 | 7:30pm

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JUAN SIDDI FLAMENCO SANTA FE

CELEBRATE OUR UPCOMING NEW YORK CITY DEBUT!

March 18 | 7:30pm

ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

April 1 | 7:30pm



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR