

SMUIN'S THE CHRISTMAS BALLET

2022
edition



SMUIN

CONTEMPORARY BALLET

CELIA FUSHILLE / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS,

Greetings of the season!

Here at Smuin, preparing our holiday program is always a good reminder of the many reasons we have to be grateful. At the top of that list is our delight in having you join us in the theater!

Smuin's *The Christmas Ballet* has become a holiday tradition for many. Whether this is your first time seeing *The Christmas Ballet* or you've seen all 28 editions, we hope you will revel in the romance, beauty, and humor that have been hallmarks since Michael Smuin's 1995 production opened.

In addition to favorite dances from years past, we have two premieres to unwrap for you. In Act I, Smuin alumna Nicole Haskins returns to choreograph a soulful pas de deux that is a prayer for Ukraine. Amy Seiwert's new ensemble piece in Act II is a lively holiday romp. From pristine classical ballet to jazz and tap set to holiday classics, we hope *The Christmas Ballet* is just what you've wished for this season.

From all of us at Smuin, we wish you a joyous season and a new year filled with good health and every blessing.

Enjoy the performance!



Celia Fushille
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

STAFF

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Lori Laqua • **Managing Director**
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Founder

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Costume Design

Sandra Woodall

Scenic Design

Douglas Schmidt

Artists

Brandon Alexander

Tessa Barbour

Ian Buchanan

Claire Buehler

Anthony Cannarella

Maggie Carey

Mengjun Chen

Ricardo Dyer

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Tess Lane

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THE CHRISTMAS BALLE

ACT 1: THE CLASSICAL CHRISTMAS

All choreography by Michael Smuin unless otherwise noted.

MAGNIFICAT

Music: J.S. Bach

Recording: Gachinger Kantorei Stuttgart, Bach-Collegium Stuttgart;
Helmuth Rilling, Cond.

ZITHER CAROL

Music: Traditional Czech

Recording: Amor Artis Chamber Choir; Johannes Somary, Cond.

FANTASIA

Choreography: Nicole Haskins

Music: Traditional

Recording: James Galway

PEACEFUL PRAYER (World Premiere)

Choreography: Nicole Haskins

Music: Prayer for Ukraine by Oleksandr Konysky and Mykola Lysenko

Recording: Chanticleer

WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

Choreography: Tessa Barbour

Music: Traditional English

Recording: 101 Strings Orchestra

VENI, VENI, EMMANUEL

Music: Traditional French

Recording: Taverner Consort, Choir and Players; Andrew Parrott, Dir.

EXCELSIS

Choreography: Rex Wheeler

Music: Antonio Vivaldi (from Gloria in D Major)

Recording: Choir of King's College, Cambridge and
the Academy of Ancient Music, Stephen Cleobury, Cond.

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN

Music: G.F. Handel (from *Messiah*)

Recording: Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra; Nicolas McGegan, Cond.

AVE MARIA

Music: Franz Schubert

Recording: Nana Mouskouri

HERE WE COME A-WASSAILING

Choreography: Jane Rehm

Music: Traditional

Recording: Canadian Brass

LA VIRGEN LAVA PAÑALES

Music: Traditional Spanish

Recording: Plácido Domingo

THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE WASSAIL

Music: Traditional English

Recording: The Waverly Consort; Michael Jaffee, Dir.

LICHT BENSCH'N "CANDLE BLESSING"

Music: Traditional Jewish

Recording: Moscow Ensemble of Jewish Music; Victor Kenzon, Dir.

DOBRA NOTSCH "SLEEP WELL"

Music: Traditional Jewish

Recording: Moscow Ensemble of Jewish Music; Victor Kenzon, Dir.

JOY TO THE WORLD

Choreography: Nicole Haskins

Music: Traditional English

Recording: Philadelphia Orchestra; Eugene Ormandy, Dir.

INTERMISSION

THE CHRISTMAS BALLET

ACT 2: THE COOL CHRISTMAS

All choreography by Michael Smuin unless otherwise noted.

CHRISTMAS IN NEW ORLEANS

Music: Richard Sherman & Joe Van Winkle

Recording: Louis Armstrong with Benny Carter's Orchestra

DRUMMER BOY

Music: Katherine K. Davis, Henry Onorati & Harry Simeone

Recording: Lou Rawls

I PRAY ON CHRISTMAS

Choreography: Amy Seiwert

Music & Recording: Harry Connick Jr.

SANTA BABY

Music: Joan Javits, Phil Springer, Tony Springer

Recording: Eartha Kitt

BABY, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE

Music: Frank Loesser

Recording: Ray Charles & Betty Carter

DROOPY LITTLE CHRISTMAS TREE

Music & Recording: Benny Martin

PRETTY PAPER

Music & Recording: Willie Nelson

THE CHRISTMAS SONG

Choreography: Erica Felsch

Music: Robert Wells & Mel Tormé

Recording: Nat King Cole

IT'S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS

Choreography: Tessa Barbour

Music: Meredith Willson

Recording: Johnny Mathis

THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS (World Premiere)

Choreography: Amy Seiwert

Music: Traditional English Christmas Carol

Recording: Straight No Chaser

BELLS OF DUBLIN

Music & Recording: The Chieftains

THE BLACKVILLE REEL

Music & Recording: The Chieftains

LA CALANDRIA

Music: Nicandro Castillo

Recording: Linda Ronstadt

CHRISTMAS TREE ROCK

Choreography: Rex Wheeler

Music: Johnny Marks

Recording: Brenda Lee

WHITE CHRISTMAS

Music: Irving Berlin

Recording: Bing Crosby

with Ken Darby Singers & John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra

❄️ Special thanks to Andrew Etherington, ❄️
our season snow sponsor.

THE CHRISTMAS BALLET LGBTQ+ NIGHT

DECEMBER 20, 7:30 PM - Smuin's spectacular San Francisco holiday tradition, *The Christmas Ballet LGBTQ+ Night*, returns with fizz! (Cue cork pop, please!) Special guest star **Lady Camden**, the alter ego of Rex Wheeler, hosts the evening and steps into the red-hot heels of the iconic role "Santa Baby." Every ticket purchased makes a donation to **Project Open Hand**, founded in 1985 to feed people with HIV/AIDS, providing nutritious meals with love to our sick and vulnerable neighbors in San Francisco and Oakland.



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BRANDON ALEXANDER, originally from Houston, TX, received his training with Lori Amare and Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy. He has danced with the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, Rochester City Ballet, Teater Vanemuine Ballet in Estonia, and Ballet Hagen in Germany. During his career he has danced works by Cayetano Soto, Itzik Galili, Riccardo De Nigris, Sir Frederick Ashton, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Giorgio Madia, Jamey Leverett, and Silas Stubbs among others. Alexander joined Smuin in 2020.



TESSA BARBOUR, of Albuquerque, NM, trained at Alwin School of the Dance before studying abroad in Warrington, England on a scholarship awarded to her at the Cecchetti International Competition. She has danced with New Mexico Ballet, Connecticut Ballet, and San Diego Ballet. Her favorite past performances include *Man in Black* by James Kudelka and *Indigo* by Stanton Welch. Since joining Smuin in 2016, Barbour has performed works by Val Caniparoli, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Trey McIntyre, Helen Pickett, and Amy Seiwert. In 2022, she was thrilled to choreograph her first world premiere on the Company, *Vignettes*.



IAN BUCHANAN hails from Fairfax, CA, where he trained with Dance Theatre Seven. He has danced with Houston Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Tulsa Ballet, Rochester City Ballet, and Alberta Ballet. Buchanan has performed works by Jiří Kylián, Stanton Welch, Ma Cong, Ben Stevenson, Wen Wei Wang, Aszure Barton, Jean Grand-Maître, Julia Adam, Denise Clarke, James Kudelka, Ronald Hynd, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Adam Hougland and Leiland Charles. Buchanan joined Smuin in 2018.



CLAIRE BUEHLER is from Milwaukee, WI and trained at the Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy. She danced with Oklahoma City Ballet's Studio Company, Nashville Ballet II, and Minnesota Ballet before joining Smuin. Her favorite past performances include *Cygnets* in *Swan Lake* and *Dew Drop* in *The Nutcracker*, as well as contemporary works by Paul Vasterling, Gina Patterson, and Chris Stuart. Since joining Smuin in 2021, Claire has been featured in *Excelsis*, a new work for *The Christmas Ballet* by Rex Wheeler and in Amy Seiwert's *Been Through Diamonds*.



MAGGIE CAREY, of Dayton, OH, received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance Performance from Butler University, where she performed works by choreographers including George Balanchine, Nacho Duato, and Paul Taylor. Upon graduating, Carey performed with the Dayton Ballet. She then spent two years with the Cincinnati Ballet Second Company, performing works by Victoria Morgan, George Balanchine, Ohad Naharin, and working with choreographers such as Garrett Smith, Nicolo Fonte, and Jennifer Archibald. Since joining Smuin in 2018, Carey has performed works by Amy Seiwert, Val Caniparoli, Rex Wheeler, and Annabelle Lopez Ochoa.



ANTHONY CANNARELLA was born and raised in Madison WI, training at Monona Academy of Dance and the Rock School. A former company artist with Sacramento Ballet, Anthony's performed featured roles including Ron Cunningham's *Peter Pan*, Stephen Mills' *Hamlet*, and Balanchine's *Tarantella*. He's toured with Amy Siewert's *Imagery to The Joyce* and *Jacob's Pillow*, and recently worked with Jessica Lang in LA Opera's *Aida*. Anthony danced with Grammy winning artist Olivia Rodrigo in *SOUR Prom*. He also performed in *Young Frankenstein* at Ogunquit Playhouse. Anthony greatly enjoys choreographing, and created works for Sacramento Ballet, Capital Dance Project, and Ballet Project OC.



MENGJUN CHEN, a native of Wenzhou, China, trained at the Beijing Dance Academy and Joffrey Ballet Academy of Dance. After receiving his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Beijing Dance Academy, he joined Milwaukee Ballet where he performed major roles in *Giselle*, *Swan Lake*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *The Nutcracker*, *Don Quixote*, *Cinderella*, *Dracula* and *La Boheme*. Chen also performed contemporary works by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Trey McIntyre, Matthew Neenan, Ma Cong, Amy Seiwert and Val Caniparoli. In 2014, he was a finalist in the USA International Ballet Competition. Chen joined Smuin in 2015.



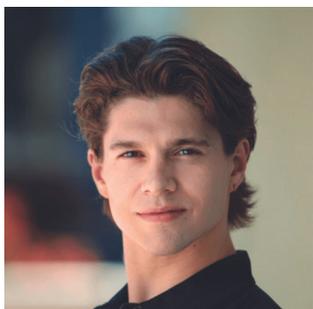
RICARDO DYER is originally from New York City, NY. He graduated with a BFA in Dance Performance from Butler University. During his time there he performed works by George Balanchine, Paul Taylor and Gerald Arpino. Upon graduating, he has danced with six professional companies — most recently LA Opera and LA Dance Project. He has performed works by Trey McIntyre, Jessica Lang, Rex Wheeler and Val Caniparoli. Ricardo is also working towards becoming a commercial model/actor. He is happy to be rejoining Smuin for a third season.



CASSIDY ISAACSON, trained at Pacific Northwest Ballet and Deborah Hadley's School of Ballet. She has won competition titles at Tremaine, West Coast Dance Explosion, Spotlight, YAGP and more. After receiving a full scholarship to The Juilliard School she danced at Grand Rapids Ballet for 8 years performing in China, Paris and Vietnam. Since joining Smuin Contemporary Ballet in 2019, she has choreographed over 11 world premieres on her colleagues. Her favorite past works performed include Trey McIntyre's *Wild Sweet Love*, Alejandro Cerrudo's *Extremely Close*, and Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Written and Forgotten* and *Requiem for a Rose*.



TESS LANE trained at South Bay Ballet in Torrance, CA, and went on to apprentice with Sacramento Ballet, where she performed works by George Balanchine, Ron Cunningham, and Lila York. In 2013, Lane joined California Ballet Company, where she danced Septime Webre's *Peter Pan*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *Fluctuating Hemlines*. She danced with the National Choreographers' Initiative in 2017, 2018, and 2019. Since joining Smuin in 2018 she has danced works by Trey McIntyre, Amy Seiwert, and Rex Wheeler. In 2021, Lane completed her 200-Hour Yoga Teacher Training.



MARC LAPIERRE began his early training at Ballet Etudes in Norwalk CT under the direction of Nanette Vallas. While at Ballet Etudes he trained closely with Christina Fagundes. Marc furthered his training at The School of American Ballet. He then went on to dance with Los Angeles Ballet, where he had the pleasure of dancing works by August Bournonville, George Balanchine, Aszure Barton and Alejandro Cerrudo. He then joined Oregon Ballet Theatre for two seasons. During his time with OBT, he danced works by Alvin Ailey, Ben Stevenson, Nicolò Fonte, Christopher Stowell, and Trey McIntyre. LaPierre joined Smuin in 2021.



TEREZ DEAN ORR, native to New York, received her training at the prestigious School of American Ballet, the official school of New York City Ballet. In 2005, she joined the State Street Ballet of Santa Barbara, dancing a wide range of contemporary and classical repertoire. Dean Orr joined Smuin in 2008 and has been featured in works by Jiří Kylián, Trey McIntyre, Val Caniparoli, Helen Pickett, Amy Seiwert, and Annabelle Lopez Ochoa. Dean Orr has her BA from Saint Mary's College (LEAP Program). She recently co-founded Jettison Creative, a production studio built to assist creatives.

DATEBOOK

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Photo: Chris Hardy

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SMUIN

CONTEMPORARY BALLET

CELIA FUSHILLE / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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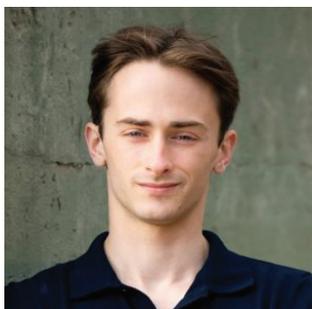
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LAUREN PSCHIRRER, a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, apprenticed at Rochester City Ballet and the Joffrey Ballet. At the Joffrey, she danced works by Ashton and Balanchine. At Ballet Memphis, Pschirrer performed works by Matthew Neenan and Gabrielle Lamb. Lauren has originated roles for the National Choreographers Initiative in California in 2015, 2017 and 2018. She joined Smuin in 2016, dancing works by Val Caniparoli and Helen Pickett, and has been featured in ballets by Amy Seiwert. She is currently being coached by Arleen Sugano, creator of SuganoSystemBallet — a science-integrated ballet technique.



ALISON RAMORAN trained at South Bay Ballet (now known as Ballet California) in Torrance, CA, with Diane Lauridsen. In 2017 she received the Daily Breeze “Making a Difference Award for Outstanding Achievements in the Arts” by the California Legislature Assembly. Upon graduating in 2018, she joined Oklahoma City Ballet’s second company, was promoted to apprentice in 2020, and corps de ballet in 2021. She has performed works by August Bournonville, Michael Pink, Septime Webre, Robert Mills, Ryan Nye, Nicolo Fonte, Jerome Robbins, Jessica Lang, Annabelle Lopez-Ochoa, Rex Wheeler, & Osnel Delgado. Ramoran joined Smuin in 2022.



YURI ROGERS began his training at the Academy of Ballet San Francisco under the direction of Richard Gibson and Zory Karah. He then had the opportunity to continue his training and perform with the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago as a trainee for two seasons. Rogers then joined the Grand Rapids Ballet as an apprentice. The following season he joined BalletMet’s second company in Columbus, OH. Rogers has performed works by Lar Lubovitch, Leiland Charles, and Edwaard Liang. Rogers joined Smuin in 2021.



JOÃO SAMPAIO trained in classical ballet in his hometown of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He has won national and international dance competitions, including the Youth America Grand Prix and the World Ballet Competition. Sampaio joined Tulsa Ballet in 2014, where he performed featured roles in Jiří Kylián’s *Petite Mort*, Wayne McGregor’s *Infra*, Nacho Duato’s *Remanso*, Kurt Jooss’ *The Green Table* and Edwaard Liang’s *Romeo and Juliet* and *Age of Innocence*. In 2018, he joined Festival Ballet Providence, performing lead roles in George Balanchine’s *Serenade* and *Swan Lake*. Sampaio joined Smuin in 2019.



BRENNAN WALL, originally from Cape Cod, MA, studied at the Los Angeles Ballet Academy. She danced with Silicon Valley Ballet (previously Ballet San Jose) as a trainee before joining The New Ballet's Studio Company. In 2017, Wall joined Ballet de Monterrey under director José Manuel Carreño. She performed in Luis Serrano's *La Bayadere*, *Swan Lake*, and *Don Quijote*, and danced soloist roles in *The Nutcracker*, Alberto Méndez's *Phantom of the Opera*, and Diego Landin's *Shorthand of Emotion*. Since joining Smuin in 2019, Wall has danced various roles by Amy Seiwert, Michael Smuin, Gina Patterson, and Rex Wheeler.

Save the date

ANNUAL GALA

SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 2023
THE GALLERIA, SAN FRANCISCO

Smuin's Board of Trustees and the Friends of Smuin host committee invite you to celebrate Smuin's 29th season with cocktails, dance performances, dinner, and live auction!

For more information on sponsorship opportunities or early ticket and table purchases, please contact Alicia Tos, Development Director, at 415-556-5000 x100 or atos@smuinballet.org



TESSA BARBOUR | CHOREOGRAPHER

Tessa Barbour began her choreographic endeavors during her first season with Smuin in 2015. Since then Barbour has created a multitude of works for Smuin's *Choreography Showcase*, *The Christmas Ballet* and virtual dance films, showcasing her versatility in tap and neoclassical ballet. She has also created ballet and jazz pieces on her students at Marin Dance Theatre. In 2021, Jettison Creative invited Barbour to be their first artist in residence as director and choreographer of a short film project. Barbour looks forward to future opportunities as she develops her choreographic skills, voice and style.

ERICA FELSCH | CHOREOGRAPHER

Erica Felsch began her professional training at North Carolina School of the Arts, and went on to attend the pre-professional program at San Francisco Ballet. She has performed with Colorado Ballet, Madison Ballet, Nova Ballet, North Carolina School of the Arts Summer Performance Series, Sierra Nevada Ballet, and Ballet Arizona. Erica was featured in commercials, print ads, and an episode of Disney's "Shake It Up". She has originated roles in world premieres by Adam Hougland, Helen Pickett, Val Caniparoli and Garrett Ammon, and performed pieces by Michael Smuin, Jiří Kylián, Trey McIntyre, Darrell Moultrie, and many more.

NICOLE HASKINS | CHOREOGRAPHER

Nicole Haskins, originally from Venice Beach, California, danced professionally with Sacramento Ballet, Washington Ballet, and Smuin Contemporary Ballet, retiring in 2019. Her choreographic career also flourished, including commissions for Sacramento Ballet, Richmond Ballet, Smuin Contemporary Ballet, Dayton Ballet, and Oregon Ballet Theatre. Her choreography has been presented at the Los Angeles Dance Invitational, the McCallum Theater's Dancing Under The Stars Choreographic Competition, and regional festivals. She was one of the 2017 winners of Oregon Ballet Theatre's Choreography XX competition, participated in the New York Choreographic Institute, receiving the Institute's Fellowship Grant in 2011 and the Institute's Commission Initiative in 2017. Haskins has recently returned to the Bay Area where she's teaching at several studios.

MICHAEL OESCH | LIGHTING DESIGNER

Michael is a professional lighting designer for dance, theatre, operas, and musicals. Since joining Smuin in 2004, he has designed the lighting for *The Christmas Ballet*, *The Turntable*, *Be Here Now*, *The Poetry of Being*, *Tutto Eccetto il Lavandino*, *Madness*, *Rack, & Honey*, *Oh*, *Inverted World*, and *Fly Me to the Moon*, as well as many more Smuin Ballet productions. He also designs lighting for other companies throughout the Bay area, where his designs have won a Theatre Bay Area award, Shelly Award, and have been nominated for BATCC Awards, and an Isadora Duncan Award. See more of his work at Michaeloesch.com

DOUGLAS SCHMIDT | SCENIC DESIGNER

For the past 50 years, Schmidt has designed for film, television, arena, and theme park presentations, as well as more than 200 productions for Broadway, Off Broadway, regional theaters, and major opera companies in the U.S. and Europe. His Broadway credits include the original productions of *Grease* and *Frankenstein*. In 2015, he received the United States Institute for Theatre Technology Award for Distinguished Achievement in Scene Design and The Robert L.B. Tobin Award for Sustained Excellence in Theatrical Design.

JANE HOPE REHM | CHOREOGRAPHER

Jane Hope Rehm (she, her) native to Perrysburg, Ohio received her training at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and San Francisco Ballet School. Rehm joined Ballet Memphis in 2001, where she both danced and began her choreographic pursuits. She went on to join Smuin Ballet in 2010, and was featured in works by Jiří Kylián, Trey McIntyre, Val Caniparoli, Helen Pickett, and Amy Seiwert. While at Smuin, she had the opportunity to create new choreographic works in the *Choreography Showcase* and *The Christmas Ballet*. Jane finished her career dancing for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Post:Ballet, and Julia Adam Dance. She now lives in west Sonoma County, and is grateful for any time spent in Smuin company – past, present and future.

AMY SEIWERT | CHOREOGRAPHER

Amy Seiwert worked with her mentor Michael Smuin for eight of her nine years as a dancer with Smuin. As the *San Francisco Guardian* wrote, “She quite possibly is the Bay Area’s most original dance thinker.” Named one of “25 to Watch” by Dance Magazine, her first full evening of choreography was named one of the “Top 10” dance events of 2007 by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Her work is in the repertory of Washington, Atlanta, Oakland, Sacramento, Colorado, Louisville, Cincinnati, Carolina, Oklahoma City, Dayton, Milwaukee, and American Repertory Ballets, as well as Smuin, Ballet/Met, AXIS Dance, Robert Moses’ KIN, and Ballet Austin.

REX WHEELER | CHOREOGRAPHER

Rex Wheeler, AKA Lady Camden, is originally from London, England, and trained at the Royal Ballet School and Elmhurst School for Dance. After dancing with Birmingham Royal Ballet as a student, he performed with Slovak National Ballet and Sacramento Ballet before dancing with Smuin from 2015-2018. A San Francisco-based choreographer and a founding member of Capital Dance Project, Wheeler has created works for many organizations across the country including Sacramento Ballet, Richmond Ballet, the New York Choreographic Institute, and Smuin Contemporary Ballet.

SANDRA WOODALL | COSTUME DESIGNER

Sandra Woodall has contributed scenic and costume designs to San Francisco Ballet, Frankfurt Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet, National Ballet companies of Finland, Georgia and Norway, State Opera Ballet of Austria, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Houston Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance, and Singapore Dance Theatre, among others. Recent productions include visual design of *Winter Journey* (Beijing), written by Wan Fang, director, Stan Lai; *Camino Real* (Atlanta Ballet) choreographed by Helen Pickett; and *Be Here Now*, choreographed by Trey McIntyre for Smuin.

MICHAEL SMUIN | FOUNDER & CHOREOGRAPHER

An American master, the late Michael Smuin began his career as a dancer performing with San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and on Broadway. A Tony and Emmy award-winning choreographer, Smuin brought a signature style to his work on stage, in film, and on television. A maverick, he fearlessly blended the theatrical with classical and popular styles, combining elements drawn from his vast stage experience. Smuin's works continue to dazzle and entertain contemporary audiences. His company, Smuin, was founded in 1994 to showcase his creative versatility and unique vision. The Company maintains his legacy today.

CELIA FUSHILLE | ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

As Artistic Director of Smuin Contemporary Ballet since 2007, Celia Fushille has been leading the artistic vision of the Company and increasing its reputation as San Francisco's premier contemporary ballet company. A founding member of Smuin, during her 25-year performing career, Fushille appeared on stages in the U.S. and Europe, on television, and in film. In addition to maintaining Michael Smuin's legacy, throughout her 15 years as Artistic Director, she has commissioned more than 20 premieres and added the work of 15 choreographers new to the Smuin audience. From 2008-2014, Fushille also served as Executive Director of the Company. In 2021 Fushille was invited to become a Trustee of the Smuin Board. She holds a BA degree (summa cum laude) from Saint Mary's College of California

LORI LAQUA | MANAGING DIRECTOR

Lori Laqua brings 30+ years of experience to her role as Managing Director of Smuin Contemporary Ballet. Laqua oversaw the renovation of Smuin Center for Dance, the organization's permanent home, which joined the rehearsal studios and administrative offices under one roof for the first time. Laqua previously served as project manager for the design and construction of the ODC Dance Commons and the ODC Theater during her 20 years there. She is especially pleased to have kept Smuin dancing during the pandemic having utilized the CARES Act and grant programs to help retain employees and to present programming on new platforms. Laqua holds a PhD (ABD) and MArch in Architectural History from the University of Virginia, a MA in Art History from the University of Missouri-Columbia, and a BA in History and Art History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Laqua joined Smuin in 2017.

JO ELLEN ARNTZ | COMPANY MANAGER & WARDROBE

Jo Ellen Arntz moved to San Francisco after receiving her BFA in dance from Creighton University. She danced with San Francisco Ballet from 1981-1991 and has taught dance in the Bay Area since 1977. She began at Smuin as Wardrobe Supervisor in 1996 and became Company Manager shortly thereafter. Working with Michael Smuin at San Francisco Ballet and later his own company prepared her for the multiple hats she wears in the organization today.

AMY LONDON | BALLET MASTER & EDUCATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Amy London trained in Albuquerque, New Mexico, with Karen Alwin and Shauna Bereska. She danced with Hartford Ballet, Diablo Ballet, and Smuin. Her favorite Smuin roles included: *The Eternal Idol*, *Q.a.V.*, and *Hearts Suite*. She has served on faculty for schools throughout the Bay Area and as Artistic Coordinator at Marin Ballet, where she has choreographed more than 20 works. As Ballet Master, she enjoys preserving Michael Smuin's legacy, as well as being the caretaker of the works of Val Caniparoli, Trey McIntyre, Amy Seiwert, Ma Cong, Helen Pickett, Adam Houglund, Choo-San Goh, and Jiří Kylián.

KATHRYN T GRAHAM | PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

KT Graham joined Smuin in 1997 after working as Production Stage Manager and Lighting Designer for Lewitzky Dance Company in Los Angeles, as well as Technical & Lighting Director for Washington Ballet in Washington, D.C., with whom she toured extensively both nationally and internationally. She also engages in freelance projects and has particularly enjoyed serving as Production Stage Manager for Amy Seiwert's *Imagery*, *Dances from the Heart* benefits for The Richmond/Ermet AIDS Foundation, and for the National Dance USA showcase in 2012.



Let's go. 

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THE CHRISTMAS BAILET

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