

# ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

newsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnews 2018 SUMMER SEASON



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# ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

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PHOTO: SHAUNIJANI

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PHOTO: MICHELE CARDAMONE



Dear Friends,

This winter season was a whirlwind! We crisscrossed the country with stops from New Orleans to Victoria, BC, and Memphis to Los Angeles. Over 600 children performed alongside our company members in the perennial holiday classic, *The Nutcracker*. The premiere of *Half/Cut/Split* by Finnish choreographer Jorma Elo featuring pianist Joyce Yang was sold out and presentations of *Ailey II* and *Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo* were hugely successful.

On April 7, after ten fruitful seasons, veteran dancer Emily Proctor gave her last performance with ASFB at the Valley Performing Arts Center in Los Angeles. Emily joined ASFB directly after graduating from Juilliard, spending her entire 10-year dance career with us. We wish her the best as she moves on to the next chapter in her life. (pg 6)

Newcomer Jenny Winton joins ASFB in May. After training at San Francisco Ballet School and spending five years dancing for the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago, Jenny experienced Broadway playing Penny in the national tour of *Dirty Dancing*. We welcome her to our ranks and can't wait for you to see her onstage. (pg 14)

This summer, we look forward to the return of three audience favorites: Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Pilobolus, and Nrityagram Dance Ensemble. ASFB will premiere two new ballets: a commissioned work by up and coming choreographer Bryan Arias, and the jazz-themed *Tuplet* by Swedish virtuoso Alexander Ekman. In case you missed it in the winter, we will offer encore performances of our newest project – *An Evening with Pianist Joyce Yang*. (pg 8)

In 2004, Aspen Santa Fe Ballet made its debut in Jean-Philippe's hometown of Biarritz, France. It is with great pride that we announce our return to this coastal resort. Le Festival du Temps d'Aimer, one of Europe's most important dance festivals, will host ASFB for one performance on September 8. We invite you to travel with us and experience what promises to be a memorable trip. (pg 13)

With one-night-only performances throughout the summer and a loyal and dedicated audience, good seats sell out quickly. In appreciation of your support we are pleased to offer you, our donors, the opportunity to purchase your favorite seats before they go on sale to the general public. We hope you will take advantage of this valuable perk.

Please mark your calendars for our popular summer galas. Not only are these events a fun way to connect with ASFB, but they are also vital to our existence. The galas are our biggest fundraising events of the season and their success will help us continue forward. (pg 8)

As always, we thank you for your continued support. See you in the theater.

*Tom Mossbrucker*  
Tom Mossbrucker

*Jean-Philippe Malaty*  
Jean-Philippe Malaty



PHOTO: JOAO CANDIANI

# A World Like Ours

by Alexandra Villareal

As human beings, we relish routine.

We scurry off to work, where we tuck ourselves in lonely cubicles for eight hours a day. We devote our energy to menial tasks that occupy long swathes of time. And we walk through our world as strangers to the neighbors around us, terrified of a plunge into meaningful connection.

To most people, the monotony that controls our lives might be fodder for thought, but nothing more. However, for Bryan Arias, it is inspiration. He harvests the images that represent who we are and how we live, and he turns them into art.

"I like to create work that reflects us, that reflects society, that reflects our world, so I focus on creating naturalism and realism with abstract aesthetics," Arias said. "There are certain connections I feel that we avoid. I think generally, in a way, humans fear connection, and yet it's what we want -- and it's what we need."

This June, Arias will bring his choreographic talents into the studio at Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, where he will create a world premiere on the company. The occasion marks his debut with ASFB, and months before actually heading west, he said he was already looking forward to making new friends.

"I'm just excited to be one of those creators, going to Aspen Santa Fe Ballet and building that relationship with the company," he said.

Arias' career as a choreographer has taken off in recent years. On an afternoon in early March, he was in the studio with Paul Taylor Dance Company, where his commission was about to take the stage at Lincoln Center.

Arias has already developed a strong presence in Europe, choreographing for The Scottish Ballet, Ballet Basel, and Nederlands Dans Theater II, among others. This action-packed timeline all precedes his arrival in Aspen, where his creativity will be on full display.

But though Arias' choreography has garnered widespread attention, the position he now occupies is relatively new to him. In fact, he only just left his commitment as a member of Kidd Pivot, Crystal Pite's contemporary ballet company in Vancouver. Until recently, much of his life revolved around his role as a dancer, and now, he is readjusting as he goes beyond execution to foster creation.

"Intellectually what changed is I'm no longer just filtering the information that I get from the choreographer into movement, but I'm now also thinking a lot about the viewer and their experience," Arias said.

Arias' path in the dance world has been long and winding. Born in Puerto Rico, he moved to Spanish Harlem as a kid. At a block party, he chanced upon hip-hop when a troupe led a mini-presentation and its director noticed him. And so Arias forayed into dance through street forms, learning early on to freestyle in fresh and innovative ways.

Later, he ended up at an arts high school by accident. There, he thought he might continue with hip-hop through the dance department. But in his classes, a whole new world opened to him. He stumbled into his first tendus and pliés, and soon after, his teachers guided him to New York's acclaimed arts program at LaGuardia High School.

"I fell in love with ballet," Arias said. When he graduated, Arias chose to pursue dance as a profession. His decision was two-pronged: not only was it his dream, but he also wanted to be able to help his single mother pay the bills.

Even though he reached for the stars, he kept falling on solid ground when auditions never swung his way. "The reality of it is that I'm short, and my body wasn't meant for ballet," he said.

But one day, he defied the odds after seeing a posting for a male soloist at what was then North Carolina Dance Theatre (now Charlotte Ballet). When he showed up to try out, he was the only man there, and after a private audition, he received a contract with NCDT's second company.

The rest is history.

Arias went on to perform around the world with prominent troupes like Complexions and Nederlands Dans Theater. But when at NDT he inched closer and closer to a deadline to sign a lifetime contract, he hesitated.

"It felt like I could tell you exactly what I was going to do to the nail, and I wasn't okay with that at 25," he said. "I felt like there's different versions of me to explore to completely find myself."

Meanwhile, he had fallen out of love with dance.

"It started becoming monotonous, and becoming something that I was just doing (rather than) experiencing," he remembered.

It was time for Arias to branch out and make his own work, instead of existing only as a dancer. And so he decided to "create the poetry that I want to see in the world," he said, and he has run with that idea ever since.

After returning to North America from Europe, Arias started teaching so he could learn to read a space and find his own artistic language. He joined Kidd Pivot, where he was exposed to Pite's creative process. And during five years with the company, he developed his own choreographic visions, which now flood onto proscenium stages as he curates premiere after premiere.

In the studio, Arias has a fully stocked toolkit because of his background. He taps into the type of physicality a dancer offers him and finds ways to put himself into their movement vocabulary.

Sometimes, hip-hop will come to the fore as the best technique for



PHOTO: COURTESY SCOTTISH BALLET

a commission. Other times, classical or contemporary ballet reigns. Even the salsa roots in his culture can take hold of his imagination and influence a work's aesthetic.

"It's all there somehow," Arias said. "It's interesting because I never really look for those moments, but I see them after the fact, and that's when it's very satisfying for me."

In his choreography, Arias immerses his audiences in a universe much like our own. There, just like here, the everyday gets in the way of what's most important: The relationships we could have, if we let them thrive.

Arias does not want his work to provoke black or white interpretations, nor does he demand that viewers feel a certain way as they watch -- they can see the pity in a missed connection even if they don't fully understand it, he said.

But what he does expect from his audience is an intuitive emotional reaction, some nugget of connection that lives in what he dubbed the "magic in the grey area."

"Hopefully, what I create -- the poetry that happens in the space -- allows them to feel vulnerable," he said.

*Alexandra Villareal is a freelance writer and contributor to the Huffington Post*

**ASPEN**  
Aspen Santa Fe Ballet  
July 7 | 8:00pm  
Aspen District Theatre

**SANTA FE**  
Aspen Santa Fe Ballet  
July 14 | 8:00pm  
The Lensic Performing Arts Center



PHOTO: ROSE ECHENBAUM



PHOTO: ROSALE O'CONNOR

# A Dancer's Final Bow: Emily Proctor

by Debra Levine

A dancer's career is finite. That we all know. For Emily Proctor, 32, a dancer both pensive and dreamy, the moment arrived April 7, 2018 at Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC) in Northridge, California. A big armful of cherry brandy roses nearly overcame her final ballerina bow for Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. The fragile-looking, but steely-spirited Proctor began her career with ASFB in October 2007, after graduating from The Juilliard School. But like all technically proficient artists, an equal duration of training preceded the professional period. So it is a long haul. In her case, she also grappled with, and prevailed against, a devastating foot injury.

Her cheeks flushed from performing, Proctor chats at a post-show reception, musing about her final moments on stage for ASFB: "I was gazing around. I looked at the other dancers; I looked at the lights; I looked at Joyce [guest pianist, Joyce Yang]. I felt the audience's energy."

Proctor's evening hit a high note. Dancing in the third of ASFB's four showcases as VPAC's resident company, she soloed passionately in Nicolo Fonte's aptly named, *Where We Left Off*. She also assisted the choreographer in the ballet's staging.

The slender, auburn-haired dancer circulates the reception amidst colleagues with whom she took daily class, toured by bus or flight, danced at the Joyce, at Jacob's Pillow, and in Europe. Among them for the evening is her husband, Peter Franc, the former ASFB dancer who flew into Los Angeles from Portland to share the special event. "We spent two and a half years apart, so it is time to be together," says Proctor with simple sweetness.

Franc, now a principal dancer with Oregon Ballet Theatre, proudly notes: "Emily comes alive in performance. There's a loose abandon and freedom that always surprises me. I'll never forget the first time I noticed that, and here we are starting a new chapter of our life together."

Indeed, it's personal. The move is much planned. Married since January 2017, it's time, according to Proctor because, "Peter and I would like to have a family. I reached a milestone of dancing professionally for a decade. I have had roles in important ballets. I feel fulfilled and satisfied. I squeezed in as much as I could!"

Now comes a new chapter. "I am abuzz with exciting things. I am a real estate agent in Portland, and I am pursuing that with every ounce of enthusiasm."

This kind of resolve is not new to Proctor. She pursued real estate as a "just in case" fallback while recovering from foot surgery in 2012. "Prior to surgery, the pain was taking me down," she says. "My toe was a grade-three deterioration in my joint, I was bone-on-bone in one area."

She consulted a top specialist at The Steadman Clinic in Vail. "I was so fortunate to have a world-class surgeon researching my case. But even he told me, 'I am not sure I can help you.'"

"So I experienced the possibility of it all being taken away. When that burden was lifted, I really could feel the freedom of dancing. These past five years, the absence of pain catapulted me. When I was fortunate enough to get my career back, there was no reason to hold back," she says with a laugh.

One beneficiary of Proctor's renewed dance vitality, the choreographer Alejandro Cerrudo says: "What I can say about Emily, except that she gave her all to the process of creating *Silent Ghost*? I could feel her transforming, being completely open to the work, and helping to shape the work esthetically as well as emotionally."

The truth is that *Silent Ghost* took months for Proctor to master. "I was struggling with it. I love to give a lot of energy, but sometimes you have to take it down a notch. I had to stay grounded and smooth out my musical accents. I had a beautiful duet with Craig Black. At the premiere I was very disappointed. I didn't feel I had connected with my partner, nor to the ground beneath me. Alejandro was in that audience and I am sure he said something nice, but I remember my personal disappointment."

"We kept this ballet for three years and it became an audience favorite. So *Silent Ghost* was performed over and over. One time, I looked in Craig's eyes when the pause came, and in that moment, I realized it has nothing to do with the steps. It is not about this turn or the height of my leg, the only thing that matters is my connection to my partner. I am

here for these seven minutes, with this audience, on this stage, and we are all in the present moment."

Another Emily fan is choreographer Cayetano Soto. "I always like Emily," says Soto. "She had the DNA of ASFB. From day one when she stepped in the studio I admired her determination, artistry, and passion for every ballet. I will never forget her solo in *Huma Rojo*. She captured the essential voice of my ballet in 49 seconds alone on the stage."

Co-directors Jean-Philippe Malaty and Tom Mossbrucker together recruited Proctor from Juilliard. Says Malaty: "Emily gave us all an incredible gift by spending her entire professional career with ASFB. She had a remarkable career and made herself an ASFB dancer. By her last four years it was not unusual to see her in a lead role in all three ballets in one evening."

"Emily has enjoyed great success as a dancer and it has been a joy to watch her develop as an artist," adds Mossbrucker with similar appreciation. "Twyla Tharp hand-picked Emily to dance the role Twyla created for herself in *Sue's Leg*. She was a muse for Fernando Melo in his ground-breaking ballet, *Re:play*, and she brought audiences to tears night after night with the poetic pas de deux Alejandro Cerrudo created for her in *Silent Ghost*."

That is a mutual admiration society. In the words of Emily Proctor: "I cannot express enough gratitude to Tom and Jean-Philippe for making my dream a reality. I found my work ethic because of this company. I met my husband in this company. I discovered Portland because of this company. These things I will treasure for the rest of my life."

*Debra Levine is a Los Angeles dance critic writing her first book. Her fine-arts blog, arts-meme, is celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2018.*

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## SANTA FE



PHOTO: ROSALIE O'CONNOR

### ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

July 14 | 8:00pm

Start your summer of dance off on the right foot with an unforgettable evening of contemporary ballet featuring a world premiere by rising star choreographer Bryan Arias in his ASFB debut. Exploring the interplay between rhythms both human-made and from jazz, ASFB's company premiere of Swedish phenom Alexander Ekman's *Tuplet* is deft, multi-media entertainment. Master dancemaker Jiří Kylián's stark and mysterious *Sleepless* explores the thin line between the conscious and subconscious. Be there when three clever choreographic voices come together in one magical evening!

"Aspen Santa Fe Ballet is ready for its Hollywood close-up."

– Los Angeles Times

## ASPEN



PHOTO: CHRIS COZENS

### ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

July 7 | 8:00pm

Generously underwritten by Carolyn Powers

Start your summer of dance off on the right foot with an unforgettable evening of contemporary ballet featuring a world premiere by rising star choreographer Bryan Arias in his ASFB debut. Exploring the interplay between rhythms both human-made and from jazz, ASFB's company premiere of Swedish phenom Alexander Ekman's *Tuplet* is deft, multi-media entertainment. Master dancemaker Jiří Kylián's stark and mysterious *Sleepless* explores the thin line between the conscious and subconscious. Be there when three clever choreographic voices come together in one magical evening!

"Aspen Santa Fe Ballet is ready for its Hollywood close-up."

– Los Angeles Times



PHOTO: BEN MCGOWAN

### PILOBOLUS

July 24 | 8:00pm

Continually testing the limits of human physicality, Pilobolus brings an evening of diverse and surprising repertoire to Santa Fe. Part Darwinian investigation, part love story, *Symbiosis* sweeps viewers away in an emotional duet. In *Rushes*, journey to what the *Los Angeles Times* called "a Fellini-esque carnival." Whether exploring the competition between animals in *Branches*, or executing classic Pilobolus feats of strength in *Gnomen*, prepare to be amazed!

"A triumph of ingenuity"

– The Huffington Post



PHOTO: QUINN B. WHARTON

### HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO

July 20 & 21 | 8:00pm

Generously underwritten by Les Dames d'Aspen

One of only a few, select stops on a tour celebrating the company's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago lands in Aspen with a specially curated program of highlights from the world's leading dance makers. Set to two of Brahms' Sonatas for cello and piano, celebrated Canadian choreographer Crystal Pite's poignant *Solo Echo* conveys a message of acceptance and loss. HSDC's virtuosic and versatile dancers will also tackle a reimagining of master contemporary choreographer Ohad Naharin's eclectic signature, *Minus 16*.

"One thing must be made abundantly clear: The Hubbard Street dancers are simply phenomenal."

– Chicago Sun-Times



PHOTO: MICHELE CARDAMONE

### ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET: AN EVENING WITH PIANIST JOYCE YANG

September 1 | 8:00pm

Enjoy a special encore of this milestone evening of live piano and dance that wowed sold-out audiences in its winter premiere! At the center of this program is the world-renowned pianist Joyce Yang, a Van Cliburn International Piano Competition silver medalist. ASFB tackles the quirky *Half/Cut/Split* by noted Finnish choreographer Jorma Elo, who collaborated with Yang to bring Robert Schumann's *Carnaval* to life. Also on the program are Jiří Kylián's poetic *Return to a Strange Land* set to the music of Leoš Janáček, and Nicolo Fonte's enthralling *Where We Left Off* with music by Philip Glass.

"[Yang's] attention to detail and clarity is as impressive as her agility, balance and velocity." – The Washington Post



PHOTO: ROBERTO RICCI

### PILOBOLUS

July 28 | 8:00pm

#### DANCE FOR KIDS!

July 28 | 4:00pm

Generously underwritten by Bebe and David Schweppe

Continually testing the limits of human physicality, Pilobolus brings an evening of diverse and surprising repertoire to Aspen. Part Darwinian investigation, part love story, *Symbiosis* sweeps viewers away in an emotional duet. In *Rushes*, journey to what the *Los Angeles Times* called "a Fellini-esque carnival." Whether exploring the competition between animals in *Branches*, or executing classic Pilobolus feats of strength in *Gnomen*, prepare to be amazed!

"A triumph of ingenuity."

– The Huffington Post



PHOTO: AKHILA VENKAT

### NRITYAGRAM DANCE ENSEMBLE

September 27 | 8:00pm

In a magnificent blending of cultures, India's acclaimed Nrityagram Dance Ensemble presents its stunning collaboration with Chitrasena Dance Company from Sri Lanka: *Samhara*. Performed with live instrumentalists and singers, this fusion of Odissi, a classical Indian dance, with Kandyana, a dance traditional to Sri Lanka, melds together two ancient and elegant art forms. Be carried away to South Asia in this transformative evening!

"Of the Indian dance I have encountered, I have never been so dazzled or so moved!"

– Financial Times



PHOTO: MICHELE CARDAMONE

### ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET: AN EVENING WITH PIANIST JOYCE YANG

Presented in collaboration with the Aspen Music Festival & School

August 10 & 11 | 8:00pm

Generous underwriting of this special performance provided by Mona Look-Mazza & Tony Mazza and Judith Z. Steinberg & Paul J. Hoenmans

Enjoy a special encore of this milestone evening of live piano and dance that wowed sold-out audiences in its winter premiere! At the center of this program is the world-renowned pianist Joyce Yang, a Van Cliburn International Piano Competition silver medalist. ASFB tackles the quirky *Half/Cut/Split* by noted Finnish choreographer Jorma Elo, who collaborated with Yang to bring Robert Schumann's *Carnaval* to life. Also on the program are Jiří Kylián's poetic *Return to a Strange Land* set to the music of Leoš Janáček, and Nicolo Fonte's enthralling *Where We Left Off* with music by Philip Glass.

"[Yang's] attention to detail and clarity is as impressive as her agility, balance and velocity." – The Washington Post

## ASPEN TICKET INFO

### ► Performance Information

All shows take place at:  
Aspen District Theatre  
335 High School Road, Aspen, CO

### Purchase Tickets

#### ► Online

www.aspensantafeballet.com

#### ► By Phone

Aspen Show Tickets  
970-920-5770 or toll free 866-449-0464

#### ► In Person

Visit Aspen Show Tickets at the Wheeler  
320 E. Hyman Avenue, Aspen, CO

## SANTA FE TICKET INFO

### ► Performance Information

All shows take place at:  
The Lencic, Santa Fe's Performing Arts Center  
211 West San Francisco St., Santa Fe, NM

### Purchase Tickets

#### ► Online

www.aspensantafeballet.com

#### ► By Phone

Tickets Santa Fe at The Lencic  
505-988-1234

#### ► In Person

Tickets Santa Fe at The Lencic  
211 West San Francisco St., Santa Fe, NM



**SANTA FE:**

**RAISE THE BARRE  
BENEFIT**

**July 15 | 6:00pm**

Four Seasons Resort Rancho Encantado  
Santa Fe

**ASPEN:**

**dancing  
with the  
aspen stars**

**July 26 | 6:00pm**

The St. Regis Aspen Resort

**Tables and Tickets are now on sale!**

For further information and reservations, please call Zander Higbie  
at 505-983-5591 ext 105 or 970-925-7175 ext 105,  
or visit [www.aspensantafeballet.com](http://www.aspensantafeballet.com)

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PHOTO ROSALE O'CONNOR

# Ballet Boys:

## Learning Life Lessons in the Dance Studio

By Jessica Moore

Originally published in Mountain Parent, October 2017

Ask the average resident of the Roaring Fork Valley what comes to mind when they hear the word 'ballet,' and it's likely the response will involve a ballerina in a tutu and pointe shoes. Such images are certainly not misplaced. After all, famed choreographer George Balanchine himself is quoted as saying, "ballet is woman." It's easy in the midst of such perspectives to forget that men play a central role in ballet. From a developmental standpoint, dance training can be a fun and unique tool for enhancing a boy's athletic and mental growth.

As a former professional dancer with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Seth DelGrasso—now an officer with the Aspen Police Department—knows very well that the skills acquired through ballet training can be a future asset regardless of one's career path. Some of the many benefits he cites include: "a growth mind set (continually working towards improvement), mental flexibility and problem solving, teamwork, trustworthiness, reliability, self-confidence, self-discipline, attention to detail, and creativity."

This year, DelGrasso's own sons, Roman (age 8) and Silas (age 6), are both enrolled in beginning ballet at The School of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. Neither child was forced into classes; both boys expressed interest, saying they wanted to be on stage in ASFB's *The Nutcracker*. To get them to this point, DelGrasso and his wife, Brooke (also a former ASFB company member), exposed the boys to dance performances and "emphasized how beneficial body awareness and stretching through ballet [would] be for their martial arts training and skiing," said DelGrasso.

While ASFB was a natural choice given both parents' backgrounds, DelGrasso said he was confident putting his sons in the school "thanks to the devoted and skilled faculty," whose teaching methods are "rooted in the culture of positive childhood development through the arts."



PHOTO ROSALE O'CONNOR

The majority of students who enter The School of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet will not pursue a career in dance, instead applying life lessons from the studio to their academics and future career paths. However, every once in a while a student stands out from the pack, showing the natural talent and mental fortitude necessary to become a ballet professional. David Gabriel (age 15) is one such student.

After training at ASFB for three years and attending numerous summer dance intensives at noted companies such as Pacific Northwest Ballet, Gabriel received a rare full scholarship for two years of study at the prestigious Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet. "I would never have had all of these amazing opportunities though if it wasn't for the training and support that I received from Aspen Santa Fe Ballet," said Gabriel.

Since starting ballet lessons at age seven at Glenwood Dance Academy, Gabriel has become aware of the advantages of ballet training and how that training transfers into other activities. He notes that ballet uniquely "targets deep inner core, leg, and hip muscles that can be extremely helpful for seemingly simple things like holding your balance and walking correctly. If you play sports I would highly recommend trying a ballet class; we practice quick footwork, core strengthening, balance exercises, and posture."

Aside from the physical benefits, Gabriel also noticed his behavior differed from that of other boys in school. While other boys might act out and disrupt the class, he explains, "boys who do ballet don't have that, because there is no tolerance for that type of behavior in ballet class." The discipline learned in the ballet studio transfers directly into the classroom.

So how does one encourage their son to try out ballet? Former ASFB dancer Eric Chase, now on faculty at The School of ASFB, suggests having



PHOTO COURTESY DAVID GABRIEL

them test out one month of dance to get a feel for the classes. "Let him make the decision with an open mind. The foundation of learning how to stretch, use inner core strength, move quicker, and become a leader will stay with him and create more opportunities in anything else he chooses to do."

In an organization brimming with strong male dancers and leaders, ASFB shatters stereotypes. Regardless of whether a student sticks with ballet, Chase urges parents to bring their sons to performances to see male dancers in action. "You will leave inspired."

**THE SCHOOL OF ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET**

<b>SANTA FE</b>	<b>ASPEN</b>
Classes begin	Classes Begin
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## JOIN ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET IN FRANCE!

We invite you to join us when Aspen Santa Fe Ballet makes its exciting return to the elegant seaside city of Biarritz, France this September.

This promises to be a trip to France like no other! The charming city of Biarritz, on the Basque coast of southwestern France, is the hometown of ASFB Executive Director, Jean-Philippe Malaty. Aspen Santa Fe Ballet made its international debut in Biarritz in 2004 and returns to the city in 2018 as the only American dance company at the Festival du Temps d'Aimer. ASFB trustee and luxury travel expert John Galante has designed your Biarritz experience with the local insight of Jean-Philippe.

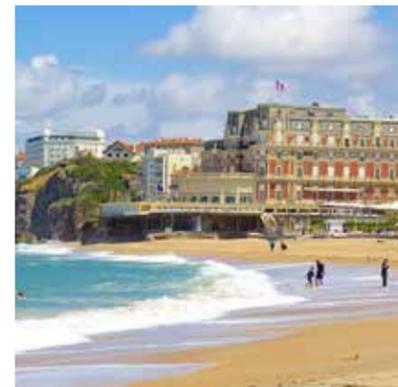


Arrive in Biarritz: **Wednesday, September 5**

Depart Biarritz: **Tuesday, September 11**

ASFB Package Highlights:

- Luxurious accommodation for six nights in a beach view room, with access to the spa, at the historic Hôtel du Palais.
- A welcome dinner for the group at Chez Albert in the Biarritz fisherman's port.
- A guided day tour of nearby French Basque country villages of Cambo Les Bains and Sare, with lunch at the charming Auberge Olhabidea.
- A day trip across the Spanish border to the seductive city of San Sebastian, recently awarded the coveted title European Capital of Culture.
- A hands-on Basque cooking class in San Sebastian.
- A day trip up the scenic Nive River Valley to a 12th century citadel and the historic village of Saint Jean de Port.
- A day along the enchanting Spanish Basque coast with stops in scenic Getaria and the extraordinary Cristobál Balenciaga Museum, housing an exquisite collection by the namesake fashion icon.
- A culinary experience at the Michelin starred Les Frères Ibarboure.
- VIP tickets to see Aspen Santa Fe Ballet perform at Theatre du Casino, followed by dinner with the ASFB dancers.
- Additional surprise experiences and activities!



This trip is customizable and John Galante of Smart Flyer is available to design an extended France or Europe travel package.

Price:

**\$4,900** per person based on double occupancy in a Beach View room.

**\$6,100** per person based on single occupancy in a Beach View room.

Airfare is not included.

This special trip to Biarritz with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet is open to all those who support ASFB at the National Council level (\$2,500) and above. Space is limited. To make your reservation, contact Zander Higbie in the ASFB office: 970-925-7175 ext. 105. For further trip details, contact travel advisor John Galante of Smartflyer: 970-300-4880 or john@smartflyer.com.

Your reservation will be made with full payment. Due to the cancellation policies of Hôtel du Palais, ASFB must charge a 50% cancellation fee after May 1 and refunds are not possible after August 1.

# Spotlight: Jenny Winton

by Jessica Moore



PHOTO: MATTHEW MURPHY

When your dance resume includes five years with a noted ballet company like The Joffrey Ballet, followed by two years touring the country playing the iconic role of Penny in *Dirty Dancing*, the dance world is truly your oyster. Lucky for us, Jenny Winton, a native of San Francisco, CA, was so taken by ASFB when she joined us as a guest dancer for this past winter's production of *The Nutcracker*, that she's changing gears yet again to tackle contemporary ballet repertoire as ASFB's newest dancer. Read on to learn more about Jenny before you see her on stage this summer.

## What is your earliest memory of dance?

I remember going to a Christmas Eve production of *The Nutcracker* when I was about five. It was a big deal because I got to wear my dress shoes and my lace socks. I couldn't stop looking up at the grand chandelier that sparked like diamonds and hung like a giant space ship above the rows of red seats. I think my mouth hung open for the entirety of the first and second act, only to close with little happy gasps as soldiers fought mice and snowflakes danced in a blizzard of clanging symbols and angel voices. It was nothing less than magical.

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

I had always had a fascination with theater, and my earliest exposure to the theater was through ballets like *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake*. I fell in love with the storytelling and that's what initially brought me into the dance studio. When I was twelve years old, I landed the role of Clara in San Francisco Ballet's production of *The Nutcracker*. I remember reaching out my hand to catch the paper snowflakes as the snow scene music reached its crescendo and thinking, "I will do whatever it takes to make this my life."

## What first drew you to ASFB?

I had always admired the company from a distance, but it wasn't until Tom invited me to guest for the *Nutcracker* season that I became truly enamored. The dancers' ability to switch from contemporary to classical work so seamlessly was very impressive, a versatility that showed not only the range of their physicality, but the intelligence in which they worked. On top of this, the dancers and staff were very welcoming. Everybody really wanted to be there and I knew it was rare to find a group so well rounded in their respect for each other and the integrity of their work.

## What prompted the transition from ballet company life to a touring Broadway production?

It's kind of funny because I was not looking to transition at all. I was in my fifth season with the Joffrey Ballet and was very invested in that. I was even preparing to compete in the International Ballet Competition, which in many ways is to dance what the Olympics are to sports. A casting director contacted me out of the blue and asked me to audition for the role of "Penny" in *Dirty Dancing*. I thought, "well that sounds fun." Once that door was opened, I was too curious not to walk through it.

## Why is now the right time for you to move back into concert dance and join a contemporary ballet company?

It wasn't until I guested with ASFB this past winter that I decided I wanted to re-enter concert dance life. It had been three years since I had called myself a ballerina and to regain that kind of physicality would be a test to my mental and physical strength. Being in the environment at ASFB, I realized this was not a cookie cutter company, but a group of artists who celebrated their personalities, and most importantly, brought their humanity into their work. Their repertoire had so much integrity and encompassed so much in all of its range. I knew that this kind of work would not only allow me to use all of my tools from theater to ballet, but would give me the opportunity to combine those skills in a way that I had not yet been able to. I was excited, I knew I had to go for it.

## Had you ever spent time in Colorado before moving out here for ASFB?

I have toured to parts of Colorado, but when I guested with ASFB this winter, I got a taste of the Aspen experience. Best sunsets in the world, hands down.

## What's your ideal next vacation?

I am fascinated with eastern medicine and just eastern culture in general. I would love to go to travel around that hemisphere...particularly the South Asian countries of Nepal and Burma.

## What are you most looking forward to this summer season?

I am looking forward to moving my life from the skyscrapers of Manhattan to the mountains of Aspen and diving into some amazing work with some exceptional people.

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