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Sadler's Wells

February 7-11 & 14, 2023

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Founded in 1972 by Geneviève Salbaing, Eva Von Genscy and Eddy Toussaint, Ballets Jazz Montréal is a contemporary dance repertory company which, under the artistic direction of Alexandra Damiani, creates, produces, and presents on local, national, and international stages.

The company engages internationally renowned choreographers to develop their own research in line with BJM's identity and generates a repertoire that is both exclusive to the company and accessible to all audiences. The company's impressive roster of talented and influential choreographers includes Crystal Pite, Azure Barton, Mauro Bigonzetti, Andonis Foniadakis, Itzik Galili, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Barak Marshall, Benjamin Millepied, Ihsan Rustem, Anne Plamondon and Juliano Nunes, to name a few. As an ambassador of Quebec dance to the world, Ballets Jazz Montréal offers an artistic product that is explosive, original, accessible, and noted for the excellence of its performance.

Among the artistic directors of the company who have greatly marked its evolution, company founder Geneviève Salbaing, driven by her visceral love of dance, led Ballets Jazz Montréal with passion and determination for over 20 years. Upon his appointment as artistic director in 1998, Louis Robitaille, reoriented the company towards an audience curious to discover new choreographic forms. In June 2021, Alexandra Damiani took over the artistic direction of BJM and will carry out the company's mission and vision into the future.

All of Ballets Jazz Montréal's work brings an element of humanity, fearlessness, and emotion in addition to the

high technical skill that each dance requires. Additionally, each piece is nuanced, multilayered and often multidisciplinary – combining other artistic disciplines such as theater, video, and music. With accessibility and quality as key values, the company successfully integrates pleasure and humanity into their strong, expressive, and demanding pieces. Moreover, the distinct personalities and high caliber of its performers further add to the quality that is expected from the company and play a key role in maintaining the company's reputation and influence in the dance world.

Through their productions, performances, and educational activities, Ballets Jazz Montréal encourages discovery, stimulates imagination, and shares their passion for this discipline to all its audiences – both local and abroad. With more than 2,600 performances in 68 countries and an audience of over 2.8 million, Ballets Jazz Montréal is considered one of the world's leading ambassadors of Quebec dance and artistic vitality.

In 2016, the Prix Rideau Hommage was awarded to the company and its artistic director at the time, Louis Robitaille, in recognition of the company's impact and continued presence on Quebec stages.

In 2020, the company received the Prix de la danse de Montréal for the category of international dissemination presented by CINARS.

In 2021–2022 season, the company celebrated 50 years of creating, exploring, boundary pushing, and connecting with its audiences.

Artistic Director Alexandra Damiani

Alexandra Damiani may have only become Ballet Jazz Montréal's Artistic Director in the spring of 2021, but she has been a major player in the dance community for over two decades.

During her 10 years with New York's Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet (2005–2015) – first as Ballet Mistress and then as Artistic Director – Damiani had the opportunity to work with and present a wide selection of contemporary dance choreographic languages by such internationally renowned choreographers as Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Crystal Pite and Hofesh Schecter. Damiani also presented the company in major cities and international festivals, including at the Lyon Biennale in France and Sadler's Wells in London.

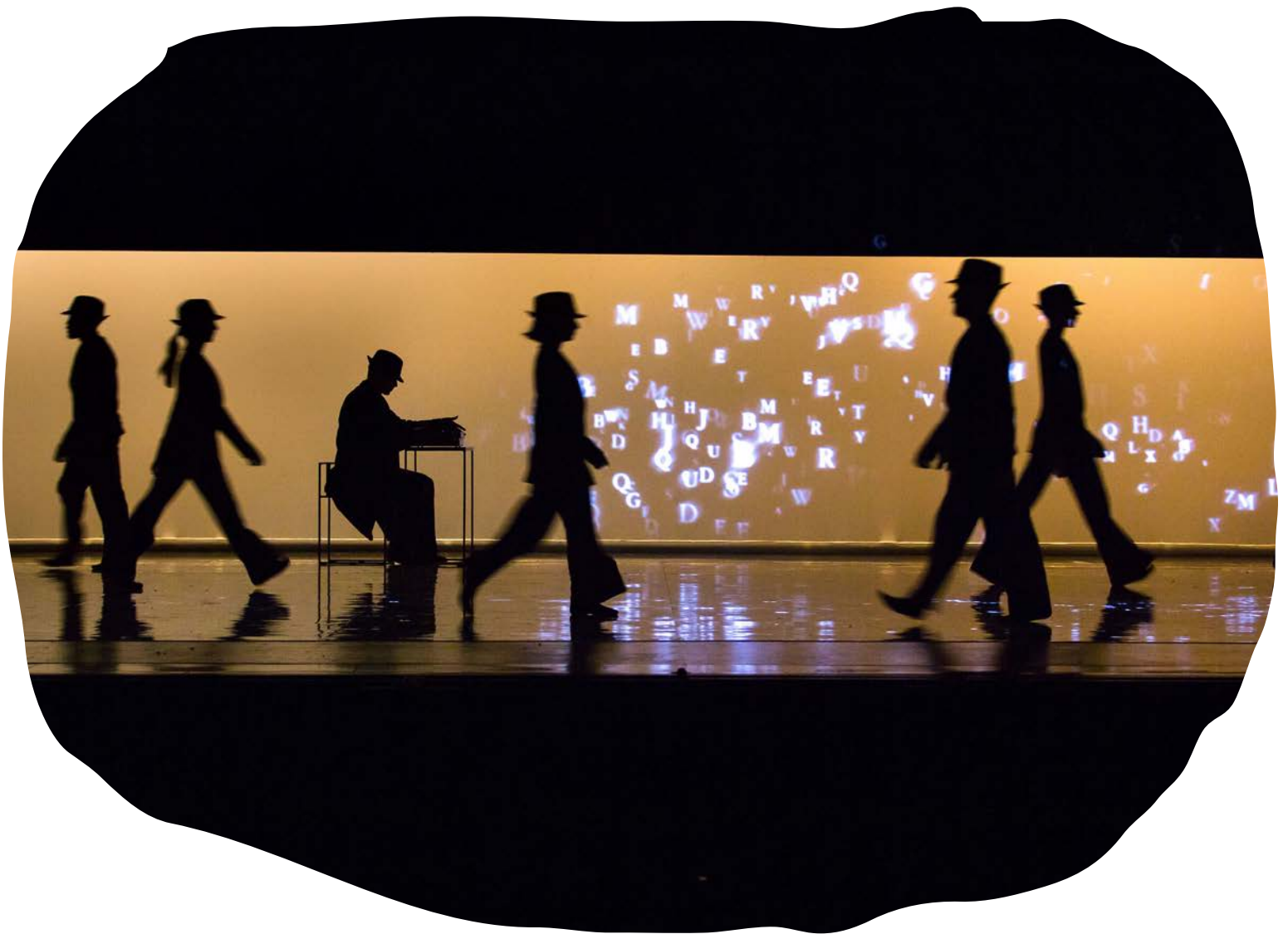
Damiani is a multidisciplinary artist who has been lending her expertise to the world of film, television and advertising for many years. Her credits include participating in Darren Aronofsky's cult film *Black Swan* in the role of ballet mistress, and working alongside Tanisha Scott on Cardi B's performance for the 2019 BET Awards. Damiani is passionate about training the young dancers of tomorrow and has excellent connections with highly regarded institutions like Jacob's Pillow and The Juilliard School.

Originally from France, Damiani trained in classical dance at the Geneva Dance Center, and later in the French capital with teachers from the Paris Opera Ballet. After winning the Bayonne competition in France, she received a scholarship to the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in the U.S. She began her career as a dancer-performer in New York where she danced as a soloist with Donald Byrd/The Group and with the company Complexions, directed by Dwight Rhoden and Desmond Richardson. Her career continued in Montreal with the company RUBBERBANDance and later with Ballets Jazz Montréal under the direction of Louis Robitaille (2002–2005).



DANCE ME

Music by Leonard Cohen



ANDONIS FONIADAKIS
ANNABELLE LOPEZ OCHOA
IHSAN RUSTEM

Dance Me – Music by Leonard Cohen is an exclusive creation inspired by the rich and profound work of Montréal-based poet, artist and songwriter, Leonard Cohen.

Approved by Cohen during his lifetime, and under the artistic direction of Louis Robitaille and the strong, bold dramaturgy of Eric Jean, this riveting homage to the famed artist evokes the grand cycles of existence, as described in Cohen's deeply reflective music and poems.

Three internationally renowned choreographers were entrusted with putting movement to Cohen's legendary songs: Andonis Foniadakis, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa and Ihsan Rustem. Their powerful and profound choreographic world reflective of Cohen's singular work is brought to life by Ballets Jazz Montréal's 14 artists.

Surrounded by a team of celebrated designers, *Dance Me* combines scenic, visual, musical, dramaturgical and choreographic writing to pay tribute to Montréal's greatest ambassador. Dance, music, lighting, scenography and videography all come together in this unforgettable show, for which Ballets Jazz Montréal has been granted exclusive dance rights for five years.

Ballets Jazz Montréal thanks the Marjorie and Gerald Bronfman Foundation for supporting this creation.

Dance Me received support from CCOV – Centre de Création O Vertigo.

CREDITS

Ideation Louis Robitaille

Dramaturgy and Stage Direction Eric Jean

Choreography Andonis Foniadakis, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Ihsan Rustem

Musical Direction Martin Léon

Musical Conception Alexis Dumais

Conception of Scenography and Accessories Pierre-Étienne Locas

Scenography Technical Direction Alexandre Brunet

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Costume Design Philippe Dubuc

Costume Production Anne-Marie Veevaete

Stage Direction Assistance Elsa Posnic

Sound Design Guy Fortin

Dancers Alyssa Allen, Gustavo Barros, Yosmell Calderon Mejias, John Canfield, Diana Cedeno, Astrid Dangeard, Hannah Kate Galbraith, Shanna Irwin, Ausia Jones, Jordan Lang, Austin Lichty, Marcel Mejia, Andrew Mikhael, Eden Solomon

World Premiere December 5, 2017, Montréal, Canada

Length (without intermission) 80 minutes

Creation & Stage Director Eric Jean

Eric Jean is, without a shadow of a doubt, one of the most esteemed and outstanding stage directors of his generation. His appointment in 2004 as general and artistic director of Théâtre de Quat'Sous – and ensuing success – are a reflection of the trust and confidence he has established in the theatre milieu, which quickly saw him as a bold, unique artist who has made significant artistic contributions to Quebec theatre.

As a prolific and inventive director and occasional actor, Jean is greatly appreciated for his commitment to up-and-coming artists, both on a teaching and professional level.

Where Jean has made his mark and his reputation, however, is in his creative approach. Using structured improvisations as his point of departure, he also works in conjunction with playwright and set design, gradually piecing together his stage plays. Striking examples of this, which he calls “writing as action”, are his renowned *Hippocampe*, written in collaboration with Pascal Brullemans, and his 2009 staging of *Chambre(s)*, co-written with Pascal Chevarie. Not only did *Hippocampe* win the 2003 Prix de la critique, but Jean was nominated for the prestigious Siminovitch Prize in 2004 as well.

Jean's other notable productions include *Corps étrangers/ Cuerpos extranos* (2005), a piece co-written with Pascal Brullemans and first performed in Mexico before being presented in Quebec; *Opium_37* (2009–2011), written in collaboration with Catherine Léger, after which Jean staged Luc Tartar's play for adolescents *S'embrasent* (2009–2017). This was followed by *Le ventriloque* (2012) by Larry Tremblay, *Survivre* (2013) by Olivier Kemeid, *Testament* by Vickie Gendreau (2014), *Variations sur un temps* by David Ives (2015), and *Le Joker* (2016) by Larry Tremblay.

Fall 2016 marked the beginning of a new adventure for Jean, when he resigned as artistic director of Théâtre de Quat'Sous to focus more on directing, writing and filmmaking.

For his first foray into the world of dance, Jean joined Ballets Jazz Montréal's artistic team to act as playwright and stage director of the large-scale production *Dance Me – Music by Leonard Cohen*.



Jean is also the artistic director of the theater company Les 2 Mondes.

During the 2020–2021 season, Eric Jean became Creation Director (interim) at Ballets Jazz Montréal in order to lead the production of the company's new creation that was set, once again, to the music of an internationally renowned artist.

Choreographer Andonis Foniadakis

Andonis Foniadakis grew up in city of Ierapetra, in the south part of the island of Crete, in Greece. He began his dance training with Niki Papadaki at the local dance school, in his hometown. From 1990 to 1992, he studied at the State Dance School of Athens and before his graduation he received the prestigious Maria Callas scholarship to continue his studies in Rudra Bejart Lausanne, in Switzerland until 1994.

As a dancer Andonis has collaborated with Bejart Ballet Lausanne (1994–1996) under the direction of Maurice Bejart, Lyon Opera Ballet (1996–2002) under the direction of Yorgos Loukos, Saburo Teshigawara / Karas Co. (2004) under the direction of Saburo Teshigawara, as well as, with his own dance company “Apotosoma-Andonis Foniadakis”. During the years of his professional engagement with these companies he has performed choreographic works of Maguy Marin, Jiri Kilian, William Forsythe, Dominique Boivin, Nacho Duato, Mats Ek, Maurice Bejart, Ohad Naharin, Frederic Flamand, Bill T Jones, Herve Robbe, Tero Saarinen, Lionel Hoche, Joachim Schlomer, John Jasperse, Saburo Teshigawara etc.

As a freelance choreographer he has collaborated with The Royal New Zealand Ballet, Geneva Ballet Switzerland, Lyon Opera Ballet (France), Bern Ballet (Switzerland), Ballet de Lorraine (France) Luzern Ballet (Switzerland) Gauthier Dance Company (Germany), Ballets Jazz Montréal (Canada), Martha Graham Dance Company (USA) Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet (USA) Aterballetto (Italy), Ballet du Rhin (France), Sydney Dance Company (Australia) Florence Ballet (Italy), National Dance Company of Wales (England) Dansgroep Amsterdam (Netherlands), Cia Sociedade Masculina Brazil Bale da Cidade of Sao Paulo (Brazil), Helsinki Dance Company (Finland), National Ballet of Greece, National Theater of Northern Greece, Greek National Theater (Greece), Codarts (Netherlands), Benjamin Millepied Dance Company (USA) Washington Ballet (USA), Bejart Ballet Lausanne (Switzerland), Ballet Junior Geneva (Switzerland), Hellenic Dance Company (Greece), CNSMD Lyon (France), Copenhagen International Dance Festival (Denmark).

He has been director of the Greek National Ballet for the 2016–2017 season and has programmed the 2016–



17 and 2017–18 seasons. He is currently the resident choreographer of the Greek National Ballet.

Foniadakis has been commissioned to choreograph for 3 operas: The Theatre des Champs Elysees – Castor et Pollux, Opera National du Rhin – Les boreades by Rameau GRAME Lyon – Il canto de la pelle by Claudio Ambrosini.

He has collaborated as moving coordinator for the film NOAH by Darren Aronofsky. In 2012, he received the Danza and Danza Award for the “Best Choreographer 2012” in Italy, for the creation Les Noces in Maggio Danza- Florence Ballet.

As well he has collaborated with Palais de Tokyo as Choreographic Curator for the Prec(ar)ious Collectives exhibition that took place in Athens, Greece parallel to Documenta 14, in 2017.

In addition to creating and performing, Andonis is teaching seminars based on his personal dance technique. He has been teaching in the State Dance School of Greece, DAN.C.CE studios and Baile de Barrio in Athens, DOCK11 in Berlin, CND and CNSMD in Lyon, Dansgroep Amsterdam, Henny Jurriens.

Choreographer Annabelle Lopez Ochoa

Colombian-Belgian Annabelle Lopez Ochoa completed her dance education at the Royal Ballet School of Flanders in Belgium before embarking on a 12-year-long dance career, during which time she was a soloist with the Scapino Ballet. In 2003, she decided to focus her energy solely on choreography. In that same year, she was hailed by Dutch magazine *NRC* as “the rising star of the Dutch dance scene.” Just seven years later, the *Temecula Performing Arts Examiner* wrote: “Ochoa is truly a masterful choreographer with an edge for what dance can and should be in this constantly changing industry.”

Ochoa is a sought-after award-winning choreographer who has created works for more than 40 companies around the world such as the Scapino Ballet Rotterdam, the Dutch National Ballet, Djazzex, the Ballet de Genève, the Royal Ballet of Flanders, the Gothenburg Ballet, the Pennsylvania Ballet, BalletX, the Luna Negra Dance Theater, the Ballet National de Marseille, the Saarbrücken Ballet, Jacoby & Pronk, the Chemnitzer Ballet, the Ballet Hispanico, the Morphoses Wheeldon Company, Whim W’Him, the IncolBallet de Colombia, the Finnish National Ballet, the Compania Nacional de Danza Madrid, the Pacific Northwest Ballet, the Scottish Ballet, the Washington Ballet, the Ballet Nacional Dominicano, the Ballet Saarbrücken, the Augsburg Ballet, Ballet Austin, the Atlanta Ballet, the Grand Rapids Ballet, Ballet Moscow, the Ballet Nacional de Cuba, the West Australian Ballet, Danza Contemporanea de Cuba, the Ballet Nacional Chileno, Ballet Staatstheater am Gartnerplatz München, Ballet Manila, the Daniil Simkin Intensio Project, the Cincinnati Ballet, the Silicon Valley Ballet, the Joffrey Ballet, the English National Ballet, Ballet Black and the New York City Ballet.

Ochoa’s versatility has also led her to choreograph for theatre, opera and musical theatre, as well as for fashion



events, such as the project in the Van Gogh Museum project by celebrated Dutch fashion designers Viktor & Rolf. She belongs to the theatre-dance collective De Fantasten, for whom she successfully co-directed five full-length productions that have been performed in theaters and festivals throughout the Netherlands.

In 2009, Ochoa created *Zip Zap Zoom* for Ballets Jazz Montréal, lauded as one of the “10 best dance moments of the year” by the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, *The Boston Globe* and *the Montreal Gazette*, and as one of the 10 best dance highlights of the year in San Diego and Chicago.

Her work has received numerous awards. *Broken Wings*, created for the English National Ballet, was nominated for a National UK Dance Award in 2016 in the category of Best Classical Premiere. In 2015, *Sombrerísimo*, created for the Ballet Hispanico, won the Villanueva Award in Cuba. In 2012, *A Streetcar Named Desire* was nominated for the prestigious Olivier Award (UK), named Best Classical Choreography by the Circle of Critics of the National Dance Award (UK), and was awarded Best Dance Production 2012 by the South-Bank Sky Arts Awards. In 2007, Ochoa was selected to participate in the New York City Ballet Choreographic Institute. In 2002, *Replay* received the first prize and the public’s prize at the Borne Choreographers Competition. In 2001, *Clair/Obscur* won third prize at the Hannover Choreographic Competition.

Choreographer Ihsan Rustem

British / Swiss choreographer, Ihsan Rustem was born in London, where he trained at the Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance.

Ihsan is the Artistic Director of the Swiss dance company Cie. La Ronde founded in 2020 with choreographer Cathy Marston, and the Resident Choreographer for the NW Dance Project in Portland, Oregon, where he has created twelve works to date.

Further collaborations include the Nederlands Dans Theater 2, Ballets Jazz Montréal, Sao Paulo City Ballet, National Ballet of Chile, Ballet Moscow, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago 2, Istanbul State Ballet MDT, Tanz Luzerner Theater, Bern Ballet, Konzert Theater St Gallen, Whim W'Him Seattle, Ballare Carmel, Ballett Augsburg, Thüringer Staatsballett, Staatstheater Braunschweig, Tanztheater, Kazan State Opera and Ballet, Koblenz Ballet, Ballet Regensburg, Würzburg Ballet, Siberian State Ballet, Salt Contemporary Dance USA, Arts Umbrella Dance Company Vancouver, Moving Arts Cincinnati, National Youth Dance Company, Palucca Hochschule Dresden, Codarts, ZHdK, Tanzwerk101, Taipei National University of the Arts and the Rambert School. He was a featured choreographer for Russia's popular TV show *The Bolshoi Ballet*.

Nederlands Dans Theater named Ihsan as one of their Up & Coming Choreographers for the 2018/19 season.

His work for the NW Dance Project has been recognized with numerous accolades. *State of Matter* won the 2012 Sadler's Wells Global Dance Contest, as well as the Public Prize at the 25th International Competition for Choreographers Hannover, and *Carmen* received Dance Magazine's 2017 Readers' Choice Award for Best Collaboration. Rustem was also the 2014 recipient of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's International Commissioning Project.



Rustem is the former Director of the Ballettschule Luzern, and, in 2021, he joined the jury of the prestigious Prix de Lausanne.

From 2000–2014 Ihsan Rustem was a dancer with the Ballet Theater Munich, Introdans, Bern Ballet, Tanz Luzerner Theater, and Adventures in Motion Pictures. He originated roles in creations by Wayne McGregor, Hofesh Shechter, Alexander Ekman, Matthew Bourne, Stijn Celis, Patrick Delcroix, Cayetano Soto, Felix Landerer, and Cathy Marston. He has also worked with choreographers Mats Ek, Jiri Kylián, Paul Lightfoot / Sol Leon, Hans van Manen, and William Forsythe, amongst others.

Ihsan lives in Zurich, Switzerland.

The Artists



YOSMELL CALDERON MEJIAS

(PRINCIPAL ARTIST)

Russian-born Yosmell Calderon Mejias graduated as a dancer and teacher of both contemporary and folk dance from Cuba's National School of Dance (ENA) in Havana in 2005. He also received a diploma from the University of Arts (ISA) in 2014. Yosmell has collaborated with such outstanding figures in the world of dance as Rafael Bonachela, Mats Ek, Itzik Galili, Carlos Junior Acosta, Jan Linkens, Juan Cuz and Ana Laguna. He has performed as a principal dancer for Danza Contemporanea de Cuba and the Pal Frenak Company, as well as in over 22 works by Cuban and foreign choreographers, touring major festivals and theatre venues around the world. Yosmell is a choreographer for the Cuban National Ballet School and its performances at the International Ballet Festival of Havana. Thanks to his background in Olympic gymnastics, he also choreographs for circus performances. Yosmell joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in July 2016 and was promoted to principal artist in 2019.



ALYSSA ALLEN

Alyssa Allen is from Los Angeles, where she attended the Orange County School of the Arts and the Dmitri Kulev Classical Ballet Academy. From 2011–2015, she performed with and was a founding member of Westside Dance Project, under the direction of Jessie Riley. In 2019, Alyssa earned her BFA as a member of the inaugural class at the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance, under the direction of William Forsythe and Jodie Gates. Upon graduation, Ms. Allen joined Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, where she spent three seasons. Over the course of her career, she has performed works by Crystal Pite, Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, Jermaine Spivey, Johannes Wieland, George Balanchine, William Forsythe, and Aszure Barton, amongst others. She is honored to join Ballets Jazz Montréal for the company's 2022–23 season.



GUSTAVO BARROS

Brazilian-born Gustavo Barros began his professional path as a dancer in his hometown of Goiânia under the direction of Gisela Vaz. He then went on to join some of Brazil's top contemporary dance companies, such as the CIA de Dança Deborah Colker and Balé da Cidade de São Paulo. Gustavo continued his career in Germany where he danced for Ballethagen and Staatstheater Augsburg. In the course of his career, Gustavo has performed works by many renowned choreographers such as Ihsan Rustem, Stephen Delattre, Itzik Galili and Cayetano Soto. He joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in 2020.



JOHN CANFIELD

Originally from Virginia, John Canfield grew up training at local dance studios before moving to Canada to attend Canada's National Ballet School in Toronto. Upon graduating in 2014 he joined the Alberta Ballet, where he danced for five seasons, working directly with choreographers Aszure Barton, Jean Grand Maitre, Anne Plamondon, Yukhichi Hattori and Wen Wei Wang, among others. In 2020, John joined Cas Public as a dancer, performing the work of Helene Blackburn for one season. In addition to his involvement with a number of private movement research programs across Canada, John has also attended Springboard Danse Montreal as well as Creative Gesture at the Banff Centre for the Arts. He joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in 2021.



DIANA CEDENO

Panama-born Diana Cedeno began her dance training at the Academia de Danzas Steps. Upon completing her training, she continued exploring contemporary dance and ballet at the Boston Conservatory. Diana has had the opportunity to attend various intensive programs and festivals such as The Juilliard's Summer Intensive, VIM VIGOR, Springboard Danse Montreal, Opus Ballet and b12 in Berlin. She has also worked under the direction of distinguished choreographers such as Shannon Gillen, Catherine Coury, Loni Landon, La Intrusa, and Darrell Moultrie, among others. Diana joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in 2020.



ASTRID DANGEARD

Born in Paris (France), Astrid Dangeard studied dance at Steps on Broadway and with the Verdon/Fosse Legacy in New York as well as acting at the Cours Cochet in Paris. She played Iris Kelly in *Fame, The Musical* at the Casino de Paris (2019 dir Ned Grujic) and has worked with Chet Walker, James Kinney (BCEFA Easter Bonnet 2018 and 2019) and Alex Frei. In 2020, she joined Ballets Jazz Montréal where she's had the privilege of dancing works by Andonis Foniadakis, Azure Barton, and Ausia Jones. She has collaborated with Emma Kate Nelson, Rémi Esterle (argentine tango) and composer Martin Léon.



SHANNA IRWIN

Shanna Irwin grew up in New Jersey where she began training as a competitive dancer. She switched her focus to ballet when she was accepted into The New Jersey Dance Theatre Ensemble under the direction of Nancy Turano. She spent her summers training with World Dance Movement-Italy, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, and Vancouver's Arts Umbrella. Shanna then went on to continue her studies at Marymount Manhattan College under the direction of Katie Langan. She began touring with Complexions Contemporary Ballet during her senior year, and graduated with a BFA in Dance in May 2014. Shanna completed five seasons with Complexions and joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in 2019.



AUSIA JONES

Ausia Jones was born in Dallas, Texas and graduated from the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance with a focus on choreography. Throughout her career, she has had the honour of performing works by William Forsythe, Robert Battle, Cayetano Soto, Azure Barton, and Jiri Kylian, among others. Her many awards include the Young Arts winner in both choreography and dance. During her time at USC Kaufman, Ausia received training at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Orsolina Forsythe/Pite, and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. She joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in 2020.



HANNAH KATE GALBRAITH

Born in Nelson, New Zealand, Hannah Kate Galbraith began her dance training at the Rebecca Bignall Academy of Dance and Southern Ballet Christchurch. She then studied at the Tanya Pearson Academy in Sydney, Australia, under the direction of Lucinda Dunn. At the age of 17, she moved to New York City to study at the Ailey School as a scholarship student under Milton Myers, Ana Marie Forsythe, Caridad Martinez, and Jacquelin Buglisi. In the course of her journey, she performed works by Alvin Ailey, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Cayetano Soto Ramirez, Ronald K Brown, and Dwight Rhoden. Hannah has performed with many renowned companies such as Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, and Futorian Dance. She joined the company in 2020.



JORDAN LANG

Jordan Lang was born and raised in Long Island, New York where he began dancing at the age of three. In 2015, Jordan began his studies at Marymount Manhattan College. While at Marymount, Jordan performed works by Alexandra Damiani, Adam Baruch, Darell Moultrie, Gabrielle Lamb, Jessica Lang, Jon Ole Olstad, Jo Stromgren, Larry Keigwin, Robert Battle, Trey McIntyre as well as participated in annual outreach programs. In 2018 and 2019, Mr. Lang attended Springboard Danse Montreal, where he performed works by Alejandro Cerrudo, Marco Goecke, and Micaela Taylor. In 2019, Jordan joined Ballet BC, under the direction of Emily Molnar. During his time with Ballet BC, he had the honor of performing the work of some of the great voices in contemporary dance including Crystal Pite, Medhi Walerski, Sharon Eyal, Johan Inger, and Azure Barton. After two seasons with Ballet BC, Jordan moved back to NYC to work with choreographer Yin Yue. Jordan is thrilled to be officially joining Ballet Jazz Montréal for their 2022-23 season.



AUSTIN LICHTY

Born in Stratford, Ontario, Austin trained at the Arts Umbrella Graduate Program under the direction of Artemis Gordon and holds a BFA from the Toronto Metropolitan University. He has participated in Springboard Danse Montréal, Arts Umbrella International Summer Dance Intensive, and TransFormation Danse, summer programs. Throughout his professional development, Austin has worked with choreographers such as James Kudelka, Crystal Pite, Guillaume Côté, Emily Molnar, Lukas Timulak, and Amos Ben Tal. Austin joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in 2020.



MARCEL MEJIA

Marcel Mejia is originally from Miami, Florida and graduated from the New World School of the Arts before attending George Mason University's School of Dance under the direction of Susan Shields. He has performed works from world-renowned choreographers such as Lar Lubovitch, Nacho Duato, Andonis Foniadakis, Ivan Perez and Alejandro Cerrudo. Marcel also attended summer dance programs such as Springboard Danse Montreal in Canada, where he performed works by Johannes Wieland and Rachel Erdos, as well as at the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, dancing original works by Tom Weinberger, Alex Ketley, and excerpts of Ohad Naharin's repertory. Marcel has served on the faculty of the Thomas Armour Youth Ballet and as a volunteer dance instructor at the Lotus House Shelter in Miami, Florida. He joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in 2019.



ANDREW MIKHAIEL

Originally from Mississauga, Canada, Andrew Mikhael earned a BFA at Marymount Manhattan College, under the direction of Katie Langan. He has danced in work by Alexandra Damiani, Andonis Foniadakis, Anne Plamondon, Aszure Barton, Barak Marshall, Crystal Pite, Ihsan Rustem, Itzik Galili, Jo Strømngren, Juliano Nunes, Larry Keigwin, and Paul Taylor to name a few. Andrew is a member of the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) Honour Society, as well as the British Association of Teachers of Dancing (B.A.T.D). Andrew has taught and choreographed across Canada, United States, Finland, France, Germany, Brazil, Spain, Italy, and Israel. Andrew joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in 2017 and, as a result of his work ethic, team spirit, and dedication, became the company's Artistic Coordinator in 2020, providing support to the Artistic Director and the entire artistic team.



EDEN SOLOMON

Eden Solomon grew up in Montreal, where she studied at l'École supérieure de ballet du Québec before continuing her education at Arts Umbrella and in the Performance Research Project in Vancouver. She also attended programs such as Springboard, the Creative Gesture (Banff Centre for the Arts), and Gaga intensives (SF, NYC). As a freelancer, Eden has worked with several choreographers, including Lesley Telford, Wen Wei Wang, Jasmine Ellis, Danielle Agami, and David Harvey. She has been a member of the TWObigsteps collective, and collaborates with the multimedia collective Crack Cloud. Eden has also presented choreographic research in Vancouver. She joined Ballets Jazz Montréal in 2020.

Guest Artist



ELIJAH LABAY

Elijah Labay, born in Victoria, British Columbia, started training at Ballet Arts Academy in Spokane, Washington. In 2004, Elijah joined Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet Professional Division and while attending, he received the First Step's Audience Choice Award for his choreographic work. In 2010, Elijah attended NW Dance Project's LAUNCH 4 where he worked intently with Loni Landon and James Gregg. Upon joining the company, Elijah was featured in André Mesquita's duet *A Short History of Walking* as well as original works created by Sarah Slipper, Patrick Delcroix, Ihsan Rustem, Lucas Crandall, Jiri Pokorny, Pedro Dias, Danielle Agami, Yin Yue, Gregory Dolbashian, Wen Wei Wang, Felix Landerer, Alex Soares, Olivier Wevers, Noam Gagnon, and others. Throughout his career, Elijah has had the opportunity to explore and grow his choreography creating on the company members of NW Dance Project. Elijah has participated in teaching and has created original works at several of NW Dance Project's Summer Dance Intensives and has taught masterclasses across the United States. After eight years with NW Dance Project, Elijah joined Ballets Jazz Montréal, where he had the opportunity to travel and perform works by Andonis Foniadakis, Itzik Galili, Ihsan Rustem, and Annabelle Lopez Ochoa. Elijah Labay is currently living in New York where he is a freelance artist, focusing on dance and choreographing. As an artist, Elijah strives to prioritize diversity and inclusivity.

The Company

ARTISTIC TEAM

Artistic Director **Alexandra Damiani**
Artistic Coordinator **Andrew Mikhaïel**
Rehearsal Directors **Andrew Murdock & Ching Ching Wong**
Principal Artist **Yosmell Calderon Mejias**
Artists **Alyssa Allen, Gustavo Barros, John Canfield, Diana Cedeno, Astrid Dangeard, Hannah Kate Galbraith, Shanna Irwin, Ausia Jones, Jordan Lang, Austin Lichty, Marcel Mejia, Andrew Mikhaïel, and Eden Solomon**

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Marketing and Communications Manager **Tony Bougiouris**
Philanthropy and Sponsorships Manager **Alexandra Kukuc**
Administrative Coordinator **Gabrielle Paquin**

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Head Carpenter **Daniel Ranger**
Head of Sound **Maxime Lambert**
Head of Lighting **Claude Plante**
Head of Video **Steve Montambault**

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