

Donor Spotlight:
Kate Groves

Letter From the
Executive Director:
Samantha Turner

20 Years:
Artistic Director
Ib Andersen

2019–2020 SEASON:
Upcoming Donor Events

TURNING POINTE

*Celebrating
20 years of
evolution
and artistry*

Your generosity
made it all possible.





“It is because of you, that my works have been brought to life on stage, ...”

Welcome to Ballet Arizona’s 2019-2020 season! This fall, for the first time ever, we are bringing Sir Frederick Ashton’s whimsical ballet *Les Patineurs* to the Arizona stage. Go on an adventure, as we explore the seaside’s of Italy, with a reprisal of August Bournonville’s vibrant, classic *Napoli*. In February, we turn to a reinvention of Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, featuring brand new sets and costumes. Take a turn on Broadway with George Balanchine’s *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*. To end the season, join me at Desert Botanical Garden, with a world premiere of my new work!

In this issue, Executive Director, Samantha Turner, touches on my tenure at Ballet Arizona. This season, I celebrate 20 years as Artistic Director, and I am grateful to everyone who has supported my vision for this company, for the art form, and for our community. It is because of you, that my works have been brought to life on stage, and that is one of the greatest honors as an artist.

Take a look at our Education and Community Engagement programs and the important role they play in people’s lives. Dance is a universal language for people to connect to themselves, with each other, and the world around them. Your support brings such a positive influence into people’s lives, making our community a stronger and more vibrant place to live.

Lastly, on behalf of myself and the dancers, thank you to everyone who joined us for *Ballet Under the Stars* presented by The Diane & Bruce Halle Foundation. We love bringing this fan-favorite event into our community each and every season and inspiring the next generations of dancers. I hope you will enjoy this issue of *Turning Pointe* and I look forward to seeing you throughout the season.

Gratefully,

Ib Andersen, Artistic Director

LET’S TALK 20 YEARS...

with Ib Andersen

Reflections

I am actually not very sentimental. I only have the ability to look forward, and now, I actually think that is a gift. I don’t remember bad things. I almost don’t remember what I did yesterday. I need to be reminded. I have always been about tomorrow. Even with hitting this milestone, I am not spending too much time reflecting on it, because all I am thinking about is how much more we have to do – what are we producing next. Although, I have been looking at some tapes of my old ballets while working on my pieces for *Director’s Choice* – suddenly 20 years of work feels like a *very* long time. Typically, in the first rehearsal I don’t remember any of the choreography. Then suddenly it all comes flooding back intensely – all of it – the musicality, execution, in no time. I don’t know where that comes from or how it is even possible. It is amazing that something you did 15 years ago stays inside of you, because it is part of you.

Milestones

There are three moments that jump to mind that feel like milestones: when I choreographed *Mosaik*, it felt like it was a milestone for me personally and for the company, then premiering *Romeo & Juliet*, then maybe, the first time we did *Topia*. They all spring out in a different way and it is not just because I choreographed all of them, but it just felt like we were on a plateau and those moments took our company to the next level. Now that you have got me going, *Eroica*, *The Firebird*, and *Napoli* all feel like huge milestones. To be the first company to premiere *Napoli* in its entirety in the U.S. was a big deal to me, not just because of its Danish roots and history, but also because it was such a humongous feat to stage. I guess you could say I dream big – I always have.

Challenges

I like a challenge – a real challenge. I have done that from the very beginning. The first time we did *Theme and Variations*, I asked my friend from New York City Ballet to stage it. She said, “Are you out of your mind? There is no way they can do that.” And I said, yeah... let’s do it. Performing a ballet with that level of difficulty made the company grow. I have always done that, and I am still giving them more than they can chew. But if you don’t constantly challenge people, they won’t rise to the occasion. Then you are definitely not going to create an audience or an interest.



Director's Choice

Nayon is choreographing a world premiere that will include an 11-piece Cuban band on stage performing Mambo! I am doing works that celebrate my twentieth anniversary, and we are finally able to do a Frederick Ashton piece. I have always wanted to do something by Ashton and the timing has not worked out until now. This is going to be a very celebratory and fun program.

I am including different pieces from my ballets *Mosaik*, *Indigo Rhapsody*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Play*, and *Preludes and Fugues*, and I am still missing a few more pieces. Will it be interesting? Maybe, I hope so. There is a rhythm to it. I am not trying to show a highlights reel, rather, I am trying to create a completely new ballet from the pieces I have already done. So I am interested to see how it turns out. It might not necessarily be ballets that others would choose if they had a pick. It is a piece that honors the Arizona audiences that have come to love my work. I am trying to do something that takes something they have seen before and showcasing it in an entirely new light.

Artistic Growth

I am much clearer now in my choreography than I have ever been before – looking back, some things are overly fuzzy or too complicated for their own good. I tried to put too much into something that didn't translate well to audiences. I have gotten better in that sense. I have always wanted to do super simple things in a complex manner, simple things that have a lot of depth and meaning. I will never get there, but I keep trying. I am a late bloomer – so it has taken me a while to find that clarity. But it is my journey and that's okay. There are some people that at a very young age are so bright and they somehow know things without having lived it – which I find very peculiar. How can you know things without having lived it? They are on a different planet – but I'm not that bright. You have to have constant curiosity, a constant need to be creative, and an innocence in your work. All I want to do now – in this time of my life – is have fun. If it is not fun then why would I be doing this?

The Future

For my next 20 years at Ballet Arizona ... is that the question? Well ... my hope is that I live that long! Who knows what will come to be 20 years from now. Technology will change everything. Maybe we won't even be performing on a stage. Maybe live performances become like virtual reality scenarios and the audience will dance with the dancers and have the ability to interact. Maybe then, there would be such an emotional connection from the audience, that they experience the same high as the dancers do when they perform. In the performing arts, if something is done well, you can lose yourself in that journey, and maybe we need to take it a step further. That would be cool.



Photos by Rosalie O'Connor and Alexander Iziliaev.



Donor Spotlight

Kate Groves

You are such a longstanding supporter of the arts in Arizona and the chair of our Prima Circle committee. What inspired such generosity, passion, and commitment to ensuring the foundational support not only thrives but grows at Ballet Arizona?

I believe the arts make our community and our lives vibrant and rewarding, and I feel Ballet Arizona is one of the most talented arts organizations in the Valley. Additionally, once I became personally acquainted with many of the dancers, I became interested and invested in their lives and careers. I appreciate that these amazingly talented and creative individuals are dedicating this time in their lives to creating art and beauty for all of us.

What ballets or contemporary works have inspired you the most?

When I first became a board member at Ballet Arizona and I was getting to know the dancers, I would often ask each dancer what his or her favorite ballet was to dance. Many mentioned *Don Quixote* as a favorite. I have only seen the ballet once, but I remember loving it. I also really like most anything Ib choreographs, one of my favorites is his ballet *Rio* with music by Philip Glass.

What is your favorite part about being a Prima Circle member and why do you think people should join?

I am very proud of our Prima Circle program. Individuals who support Ballet Arizona and become Prima Circle members have access to an enhanced ballet experience. Members are invited to attend rehearsals and cocktail events a few weeks prior to the ballet performances, where the dancers, Ib, and other guest speakers educate members on the upcoming ballets. Recent guest speakers have included répétiteurs (individuals responsible for teaching the ballets) from The George Balanchine Trust and Costume Designer, Fabio Toblini, who created the costumes for *The Firebird*. We also have studio rehearsal luncheons, drinks at performance intermissions, and our Prima Circle Donor Appreciation Evening. We have a great Prima Circle committee, and we are always striving to create new educational and entertaining programs for our members.

What are you most looking forward to this season?

I am excited about *Director's Choice*. The choreography is always so creative. Unlike the storybook ballets which utilize costuming and sets to enhance the experience, the mixed repertoire programs are all about the dance and music.

You also have many other artistic outlets – an artist yourself? Could you tell us a little more about that?

I have been “artsy” all my life. At 12, I started silversmithing and owned my own acetylene torch! In high school and college, I was a singer, and in high school I auditioned and spent a summer at Tanglewood in the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s vocal program. More recently, I owned a business where I designed and manufactured funky felted handbags. In 2005, I won the Fashion Group International award for “Rising Accessory Designer of the Year” in Arizona. Currently, I am working on a lot of hand sewn and embellished garments. I also dance 4 times a week for fitness. Fortunately, there are no recitals!

Ib Andersen

A brilliant career that began on one of the world's greatest ballet stages and continues to inspire audiences in Arizona.

1960

Started ballroom dancing at the age of 4.



1972

Joins The Royal Danish Ballet, at the age of 16.



1980

Moves to the United States at the age of 25, after auditioning for George Balanchine, and joins New York City Ballet as a principal dancer.



1990

Retires from dancing at the age of 35.



1963

Accepted to The Royal Danish Ballet School at the age of 7.



1975

Promoted to principal dancer at the age of 20, the youngest in the company's history.



1987

Creates 1st choreographic commission, *1-2-3 - 1-2*, for The Royal Danish Ballet.





LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Samantha Turner

How did we get here?

This year, we celebrate 20 years of Ib Andersen as Ballet Arizona’s artistic director, a tenure that has transformed the company.

For those of you who have supported us since before 2000, you’ve witnessed the extraordinary evolution of the company’s artistry and repertoire. If you’ve moved to the Valley from one of our nation’s leading cultural centers, you were delighted to see that your new home offered ballet on par with what you’ve experienced elsewhere.

What makes that possible? Why *you do*, of course.

When we weren’t sure we could keep the doors open twenty years ago, you saved the day with an appeal to the community on television and fundraising gala produced in a little more than a week.

As our financial situation stabilized and a letter arrived asking you to renew your annual contribution, you mailed in your gift, as you did the prior year, and many more into the future, providing the critical sustaining support that helps us do what we do every day.

When the opportunity came to create a new *Nutcracker* production to delight and inspire the Valley with magical costumes, sets, and choreography, a foundation and corporate funder came forward to make it happen.

To bring a child or family in need to Symphony Hall to experience the delight of that magical production and other ballets, you enthusiastically responded with an Angel Night gift.

When the opportunity for a new building came, you voted yes on a city bond and participated in our capital campaign, creating one of the finest dance facilities in the Southwest.

As you considered the legacy you would leave behind, you thoughtfully remembered Ballet Arizona in your estate.

You have transformed Ballet Arizona and carry it into the future with your acts of generosity – both sustaining support year after year and special gifts that create new opportunities.

Your investments in Ib Andersen, the dancers, faculty and staff of Ballet Arizona, provide our community with a gift that delights the soul, enriches lives, and helps make the Valley among the most desirable places to live.

Thank you for what you've made possible and what you'll bring to the future.

Gratefully,

Samantha Turner, Executive Director



2003

Premieres 1st full-length story ballet, *Romeo @ Juliet*, for Ballet Arizona.



2010

Ballet Arizona performs *Divisions* at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.



2014

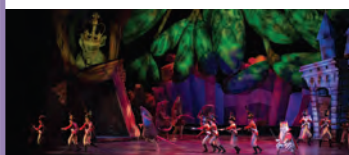
Ballet Arizona celebrates the U.S. premiere of August Bournonville’s *Napoli*.

2000

Named Artistic Director of Ballet Arizona

2006

Creates brand new version of *The Nutcracker*, ranked among the top 3 in the nation by *The New York Times!*



2012

World premiere of *Topia* at Desert Botanical Garden.



2019

World premiere of *The Firebird*.

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Why does it matter?

From student matinees, to adaptive dance classes, to free or low cost community programs, part of Ballet Arizona's mission is to bring dance to as many people as we can each year. But why? This question has many different answers but ultimately the reason is that dance creates opportunities for individuals to better themselves and the world around them.

First and foremost, dance provides a means of self-expression, something that many people struggle with. According to the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO),

“Arts research shows that students who study dance are more expressive in their communication of emotions, thoughts, and feelings.”

Dance opens doors to communication by providing different ways to express what they are feeling and thinking through movement. This helps people find more confidence in themselves and develop their ability to connect with others.

Secondly, dance also helps people become aware of the wider world around them and find their place in it. Because movement is an international language, dance has the power to bring people together from all countries and cultures. Those who experience dance also have the opportunity to be a part of diverse networks and learning communities. The experiences gained through this exposure allow people to practice and grow their observational and interpersonal skills, which helps them become more informed members of society.

What we're trying to say is that education in the art of dance leads to more than just learning dance steps. The process of learning dance is also a process of learning how to think critically, grow in nonverbal communication, exchange ideas, work together as a group, and work within a multicultural society. We believe that these self-motivated, expressive, and creative people are the ones who will change the world.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for supporting our efforts to shape and empower the future leaders of our society.

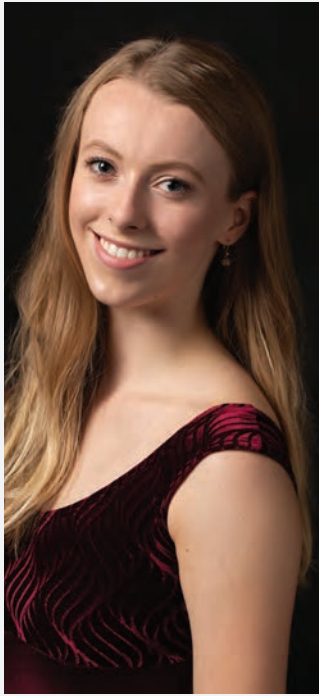


DID YOU KNOW?

Fun Facts about *Sir Frederick Ashton*

- Frederick Ashton was the founding choreographer of The Royal Ballet in London and played a crucial role not only in the company but also The Royal Ballet School. He later went on to serve as their artistic director from 1963 to 1970.
- Ashton is credited with creating the English style of ballet which was distinct for its épaulement (the way the head and shoulders are held). The “Ashton style” is known for its elegance and has been described as very architectural as their wasn't a lot of movement in the upper body.
- Margot Fonteyn, The Royal Ballet's Prima Ballerina Assoluta, worked with Ashton for many years and revealed in an interview that when she worked with him, she thought Ashton was a madman whose choreography was impossible.
- In 1941, Ashton was called into service as an officer in the Royal Airforce. He was charged with analyzing aerial photographs and later became an intelligence officer. During this time, he was granted occasional opportunities to leave and continue his work with the ballet.
- *Les Patineurs* was a huge success, not only for Ashton, but also The Royal Ballet. It was performed in London every season from 1937 to 1968. In May of 1937, *Les Patineurs* aired on the BBC making it one of the first ballets ever to be televised!

COMPANY CONNECTION *Meet dancers Annika & Alberto*



Annika Erickson

Hometown: Spokane, Washington
Joined Ballet Arizona: 2018

What inspired you to become a dancer?

My mom inspired me to become a dancer, because she was once a professional dancer and has been teaching ballet for over 25 years. As soon as I could walk, I would dance around my house to classical music. She put me in ballet at age 7, and has supported me every step of the way!

Who is your greatest dance inspiration?

My greatest dance inspiration would have to be George Balanchine. I am inspired by his amazing choreography and innate sense of musicality

Do you prefer modern or classical ballet?

I mainly prefer classical ballet because I have so much respect for the history and the steadfast aesthetic of the art. However, being able to move freely in modern works can be very liberating.

Do you have a pre-performance ritual?

My pre-performance ritual has several steps, so I always make sure I give myself plenty of time before a show. While I do my hair and makeup, I like to listen to music, to get in the right mindset and calm any pre-show nerves. I always make sure I am well fueled and hydrated. I also give myself a proper warm up to prevent injuries and improve my overall performance. Right before I go onstage, I usually go over any last-second notes or sections of choreography, and do a little meditation.

What do you do outside of dance?

In my spare time, I love to go to the movies, bake, spend time with family and friends, visit local coffee shops and be outdoors! My favorite thing to do is travel and experience different cultures. I spent part of my summer solo traveling in Amsterdam and Reykjavík, Iceland, and am already starting to plan next summer's adventure!



Alberto Peñalver

Hometown: Murcia, Spain
Joined Ballet Arizona: 2016

What inspired you to become a dancer?

I started dancing when I was 8 years old. I didn't know much about it, but my parents asked me if I wanted to dance after school and I said yes. After that, I kept dancing and began loving it more and more. That is when I realized that ballet is what I wanted to do. It was hard when a lot of teachers didn't believe in me, but against a lot of people's advice, I went to an audition and at 16 I got accepted to one of the best ballet schools in the world, the John Cranko School in Stuttgart, Germany. That made me realize that sometimes, in the ballet world, little things can be very hard at a young age. However, if you have a strong mind and don't let people get into your head, you can enjoy, as a career or not, the beautiful world of ballet.

What is your favorite ballet?

It is hard to choose just one. Some of my favorite ballets, that I've also been lucky enough to perform in are *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Giselle*, the most classic ones! I like them because it is all about beautiful, clean technique and pure lines. I also like more neoclassical ones, like George Balanchine's *Agon* or

William Forsythe's *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated* because of all the fast movement and modern music. They are a lot of fun to dance.

Do you prefer modern or classical ballet?

I personally prefer to dance more classical ballets, because it is what I've trained for and I love ballet technique. However, I love the movement of more neoclassical and modern ballets, like Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort*, and the way it makes the dancers move is beautiful.

What has been your favorite role to dance?

My favorite role to dance has to be *In Creases* by Justin Peck. Thanks to the répétiteurs, Patricia Delgado and Michael Sean Breeden, that came to stage the piece, I was given the great opportunity to dance this ballet. The choreography is amazing, and with love and encouragement, Patricia and Michael helped get the best out of me. It was definitely the best moment of my career so far.

What do you do outside of dance?

I love art, exploring museums, and having a good time with friends. I recently sparked a new interest in photography. I also love to travel and discover new places of the world.

We would love to hear from you! Please send any comments or suggestions to Annual Fund Coordinator Elyse Salisz at esalisz@balletaz.org or call **602.343.6510**.

BALLET ARIZONA 2019–2020 SEASON UPCOMING DONOR EVENTS

September 26 – 29 (All Prima Circle Members) | Orpheum Theatre
Intermission Receptions at *Director's Choice*

October 11 (All Prima Circle Members)
Napoli Studio Spotlight

October 23 (\$3,500 & Up)
Napoli Dress Rehearsal Viewing

October 24 (\$2,500 & Up)
Napoli Company Class Viewing on Stage

October 24 – 27 (All Prima Circle Members)
Intermission Receptions at *Napoli* (except Sunday evening)

October 24 – 27 (\$3,500 & Up)
Backstage Tour at *Napoli*

November 12 (\$500 & Up)
Corps de Ballet Rehearsal Viewing

November 14 (All Prima Circle Members)
Prima Circle Rehearsal Viewing & Lunch

November 21 – 24 | Dorrance Theater
Cinderella performed by The School of Ballet Arizona

December 13 – 24 | Symphony Hall
The Nutcracker

December 12 | Symphony Hall
The Nutcracker Angel Night

January 14 (\$2,500 & Up)
Company Class Viewing

January 31 (All Prima Circle Members) | Dorrance Theater
Prima Circle Evening & Studio Spotlight

April 18 | The Camelback Inn
Dance with Me – A Ballet Arizona Gala

BALLET
ARIZONA

IB ANDERSEN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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Ballet Arizona dancers Arianni Martin and Brian Leonard.
Photo by Alexander Iziliaev.

