



IB ANDERSEN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



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Ballet Arizona Announces Free Digital Performance and Awards Celebration

Set the Stage: BALANCHINE Will Present a Collection of Performances on May 8

PHOENIX – [Ballet Arizona](#) introduces *Set the Stage: BALANCHINE*, a one-hour production that invites viewers to celebrate the perseverance of the Ballet Arizona family over the past year and sets the stage for an exhilarating return to the main stage for the 2021-2022 season. Viewers will also be invited to witness the presentation of the 2021 Hazel Hare Award of Artistic Excellence.

Set the Stage: BALANCHINE combines Ballet Arizona's reimagined 2021 gala, [Set the Stage](#), with favorite performance excerpts choreographed by George Balanchine and Ballet Arizona's own Nayon Iovino ranging from *Emeralds*, *La Sonnambula*, *Western Symphony* and more. The performance will be available on Ballet Arizona's [Vimeo channel](#) for 24 hours starting at 7 p.m. MST on May 8.

In the past, Ballet Arizona's Dance with Me Gala has been a celebrated evening to remember – one that brings patrons together to support the mission of Ballet Arizona, the critically-acclaimed artistic product, The School, and all community engagement efforts. Unfortunately, the events of COVID prohibit the company from holding this critical fundraising event in-person this year. *Set the Stage* sponsors and donors will be able to continue their support of the ballet's mission while simultaneously making the spring digital performance free to our entire community. Neither cost, nor geography will limit access to this inspiring art.

"We are excited to celebrate the fortitude of the arts this past year while showcasing some of Ballet Arizona's finest work and talent," said Artistic Director Ib Andersen. "It is a continued joy to watch our dancers excel and be recognized for their hardworking talents and I am overjoyed to share the art of Ballet Arizona with our community both on a local and national level."

Each year at the gala, Ballet Arizona awards two dancers, with the Hazel Hare Award for Artistic Excellence. Hazel was a passionate supporter of Ballet Arizona and was well known in the community for being a strong advocate for the arts. It is because of her transformative endowment gift to Ballet Arizona in 2016, that this cash award is available.

To learn more about how to watch Ballet Arizona's content on Vimeo, visit <https://balletaz.org/vimeo-faq/>. The video link will also be sent out via email to Ballet Arizona email subscribers just before 7 p.m. MST on May 8. Viewers can also go directly to Ballet

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Arizona's Vimeo channel anytime between 7 p.m. MST on May 8 and 7 p.m. MST on May 9 to watch.

Ballet Arizona

Ballet Arizona is dedicated to preserving and celebrating classical dance while creating new and innovative works. Under the artistic direction of internationally acclaimed choreographer Ib Andersen - a former Principal Dancer with The New York City Ballet and The Royal Danish Ballet - Ballet Arizona follows his lead to the future of dance in Arizona. The School of Ballet Arizona promotes access to the art form of ballet through dance education, with a focus on excellence in the form, directing each student to a life-long love of dance. Following this vision, Ballet Arizona connects to more than 35,000 children and families every year through its free and low-cost outreach programs. For more information, visit balletaz.org.

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