

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ballet Arizona Awarded \$600,000 By Governor Doug Ducey

Grant Will Support Professional Ballet Company Negatively Impacted By COVID-19

PHOENIX - [Ballet Arizona](#), the Valley's only professional ballet company, is thrilled to announce that it has been awarded \$600,000 by the office of Governor Doug Ducey through the American Rescue Plan Act, which is working to provide nonprofit organizations across the country with COVID-19 relief funding.

The performing arts were devastatingly affected by the pandemic, as both indoor and large venues remained closed for nearly two years. As an organization that has been providing world-class ballet performances in Maricopa County for more than 37 years, Ballet Arizona worked diligently to shift performances and school programs to digital formats and find innovative ways to continue to engage audiences within the arts.

"Arizona's vibrant arts community is vital to our state's cultural identity," said Governor Ducey. "These dollars will support Ballet Arizona as it continues to recover and provide artistic expression and education for Arizonans."

For the first half of its 35th season, Ballet Arizona transitioned to a digital streaming experience that provided Arizonans with access to beloved performances of works previously presented by the company in years past. In addition to digital performances, a virtual book club became a new tradition that worked to build community and appreciation for the incredible art form of dance. The School of Ballet Arizona also hosted a free interactive workshop on Zoom that helped kids stay active and creative despite staying home.

The grant will aid Ballet Arizona in overcoming the financial burdens placed upon the institution over the past two years. Thanks to the generous support from the local community, Ballet Arizona was fortunate to maintain its entire staff, including dancers and administrative employees. As an organization that relies on the income generated through ticket sales and charitable donations, however, it lost millions of dollars in operating revenue during its 34th and 35th season. This funding will help fill that revenue gap and assist the company as it continues to recover to pre-pandemic levels of attendance from its audience base.

"We are beyond grateful to Governor Ducey and his entire office for their continued support of the arts and Ballet Arizona," said Jami Kozemczak, Ballet Arizona Executive Director. "The coronavirus pandemic was a devastating time for everyone, and arts organizations were also among those deeply affected. We still have yet to recover fully to 2019 numbers in terms of attendance and revenue, so this funding could not come at a more critical time as it truly gives us the runway we need to recover, rebuild, and position ourselves for growth."

"This funding is a testament to the belief that arts organizations are a crucial component of our community," said Artistic Director Ib Andersen. "During the pandemic, we turned to the arts to sustain us, heal us and keep our spirits alive. We consumed music, literature, and digital

performances in order to find respite through entertainment. The arts provide joy and inspiration and are a necessary part of healthy and vibrant communities. We are deeply grateful to Governor’s Office and the State of Arizona.”

Ballet Arizona is the official ballet company of the State of Arizona, whose mission is to create, perform, and teach outstanding classical and contemporary ballet. This institution is dedicated to preserving and celebrating classical dance while creating and commissioning new innovative works. To learn more about how Ballet Arizona continues to evolve, visit balletaz.org.

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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