

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Artistic Director Ib Andersen Departing Ballet Arizona

National search underway for successor

PHOENIX – [Ballet Arizona's](#) Board of Directors has announced that Ib Andersen, Artistic Director, will be leaving the organization on June 30, 2024 after 24 years of service. A national search firm has been retained to find Mr. Andersen's successor.

The Board has voted to name Mr. Andersen as Artistic Director Emeritus, effective following the transition to new leadership, in recognition of his significant contributions to the organization.

"Since Ib joined Ballet Arizona in 2000, we have marveled at his ability to create masterful pieces and bring to life his unique vision," said Mike Bolar, chair of the Ballet Arizona Board. "Ballet Arizona greatly appreciates Ib for his immense contributions over the last 23 years."

Mr. Andersen's career in the world of dance began at age seven in Copenhagen, Denmark, at the Royal Danish Ballet School. He earned a promotion to Principal Dancer in the Royal Danish Corps de Ballet at the age of 20, becoming the youngest Principal Dancer in the company's history.

His stellar reputation in Europe brought Mr. Andersen to the attention of the director of the New York City Ballet, George Balanchine, and he joined the company in 1980, learning 39 ballets in the first three months of his time there, including challenging works of Balanchine's *Symphony in C*. During his 10 years with the company, he appeared in 60 ballets. This led Balanchine to create principal roles for him in *Ballade*, *Dauidsbündlertänze*, and *Mozartiana*. Jerome Robbins and Peter Martins also created roles for Andersen's unique style.

"My work will continue. There are still stories I look forward to telling and I will be exploring new opportunities to showcase my performances," said Mr. Andersen. "I want to thank the amazing dancers and loyal patrons that I've gotten to know at Ballet Arizona over the past two decades. Their support and friendships have been inspiring."

Ballet Arizona has engaged a well-regarded national search firm to identify potential successors who can build on the strong foundation that Mr. Andersen has created as Artistic Director. Mr. Andersen will continue to lead the company as Artistic Director for the coming season and assist with the transition to a new artistic director.

"Anyone who appreciates dance knows it is about building greatness from greatness and strength upon strength. It is about renewal and rebirth. This transition year is a time to celebrate all that Ib has brought to Ballet Arizona while we plan for our continued success in the future," said Jami Kozemczak, Executive Director of Ballet Arizona.

Ballet Arizona's 2023-2024 season promises to excite and inspire audiences with a blend of classical and contemporary ballets. The new season will include the return of *Juan Gabriel*, *The Nutcracker*, a world premiere ballet choreographed by Ib Andersen titled *Moving Movies*, and more. More information can be found at www.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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