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Neoclassical choreographer George Balanchine (1904-1983) (A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Program 04; Jewels, Program 07) is one of the 20th century’s most influential and innovative artists. Born in St. Petersburg, he trained at the Imperial Ballet School and joined the Mariinsky Ballet. He left Russia in 1924 and became ballet master for Serge Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes in Paris. Balanchine choreographed several ballets, including Prodigal Son and Apollon Musagète (later renamed Apollo) for the Ballets Russes. After Diaghilev’s death, Balanchine worked in Europe until arts patron Lincoln Kirstein invited him to come to the United States to start a company. “But first a school,” was Balanchine’s famous reply, and he founded the School of American Ballet in 1934. In 1946, he and Kirstein started Ballet Society, which later became New York City Ballet. Balanchine served as ballet master and principal choreographer of New York City Ballet until his death in 1983. He created more than 400 dance works, many of which are in the repertory of San Francisco Ballet.

David Dawson (Anima Animus, Program 05) is an associate artist at Dutch National Ballet and a prolific dancemaker. A former resident choreographer at Dutch National Ballet, Semperoper Ballet, and Royal Ballet of Flanders, Dawson’s work is in the repertoires of such companies as Boston Ballet, English National Ballet, Finnish National Ballet, Mariinsky Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, The Royal Ballet, Royal
New Zealand Ballet, Royal Swedish Ballet, Scottish Ballet, Hungarian National Ballet, Staatsballett Berlin, and Vienna State Opera Ballet. Among his works are full-length productions of *Tristan + Isolde*, *Swan Lake*, and *Giselle*. Other significant works include *A Million Kisses to My Skin*, *Empire Noir*, *The Human Seasons*, *The Third Light*, *Morning Ground*, *Citizen Nowhere*, *The Disappeared*, *A Sweet Spell of Oblivion*, *Faun(e)*, *The World According to Us*, *Styx*, *dancingmadlybackwards*, and *timelapse/(Mnemosyne)*. For his ballet *The Grey Area*, Dawson received the Prix Benois de la Danse Award and was nominated for the UK Critics’ Circle National Dance Award. As the first British choreographer to choreograph for Mariinsky Ballet, he created the Golden Mask Award-winning *Reverence*. He received the Choo-San Goh Award for *The Gentle Chapters* and Golden Swan Award nominations for *Overture* and *00:00*. *Anima Animus*, created for 2018 Unbound: A Festival of New Works, was Dawson’s first work for SF Ballet.

Danish dancer and choreographer [Harald Lander](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harald_Lander) (1905–71) (*Etudes*, Program 03) was artistic director of the Royal Danish Ballet for more than 20 years and is credited with both revitalizing the company by cultivating a diverse repertory and preserving the work of its previous director, August Bournonville. Lander trained at the Royal Danish Ballet School and with Michel Fokine in New York. He joined the Royal Danish Ballet School in 1923 and was appointed artistic director in 1931. As artistic director, Lander created over 30 ballets for Royal *Valse* (1940), *L’Apprenti Sorcier* (1940), *Fool’s Paradise* (1942), *Fest-Polonaise* pas de deux (1942), *Quarratsiluni* (1942), *Spring* (1942), *Quasi una Fantasia* (1945), and *Etudes* (1948)—his most enduring work. Lander also staged and preserved the Bournonville repertoire, including *Naples*, *La Sylphide*, *Le Conservatoire*, *Far from Denmark*, *La Ventana*, *Folk’s Tale*, *The Kermesse in Bruges*, *King’s Volunteers on Amager*, *Flower Festival in Genzano*, and *Pas de Trois Cousins*. He is also credited with preserving and restoring many of Fokine’s ballets, including *Les Sylphides*, *Petrouchka*, *Prince Igor* and *Le spectre de la Rose*. From 1953 to 1963, Lander was ballet master for the Paris Opera. Lander died in Copenhagen in 1971.

Edwaard Liang (*The Infinite Ocean*, Program 03) is a choreographer and artistic director of BalletMet in Ohio. Born in Taipei, Taiwan, Liang trained at Marin Ballet and the School of American Ballet. He was a medal winner at the Prix de Lausanne International Ballet Competition in 1993 and won the Mae L. Wien Award that same year. He joined New York City Ballet in 1993 and was promoted to soloist five years later. In 2001, he joined the cast of the Tony Award-winning Broadway show *Fosse* and performed in “From Broadway: Fosse” in the PBS television series *Great Performances: Dance in America*. Subsequently, he joined Netherlands Dance Theater. Liang became artistic director of Ballet Met in 2013. His choreography is in the repertories of the Bolshoi Ballet, Houston Ballet, The Joffrey Ballet, Mariinsky Ballet, New York City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Shanghai Ballet, Singapore Dance Theatre, and The Washington Ballet. He has won numerous awards for his choreography, including the 2006 National Choreographic Competition. Created for 2018 Unbound: A Festival of New Works, *The Infinite Ocean* is his third work for SF Ballet; he also created *Symphonic Dances* and *Finding Light*. 
Cathy Marston (world premiere, Program 05) is a choreographer, artistic director, and Clore Cultural Leadership Fellow. Born in Newcastle, she studied in Cambridge and at The Royal Ballet School before launching an international career as a choreographer. She has created more than 50 works that have been performed in 10 countries. As an associate artist at The Royal Opera House from 2002 to 2006, Marston created a critically acclaimed interpretation of Henrik Ibsen’s *Ghosts* and a dance-opera, *Echo and Narcissus*, among other works. As director of Bern Ballett from 2007 to 2013, she developed a hybrid signature style, visible in her history-inspired *Witch-hunt* and her literature-based *Ein Winternachtstraum*, *Juliet and Romeo*, and *Wuthering Heights*. She brought new perspectives to old narratives in *Three Sisters* and *Hamlet* (for Ballet im Revier), *Jane Eyre* and *A Tale of Two Cities* (for Northern Ballet), *Lolita* (for Copenhagen Summer Ballet), *Blood Wedding* (for The Finnish National Ballet), and *Dangerous Liaisons* (for Royal Danish Ballet). In addition, Marston has choreographed for The Royal Ballet, Ballett Basel, Danza Contemporanea de Cuba, English National Ballet, Ballett des Theater Koblenz, The Washington Ballet, Ballet Boyz, Graz Oper Ballett, Images of Dance, Ballet Central, The Royal Opera, and Opera Australia, among other companies. Marston’s first work for SF Ballet was *Snowblind*, which was created for 2018 Unbound: A Festival of New Works.

Trey McIntyre (world premiere, Program 03) is a choreographer, filmmaker, writer, and photographer. Born in Wichita, Kansas, he trained at North Carolina School of the Arts and Houston Ballet Academy. McIntyre spent 13 years as choreographic associate to Houston Ballet, a position that was created especially for him. He has also created works for American Ballet Theatre, Pennsylvania Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, New York City Ballet, Queensland Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, and The Washington Ballet, among others. The company he founded, Trey McIntyre Project, has been lauded as a new model of an arts organization, developing new models of community engagement while being highly visible worldwide through touring. In 2014, he transitioned the company to focus on photography and video projects. He continues to choreograph and teach dance worldwide and is working on a collection of photography he published on a Patreon site, in addition presenting his documentary entitled *Gravity Hero* at film festivals around the country. McIntyre has received a Choo-San Goh Award for choreography, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Society of Arts and Letters, and two National Endowment for the Arts grants for choreography. He is also a United States Artists Fellow. McIntyre’s first work for SF Ballet, *Presentce*, premiered at the 2017 Opening Night Gala. McIntyre’s second work for the company was *Your Flesh Shall Be a Great Poem*, which debuted at 2018 Unbound: A Festival of New Works and was last seen in the 2019 Repertory Season. The 2020 Season’s world premiere marks McIntyre’s third work created for SF Ballet.

Benjamin Millepied (Appassionata, Program 06) is a choreographer, filmmaker, and artistic director distinguished by his career as a dancer at New York City Ballet and his growing body of creative work. Born in Bordeaux, France, Millepied trained with his mother, Catherine Flori; at the Conservatoire National de Lyon; and
at the School of American Ballet before joining New York City Ballet, where he became a principal dancer in 2001. Millepied’s choreography has entered the repertories of major dance companies worldwide, including New York City Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Berlin Staatsoper, Mariinsky Ballet, among many others, and was featured in Darren Aronofsky’s award-winning film Black Swan, in which he also starred. Millepied founded L.A. Dance Project in 2012. In 2013, he was appointed director of Paris Opera Ballet, where he was the subject of the documentary film Reset. He returned to Los Angeles in 2016 to focus on L.A. Dance Project and his own choreography and filmmaking. He is currently working on two feature films, one of which is a musical adaptation of Carmen to be released in 2020. Among many awards and honors, Millepied was made a Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Ministry of Culture.

Mark Morris (Sandpaper Ballet, Program 02) formed the Mark Morris Dance Group (MMDG) in 1980 and has since created over 150 works for the company. From 1988 to 1991, Morris was Director of Dance at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the national opera house of Belgium. In 1990, he founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov. Morris is also an acclaimed ballet choreographer, with twenty-two works commissioned by ballet companies worldwide. Noted for musicality, he has been described as “undeviating in his devotion to music” (The New Yorker). He began conducting performances for MMDG in 2006 and has since conducted at Tanglewood Music Center, Lincoln Center, and BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music). In 2013 he served as Music Director for the Ojai Music Festival. Morris also works extensively in opera, directing and choreographing productions for The Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, English National Opera and The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, among others. Morris was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991 and has received eleven honorary doctorates to date. He has taught at the University of Washington, Princeton University and Tanglewood Music Center. He is the subject of a biography, Mark Morris, by Joan Acocella (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) and Marlowe & Company published a volume of photographs and critical essays entitled Mark Morris’ L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato: A Celebration. A new book, Mark Morris: Musician-Choreographer, by musicologist Stephanie Jordan was released in Fall 2015. Morris opened the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn, New York, in 2001 to provide a home for his company, subsidized rental space for local artists, outreach programs for children and seniors, and a school offering dance classes to students of all ages and abilities.

Yuri Possokhov (Classical Symphony, Program 06) trained at Moscow Ballet Academy before dancing with Bolshoi Ballet for 10 years, where he was promoted to principal dancer. In 1992 he joined Royal Danish Ballet as a principal dancer; two years later he joined SF Ballet, also as a principal dancer. He retired from the stage in 2006 and was named SF Ballet’s choreographer in residence that same year. In addition to the 15 ballets he was created for SF Ballet, Possokhov has choreographed works for the Bolshoi Ballet, Georgian National Ballet, and The Joffrey Ballet. In July 2015, his full-length ballet, a Hero of Our Time, debuted at the Bolshoi Ballet.

Alexei Ratmansky (The Seasons, Program 06), currently artist in residence at American Ballet Theatre, is an internationally acclaimed Russian choreographer who has revitalized narrative ballet through his thoughtful
remounting of classics and his shorter, more abstract works. Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, he trained at the Bolshoi Ballet School in Moscow and performed as a principal dancer with Ukrainian National Ballet, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and Royal Danish Ballet. An invitation to create a work for the Bolshoi Ballet led him to become artistic director of that company in 2004. As Artistic Director, Ratmansky remounted several Soviet-era ballets, most notably The Bright Stream, for which he earned a Critics’ Circle National Dance Award in London. Bolshoi Ballet was also named “Best Foreign Company” by The Critics’ Circle twice under his direction. San Francisco Ballet commissioned Ratmansky’s first American premiere, Le Carnaval des Animaux in 2003 and has since acquired seven additional works in the repertory. He has also choreographed ballets for the Mariinsky Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, New York City Ballet, The Australian Ballet, and many others.

Ratmansky joined American Ballet Theatre as artist in residence in 2009. Named a 2013 MacArthur Foundation Fellow, Ratmansky has also served as a choreographic mentor to SF Ballet Corps de Ballet member Myles Thatcher through the Rolex Mentor & Protégé Arts Initiative. In 2014, Ratmansky won his second Benois de la Danse award for Shostakovich Trilogy. Ratmansky’s The Seasons, co-commissioned by SF Ballet and American Ballet Theatre, makes its West Coast premiere in SF Ballet’s 2020 season.

Liam Scarlett (Hummingbird, Program 02) is currently artist in residence at The Royal Ballet and artistic associate at Queensland Ballet. Born in Ipswich, England, Scarlett trained at the Linda Shipton School of Dancing and The Royal Ballet School before joining The Royal Ballet in 2005. While still dancing, Scarlett choreographed Asphodel Meadows (2010), which won the Critics’ Circle National Dance Award for Best Classical Choreography, and Sweet Violets (2012), about Jack the Ripper, for The Royal Ballet. He then retired from dancing to focus on creating his first full-length work, Hansel and Gretel (2013). In addition to numerous works for The Royal Ballet, Scarlett has choreographed for New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Miami City Ballet, and Norwegian National Ballet. Following the 2016 premiere of his new A Midsummer Night’s Dream at Queensland Ballet in Australia, he was named artistic associate of that company. Die Toteninsel, which debuted in the 2019 Repertory Season, is Scarlett’s fourth creation for San Francisco Ballet, including the popular co-production of Frankenstein.

Helgi Tomasson (7 For Eight, Program 05; Romeo & Juliet, Program 08), one of the supreme classical dancers of his generation, has led San Francisco Ballet for 34 years and is the longest-serving sole artistic director of a major ballet company. Born in Iceland, he danced with Harkness Ballet, The Joffrey Ballet, and New York City Ballet, where he distinguished himself as a dancer of technical purity, musicality, and intelligence. Tomasson assumed leadership of SF Ballet in 1985. Under his direction, SF Ballet has developed into a Company widely recognized as one of the finest in the world. Tomasson has balanced devotion to the classics with an emphasis on new work, cultivating frequent collaborations and commissions with renowned choreographers such as William Forsythe, Christopher Wheeldon, Alexei Ratmansky, and Mark Morris, among many others. He has choreographed more than 50 works for the Company, including full-length productions of
Swan Lake, The Sleeping Beauty, Romeo & Juliet (taped for Lincoln Center at the Movies’ Great American Dance), Giselle, and Nutcracker (taped for PBS’s Great Performances). He conceptualized the 1995 UNited We Dance festival, in which SF Ballet hosted 12 international companies; the 2008 New Works Festival, which included 10 world premieres by 10 acclaimed choreographers; and the 2018 Unbound: A Festival of New Works. Tomasson has also connected SF Ballet to the world, through co-commissions with American Ballet Theatre, The Royal Ballet, and Dutch National Ballet; and major tours to Paris, London, New York City, China, and his native Iceland.

In July 2003, Australian Stanton Welch (Bespoke, Program 02) assumed leadership of Houston Ballet, America’s fifth largest classical ballet company. Since he took the helm of the company, Mr. Welch has revitalized Houston Ballet, bringing in new dancers, commissioning new works, and attracting a top-flight artistic staff. Mr. Welch has created works for such prestigious international companies as Houston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, The Australian Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, and The Royal Danish Ballet. Mr. Welch was born in Melbourne to Marilyn Jones, O.B.E., and Garth Welch, A.M., two of Australia’s most gifted dancers of the 1960s and 1970s. In 1989 he was engaged as a dancer with The Australian Ballet, where he rose to the rank of leading soloist, performing various principal roles. He has also worked with internationally acclaimed choreographers such as Jiří Kylián, Nacho Duato, and Maurice Béjart. In 1995, Mr. Welch was named resident choreographer of The Australian Ballet. For his contributions to the world of dance, he was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) in June 2015. For Houston Ballet, he has choreographed more than twenty works including a new full-length narrative ballet Marie (2009), inspired by the life of the legendary Marie Antoinette and spectacular stagings of Swan Lake (2006), La Bayadère (2010), Romeo and Juliet (2015), and Giselle (2016).

Christopher Wheeldon (Cinderella, Program 01) is a choreographer working in dance, theater, opera, and film. Born in Yeovil, England, he trained at The Royal Ballet School and danced with The Royal Ballet and New York City Ballet (NYCB). Wheeldon served as NYCB’s first-ever artist in residence before being named NYCB’s first resident choreographer in July 2001. He has created ballets for NYCB, The Royal Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Pennsylvania Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, Royal Swedish Ballet, the Bolshoi Ballet, and The National Ballet of Canada. In 2007, Wheeldon founded Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company and was appointed an associate artist for Sadler’s Wells Theatre in London. His Broadway credits include The Sweet Smell of Success and An American in Paris, for which he won a 2015 Tony Award for choreography. He has choreographed for Metropolitan Opera productions of La Gioconda and Carmen, Brigadoon at City Center and the feature film Center Stage (2000). He has been awarded the Martin E. Segal Award from Lincoln Center, the American Choreography Award, a Dance Magazine Award, two Benois de la Danse awards, and the 2014 Leonard Massine Prize for choreography. Wheeldon was awarded an OBE in the 2016 New Year’s Honours and was made an Honorary Fellow of American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Wheeldon’s Bound To, his 10th and last
work created for SF Ballet, premiered at the 2018 Unbound festival and was last seen in the 2019 Repertory Season.

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