



# Talking Pointes

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## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### ***On Pointe Luncheon Benefiting Dance - the Next Generation***

Monday, March 11, 2019, Michael's  
On East, 11:30 AM

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### ***Showcase Luncheon Margaret Barbieri, Assistant Director, The Sarasota Ballet, "Giselle: Setting An Iconic Work"***

Monday, April 15, 2019, Michael's  
On East, 11:30 AM

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## **UPCOMING PERFORMANCES**

### ***POETRY AND LIBERTY (Program 6)***

**8 - 9 March 2019**

**Van Wezel Performing Arts  
Hall**

**performed with Live Music**

Sir Frederick

Ashton's APPARITIONS

(company premiere)

George Balanchine's STARS

AND STRIPES

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### ***GISELLE (Program 7)***

**26 - 27 April 2019**

**Sarasota Opera House**

**performed with Live Music**

Production and Choreography

by Sir Peter Wright

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Tickets to all performances are now  
on sale on the website at  
[www.sarasotaballet.org](http://www.sarasotaballet.org) or by calling  
the Box Office at 941.359.0099.

## ***From the Desk of the President***

Richard March 941.343.7117

[rjmhkm@aol.com](mailto:rjmhkm@aol.com)

You will see that this edition of Talking Pointes has a decidedly Brazilian flavor – with articles about Inside the Studio and the February Showcase Luncheon.

Those lucky enough to attend the luncheon, which featured the “Boys from Brazil,” were thrilled with the program. We had the largest crowd in memory and filled the room to capacity.

Unfortunately, we were not able to accommodate everyone on the waitlist. Our Editor captured the spirited conversation with the dancers in her article.

We hope that our final luncheon of the season will also be a sellout – with even more than 150 people in attendance! It will be on April 15, 2019 at 11:30 AM at Michaels on East. Since the venue is larger, we will be able to accommodate even more members and guests.

We are so excited that Margaret Barbieri will discuss “Giselle: Setting an Iconic Work.” Please plan to join us. Who knows? We may even have a special guest!

It would be exciting if all of our luncheons are “sold out” next Season. To guarantee a seat, please consider subscribing to the Showcase Luncheon Package. This is a discounted four-luncheon subscription — ensuring you will hear our fantastic guest speakers.

**NOTE: The “SPRING FLING” previously planned for March 31, 2019 will be rescheduled in 2020.**

### ***From the Desk of the President (cont'd)***

Even though it seems like the Season has just begun, by the time this newsletter is published there may be only one performance weekend remaining. It will feature the iconic ballet classic, *Giselle*, at the Sarasota Opera House. As with all of the programs there and at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, the ballet will be enhanced through live music provided by The Sarasota Orchestra.

If you enjoy the live music as much as I do, I hope that you will consider a donation to the Live Music Endowment Fund. This Fund helps defray some of the costs incurred by performing with an orchestra. To donate, you may send a check to The Sarasota Ballet and note that it is for the Live Music Endowment Fund.

In recent months, there has been a significant increase in our volunteer efforts. Through the outstanding work of our Volunteer

Coordinator, Barbara Fischer Long, we have set new records for both the number of individuals involved and the number of hours they have provided. I would like to personally thank Barbara and everyone who has volunteered his or her time.

If you would like to become a volunteer, there are plenty of options, depending on how you would like to help. The recent opening of The Sarasota Ballet School's new studios in the Rosemary District has provided new opportunities to assist downtown. We look forward to further increases in the number of Friends who become active volunteers. For more information, please contact Barbara ([bflong@comcast.net](mailto:bflong@comcast.net)).

I am always pleased to hear from our members. Please let me know your thoughts and any suggestions you may have to make the Friends of The Sarasota Ballet even more effective.

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### ***From the Desk of the Events Coordinator***

Donna Maytham 941.351.5361

[pavlova03@comcast.net](mailto:pavlova03@comcast.net)

### ***February Showcase Luncheon***

The February Showcase Luncheon at Bird Key Yacht Club was another first for the Friends – a complete sellout with a waitlist! An enthusiastic audience of 150 people enjoyed a magical experience with three of our “Boys from Brazil,” Marcelo Gomes (MG), Ricardo Graziano (RG), and Ivan Duarte (ID).



All photos in this article courtesy of Shirley Blair

The luncheon was generously sponsored by Charlotte Hedge and The Hedge Team from Premier Sotheby's International Realty. (See separate article.)

In a setting beautifully decorated with flowers donated by Lauren Walsh, we had the pleasure of watching Jean Volpe interview the dancers. Oh, what an interview it was. To try and capture the atmosphere, this article will highlight the questions followed by individual answers.



Festive table decorations



The start of the interview...

JV – Can you tell us how you became a dancer and what led you to where you are today?

ID – In Brazil, we are always celebrating. With our exciting music, we are dancing in the streets. As a child, I was into sports, singing, and competing. When I saw my first ballet, I knew I wanted to do this as ballet has everything!



Marcelo and Jean



Ivan with Lydia Landa

After taking classes, I entered a competition where I received the Bronze Medal. Someone from the Orlando Ballet was there and offered me a contract. Although I was happy dancing, I didn't enjoy the city. When a friend told me about The Sarasota Ballet and the Ashton choreography, I auditioned and was hired.

RG – As Ivan said, parties are in our blood. My sister used to take classes. I would watch her dance and come home and recreate what she had done in our living room. When I was eight, my parents said that it was time for me to take lessons. So, I started doing jazz and at age 11, I started my classical training. By the time I was 12, I knew that I wanted to take dancing seriously.

I heard about some Brazilians getting scholarships to dance in Germany. When I was 15, I knew that it was time for me to leave and I also received a scholarship to study there for two years.

MG – In Brazil, even the street cleaners dance. Growing up, my parents would throw parties and remove the furniture so that everyone could dance.

When I was five, I went to where my sister was taking dance lessons and wandered into a musical theater class. I told the teacher that I think I can do this. She let me stay and when it was over, she asked me if I would like to become part of the class. When I said that my parents couldn't afford to pay, I was allowed to come for free. (Note: *Imagine: he received his first scholarship at age five.*)

At age 13, my dance partner sent an audition tape to The Harid Conservatory in Boca Raton and I was in the background of her tape. When the school saw my dancing, they offered scholarships to both of us and my parents agreed to let me go to follow my passion. (Note: *The Harid Conservatory is the only tuition-free school for gifted young dancers in the United States.*)



Ivan and Ricardo



Jean with "The Boys from Brazil"

JV – Have you always had confidence and known that nothing would stand in your way?

MG – No. As a teenager, you always question yourself. As I was getting on the plane to Florida, I asked myself is this the right choice? I'll be in a new culture and not know the language. However, when I got there and started to dance, the steps speak the same language. It put me in my comfort zone.

Three years later, I went to the Paris Opera Ballet School. Again, it was a whole new culture and I didn't speak the language. Knowing that it's your passion gives you confidence.

RG – As a professional, I have had moments of doubt. However, as a boy of eight or nine, I was very confident in myself. Boys called me names because I danced. But, I never thought of giving up. They were the problem, not me.



Lauren Walsh and Pat Golemme with Ricardo



Bob Griffiths, Jerry Genova, Bob Evans and David Eichlin

ID – I wanted to prove people wrong about me and show them that I could really dance. When I think about technique, I can get nervous. As a dancer I want to be relatable and talk to people through movement. On stage, I feel the energy from the audience and that gives me confidence.

MG – I've been told "no" more often than "yes." Taking corrections can be challenging. You have to have a lot of discipline and develop a tough skin. That helps build confidence.

JV – What are your favorite roles and why?

ID – Last season, I danced my "dream role" – "Puck" in *The Dream*. It was a very hard role. Iain and Margaret coached me through it.

My other favorite role is the "Blue Boy" in *Les Patineurs*. It was another very challenging role. Coming back from an injury made it even more difficult, but the other dancers really helped me get to where I needed to be.

RG – My two favorite roles are *La Fille Mal Gardée* and *Marguerite and Armand*. Iain brings in fantastic people to work with us on ballets that I wasn't familiar with.

As a child, I loved two modern pieces: *Remansos* which was choreographed by Nacho Duato, and *Petit Mort* by Jiří Kylián. I've had the chance to dance both works. They really touched me and helped make me a better choreographer.

MG – Without a doubt, my favorite role is Albrecht in *Giselle*. It was the first classical music I remember hearing and I knew the entire score. The first time I performed the role, it was like an out of body experience. I love the fact that Albrecht starts as one man and two-and-a-half hours later, he finishes as someone else. It gives me the sense of a man and his learning curve. The "acting" component really draws me to this work.

I also had the opportunity to "act" in *Varii Capricci*. It's the first time I ever danced in sunglasses! It's fun to play a character that's larger than life. But it's more difficult to perform comedy than drama. The Sarasota Ballet has shown me things that I never thought I would do. I'm very lucky to have had this opportunity.

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### An Amazing Offer to Benefit The Sarasota Ballet

The February Showcase Luncheon was sponsored by Charlotte Hedge, a long-time Friend of The Sarasota Ballet, and The Hedge Team – a member of Premier Sotheby's International Realty. The Hedge Team includes Charlotte and her husband, Tom Sr., along with their son, Tom Jr., and Monica Barth.

During Charlotte's brief remarks, she spoke about her love of The Sarasota Ballet. The audience was stunned when she made a special commitment to the ballet community. Any time The Hedge Team lists/sells a property and the client mentions the Ballet, the team will donate 10% of its commission to the Ballet upon closing.

It's so simple and has the potential of being a great fundraising source. If you refer a friend or use their services yourself, say the "magic words" – "The Sarasota Ballet."

For further information, please contact [Charlotte.hedge@premiersir.com](mailto:Charlotte.hedge@premiersir.com).



The Hedge Team with Laurie Feder, Sponsorship Development Chair

## *Inside the Studio - Amorosa*

Fascinating – that’s the only word to describe the experience of attending an *Inside the Studio*. This was my first time attending this event, and it certainly won’t be my last.

Studio 1 is the setting for this amazing experience. I didn’t really know what to expect. As it normally is, the event was sold out. About 150 ballet enthusiasts were able to watch Ricardo Graziano work with Danielle Brown and Marcelo Gomes on the final *pas de deux* from his world premiere, *Amorosa*. Ellen Overstreet and Wesley Carvalho, the second cast, were also rehearsing the choreography.

Ricardo described how his biggest challenge had been finding the perfect music. When he discovered a series of Vivaldi cello concertos, he had what he wanted. He was able to use nine songs and create 11 tracks that form the musical underpinning for the ballet.

As Ricardo said, “the music tells you what to do.” As soon as the tracks came together, he had the vision of how the ballet would look. During the rehearsal, we were able to see his vision in action.

As Marcelo partnered Danielle, Ricardo would tell them “use the floor, it’s your friend.” He also encouraged them to “enjoy the moment – don’t rush.” He told the audience that he likes to make the gentlemen suffer, while the women look like “they are walking on air.”

One element that Ricardo emphasized was focusing on the transitions. He encouraged the dancers to work through the movement. He also asked the ladies to look at their partners as they were going under their arms. It was so interesting to see the subtle differences as they followed his corrections.

Ricardo told the audience that he wanted the piece to look soft, loving and tender, but not romantic. He also shared that the goal of this work was to show off the Company, and not just Marcelo.

In response to a question, Ricardo discussed the use of “bicycle” steps – something that is not his trademark. He told us that he just loves the way that it flows. Marcelo commented that these steps correspond to the musical notes and work well for the dancers.

Another person asked about how Ricardo choreographs. Once he has the music, he first creates the work in his head. Then, he dances both the male and female roles before actual rehearsals. He not only wants to see how it looks, he also wants to ensure that everything is safe.

Marcelo commented that as a dancer and choreographer, one must be open minded. Working together is what makes the experience so much fun. In addition, it’s the collaborative process itself that makes everyone grow.

Ricardo was asked how he preserves his choreography. He commented that writing down the steps is somewhat of a lost art, although he will sometimes write some things down after the ballet is over. However, he records rehearsals with an iPhone. (*Note: The Ballet uses video to record all performances.*)

The dancers were asked how they enjoy performing to live music. While they admitted that performing to recorded music is more secure – they always know exactly what they’ll hear – they love performing to live music. There is a sense of the unexpected and not knowing exactly what will happen on stage. This keeps them on their toes, literally and figuratively.

Finally, someone asked Ricardo if he’d like to choreograph a ballet with a piece of music commissioned for him. He admitted that Iain Webb would like him to create something from

scratch – original music, lighting, staging, costuming, and choreography. He described this as something scary to which Iain replied, “scary is good.”

*Inside the Studio* was held nine days before opening night. It was truly a work in progress. The rehearsal that we saw ended with a jaw-dropping final lift that required the men to support their partners’ necks while lowering them towards the floor. They worked on this several times. We could see the sweat pouring off Marcelo and Wesley as they did a complete run through.

By opening night, the lift had been changed. Ricardo ultimately decided that it was too dangerous to risk the ballerina’s safety. Although the partner still supported her neck, the movement was much more controlled. It was still incredibly beautiful as you can see from this amazing photo.

If you had been *Inside the Studio*, you would have had the opportunity to witness choreography in action. And, you may have spotted other subtle changes in the completed *Amorosa*. Maybe next time?



Danielle Brown and Marcelo Gomes

Photography Frank Atura

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### ***Welcome to Our New Friends***

We are pleased to introduce the newest members of the Friends of The Sarasota Ballet (FSB). As of February 13, 2019 and since the January Newsletter was published, these wonderful people have become Friends.

Sustaining Members:

Joseph Kerata & Lynne Armington, Dr. Erin & Kathleen Long, and Marilyn Sachs

Members:

Bonnie & Richard Berner, Jonathan Coleman, Cory-Jeanne Houck-Cox, Beverly Koski, Cynthia Pearlman, Richard Reston & Brenda Griffiths, and Judith Waxberg

A special effort has been made during the 2018-2019 season to increase our membership base. We are thrilled to report that the Friends membership now stands at 362. You can help us continue to grow by introducing your friends to the Friends.

As we greet our newest members, we look forward to their joining us and becoming active participants in the FSB and sharing the passion for our wonderful Company.

## Change in Membership Renewals

In keeping with how other organizations manage renewals, we are in the process of implementing a rolling-renewal system based upon the month Friends joined or renewed membership. For the vast majority of Friends, your renewal date will continue to be June 1<sup>st</sup> and you will receive a renewal letter a month before your due date.

Friends who joined in a different month will also receive letters one month before their expiration dates. For example, if you joined in October 2018, you will receive notice in September 2019. If payment is received no later than October 31<sup>st</sup>, your renewal will be effective as of November 1, 2019.

Our goal is to ensure that you receive the benefits of being a Friend for a full year, while at the same time keeping our systems as simple as possible. As you will appreciate, the Friends of The Sarasota Ballet is completely staffed by volunteers. We will implement this system as smoothly as possible.

If you have any questions during this transition, please feel free to contact our Membership Chair, Betty Ferguson at [bcamarest@yahoo.com](mailto:bcamarest@yahoo.com).

## Coming Soon

### Friends Reward Card

This Season we offered reduced pricing for members to all Friends' events. In addition, we initiated an additional discount for member-subscribers to the Showcase Luncheon Package. This was our way of thanking you for being a Friend of The Sarasota Ballet (FSB.)

In the near future, we will be offering a new benefit for FSB members – a Friends Reward Card which will offer discounts at certain restaurants and other merchants. We are currently in the process of finalizing agreements with our initial vendors. Once these agreements are completed, you will receive a letter describing the program in more detail.

The plan is for the Reward Card to be valid until June 2020 and renewed annually. This list of vendors will evolve and expand over time. We hope that you will enjoy and take advantage of this new membership benefit.



Photo Courtesy of Shirley Blair

**If you are unable to attend a Showcase Luncheon, please contact the Luncheon Reservation Coordinator, Phyllis Myers at 941-993-2170. This will allow another guest to attend if the event is sold-out.**

## Tributes

### To **Lauren Walsh**

Your passion, dedication, and commitment to The Sarasota Ballet is only outshined by your generosity. This year, you have donated furniture to our new dancers; provided and served dinners at Dancers' Suppers; and sponsored the amazing floral arrangements for Meet Me at the Barre and the Showcase Luncheons. The spirit you demonstrate fills us with gratitude. You are a true "Friend."

The Board of Directors  
Friends of The Sarasota Ballet

## A Thank-You to the Supper Providers

The President's Letter in this newsletter mentions that the Friends set a record in January for the number of volunteer hours and the number of Friends who provided them. I want to specifically thank the 28 Friends who contributed to the four Dancers' Suppers in January.

Your combined total of 81.5 hours of volunteer time, according to the formula used by grant-providing organizations, is the equivalent of a financial contribution of \$1956 – almost two thousand dollars!

Peggy Sweeney

### Additional Photos from the Showcase Luncheon Courtesy of Shirley Blair



Jean & Peter Huber with guest, Joanna Cleary



Shirley Fein, Jill Ross, and Joy Peshkin



Linda Elliff, Julie Planck, and Donna D'Agostino



Barbara Chertok, Deborah Kalb, and Lynda Doerr 10

## We Need Your Help as a DNG Volunteer

My name is Loren Poley and I'm proud to be a DNG Volunteer. If you enjoy working with children as I do, we need your help.

The Sarasota Ballet supports an amazing program called *Dance — The Next Generation* (DNG). As you may know, DNG gives at-risk schoolchildren a chance to participate in a 10-year, full-scholarship dance program. This after school opportunity encourages the development of the entire individual.

DNG focuses on instilling the self-discipline that is inherent in the study of dance. Self-discipline leads to increased self-esteem and a sense of achievement. These tools extend to academics and ultimately help the students achieve a purposeful life. To reach these goals, DNG needs more volunteers to assist the children who are currently enrolled.

Volunteers work with the third, fourth, and fifth graders before and after dance class — helping them with homework, teaching ballet terminology, and providing one-on-one mentoring, when possible. If you can help one or more afternoons a week from 3:30 to 6:00 PM, please contact Madonna Schaeffer, DNG Volunteer Coordinator, at 716.408.6248 ([vaganovausa@gmail.com](mailto:vaganovausa@gmail.com)) or David Eichlin, Enrichment Coordinator ([deichlin@sarasotaballet.org](mailto:deichlin@sarasotaballet.org).)

### ***Tributes Are Here***

In this "Season of Tributes," we launched our own "Tributes" to allow Friends to acknowledge someone meaningful — recognize a favorite dancer; honor a friend or family member on a special occasion; or remember someone who has passed away. We would really like to see this take off and continue into next Season.

If you would like to pay tribute to someone, in addition to the name of the honoree and your name, please limit your text to 30 words. A minimum donation to The Friends of The Sarasota Ballet in the amount of \$25 is required. Please note that if you prefer, a Tribute may be made anonymously.

You may submit your text by email to [jes02655@comcast.net](mailto:jes02655@comcast.net) or by phone to Jane Sheridan at 508.367.4949. Please include your name, address and phone number with your submission. You will be contacted by Jane or our Treasurer, Elaine Foster, to arrange for your donation.

The final submission date for the 2018-2019 season is March 29, 2019.

For further information, please contact our editor, Jane Sheridan.

# Calendar at a Glance

March 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 <i>Poetry and Liberty</i> Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall 7:30 PM	9 <i>Poetry and Liberty</i> Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall 2:00 PM & 7:30 PM
10	11 <i>On Pointe Luncheon</i> Michael's on East 11:30 AM	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 <i>Principal Film Series – Dame Margot Fonteyn</i> FSU Center for the Performing Arts 6:00 PM	26	27	28	29	30
31 <i>The Spring Fling</i> Sarasota Garden Club 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM						

*The Spring Fling*  
Sarasota Garden Club  
4:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Type to enter a caption.

# Calendar at a Glance

## April 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 <i>Inside the Studio – Giselle</i> FSU Center for the Performing Arts 6:00	11	12	13
14	15 <i>Showcase Luncheon – Margaret Barbieri</i> Michael's on East 11:30 AM  <i>Principal Film Series – Ricki Bertoni</i> FSU Center for the Performing Arts 6:00 PM	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 <i>Giselle</i> Sarasota Opera House 7:30 PM	27 <i>Giselle</i> Sarasota Opera House 2:00 PM & 7:30 PM
28	29	30				

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