



Talking Pointes Newsletter

Jane Sheridan, Editor

2019 - 2020 Friends Events

Meet Me at the Barre

Monday, October 14, 2019
FSU Center for the Performing Arts
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

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Showcase Luncheon

Octavio Martin, Assistant Ballet Master

Monday, November 4, 2019,
Michael's on East, 11:30 AM

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Showcase Luncheon

Dominic Walsh, Choreographer

Monday, January 20, 2020,
Michael's on East, 11:30 AM

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Showcase Luncheon

Ricardo Graziano & Iain Webb, 10 Years with the Sarasota Ballet

Monday, February 10, 2020,
Michael's on East, 11:30 AM

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Showcase Luncheon

Peter Schaufuss, Dancer & Director

Monday, March 16, 2020, Michael's
on East, 11:30 AM

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Showcase Luncheon

Margaret Barbieri and "The Italian Job"

Monday, April 6, 2020, Bird Key
Yacht Club, 11:30 AM

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From the Desk of the President

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Last season was so outstanding, for both the Friends of The Sarasota Ballet (FSB) and The Sarasota Ballet, that you may wonder what can be done to top it. Well, Iain Webb, our intrepid Ballet Director, has set forth a cornucopia of programs that will please the most discerning and lift the Company to new heights.

The 29th Season for The Sarasota Ballet opens on October 25th at the FSU Center and features three diverse ballets by our Resident Choreographer, Ricardo Graziano, in celebration of his 10th year with The Sarasota Ballet. Included will be his much acclaimed *In a State of Weightlessness*, originally performed in 2015 at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival.

Featured later in the season will be Sir Frederick Ashton's *Romeo and Juliet*, a full-length ballet to be performed at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall. The ballet was created for the Royal Danish Ballet in 1955. With music by Prokofiev, this Company premiere will no doubt be a highlight of the season.

Our plans for the FSB include our opening event, Meet Me at the Barre (MMATB), and a series of luncheons that feature Ballet personnel. MMATB was held Monday, October 14th at FSU. This was our first opportunity to meet the new dancers joining the Company, including Principal Dancer, Luke Schaufuss, and greet the returning members. In addition to introducing the dancers, Iain presented the staff, without whose yeoman efforts, there would be nothing on stage! He also expressed his thanks to the Friends for the time, energy, and passion they display while volunteering for the Ballet.

The staff includes recent hires Sara Robinson, Director of Development, and Dierdre Miles Burger, Assistant Education Director (both of whom are Bostonians.) These ladies are excited to be joining the team at The Sarasota Ballet and look forward to working with us. Following the presentation, guests had the chance to mingle with the dancers and staff at a reception and buffet.

From the Desk of the President (cont'd)

This Season, we have added a fifth Showcase Luncheon in direct response to what you asked for in our Spring Survey. Director Iain Webb has outdone himself with the guest speakers and I know that you'll be as excited as I am to attend. As we offered last year, there is a reduced price for Friends who purchase a package for the Quintet of Luncheons. As some of you may remember, one luncheon was sold-out last year. This is the only way to guarantee your seat for the Season

I would also ask you to Save the Date for a fundraising event called Sip, Shop and Support the Friends of The Sarasota Ballet. It is being hosted by the Sara Campbell Boutique on November 20, 2019 from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Further information will be coming soon.

You will find an article elsewhere about Dance – the Next Generation, the program fostered by the Ballet for “at-risk” schoolchildren. This program presents an excellent opportunity for members to help the students with homework and projects while they are at the DNG facility on Tallevast Road. If you are able to volunteer one afternoon a week from 3:30 – 6:00PM, please contact David Eichlin at deichlin@sarasotaballet.org.

A Peek Behind the Curtain – An Interview with Director Iain Webb about The Sarasota Ballet's 2019-2020 Season

Jane Sheridan

Twenty-four performances, six Company premieres, 14 ballets. That's the challenge Director Iain Webb and our dancers face in the upcoming Season.

Iain has usually been the featured speaker at the first Showcase Luncheon. However, due to scheduling and rehearsal demands, it isn't possible this year. As a special treat for the Friends, Iain agreed to discuss his thoughts about the upcoming Season for *Talking Pointes*.

With over 150 ballets in the Company's repertoire, this Season builds upon the past and prepares for the future. The programs he has assembled for 2019-2020 represent the foundation for ballets he plans to stage in the coming two to three years. "It's a platform for the future that still highlights the diversity of the repertoire and talent of the dancers with different choreographers." As he said, "it's about developing the dancers in terms of choreography, musicality, and acting to continually tackle more challenging works."



Photo by M. Holler

A Peek Behind the Curtain (cont'd)

This Season opens with a triple program called GRAZIANO, RETROSPECTIVE. This is Ricardo's 10th year with the Company. "I wanted to give him and the audience a chance to look back in our investment in his choreographic talent and see the breadth of his work. It's also an opportunity for him to learn how a triple bill can work."



The Sarasota Ballet in Ricardo Graziano's *Shostakovich Suite* Photo by Frank Atura

Iain discussed the challenges of structuring triple bills. For example, once a program with live music is finalized, the Sarasota Orchestra determines which musicians are required for each act. In one instance, during rehearsal Iain realized that there was a problem. While the program flowed visually and choreographically, to him it didn't work musically. So, he worked with the Orchestra to revise the sequence.

Although Iain selected the ballets for GRAZIANO, RETROSPECTIVE, Ricardo is learning how the pieces fit together. It's challenging for him as he has to determine what's the best way to teach the dancers who are concurrently rehearsing elements of the three ballets in different studios.

The premiere of *Brandenburgs* which was choreographed by Paul Taylor represents another milestone for The Sarasota Ballet. Other than Taylor's own Dance Company, no other company in the world has ever performed this ballet.

2019 - 2020 Season

GRAZIANO, RETROSPECTIVE (Program 1)

25 – 27 October 2019

FSU Center for the Performing Arts

Shostakovich Suite

Choreography by Ricardo Graziano

Music by Dmitri Shostakovich

En las Calles de Murcia

Choreography by Ricardo Graziano

Music by Santiago de Murcia

In a State of Weightlessness

Choreography by Ricardo Graziano

Music by Philip Glass

SYMPHONIC TALES (Program 2)

22 – 23 November 2019

Sarasota Opera House

Theme and Variations

Choreography by George Balanchine

Music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Las Hermanas

Choreography by Sir Kenneth MacMillan

Music by Frank Martin

Western Symphony (Company Premiere)

Choreography by George Balanchine

Music - American folk tunes arranged by

Hershy Kay

JOHN RINGLING'S CIRCUS

NUTCRACKER (Program 3)

20 – 21 December 2019

Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

Choreography by Matthew Hart

Music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Design by Peter Docherty

2019 - 2020 Season (cont'd)

REDEFINED MOVEMENT

(Program 4)

31 January – 3 February 2020

FSU Center for the Performing Arts

Les Rendezvous

Choreography by Sir Frederick Ashton

Music by Daniel Auber

Brandenburgs (Company Premiere)

Choreography by Paul Taylor

Music by Johann Sebastian Bach

I Napoletani

Choreography by Dominic Walsh

Music by Giovanni Battista Pergolesi

The Sarasota Ballet Presents

PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY

(Program 5)

28 February – 1 March 2020

FSU Center for the Performing Arts

The Sarasota Ballet Presents: Paul Taylor

Dance Company

ROMEO & JULIET (Program 6)

27 – 28 March 2020

Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

Romeo and Juliet (Company Premiere)

Choreography by Sir Frederick Ashton

Music by Sergei Prokofiev

BEYOND WORDS (Program 7)

24 – 25 April 2020

Sarasota Opera House

In the Night (Company Premiere)

Choreography by Jerome Robbins

Music by Frédéric Chopin

Dante Sonata (Company Premiere)

Choreography by Sir Frederick Ashton

Music by Franz Liszt

The Spider's Feast (Company Premiere)

Choreography by David Bintley

Music by Albert Roussel

Tickets to all performances are now on sale on the website at www.sarasotaballet.org or by calling the

A Peek Behind the Curtain (cont'd)

Even though this will be danced in January, Iain mentioned how the Company will begin two weeks of rehearsing *Brandenburgs* on October 7th while also working on other choreography. This is due to the availability of the repetiteur. The dancers will have to rely on muscle memory and fine-tuning in the week before the actual performances – something that Iain and Margaret have discussed with Friends in previous Seasons.

Similarly, *Dante Sonata* will also be taught early in the year, even though it will only be performed in late April. As Iain said, "our dancers must be able to learn so quickly and switch from one style to another. In addition to technical prowess, they also need to act and to show their personalities."

Iain emphasized the importance of dancers' learning their craft. He and Margaret enjoy nurturing them, particularly with respect to acting. Taking a person who doesn't have a natural flair for acting and seeing him or her grow gives them both great satisfaction.

Iain told the story of how Dame Ninette de Valois coached Margaret on the role of the Black Queen in *Checkmate*. While saying that "she was all wrong for the part," de Valois said that was precisely why Margaret needed to learn the part. This went on to become one of her signature roles. Iain and Margaret want to do the same for our dancers.

We also discussed the staging of Sir Frederick Ashton's *Romeo and Juliet*, on the heels of the highly successful performances of *Giselle* last Season. I learned that Ashton created the ballet for The Royal Danish Ballet in 1955. The role of Juliet was made on Mona Vangseea, the grandmother of our newest Principal Dancer, Luke Schaufuss. Luke's grandfather, Frank Schaufuss, danced the role of Mercutio, and Peter Schaufuss (Luke's father) danced the young page.

A Peek Behind the Curtain (cont'd)

Peter, a dancer and director, inherited the rights to *Romeo and Juliet* when Ashton passed. Assisted by his son, Peter was scheduled to stage the ballet here, with Luke dancing two of the performances. While they were discussing the staging, Luke showed great interest in the Company, and in the end, Iain signed him to a full contract for the Season. So, we are lucky that we'll be able to see Luke in more than "just" *Romeo and Juliet*!

Since last Season's *Giselle* is being followed this year by another classic, I asked if this represented a trend for future seasons. Iain replied, "who knows? I don't go for trends. I always go the opposite of what people expect." He admitted, though, that he has a list of full-length ballets that he would love to do.

However, there are two key elements that factor into the decision to mount such a production. The first is ensuring that we have dancers with the required skills from the lead roles on down. Secondly, staging productions such as *Giselle* and *Romeo and Juliet* is very expensive. He hopes that working on long-term planning with Joseph Volpe and Sara Robinson, the new Director of Development, will help everyone be on the same page. If we're lucky, we may get to see another major production in the Seasons to come.

Other than the budget which is a perennial task, I asked Iain what he sees as the greatest challenges facing the Company to which he replied, "space and time."

With one full-sized studio and a small studio on a part-time basis, it makes rehearsing difficult. Recently, Iain had the opportunity to attend a meeting with directors of other companies. During their conversations, the recurring question from the others was, "how do you manage to mount such diverse programming each Season with only one full studio?" The answer – we make it work. The Friends of The Sarasota Ballet are the lucky beneficiaries!



Danielle Brown and Ricardo Rhodes in Sir Frederick Ashton's "Romeo and Juliet." Photo by Frank Atura

In closing, I asked Iain if he had any final thoughts to share with the Friends. He talked about how much he appreciates us and all the volunteer work that we do. He added that dancers like to know that they have Friends in the audience – special fans who share a passion for this art form. We, the Friends, are lucky to have Iain, Margaret and the Company here in Sarasota.

Personally, I can't wait to see what's in store for the 2020-2021 Season during which we will celebrate The Sarasota Ballet's 30th Season. I know that we can expect something special!

“On Pointe” Celebration

I’m sure you know that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. But, did you know that October is also National Dropout Prevention Month? The Sarasota Ballet has its own dropout prevention program: *Dance – The Next Generation (DNG)*.



DNG Students On Stage

DNG, founded in 1991 by Jean Weidner Goldstein, is devoted to fostering the development of students with emphasis on discipline, self-esteem, and the desire for higher education. This program provides transportation, dance clothing, snacks, and mentorship completely free of charge to Title 1 children deemed most at-risk for dropping out of school. For students who successfully complete the 10-year program and are academically eligible, they are eligible to apply for a DNG-specific scholarship to State College of Florida and/or receive special guidance through the scholarship program at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee.

“On Pointe” has been hosted for over 13 years as a way of supporting the DNG program. This year, the event is being held on Tuesday, 29 October 2019 at the FSU Center for Performing Arts from 6:00 – 8:30PM. *“On Pointe”* will include the opportunity to interact with students, watch a class demonstration and performance, hear testimonials, and enjoy cocktails and hors d’oeuvres. This event is free of charge. We do hope that you will be moved by what you see and want to help us reach our fundraising goal of \$87,000 – the equivalent cost for all first-year students.



DNG Students Performing

Help us do our part to prevent at-risk students in Sarasota and Manatee counties from becoming dropouts. If you would like to attend, send invitations to friends you think may be interested, or would like more information, please contact Amy Hernden, Events & Engagement Manager at events@sarasotaballet.org or 941.225.6519.

Calling All Cooks – and Shoppers

As you probably know, one of the Friends’ activities is to provide food for our amazing dancers between the Friday dress rehearsal and the opening night performance as well as between the matinee and evening performances on Saturday – and on Sunday if there are Sunday performances. As you can imagine, the dancers are always incredibly grateful and the new dancers at each year’s first supper can hardly believe their eyes when they see the bounty before them!

And who provides this bounty? You do! There is a committed contingent of Friends members who have been incredibly generous with their time and culinary skills and we need to add to that contingent. Whether you would like to make sandwiches, provide a homemade finger-food dessert, prepare a sumptuous casserole, or provide healthy fruit, we would love to add you to the list. No one need commit to more than one of the ten suppers we’re providing this season.

Please consider joining the supper team. To join – or ask any questions, just send an email to peggysweeney@verizon.net. And thank you for your support.

Friends Reward Card

You should have received your Friends Reward Card which entitles you to discounts at retail and restaurant outlets around town. If you haven't, please contact Betty Ferguson at bcamarest@yahoo.com.

But, are you using it? You know the old saying - use it or lose it.

Some of our partners have indicated that they would like to see even more Friends using their cards. The Reward Card was added as an extra benefit for our members. So, please take advantage of these discounts so that we can maintain and grow our partnerships.

Here are the current discounts available to you. As we add new partners, a complete listing is always available on the Friends' link on the Ballet's website.

The Friends discount is not valid with any other discount or special offer and does not apply to taxes and gratuity. Please bear in mind that this discount is provided by the business and you should use the pre-discount amount when you calculate how much to tip your server.

RETAIL PARTNERS

Friends Jewelers — 20% discount on all purchases

*Excludes repair, special order items, or a discount sale in progress
1387 Main Street, Sarasota
941.955.4956

Soto Glasses — 15% discount
1383 Main Street, Sarasota
941.953.3788

T. Georgiano's Boutique — 10% off any new full priced item*

*Valid on one item per visit/up to three items per year per person
1409-B 1st St, Sarasota
941.870.3727

RESTAURANT PARTNERS

Amore Restaurant — 15% discount
446 S Pineapple Ave, Sarasota
941.383.1111

Beulah — 10% discount*

*Advance reservation required Friday and Saturday during season, and mention discount at time of reservation
1766 Main Street, Sarasota
941.960.2305

Bevardi's Salute — 10% discount*

*Up to eight people
23 N Lemon Avenue, Sarasota
941.365.1020

Blu Kouzina — 10% discount April-November
25 N Blvd of the Presidents, St. Armands
941.388.2619

Cafe L'Europe — 10% discount*

*Not valid with any other offers, specials, or special menus; excludes holidays
431 St Armands Circle
941.388.4415

Drunken Poet — 10% discount

1572 Main Street, Sarasota
941.955.8404

Spice Station — 10% discount per couple*

*Call in advance for reservations and mention discount
1438 Boulevard of the Arts
941.343.2894

Umbrellas 1296 — 10% discount

1296 1st Street, Sarasota
941.500.4810

Backstage Tours

The tours are starting up for the Season under the leadership of Andi Lieberman and Carolou Marquet. The tours will be held on select Tuesdays and Thursdays. For reservations or further information please contact friends@sarasotaballet.org or call 941-228-9899.

2019 – 2020 Season at a Glance

October

October 14 – **Meet Me at the Barre**, 5:30 PM
October 25 – **Graziano, Retrospective**, 7:30 PM
October 26 – **Graziano, Retrospective**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM
October 27 – **Graziano, Retrospective**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM
October 29 – **On Pointe**, 6:00 PM

November

November 4 – **Showcase Luncheon: Octavio Martin, Assistant Ballet Master**, 11:30 AM
November 13 – **Inside The Studio: Las Hermanas: Repression and Oppression**, 6:00 PM
November 22 – **Symphonic Tales**, 7:30 PM
November 23 – **Symphonic Tales**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM

December

December 1 – **Winter Dreams, Sarasota Ballet Studio Company and Margaret Barbieri Conservatory Trainees in collaboration with Key Chorale**, 4:00PM
December 7 – **Winter Wonderland, Sarasota Ballet School, Margaret Barbieri Conservatory, and Sarasota Ballet Studio Company**, 6:00PM
December 8 – **The Sarasota Ballet Presents Winter Wonderland**, 2:00 PM
December 9 – **Principal Film Series: The Male Dancer: Danseur Noble**, 6:00 PM
December 20 – **John Ringling's Circus Nutcracker**, 7:30 PM
December 21 – **John Ringling's Circus Nutcracker**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM

January

January 5 – **The Sarasota Ballet's 29th Season Gala**, 5:00 PM
January 15 – **Inside The Studio: Brandenburgs: Baroque Modernity**, 6:00 PM
January 20 – **Showcase Luncheon: Dominic Walsh, Choreographer**, 11:30 AM
January 31 – **Redefined Movement**, 7:30 PM

February

February 1 – **Redefined Movement**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM
February 2 – **Redefined Movement**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM
February 3 – **Redefined Movement**, 7:30 PM
February 10 – **Showcase Luncheon: Ricardo Graziano & Iain Webb**, 11:30 AM
February 10 – **Principal Film Series: Paul Taylor: Creative Domain**, 6:00 PM
February 28 – **The Sarasota Ballet Presents the Paul Taylor Dance Company**, 7:30 PM
February 29 – **The Sarasota Ballet Presents the Paul Taylor Dance Company**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM

March

March 1 – **The Sarasota Ballet Presents the Paul Taylor Dance Company**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM
March 9 – **Principal Film Series: Danielle Brown, Principal of The Sarasota Ballet**, 6:00 PM
March 16 – **Showcase Luncheon: Peter Schaufuss, Dancer & Director**, 11:30 AM
March 18 – **Inside The Studio: Romeo and Juliet: Romance and Tragedy**, 6:00 PM
March 27 – **Romeo & Juliet**, 7:30 PM
March 28 – **Romeo & Juliet**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM

April

April 6 – **Showcase Luncheon: Margaret Barbieri and "The Italian Job"**, 11:30 AM
April 6 – **Inside The Studio: Dante Sonata: Darkness and Light**, 6:00 PM
April 15 – **Inside The Studio: The Spider's Feast: Nature and Artistry**, 6:00 PM
April 24 – **Beyond Words**, 7:30 PM
April 25 – **Beyond Words**, 2:00 PM, 7:30 PM
April 28 – **Images of Dance**, 7:00 PM
