

CALIFORNIA BALLET COMPANY ANNOUNCES

Its 50th Anniversary Season
AT THE SAN DIEGO CIVIC THEATRE

Thor Sutowski's full length ***Swan Lake***
Maxine Mahon's ***The Nutcracker***
Septime Webre's ***The Great Gatsby***
Billy Elliot the musical with San Diego Musical Theatre

San Diego, CA - California Ballet Company announces its 2017-2018 50th Anniversary season. It is the only American regional ballet company to reach 50 years with its founding director at the helm.

The season will present a first, a classic, a favorite, and a smash hit:

Opening in September at the Historic Spreckels Theatre, California Ballet and San Diego Musical Theater will co-produce ***Billy Elliot the musical***. This is the first time the two companies have worked together. *Billy Elliot* is the story of a young boy's fight to make his dreams come true as he discovers a passion for dance which will change his life forever. With music by Elton John and direction by Neil Dale, *Billy Elliot* will be choreographed by California Ballet Associate Artistic Director Jared Nelson.

California Ballet's official season at the San Diego Civic Theatre will begin with Thor Sutowski's ***Swan Lake***. Opening the season **October 2017**, California Ballet presents the only locally, professionally produced full length production of the ballet classic. Set to Tchaikovsky's incredible score, *Swan Lake* is quintessential ballet with white tutus, an enchanted queen, and the promise of true love. www.californiaballet.org/swan-lake

December 2017 Maxine Mahon's ***The Nutcracker*** returns to the San Diego Civic Theatre stage for a three weekend run. Filled with amazing dancing, magical music, and the whimsy of childhood, this holiday classic has become an annual tradition for many San Diego families. The longest-running *Nutcracker* in San Diego will be presented with symphony accompaniment of Tchaikovsky's magnificent score, conducted by California Ballet Music Director John Stubbs. www.nutcrackersandiego.com

Returning for its second year, ***Nutcracker Connect*** will provide equal and equitable theater access to special needs and underserved communities throughout San Diego. www.nutcrackerconnect.com

Back by popular demand! Septime Webre's ***The Great Gatsby*** returns to the San Diego Civic Theatre **April 2018**. The contemporary ballet adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1920's classic thrilled audiences with its West Coast Premiere in 2015. Webre's choreography, set to live jazz music by composer Billy Novick and his *Blue Syncopators*, presents a multi-genre production which will appeal to ballet enthusiasts and theater goers of all ages. www.gatsbysandiego.com

May 2018 California Ballet celebrates its 50th Anniversary with a black tie gala. The evening will feature an intimate performance, dinner, and dancing. Location and time TBA.

Performance Tickets: Adults \$25 - \$115; ***Ballet productions only*** - 20% discount for Children 12 & under.

Tickets available online at californiaballet.org or via phone at (858) 560-6741.

California Ballet Company 2017-2018 50th Season

- *Billy Elliot the musical* - Sept 22 - Oct 8, 2017 - Spreckels Theatre
- *Swan Lake* – October 28-29, 2017 – San Diego Civic Theatre
- *The Nutcracker* – December 9-23, 2017 – San Diego Civic Theatre
- *The Great Gatsby* – April 6-8, 2018 – San Diego Civic Theatre

Maxine Mahon – *The Nutcracker* – is the founding director of California Ballet Company. Her works include the full-length *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Sleeping Beauty*. Her full-length *The Nutcracker* premiered at the Russ Auditorium in 1971 and has been performed every year at the Civic Theatre since 1972. Ms. Mahon's works have been staged for other companies including the Theatre Ballet of Sacramento, the San Diego Opera, Seattle Opera, and the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto. She is a member of the IBC-CID, the official umbrella organization for all forms of dance worldwide, under UNESCO.

Jared Nelson – *Billy Elliot* – joined California Ballet in 2015 as a Guest Artist, Stager and Choreographer. Since his retirement from The Washington Ballet in 2015, he has been staging and creating ballets for companies around the country. In 2016, Mr. Nelson was appointed California Ballet's Associate Artistic Director. He has staged his own works, as well as those by Septime Webre, for the company including his popular *Jump Jive* which has been received with standing ovations every performance since its premiere with Sacramento Ballet. Mr. Nelson will also stage this season's production of *The Great Gatsby*.

Thor Sutowski – *Swan Lake* – is originally from San Diego, his career as a leading male dancer and choreographer spans Europe, Asia, United States, Scandinavia and Africa. He received three Emmy awards for dance programs produced on PBS and has produced several successful domestic and foreign tours under Columbia Artists. He was resident choreographer for Ballet Hawaii, Bayerische State Ballet, Venice Opera, and Asami Maki Ballet. With his late wife, Sonia Arova, he spent twenty years as Co-Director for Ballet South and Dance Chairperson for the Alabama School of Fine Arts. He was also the Director of the Norwegian Ballet in the late 1960's. Locally, Mr. Sutowski has been associate director/choreographer with both California Ballet and San Diego Ballet, as well as a member of the UCSD dance faculty. Six of his works are in the California Ballet repertoire, including the full length *Swan Lake*, which he and Ms. Arova staged for California Ballet in 1997.

Septime Webre – *The Great Gatsby* – From 1999-2016 Mr. Webre served as the Artistic Director of The Washington Ballet (DC). In 2017 he was appointed Artistic Director of Hong Kong Ballet. He has created works that appear in the repertoires of many companies in North America including Pacific Northwest Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, and Ballet Austin. His adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* premiered at the Kennedy Center in 2010 to packed audiences and rave critical reviews. Mr. Webre sits on the board of the Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington.

Billy Novick – Composer, *The Great Gatsby* – has had a whirlwind career in music for over 40 years as a performing artist, studio musician, arranger, and composer. He has recorded fourteen albums under his own name. Mr. Novick has composed extensively for modern dance, and his two full-length ballet scores, *The Great Gatsby* and *The Sun Also Rises*, debuted at the Kennedy Center to packed houses and rave reviews.

John Stubbs, Music Director/Conductor – conducts the San Diego Symphony for California Ballet productions. He is a violinist with the San Diego Symphony and the creator and director of *Luscious Noise*, an eclectic performance series at local jazz venues. Most recently Mr. Stubbs was invited by the Ochi International Ballet in Nagoya, Japan to conduct their production of *La Bayadere*.

The 2015-2016 Season features California Ballet dancers Toshiro Abley, Ana da Costa, Reka Gyulai, Trystan Merrick, Oscar Burciaga, Zachary Guthier, Tess Lane, Tiffany Smith, and Jeremy Zapanta. Dancer bios are available online at www.californiaballet.org/dancers.

For more information on California Ballet's 2017-2018 50th Anniversary Season please visit californiaballet.org/season or email Joe Shumate at jshumate@californiaballet.org.

California Ballet 2017-2018 Season Sponsors



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