

PLAYBILL

THE LITTLE MERMAID



diablo
ballet

Lauren Jonas, Artistic Director

February 6-7
2026

diablo ballet

Lauren Jonas, Artistic Director

Board of Directors

Laurie Miller & Cheryl DeSimone, Co-Presidents
Valerie Akin
Victoria Sandbrook Flynn
Al Fontes
Sandy Garcia
Elizabeth Green Sah
Brittany Griffin
Fred Lambright
Richard M. Leavitt, M.D.
Umberto Leone, CFP, AAMS
Kelly Rowland, Esq.
Ashraf Habibullah, Co-Founder & President
Emeritus

Advisory Board

Solomon Belette, MBA Business Development
Consultant, East Contra Costa County Alliance
Jack Catton, former Vice President of Banking,
US Bank
John diBene, Legal Consultant
Kathy Ferber, Former Director, Nonprofit Management
Certificate Program, Cal State University East Bay
William T. Gallagher, Professor of Intellectual
Property Law, Golden Gate University School
of Law
Arturo Jacobus, Former Executive Director at
the Atlanta Ballet and the San Francisco Ballet
Lynn Mackey, Contra Costa Superintendent
of Schools
Sylvia Perfetto, Pacific Gas & Electric
Gail Murray, Former Mayor & City Council Member,
Walnut Creek
Debbie Toth, President and CEO, Choice in Aging

Artistic Staff

Lauren Jonas: Artistic Director/Co-Founder
Sean Kelly, Pierre-Francois Vilanoba: Rehearsal
Directors
Pierre-Francois Vilanoba, Kaori Ogasawara, Dawn
Perrin: Company Teachers & Coaches
Patricia Barker: Artistic Advisor
Sally Streets: Artistic Advisor

Administrative Staff

Krissy Gray: Director of Operations
Dan Meagher: Audience Development Manager
Susan Boreliz: Community Engagement
Catherine Davis: Development Associate
Lorraine Donovan: Administrator
Rosselyn Ramirez: PEEK Outreach Director
Andrea Gaudet: Diablo Ballet School Principal
and PEEK Program Associate
Micheal Bushman, Evelyn Febuary, Mia Hanflig,
Alina Gonzalez, Kyla Marcus: PEEK Teaching
Artists
Shannon Stowe: Public Relations Manager
Natalie Hannah: Digital Media Specialist
Alison Ramoran: Social Media Content
Gabriella Giannini: Grants Manager
Shannon Perreira, Bayer & Associates:
Bookkeeping

Production Staff

Cassie Barnes: Lighting Designer
Rachel Stone: Stage Manager
Josh Stouffer: Technical Director
Tom Roberts: Technical Consultant
Suelyn Pewitt: Wardrobe Supervisor
& Costume Construction
Amanda Farris: Costume Creator
& Construction
Hank Chan, Ted Helminski: Videographers
Mike Bemederfer: Sound Engineer

Diablo Ballet School

Lauren Jonas: Co-Founder & Director
Krissy Gray: Co-Founder & Director of
Operations
Andrea Gaudet: School Principal
Gena Bullio, Genevieve Boyle, Lizzie Devanney,
Mia Hanflig: School Administrators
Natalie Allenton, Olivia Hush, Halyna Klymenko,
Abbie Wang, & Alice Welch: Teacher Assistants
Kirsten Sawyer: Parent Ambassador Liaison

Faculty

Nicole Ciapponi	Mia Hanflig
Amanda Farris	Dawn Perrin
Evelyn Febuary	Olivia Powell
Andrea Gaudet	Alison Ramoran
Alina Gonzalez	
Luis Gonzalez	

DONIZETTI VARIATIONS

Music: Gaetano Donizetti
(From Don Sebastian)
Choreography: George Balanchine*
Staging: Sandra Jennings
Costume Design: Karinska
Costume Construction: Amanda Farris
Rehearsal Director: Pierre Francois Vilanoba

Olivia Powell and Elijah Hartley – 2/6 and 2/7, 7:30 pm
Alison Ramoran and Luis Gonzalez – 2/7, 2 pm

Nicole Ciapponi Lizzie Devanney Kyla Marcus
Alina Gonzalez Natalie Allenton Olivia Powell/Alison Ramoran
Micheal Bushman Marco Clemente Luis Gonzalez/Elijah Hartley

@ The George Balanchine Trust

The performance of Donizetti Variations, a Balanchine Ballet, is presented by arrangement with The George Balanchine Trust and has been produced in accordance with the Balanchine Style and Balanchine

Technique Service standards established and provided by the Trust.

Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848) was born and died in Bergamo. His opera, Don Sebastian, was composed in 1843, the same year as the far more familiar Don Pasquale. He composed over sixty-five operas, besides sacred and chamber music, working with extreme rapidity for the greatest voices of his time. Apart from Luccia di Lammermoor and the handful of works familiar in the standard repertory, recent years have seen the successful revival of a number of fine works in the great opera houses of the world, notably Anna Bolena, Il Duce d'Alba, and Rita.

World Premiere: New York City Ballet, City Center of Music and Drama, November 16, 1960, New York

Diablo Ballet Premiere: February 7, 2024, Leshner Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek, California.

Intermission

COMPANY B

(Specially staged for six dancers by Paul Taylor)
Songs sung by the Andrews Sisters
Choreography by Paul Taylor
Reconstructed by Richard Chen See
Costumes by Santo Loquasto courtesy of San Francisco Ballet
Lighting by Jennifer Tipton Re-created by Cassie Barnes
(First performed by Paul Taylor Dance Company in 1991)

Friday & Saturday, 7:30 pm

NICOLE CIAPPONI AMANDA FARRIS OLIVIA POWELL
DIEGO CRUZ ALVAREZ MARCO CLEMENTE ELIJAH HARTLEY

Saturday, 2:00 pm

LIZZIE DEVANNEY ALINA GONZALEZ ALISON RAMORAN
DIEGO CRUZ ALVAREZ MARCO CLEMENTE ELIJAH HARTLEY

1. Bei Mir Bist du Schön.....full cast
2. Pennsylvania Polka.....Miss Powell/Miss Ramoran and Mr. Hartley
3. Tico-Tico.....Mr. Cruz Alvarez
4. Oh Johnny, Oh Johnny, Oh!.....Mr. Clemente with cast women
5. I Can Dream, Can't I?.....Miss Ciapponi/Miss Devanney
6. Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy (of Company B).....Mr. Hartley
7. Rum and Coca-Cola.....Miss Powell/Miss Ramoran with cast men
8. There Will Never Be Another You.....Miss Farris/Miss Gonzalez and Mr. Cruz Alvarez
9. Bei Mir Bist du Schön.....full cast

All selections performed by
The Andrews Sisters
Courtesy of MCA Records

Original production commissioned by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC, with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund and the Brown Foundation. Produced in co-operation with Houston Ballet and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Diablo Ballet Premiere: February 6, 2026, Leshar Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek, California.

Intermission

THE LITTLE MERMAID

Choreography: Julia Adam
Music by: Louis Armstrong, Adrian Von Ziegler, Camille Saint-Saens, Hugh Laurie,
George Frideric Handel, Wojciech Kilar
Costume Design: Amanda Farris
Lighting Design: Cassie Barnes

Little Mermaid:	Nicole Ciapponi
Prince:	Marco Clemente
Sea King:	Luis Gonzalez
Sea Witch:	Olivia Powell
Lady in Waiting:	Lizzie Devanney
Prince's Friends:	Diego Cruz Alvarez, Elijah Hartley, Micheal Bushman
Mermaid's Sisters:	Amanda Farris, Alina Gonzalez
Mer and Land People:	Alison Ramoran, Astrid Arvelo, Genevieve Boyle, Evelyn Febuary, Mia Hanflig, Grace Thompson, Natalie Allenton, Kyla Marcus, Phoenix Breese

World Premiere: February 6, 2026, Leshar Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek

Choreographer



Canadian born **Julia Adam** received her early training in her hometown of Ottawa, Ontario, and at age thirteen began studies at the National Ballet School in Toronto, graduating in 1983. Upon receiving a Canada Council Grant, Julia spent a year traveling, exploring the European art and dance scene along with apprenticing with the National Ballet of Canada. She then joined the company under the direction of Erik Bruhn. In 1988, Julia joined San Francisco Ballet, where she finished the remainder of her dancing career, gaining prestige as a principal dancer known for her lyricism, musicality and broad theatrical range. Julia performed a wide range of roles in Artistic Director Helgi Tomasson's diverse repertory for the Company. She retired from dancing in Spring 2002. Julia has created over 70 works for numerous companies including San Francisco Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, Houston Ballet, The Joffrey Ballet, ABT 2, Alberta Ballet, Oregon

Ballet Theater, Atlanta Ballet, Nashville Ballet and has created and staged over 10 works on Ballet Memphis where she was Artistic Associate from 2010 to 2013. In 2014, Julia founded her own company, Julia Adam Dance, an ensemble of handpicked dancers performing in an open air theater built in beautiful West Marin. She also continues to choreograph, create new works for companies, and win critical acclaim for her work.



George Balanchine was one of the 20th century's most prolific choreographers. Styled as the father of American Ballet, he took the standards and technique from his education at the Imperial Ballet School and fused it with other schools of movement that he had adopted during his tenure as a guest choreographer on Broadway and in Hollywood, creating his signature "neoclassical style". He was invited to America in 1933, by Lincoln Kirstein, who shared Balanchine's attitude regarding the importance of high quality dance training in America and together they founded the School of American Ballet, that has since grown into one of the foremost dance academies in the United States and the world, respectively. Along with Kirstein and Jerome Robbins, he co-founded the New York City Ballet and remained its balletmaster for more

than 35 years, alongside Mr. Robbins as co-founding choreographer. He was a choreographer known for his musicality; he expressed music with dance and worked extensively with leading composers of his time like Igor Stravinsky. Mr. Balanchine created 465 works, which have been performed by nearly every ballet company in the world today allowing audiences to delight in his legacy.

Choreographer



Paul Taylor (1930-2018) was one of the most accomplished artists this nation has ever produced. He established the Paul Taylor Dance Company in 1954, serving as both a virtuoso performer and a trailblazing choreographer until 1974, when he turned exclusively to choreography. During his 64-year career as a dancemaker, Mr. Taylor helped define and shape the art of American modern dance through a matchless repertoire of 147 works with an extraordinary range of subject matter. One of the world's leading dance organizations, the Paul Taylor Dance Company is based in New York City and has vast international reach. Under the artistic direction of Michael Novak, who has taken the Company in bold new directions over the past seven years, Taylor continues to innovate, create and transform.

**diablo
ballet
school**

Enrich. Inspire. Educate.

Join us for our Summer Programs

June 1 - August 16



The first ballet school in the history of Contra Costa County run by a professional ballet company offering classes available for ages 3 through adult, including Dance for Parkinson's classes.

For more information and a listing of classes, visit: **diabloballet.org**.

Artists of the Company



Diego Cruz Alvarez
Born: Zaragoza, Spain
Companies performed with:
San Francisco Ballet



Astrid Arvelo
Born: Caracas, Venezuela
Companies performed with:
Teresa Carreño Ballet de
Caracas & Ballet Clásico
Cubano de Miami



Micheal Bushman
Born: Los Angeles, CA
Companies performed with:
Pacific Northwest Ballet,
Ballet West



Nicole Ciapponi
Born: Vancouver, BC
Companies performed with:
San Francisco Ballet and
Joffrey Ballet



Marco Clemente
Born: Chicago, IL
Companies performed with:
Dayton Ballet, Minnesota
Ballet and Ballet Nebraska



Lizzie Devanney
Born: Bel Air, MD
Companies performed with:
Pittsburgh Ballet,
Pacific Northwest Ballet



Amanda Farris
Born: Modesto, CA
Companies performed with:
The Georgia Ballet



Alina Gonzalez
Born: Pittsburg, CA
Companies performed with:
Diablo Ballet



Luis Gonzalez
Born: Bogota, Colombia
Companies performed with:
Houston Ballet II, Orlando
Ballet, Joffrey Ballet,
Sarasota Ballet



Elijah Hartley
Montesano, WA
Companies performed with:
Ballet West



Olivia Powell
Born: Boston, MA
Companies performed with:
The Alabama Ballet,
Ballet Memphis



Alison Ramoran
Born: Torrance, CA
Companies performed with:
Oklahoma City Ballet,
Smuin Contemporary Ballet



Genevieve Boyle
Apprentice
Born: Salt Lake City, UT



Evelyn Febuary
Apprentice
Born: Lafayette, LA



Mia Hanflig
JR Apprentice
Born: Cape Cod, MA



Grace Thompson
JR Apprentice
Born: Berkeley, CA



Natalie Allenton
Trainee



Kyla Marcus
Trainee



Phoenix Breese
JR Trainee

2025-2026 Season Sponsors



Bernard E. & Alba Witkin
Charitable Foundation®



Center for Sports Medicine
Walnut Creek



Wellness & Fitness Team

Selina Shah, MD, FACP
Sports Medicine Physician

Denise Hilliard, MD
Primary Care Physician

Tania & Daniel Bajada
Pacer Physical Therapy

Joyce Warren, Meghann Oakes Rust,
Mari Ball and the Physical Therapy team
Center for Sports Medicine, Walnut Creek

Dr. Earl Paynton and staff
Paynton Chiropractic

Karen Lapointe
*Fine Line Fitness Pilates
Pilates and Conditioning*

Tracy Beckham
*Body by Beckham
Nutrition & Physique Development*

Special Thanks

David Bruzzone, Managing Director, Newmark

Hank & Rosarie Chan

Azlan Ezaddin

Ashraf Habibullah, Co-Founder

Ted Helminski

Jenny Hudson & Marissa Pfaff, Ace
Dance Academy

Michael Kim

Kathy Nelson

Buckley Patchen

Renee Rothmann

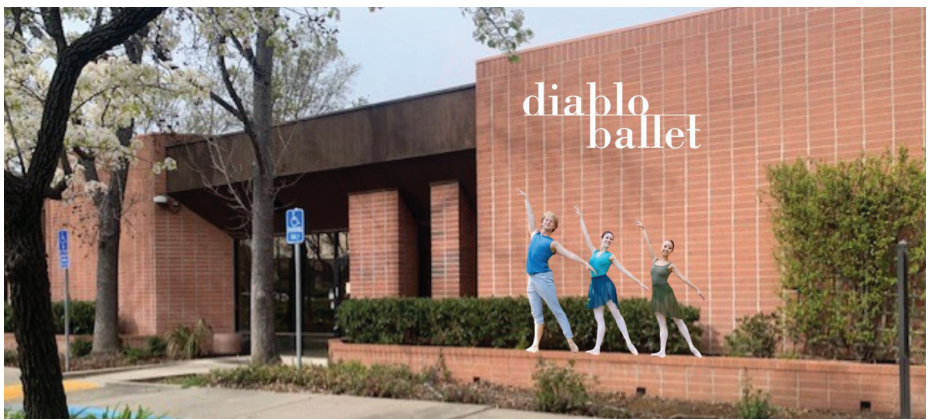
Julie Trovato

Bryn Wears-Fitipaldi

PASE

Sedley Chew

Rose Kirshner & Staff, SF Dance Gear -
Walnut Creek



Introducing Our New Home!

We are thrilled to be embarking on an exciting new chapter in our 32-year history: Diablo Ballet's new permanent home located in Shadelands of Walnut Creek and slated to open in early 2026.

This state-of-the-art facility will house our professional dancers, our Diablo Ballet School, and provide expanded studio space for training the next generation of dancers, a gathering place for youth and families, and a secure foundation for the Ballet's future.

To make this dream a reality, we have launched a Capital Campaign. We invite you to be a part of this historic moment!

A generous Diablo Ballet donor has awarded a \$500,000 matching contribution and we only have **\$25,000** to raise! This means that the gift you make today could have twice the impact, producing an even greater difference in the lives of those we serve. Every contribution is critical for us to reach our goal by **February 28, 2026**.

Scan the QR code to make a contribution to our new home

Thank you for your wonderful support!



Friends of Diablo Ballet

Diablo Ballet acknowledges the generosity of the following individuals and organizations whose support makes our performances possible. This list reflects donations and contributions made to Diablo Ballet between January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025. We thank you for your continued support and apologize for any omission or errors in the listing.

Distinguished Gifts

\$25K and above

Anonymous
Ashraf Habibullah
California Arts Council
Dean & Margaret Leshner
Foundation
U.S. Bank

Founders' Circle

\$15,000 - \$24,999

Anonymous
Azlan Ezaddin
CalFoods Logistics
David Nicolls (in Memory of
John Collins)
Quest Foundation

Choreographers' Circle

\$10,000 - \$14,999

Mt. Diablo Education
Foundation
Bernard E & Alba Witkin
Charitable Foundation
PG&E
Jenny Yip & Michael Kim

Dancers' Circle

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Anonymous
Antioch Community Foundation
Alfred Fontes
Umberto Leone
Lynn Luo
Macy's
Carol Mather
Laurie Miller & Ian McNeill
Louise Morrison
Mechanics Bank
Richard Reed Foundation
Elizabeth Green Sah
Kerry Silverstone
Wanda Shufin
Sonny's Philanthropy Fund of
the Marin Community
Foundation (MCF)
Juliana Walters

Ambassadors' Circle

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Anonymous
Elsie Brown
Community Bank of California
Cheryl & Chris DeSimone
Diablo Regional Arts
Association
Geraldine & Marco Magarelli
William & Renee Rothmann

Encore

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Angela & William Blösen
Brenda & Leonard Cipriano

Elizabeth Collins (in memory of John
Collins)
Lucinda & Michael Ely
Helen Choi & David Glazer
Anne Launt
Sabine Lemmo
Ania & Patryk Lesiewicz
Elaine & Jeff Luo
Elizabeth Masten
Carole Lowenberg & Robert
Morris
Sally Nichols
Maureen & George Pereira
Sandy & Marty Shellhammer
Emily True & Adam Stanford
The Welch Family
Ian White
Marilyn Wilkes

Patron

\$500 - \$999

Barry Benioff
Susan & Rick Boreliz
Angie Coffee
Jennifer Corbett
Ramona Davis
Katherine & Stanley Ferber
Joan Feury
Denise & Frank Mallozzi
Pam Gordon & John Marvin
Loella & Ralph Haskew
Carl & Gwaltney Mountford
Gail & James Murray
Russell Nelson
PayPal Giving Fund
Eric Pressler
Ellen Osmundson
Elizabeth Paez
Ellen Pastore
Sharon & Don Ritchey
Judith Rowan
Pamela Sah
Cindy & Thomas Silva
Caitlin Sly
Setsuko Takenobu
Cecelia Tutt
Edwin Walker

Contributor

\$100 - \$499

Anonymous
Terri Anderson
Mary & Kirk Bennett
Pamela & David Bernal
Joanna Berman
Carla Blackmon
Arlynn & Craig Bloom
Jack S. Catton
Frances & Wai Chan
Karyn Connell
Suzanne & Walter Cook
Costco Wholesale
Billie & Gerald Cronen
Carol DiMaggio

Marlene & Keith Dines
Kimi & David Dowell
Dan Dyer
Kathy Famulener
Joseph Figurelli
Daria Fireman
Janet Frazier
Patty & Bill Gallagher
Brett Gardner
Sherri Gressel
Brittany Griffin
Leslie Kelly-Guerreo & Steve
Guerrero
Dajana & Tomasz Klos
Patricia Harris
Susie Hanson Hartman &
Charles Hartman
Erica & Dylan Hughes
Diana Huie
Edward Jones & Shane
Jacksteit
Steven & D'Arcy James
Mindy Jonas & Jonathan Delson
Dennis Irving
Stephanie Isaacson
Gary Masters & Fred Mathews
Corinne Jonas Mayer & John
Mayer
Terry & Diane Kamrin
Sean Kelly
Barbara Kulewicz
Fred Lambright
Dr. Yuriria Lobato & Dr. Hilary
Lerner
Adeline Louie
Carl Lucania
Verna Lin
Wendy Lyn
Penny & Peter Mathewson
Sheila & David Matz
Diane Mauch
Linda & John McClain
David Meyer
Alixandra Mora
Lee & Art Oller
Moiria O'Neal
Kendra Pappas
Anika Peterson
Mary Beth & Dan Powell
June Rando
Vicki Robinson
Lana & Bill Rocha
Mary Ellen Rockdale
Andrea Saunders
Mary Schulze
Kirsten & Greg Sawyer
Nan Siegel
Debbie Toth & Colin Ewart
Joyce Vandermeide
Kristie & James Vetterli
Cathy Waite
Grace Wang
Aaron Woolsey
Lesley Wright
Halei Zhai

Friends of Diablo Ballet

New Building Capital Campaign Donors

Anonymous	Umberto Leone	Ellen Osmundson
Terri Anderson	The Lesiewicz Family	Elizabeth Paez
Joanna Berman	Dr. Yuriria Lobato & Dr. Hilary Lerner	Ellen Pastore
Jonathan Berman	Verna Lin	June Rando
Angela & William Blosen	Elaine & Jeff Luo	Sandy & Marty Shellhammer
Angie & Pete Coffee	Lynn Luo	Wanda & TJ Shuflin
Jack S. Catton	Denise & Frank Mallozzi	Kerry Silverstone
Karyn Connell	Elizabeth Masten	Caitlin Sly
Jennifer Corbett	Carol Mather	Setsuko Takenobu
Cheryl and Chris DeSimone	Laurie Miller & Ian McNeill	Mei Fong Tong
Joseph Ficarelli	Allison Mitobe	Joyce Vandermeyde
Al Fontes	Louise Morrison	Chunli Vu
Ashraf Habibullah	Gail & Jim Murray	Grace Wang
Jenny Yip & Michael Kim	Angevine Mutsumi	The Welch Family
Susan King	David Nicolls (in memory of John Collins)	Aaron Woolsey
Barbara Kuklewicz		Halei Zhai
Anne Launt		
Sabine Lemmo		



Save the Date!

March 27, 2026

Diablo Ballet's 32nd Anniversary Gala

Celebrate Diablo Ballet's 32nd Anniversary immediately following the March 27th performance of **Romeo & Juliet**. Dress to impress and join us for a dazzling night including a celebratory dinner with the dancers, an exciting live and silent auction, and more all within walking distance of the Leshner Center for the Arts at Walnut Creek's premiere event space, Prime Steakhouse and Martini Bar (previously The Garden).

Visit diabloballet.org/events for more information.

diablo ballet

Lauren Jonas, Artistic Director



Photo by Tue Nam Ton

Join us for the remainder of our 2025-26 Season

Romeo & Juliet

March 27 - 28, 2026

Choreographer Penny Saunders takes you on a powerful journey with a brand new production of the timeless love story, *Romeo & Juliet*, Shakespeare's famous tale of star-crossed lovers is retold through passionate choreography and dramatic staging. Also on the program is Gerald Arpino's *Birthday Variations* set to a selection of effervescent operatic melodies by Giuseppe Verdi.

Coppélia

May 15 - 16, 2026

The beloved comic ballet, *Coppélia*, features a brash young protagonist, a doll that comes to life, and a dash of magic. With lively characters, a case of mistaken identity, and a bright orchestral score, this enchanting ballet will charm and delight the young and young at heart.

Diablo Ballet's *Choreography Showcase*

Featuring Dancemakers of the Future

Friday, May 22, 2026

This special one-night only performance features new works by Diablo Ballet Company dancers. Witness an extraordinary blend of creativity and technical skill as the company presents these original ballets in one stunning performance.

Purchase tickets: 925.943.SHOW / lesherartscenter.org
Information and Groups: 925.943.1775 / diabloballet.org