The mission of Saint Louis Ballet is to provide the metropolitan St. Louis region with a resident professional ballet company that performs classical and contemporary works and offers education programs of the highest quality for the cultural enrichment and enjoyment of the entire community.
Dear Friends,

Saint Louis Ballet had quite a memorable year. Before the global pandemic forced us to shift gears, the company hit several high notes with ballet performances by renowned choreographers George Balanchine, Christopher Wheeldon and Twyla Tharp. For the first time, we performed to the music of the critically acclaimed Arianna String Quartet in a collaboration we hope will generate more of these artistic endeavors.

We welcomed choreographers, educators and répétiteurs who spoke to our dancers and our audiences in the studios, in the theatre and on radio. We are devoted to providing this community with the most prominent voices in the ballet world.

Covid-19 challenged us in ways that seemed endless and unbearable. We were forced to cancel audience favorite “Swan Lake” in April and the annual fundraiser in May. But beginning in March, 600 people stepped up and demonstrated their commitment to SLB and to ballet in this community with a special donation. That generosity of spirit kept us afloat during a precarious time, enabling us to continue employing our dancers and staff and to plan for the new season. In fact, since 2017, our family of donors has increased five-fold.

We are eternally grateful and take our wonderful supporters’ intentions to heart. We honor them in this annual report to the community, and thank Saint Louis Ballet’s Board of Directors for their trust in my leadership during these difficult times.

Gen Horiuchi

Director Gen Horiuchi, masked for safety, directs dancers Roxy Shackelford (far left and center photo) and Julia Heiss (far right photo) while Rehearsal Director CiCi Houston also directs dancer Olivia Cornelius in preparation for “This Is Who We Are” October 1, 2020.
THE SEASON IN REVIEW

2019-2020 COMPANY
Mark David Bloodgood • Michael Burke
Lauren Christensen • Ashley Conroy
Rebecca Cornett • Colin Ellis • Emily Fugett
Elliott Geolat • Rachel Harrison • Amy Herchenroether
Lauren Kot • Lauren Lane • Elizabeth Lloyd
Alexis Matthesen • Michael McGonegal
Tiffany Mori • Jordan Nelson • Matthew Rusk
Sean Session • Roxy Shackelford • Lori Wilson

TRAINEEES
Ruth Connelly • Sophia Copley • Victoria Cunnane
Sydney Groff • Miguel Guevara • Michael Harp
Abby Hernandez • Olivia Kalamboukas • Emma Kovacs
Julia Monsey • Leena Wheeler

THREE ST. LOUIS PREMIERES

Nine Sinatra Songs
Choreography by Twyla Tharp
Music by Various Composers
Performed by Frank Sinatra

Concerto Barocco
Choreography by George Balanchine
Music by Johann Sebastian Bach

The American
Choreography by Christopher Wheeldon
Music by Antonin Dvorak
Performed by Arianna String Quartet

ONE WORLD PREMIERE

Agile Episodes
Choreography by Emery LeCrone
Music by Max Richter and Bryce Dessner

Lauren Lane and Matthew Rusk in Tharp’s “Nine Sinatra Songs”

Tiffany Mori and Michael McGonegal in Wheeldon’s “The American”

Dancers of Saint Louis Ballet in LeCrone’s “Agile Episodes”
2019-2020 PERFORMANCE SEASON

Nine Sinatra Songs
October 4–6, 2019
Touhill Performing Arts Center

The season opener was a joyful and eclectic celebration of classicism and modernity. The program featured George Balanchine’s foundational work *Concerto Barocco* (1941), Twyla Tharp’s *Nine Sinatra Songs* (1982) and Gen Horiuchi’s fierce and energetic *More Morra* (2007).

Attendance: 1,514

Media Sponsor:

The Nutcracker
November 29–December 23, 2019
Touhill Performing Arts Center

For the 19th year, this holiday family favorite wowed enthusiastic crowds with its interactive choreography, opulent sets and costumes and beautiful, dynamic dancing.

Attendance: 9,931

Sponsored by

EMERSON
SLB Artistic Director Gen Horiuchi restaged Jazz à la Française (see above), a delightful and artistic homage to the French spirit. Horiuchi honored long-time Saint Louis Ballet supporter Francois Fraudeau (seen to the left) on his retirement from Novus International.
PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

By offering free or inexpensive master classes, pre- and post-show conversations and topical lectures, Saint Louis Ballet provides the regional community with access to some of the most respected artists working in ballet today.

Masterclass with Matthew Dibble
September 22, 2019
Saint Louis Ballet Studios

Matthew Dibble, dancer and répétiteur of the works of Twyla Tharp, brought his in-depth understanding of ballet technique and extensive experience working with the great Twyla Tharp to this master class, which invigorated and challenged 30 young students to push beyond their classical training.

Protecting the Legacy of George Balanchine:
A Conversation with Nilas Martins and Christine O’Neal
October 4, 2019
Touhill Performing Arts Center

Christine O’Neal, Director of Graduate Studies in Dance at Washington University, interviewed Nilas Martins, choreographer, Balanchine répétiteur and former New York City Ballet principal dancer, about the intricacies and challenges of staging the works of the great George Balanchine.

Visiting Artists

For two weeks in January, 2020, répétiteur Michelle Gifford set Christopher Wheeldon’s *The American* on the dancers of Saint Louis Ballet. Choreographer Emery LeCrone created a new work on SLB dancers over the course of three weeks in February. While in St. Louis both artists shared information about their creative processes with on-air host Tom Sudholt of Classic 107.3.

Shelley Washington has had an illustrious dance career. She was a long-time member of Twyla Tharp’s company and continues to work as a répétiteur of Tharp’s work. Ms. Washington spent two weeks in September 2019 at SLB studios, teaching *Nine Sinatra Songs* preparing SLB dancers for our opening performance. She was ably assisted by SLB Rehearsal Director Matthew Dibble.
Pointe to Succeed embodies Saint Louis Ballet’s commitment to educate children at under-resourced schools in many aspects of the art of classical ballet. In 2019-20 we held programs at Mason Elementary, St. Louis Catholic Academy and Mathews-Dickey Boys and Girls Club. SLB Education Director CiCi Houston oversees the multi-phase program, which consists of storytelling, interactive seminars, ballet appreciation and talent development. The program served over 200 students through in-school programs, providing a holistic, engaging and thorough introduction to ballet for these young people.

Grants from Heartland Coca-Cola and Ameren allowed us to bring over 600 children to a school-day matinee of The Nutcracker on December 18, 2020. Participating schools included Mason and Woerner from Saint Louis Public Schools; Barack Obama Elementary from the Normandy district; St. Louis Catholic Academy; and Meramec Heights from the Fox C-6 school district. Finally, we were thrilled to welcome four volunteers from Heartland Coca-Cola, who helped usher and manage the post-show conversation between children in the audience and the performers.
The 2019-2020 season was on track to be one of the best attended and most successful seasons in our history. We anticipated full attendance at our final production of the year, the classic *Swan Lake*, which was to include four public performances and a school day matinee for over 700 children. Our Spring Gala had unprecedented advance support, and we were thrilled to be honoring the great Mary Strauss, arts booster, philanthropist, champion of St. Louis’ architectural heritage and ballet lover. Covid-19 brought all of this to a devastating halt. The support that Saint Louis Ballet received in the wake of the crisis was nothing short of overwhelming, and we express our unending gratitude to those supporters who have been so incredibly generous in our time of need.

**An Enchanted Evening in the Garden**

*2020 Spring Gala*

In the wake of cancellation the following individuals, corporations and foundations generously converted their gala donations to operating support:

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**IN HONOR OF MARY STRAUSS**

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- Mary Strauss
- Laura and Michael Tarrasch
- Tricia Uetrecht
- Carol and Thomas R. Voss
- Patricia and Leo Whiteside
- Fran Zamler

Saint Louis Ballet was looking forward to honoring the brilliant Mary Strauss at the 2020 Spring Gala. When the emergence of Covid-19 forced cancellation, Mary graciously accepted our request to honor her at our 2021 Gala. We are so grateful to Mary, who inspires us daily with her philanthropic spirit, her love of ballet and her devotion to the St Louis community.
ANNUAL DONORS
July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

We are grateful to the following individuals, corporations, foundations, and public agencies that provide annual support for Saint Louis Ballet Company operations.

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Saint Louis Ballet Board member Laurie Lock (third from left) and Gala chair Brooke Meek (5th from right) gather with supporters at Neiman Marcus for the 2020 Gala Kickoff held on February 26.
May 7, 2020

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Members of barreSLB at the Neiman Marcus kickoff on February 26, 2020

Members of barreSLB attend The Nutcracker in December, 2019.
Subscriber Ticket Donors
When performances were cancelled in April of 2020, these generous subscribers donated the value of their tickets back to the ballet.

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Critical Relief Fund
June 17 – November 1, 2020

Recognizing the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the financial viability of Saint Louis Ballet, the Board of Directors announced a special emergency campaign, Dancers First. Since its launch on June 17, 2020, the campaign has generated over $123,000 from 190 generous donors. This funding, along with a PPP loan received through the CARES Act, has allowed SLB to continue to provide safe employment for our dancers, and to continue programming through the current season.

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SAINT LOUIS BALLET BY THE NUMBERS

35 ARTISTS EMPLOYED
540 GENEROUS DONORS
21 PERFORMANCES

150 VOLUNTEERS
700 SCHOOL CHILDREN SERVED
20 PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

280 SUBSCRIBERS
13,450 ATTENDEES

SAINT LOUIS BALLET
Statement of Activities
July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

REVENUES AND SUPPORT
Ticket Sales 606,417
Contributions and Grants 546,285
Events 145,245
Merchandise 31,979
Other 24,972
Total Revenues and Support 1,354,898

EXPENSES
Program 965,216
General and Administrative 196,731
Fundraising 46,196
Total Expenses 1,208,143

Change in Net Assets 146,755
Net Assets, Beginning of Year (67,068)
Net Assets, End of Year 79,687
2019-2020

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Christina Altholz
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Cathie Hernandez
Immediate Past President

Bhavani Amirthalingam
Allison Benney
Susan Bindler
Jennifer Cunnane
Mark Eggert
Catherine Ellwood
Sarah Glasser
Laurie Lock
Lawrence Miller
Jeff Oberman
Amy Schwetz
Carol Voss
Thomas Weaver

Saint Louis Ballet welcomed five new members who bring a diversity of experience and a wealth of insight to our leadership team. We are very grateful for their willingness to serve.

Friends of Saint Louis Ballet
Comprised of parents, alumni and community members who are ballet enthusiasts, the Friends of Saint Louis Ballet is a group of 150 volunteers who support the operations of the ballet company with countless hours of support - backstage, at the Ballet Boutique, in the office and in marketing support. Saint Louis Ballet is indebted to this generous group of helpers.

Thank you to Friends Co-Presidents Beth Painter and Kate Wiley who provided leadership during the 2019-2020 season.