WINTER WONDERS

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SARAH SLIPPER

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SCOTT LEWIS

DANCERS
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Katherine Disenhof
Kody Jauron
Noelle Kayser
Jityun Kim
Colleen Loverde
Franco Nieto
Kevin Pajarillaga
Andrea Parson
Anthony Pucci

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The use of photography or other recording equipment is prohibited. Please silence your cell phones.

PLEASE NOTE: Food, beverages, cameras, and recording devices are not permitted in Lincoln Performance Hall. Smoking is not permitted in the theatre or in the building.
NW Dance Project was founded in Portland in 2004 by acclaimed dancer, mentor, and choreographer Sarah Slipper.

NW Dance Project is dedicated to the creation and performance of innovative, new contemporary dance works from talented choreographers from around the world, all created in an open and artistically stimulating environment.

NW Dance Project has fostered the creation and Portland-premiere of over 300 original works to date.

Four company dancers have won prestigious Princess Grace Awards while with the company.

Sarah Slipper’s A Fine Balance, created during NW Dance Project’s first year, was a finalist for the Benois de la Danse international choreography award and performed at the Bolshoi Theatre.

Resident Choreographer Ihsan Rustem’s debut work for NW Dance Project, State of Matter, won the Sadler’s Wells Global Dance Contest and was performed twice by the company in London as part of the 2012 Cultural Olympiad.

Launched in 2007, our Dance Moves Arts Outreach and Participation program brings ongoing cost-free dance classes to underserved youth in our community, as well as adults with cognitive and physical challenges.

In March 2015, NW Dance Project opened our beautiful and bright 8,500 sq. ft. Creative Center in the heart of Portland’s Inner Eastside (211 NE 10th Avenue), which houses all creation and rehearsal sessions, as well as dance classes and training opportunities for adults and youth of all ages and abilities seven days per week.

NW Dance Project was selected to represent the western United States at the inaugural American Dance Platform with two performances at the iconic Joyce Theater in New York City.

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Sarah Slipper is truly gifted. This is what dance should be... She found the point at which the form of dance (steps, technique, feet, performance) combine to create a work of art.

– The News Record

Sarah Slipper was born and raised in Vancouver, British Columbia, and received her professional training at the Royal Ballet School in London, England and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School. In 1980, she made her professional debut with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet as a corps de ballet member; and became one of the company’s leading dramatic ballerinas. Ms. Slipper worked closely with many internationally renowned directors, choreographers and teachers, including Arnold Spohr, Rudi van Dantzig, Hans van Manen, Jiri Kylian, Agnes de Milé, Galina Yordanova, and Alla Svetchenko. Ms. Slipper was noted for her classical line and dramatic abilities, dancing the principal roles in classical ballets such as Swan Lake, Les Sylphides, Giselle, and The Nutcracker. In addition to the classical repertoire, she received worldwide acclaim for her performances of contemporary ballets, most notably Nobert Vesvák’s The Ecstasy of Rita Joe and the award winning Belong pas de deux.

After Ms. Slipper left the stage, she continued her passion for music and drama, studying theatre at the honours level at the University of Winnipeg, and in Oxford, England. During the 1996/97 season, she served as ballet mistress of Alberta Ballet; and from 1997/99 as ballet mistress of Oregon Ballet Theatre. Ms. Slipper’s command of classical and contemporary styles is demonstrated in her active role of teaching and coaching younger dancers. As a guest master teacher, Ms. Slipper has worked with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Washington Ballet, Ballet Austin, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, The Jefferson Dancers and the Dance Departments of the University of Utah, Cornish College of the Arts, and the University of Iowa.

An award winning independent choreographer, Ms. Slipper is presently based in Portland, Oregon, creating dance worldwide. She has worked with prominent dance companies including the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Nashville Ballet, Washington Ballet, Ballet Jorgen, Louisville Ballet, Fugata/Bahai Ballet NY, Alberta Ballet, Ballet Pacifica, Cornish Dance Theater, NW Dance Project and The Jefferson Dancers. She was awarded the Grand Prize for Choreography at the International Choreographic Competition Saint Sauveur 2000 for her ballet Shattered Night, which was created on the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. During her choreographic residency at Festival des Arts in Quebec, Canada, her ballet A River In A Dry Land, was described by the Montreal Gazette as “one of the finest choreographies produced in residency.” Ms. Slipper’s works have been described as “absolutely remarkable… grippingly pits breezy romanticism against a sinister undercurrent.” (The Oregonian) and “... a complete, enclosed world, a somber yet hopeful winter landscape across which the three couples thread in a long, smoothly unfolding skein of dance.” (The New York Times)

A Fine Balance, her pas de deux created during the first year of NW Dance Project, was a finalist for the prestigious Benois de la Danse award in 2006 and was performed at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow as part of the award’s gala celebration. Ms. Slipper has created over 45 ballets to date and is currently working on several new creations while serving as the Artistic Director of NW Dance Project.

Sarah Slipper
Artistic Director

Ihsan Rustem was born in London and studied at the Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance, during in which time he was a member of the National Youth Dance Company. His professional performance career began in the UK with Matthew Bourne’s Adventures in Motion Pictures, followed by Ballet Theater Munich, Introdans, and as a founding member of both the Stadt Theater Bern Ballett and the Tanz Luzerner Theater. Ihsan has worked with many of today’s leading choreographers including Mats Ek, Jiri Kylian, Hans van Manen, Paul Lightfoot and Sol Leavon and others. In 2010, Sarah Slipper invited Ihsan to Portland to create his first commission for a company. The resulting work, State of Matter, went on to win the Sadler’s Wells Global Dance Contest in 2011 and the Audience Choice Award at the 25th International Competition for Choreographers in Hannover. Ihsan has since gone on to choreograph for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago 2, Istanbul State Ballet MDT, Lucerne Dance Theater Switzerland, Würzburg Ballet Germany, and many others. Ihsan has created five works for NW Dance Project: State of Matter (2010), Mother Tongue (2012), Yidam (2015), Le Fil Rouge (2016), Bolero (2016), Carmen (2017). Ihsan was the 2014 recipient of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago’s International Commissioning Project and Whim W'Him’s inaugural Choreographic Shindig in 2015. He was appointed NW Dance Project’s Resident Choreographer in 2015.
Noelle has narrated 16 audiobooks for Listen. She performed in the World Premier of Edgar Zendejas’ solo for “Outstanding Achievement in Performance—Cultural Impact” at the 2017 Dance Alliance New England Conference. She has performed in Choreographic Works by Sarah Sliper, Didy Veldman, Patrick Delcroix, Ihsan Rustem and Felix Landerer. Most recently, Colleen performed with Patrick O’Brien Dance, and worked as a freelance dancer in New York City. At Springboard Danse Montreal she had the opportunity to perform in original works by Vim Vigor Dance Company, Shannon Gilsen, German choreographer Ryan Mason, Johann Webb of Staatsballett Kassel, and Michele Taylor of the TL Collective. While attending NW Dance Project’s LAUNCH project, she has had the privilege of performing original works by Alysa Pires, Alissa Klock, Kristen Care, and Megan Lou before being invited to join the company.

KATHERINE DISENHOF

Jihyun joined NW Dance Project as a company member in 2019. She graduated from the University of Oregon at Northwest Conservatory of Dance. She received her B.F.A. in Dance from Hanyang University. She won the Golden-Prize for senior contemporary in “The 41st Dong-A Dance Competition” and started to gain attention as a remarkable dancer. Post graduation, Jihyun moved to New York City in order to enhance her dance career and life experiences, and in 2017, she earned her MFA in dance from Ti Schuall School of the Arts, NYU. She has performed in works by Cristal Pita, Trisha Brown, Stefanie Batten Bland, Gaspard Louis, Alice Klock, Alysa Press, Rohan Bhardwaj, Kaloyan Boyadjev, Joseph Hernandez, and many others. Additionally, as a choreographer, Jihyun has presented her own work at a variety of venues such as Wallach Art Gallery at Columbia University, KoDaFe, Dumbo Dance Festival, Translate, Sana Limits Dance Space, Spark Spring Film Festival, and Gallery Max Soho. Jihyun joined NW Dance Project as a company member in 2019.

KODY JAURON

Kody Jauron hails from Phoenix, Arizona where he began his dance training at age 6 with Andrew Needhammer, and continued his studies with the Miami City Ballet School and Ballet Austin, where he became a company apprentice and danced for two seasons. Kody has trained at Lou Conte Dance Studio, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, The School at Jacob’s Pillow, Springboard Danse Montreal, and NW Dance Project’s LAUNCH project. Prior to joining NW Dance Project, Kody danced with DanceWorks Chicago under the tutelage of Julie Nakagawa and has been a featured guest artist with the Rush Page Civic Ballet, Eugene Ballet, Ballet Austin, and Greek Ballet. He has had the opportunity to perform works by Azurite Barston, Nelly van Bommel, Thang Djo, James Gregor, Felix Landerer, Joshua Manculich, Jiri Pokorny, Ihsan Rustem, and Yin Yue, and many more.

WILLIAM COUTURE

William Couture was born and raised in St. Paul Minnesota, where he attended the Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Arts, and from there went to San Francisco State University where he attended the Saint Mary’s College of California, and the University of California in Santa Cruz. In 2013 Will received a scholarship to perform with the Southern California Ballet, Santa Rosa Ballet, and lINES ballet. In 2013 Will received a scholarship with the Dizzy Feet Foundation and was invited to perform a solo at their gala event. After graduating in 2013 Will returned to Minnesota to dance with Shapiro and Smith Dance and teach. William joined NW Dance Project in 2016 and has been featured in original roles in works by Ihsan Rustem and Felix Landerer.
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