



50TH ANNIVERSARY 1965–2015  
*Celebrating a Legacy of Dance Excellence*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PHOTOS: <http://oaklandballet.org/wp/photos/>

## OAKLAND BALLET COMPANY ANNOUNCES SPRING 2016 SEASON

**A CAPPELLA—OUR BODIES SING** FEATURES WORLD PREMIERES BY VAL CANIPAROLI and JANICE GARRETT & CHARLES MOULTON, and WEST COAST PREMIERE by GRAHAM LUSTIG

MUSIC PERFORMED LIVE BY BAY AREA CHORAL GROUPS

COMPANY'S SPRING SEASON EXPANDS TO INCLUDE THREE BAY AREA THEATERS  
IN OAKLAND, SAN FRANCISCO and HAYWARD IN APRIL 2016

COMMUNITY DANCE FESTIVAL, *EAST BAY DANCES*, CONTINUES  
IN ITS SECOND YEAR

### **Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, Oakland**

Thursday, April 14 at 8pm

Friday, April 15 at 8pm

Saturday, April 16 at 8pm

### **Brava Theater Center, San Francisco**

Thursday, April 21 at 8pm

### **Reed L. Buffington Performing Arts Center, Chabot College, Hayward**

Saturday, April 23 at 8pm

Oakland, CA, December 18, 2015—Oakland Ballet Company announces its 2016 spring season, *A Cappella—Our Bodies Sing*, with five performances in three cities celebrating the power of the human voice and the grace of the human body. The program features world premieres of newly-commissioned dances by **Val Caniparoli** and **Janice Garrett & Charles Moulton**, as well as the West Coast premiere of a recent work by Artistic Director **Graham Lustig**. Bay Area choral groups the **Berkeley Community Chorus Chamber Ensemble**, the women's early music ensemble **Vajra Voices**, and members of Oakland's **Allen Temple Baptist Church Gospel Choir** will perform live with Oakland Ballet company dancers. Lustig's vision for the program is to showcase the beauty of the

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unaccompanied voice in concert with the artistry of the company's accomplished dancers. In 2016, Oakland Ballet expands its spring season to include performances in San Francisco, and at Chabot College in Hayward, which will host extensive community engagement activities, master classes and workshops as part of a new partnership between the ballet and the college. Performances are Thursday–Saturday, April 14–16 at 8pm at Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, Oakland; Thursday, April 21 at 8pm at Brava Theater Center, San Francisco; and Saturday, April 23 at 8pm at the Reed L. Buffington Performing Arts Center, Chabot College, Hayward.

After its successful launch in spring 2015, the community dance celebration, ***East Bay DANCES***, returns in its second edition, on Sunday April 17 at 4pm in the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts theater. The program offers subsidized theater space and production facilities for smaller area dance groups, and low-cost tickets for audience members. Bringing together an array of groups working in classical, folk, popular and contemporary dance styles, *East Bay DANCES '16* is a catalyst to bring together diverse corners of the East Bay dance community, and help develop new and broader audiences for a range of dance genres. Participants will be announced in February 2016, with members of Oakland Ballet performing alongside the invited groups, presenting excerpts from the spring season as part of the program.

Oakland Ballet hosts its annual **Spring Gala** fundraiser on Saturday, April 2 at 6:30pm, at the Bellevue Club overlooking scenic Lake Merritt in Oakland. The evening includes a cocktail reception; season performance highlights; dinner catered by the Bellevue Club; and a silent auction. The fundraiser directly supports the Company's annual *Nutcracker* production, which reaches 7,000 audience members and 5,000 schoolchildren annually; its ongoing "Discover Dance" education program; and the spring season program, *A Cappella—Our Bodies Sing*. Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf serves as Honorary Chair.

## TICKET INFORMATION

Ticket prices for Oakland Ballet's spring season performances of *A Cappella—Our Bodies Sing* Friday, Thursday–Saturday April 14–16 at 8pm at Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts; Thursday, April 21 at 8pm at Brava Theater Center; and Saturday, April 23 at 8pm at the Reed L. Buffington

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Performing Arts Center, Chabot College, range from \$20.00–\$50.00 and are subject to change. Ticket prices for *East Bay Dances '16* on April 17 at 4pm are priced from \$10-\$20 and are subject to change. Tickets for Oakland Ballet's Spring Gala on April 2 at 6:30pm are priced at \$200 and are subject to change. All tickets go on sale February 1, 2016 at [www.oaklandballet.org](http://www.oaklandballet.org) or by calling (510) 893-3132.

## GUEST CHOREOGRAPHER BIOGRAPHIES

**Val Caniparoli's** versatility has made him one of the most sought-after choreographers in the United States and abroad. He has contributed to the repertoires of more than 35 dance companies, including Pacific Northwest Ballet, Northern Ballet Theatre, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Israel Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Singapore Dance Theatre, Atlanta Ballet, State Theatre Ballet of South Africa, Oakland Ballet, Ballet West and Tulsa Ballet, where he has been resident choreographer since 2001. Caniparoli is most closely associated with San Francisco Ballet, his artistic home for more than thirty years, where he began his training and was later appointed resident choreographer. He continues to perform with the company as a principal character dancer and to choreograph for the company under Artistic Director Helgi Tomasson.

**Janice Garrett** is an internationally active choreographer and dance educator who began her career as a dancer with Dan Wagoner and Dancers. Honored in 2004 as one of *Dance Magazine's* top "25 to Watch," she has received commissions from companies throughout the US and Europe. Honors include a 2010 Isadora Duncan Dance Award ("Izzie") for "Best Company Performance" for her collaboration with Charles Moulton on *The Illustrated Book of Invisible Stories*, three 2011 Izzie nominations for *The Experience of Flight in Dreams* and recognition by the San Francisco Chronicle for *StringWreck* as one of the "Top 10-Best Performances of 2008."

Guggenheim Award recipient **Charles Moulton** began his career dancing with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company from 1973-1976. He has created works for the Joffrey Ballet, Baryshnikov's White Oak Project and many other dance companies in the US and abroad. He is the winner of a 1989 Dorothy Chandler Arts Achievement Award and has received support for his work from the NEA, NYSCA, The Jerome Foundation, and Meet the Composer/Choreographer. Moulton has directed theater and opera and has created works for film and television including choreography for 1,000 dancers in *the Matrix Reloaded*. Moulton has been active as a visual artist for 12 years.

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## **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR GRAHAM LUSTIG**

Since his appointment as Artistic Director in 2010, Graham Lustig has revitalized Oakland Ballet Company and helped the organization reclaim its position as a leading San Francisco Bay Area arts institution and first-rate dance company. Lustig's stewardship has brought the company long-term vision and a reputation for nurturing community-based programming, deep audience engagement, and organizational stability. For the past six seasons, Mr. Lustig has presented his critically-acclaimed production of *The Nutcracker* at Oakland's Paramount Theatre, as well as an annual spring season rooted in contemporary works, including the 50th Anniversary program, *Five Decades of Dance* (2015); *Oakland-esque* (2014), *Diaghilev Imagery* (2013) and *Forwards!* (2011). In collaboration with Oakland Unified School District, under Lustig's watch Oakland Ballet has expanded its educational outreach program, *Discover Dance*, to provide educational arts programs to more than a dozen area schools annually. Educational events such as in-school assemblies and open rehearsals reach more than 5,000 local school children each year.

Trained at the Royal Ballet School in London, Mr. Lustig danced with the Dutch National Ballet and Birmingham Royal Ballet before embarking on a freelance choreographic career that has included operas, ballets and musicals. He serves as a founding member of the Artists Committee of Americans for the Arts, and has served numerous times on the Dance and Policy Committee of the National Endowment for the Arts.

## **OAKLAND BALLET COMPANY**

For 50 years, Oakland Ballet Company has inspired the East Bay community and beyond by keeping the art of ballet exciting, vibrant and accessible, primarily through the presentation of works of the Diaghilev repertoire and modern masterpieces. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Graham Lustig since 2010, the Company has renewed its commitment to artistic excellence with imaginative programs that seek to engage contemporary audiences—through close relationships with living choreographers, the commissioning of vibrant new works, innovative collaborations with diverse artists and communities, and compelling educational programs that cultivate the next generation of dance lovers.

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Oakland Ballet was founded in 1965 by Ronn Guidi, and gained international recognition through its historical reconstructions of ballets from the legendary Ballets Russes of Serge Diaghilev; its mounting of classic works of Americana; and its creation of innovative contemporary choreography. In 2000, Ronn Guidi retired and Karen Brown succeeded him as Artistic Director. Brown continued Oakland Ballet's commitment to performing great works of classical ballet, and focused especially on the work of local and contemporary choreographers. Since then, Oakland Ballet Company has brought its mix of contemporary and classic programs to the Oakland and East Bay communities and continued its longstanding partnership with Michael Morgan and the Oakland Symphony.

A cornerstone of Oakland Ballet Company's 50-year legacy has been engagement with the community. Oakland Ballet's "Discover Dance" outreach program features educational programs at East Bay schools; educational in-theater performances; free performances throughout the community at events such as the Oakland Art Murmur and Oakland Dance Festival; ticket donations to season performances; and scholarships to OBC training programs.

*Oakland Ballet's 2015-2016 Season sponsors include AT&T, Chevron, the City of Oakland Cultural Funding Program, Clorox, the San Francisco Foundation, Bank of America, the Matson Foundation, Wells Fargo, Fremont Bank and the Oakland Athletics.*

#### **CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

- What:** Oakland Ballet Company presents its Spring Gala Fundraiser
- When:** Saturday, April 2, 2016, 6:30–10:00 pm
- Where:** The Bellevue Club, 525 Bellevue Ave, Oakland
- Tickets:** Tickets start at \$200, and will be available beginning February 1, online at [www.oaklandballet.org](http://www.oaklandballet.org); by phone at 510-893-3132; or by mailing a check to Oakland Ballet Company at 2201 Broadway, Suite 206, Oakland CA 94612.
- Description:** Oakland Ballet Company's Spring Gala Fundraiser features a cocktail reception, dinner, silent auction and live performance highlights, with proceeds supporting the company's spring season, *A Cappella—Our Bodies Sing*.

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- What:** Oakland Ballet Company presents *East Bay DANCES '16*
- When:** Sunday, April 17, 4pm
- Where:** Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, 1428 Alice St, Oakland
- Tickets:** Tickets, priced at \$20 general admission (\$15 seniors/\$10 ages 17 and under and students), go on sale February 1, 2016 at [www.oaklandballet.org](http://www.oaklandballet.org), and will be available at the door the day of the performance.
- Description:** *East Bay DANCES '16*, presented by Oakland Ballet Company, showcases the best and brightest in East Bay dance, in a program curated by Oakland Ballet Company's Artistic Director Graham Lustig.

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- Where:** Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts, 1428 Alice St, Oakland
- Tickets:** Ticket prices range from \$20.00–\$50.00 and are subject to change. All tickets go on sale February 1, 2016 at [www.oaklandballet.org](http://www.oaklandballet.org) or by calling call (510) 893-3132.
- Description:** **Oakland Ballet Company** presents its spring 2016 season, *A Cappella—Our Bodies Sing*, with five performances in three cities celebrating the power of the human voice and the grace of the human body. The program features world premieres by **Val Caniparoli**, and by **Janice Garrett & Charles Moulton**, and a West Coast premiere by Artistic Director **Graham Lustig**.

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- What:** Oakland Ballet Company presents *A Cappella—Our Bodies Sing*
- When:** Thursday, April 21 at 8pm
- Where:** Brava Theater Center, 2781 24th St, San Francisco
- Tickets:** Ticket prices range from \$20.00–\$50.00 and are subject to change. All tickets go on sale February 1, 2016 at [www.oaklandballet.org](http://www.oaklandballet.org) or by calling call (510) 893-3132.
- Description:** **Oakland Ballet Company** presents its spring 2016 season, *A Cappella—Our Bodies Sing*, with five performances in three cities celebrating the power of the human voice and the grace of the human body. The program features world premieres by **Val Caniparoli**, and by **Janice Garrett & Charles Moulton**, and a West Coast premiere by Artistic Director **Graham Lustig**.

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- Where:** Reed L Buffington Performing Arts Center, Chabot College, Hayward
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