



50TH ANNIVERSARY 1965-2015
Celebrating a Legacy of Dance Excellence

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OAKLAND BALLET COMPANY PRESENTS 50th ANNIVERSARY SPRING GALA

Black tie event includes cocktail reception, silent auction, spring season performance highlights and dinner overlooking Lake Merritt

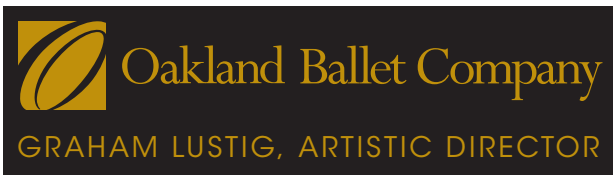
Saturday May 2, 2015, 6:30-10:00pm

The Bellevue Club, 525 Bellevue Ave, Oakland, CA 94610

VIDEO: [Oakland Ballet Company's 50th Anniversary](#)

Oakland, CA, March 6, 2015 – Oakland Ballet Company presents its 50th Anniversary Spring Gala fundraiser event on Saturday, May 2, 2015 from 6:30-10:00pm at the elegant Bellevue Club overlooking scenic Lake Merritt in Oakland. In what has now become an Oakland Ballet tradition, the evening is graciously hosted by Cheryl Jennings, ABC7 news anchor, and includes a cocktail and hors d'oeuvres reception; an informal performance featuring highlights from the company's dynamic 50th Anniversary spring season, *Five Decades of Dance*; a sumptuous dinner catered by the Bellevue Club; and a silent auction offering items such as spa packages, tickets to local sporting events, luxury goods, and local services. As in previous years, guests may also bid to win a cameo role in the company's annual *Nutcracker* production at the Paramount Theatre in December 2015. The annual gala is an opportunity for East Bay arts lovers to take part in Oakland's thriving cultural landscape, by supporting Oakland Ballet's mission to keep world-class ballet accessible and relevant to diverse Oakland communities. 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 *Five Decades of Dance*, this year's 50th Anniversary spring season at the magnificent Paramount Theatre on May 23. Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf serves as Honorary Chair. Tickets for the intimate evening start at \$150, \$100 of which is tax-deductible, and are available online at www.oaklandballet.org; by calling 510-893-3132; or by mailing a check to Oakland Ballet at 2201 Broadway, Ste 206, Oakland CA 94612.

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“On behalf of Oakland Ballet Company’s Board of Directors, I am thrilled to welcome the East Bay community to our annual gala. This year’s gala is a special one, as it directly supports our ambitious 50th Anniversary spring season at the Paramount Theatre,” says Roz Perazzo, Chair of the Board of Directors and Gala Committee Co-Chair. “The gala fundraiser also allows Oakland Ballet to strengthen its core mission of access, supporting affordable ticket prices, and our extensive educational outreach programs that reach hundreds of local children in underserved communities each year.”

This year’s gala is sponsored by East Bay Sotheby’s International and Torrey Pines Bank.

Oakland Ballet 50th Anniversary Spring Gala

Honorary Committee

Mayor Libby Schaaf, City of Oakland, Honorary Chair
Mayor Ruth Atkin, City of Emeryville
Vice Mayor Nora David, City of Emeryville
Mark Attarha and Nahid Nassiri East Bay Sotheby's International
Gray Cathrall, Piedmont Post
Matthew Dixon, MD, Kaiser Permanente and Ina Park Dixon
Donn Harris, Chairman, California Arts Council

Gala Committee

America Foy, Co-Chair
Roz Perazzo, Co-Chair
Kristen von Bargaen
Caitlin Crawford
Krista Freelove
Sharon Yap

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ABOUT OAKLAND BALLET'S 50th ANNIVERSARY SPRING SEASON, *FIVE DECADES OF DANCE*

Oakland Ballet Company celebrates its 50th Anniversary Season with a weekend of programs that honor the company's tradition of presenting iconic ballet masterworks alongside innovative commissions; strengthen its ties to area choreographers; and continue its commitment to community engagement in the East Bay. Artistic Director Graham Lustig has created Oakland Ballet's spring season, ***Five Decades of Dance***, to celebrate the past through works that built the company's reputation under founding Artistic Director Ronn Guidi, and look to the future with a series of newly-commissioned dances by alumni and choreographers close to the company. Historical works on the program include Diaghilev-era ballets by **Mikhail Fokine, Léonide Massine, Vaslav Nijinsky** and **Bronislava Nijinska**; plus revivals of important works by **Carlos Carvajal, Ronn Guidi, Eugene Loring** and **Alonzo King**; new works commissioned from **Val Caniparoli, Betsy Erickson, Michael Lowe, Robert Moses, Amy Seiwert** and **Graham Lustig**. The spring season performance is Saturday May 23, 2015 at 4pm in the grand Paramount Theatre, the historic home of Oakland Ballet for many of its acclaimed productions.

As part of the company's ongoing community outreach and education programs, ***East Bay DANCES***, a new community dance festival presented by Oakland Ballet Company, invites an assortment of East Bay dance companies and smaller performance groups to participate in a curated showcase to close the spring season on Sunday, May 24, 2015 at 3pm and 5:30pm in Laney College's Odell Johnson Performing Arts Center in Oakland.

Tickets for *Five Decades of Dance* range from \$20-\$45, with discounts available for seniors, children and groups of 10 or more. Tickets for the Oakland Ballet Company Alumni Reception following the performance are available to performance ticketholders for an additional \$25. A special VIP ticket is available for \$100. All tickets are on sale now, at the Paramount Theatre box office and online at www.ticketmaster.com.

Tickets for *East Bay DANCES* are \$20 general admission, \$15 for seniors, \$10 for children and students. A separate ticket is required for each performance time. Tickets are on sale now, online at www.brownpapertickets.com or at the door the day of the performance. For more information about any event, or to purchase tickets visit www.oaklandballet.org or call (510) 893-3132.

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ABOUT OAKLAND BALLET COMPANY

For fifty years, Oakland Ballet Company has maintained its commitment to inspiring the East Bay community and beyond by keeping the art of ballet exciting, vibrant and accessible, mainly through the presentation of works of the Diaghilev repertoire and modern masterpieces. 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 on the work of local and contemporary choreographers. Oakland Ballet closed in 2006, but was revived in 2007 with Guidi returning as Artistic Director. Since its rebirth, Oakland Ballet Company has brought its classic mix of drama and family classics to the Oakland and East Bay communities and continues a longstanding partnership with Michael Morgan and the Oakland East Bay Symphony.

A cornerstone of Oakland Ballet Company's legacy has been engagement with the community. OBC'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 Pride Festival; ticket donations to season performances; and scholarships to OBC training programs. In 2010, the Oakland Ballet Company welcomed Graham Lustig as Artistic Director. Lustig's career as a dancer, artistic director and choreographer parallels Oakland Ballet's tradition of presenting historically vibrant work while championing new choreography.

Oakland Ballet's 50th Anniversary Season is supported by Chevron, the City of Oakland Cultural Funding Program, Bank of America, Clorox, the Matson Foundation, Wells Fargo, East Bay Sotheby's International, the Alameda County Arts Commission/ARTSFUND Grants and McGuire and Hester.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

WHAT: Oakland Ballet Company's 50th Anniversary Spring Gala
WHEN: Saturday May 2, 6:30-10:00pm
WHERE: The Bellevue Club, 525 Bellevue Ave, Oakland, CA 94610

TICKETS: Tickets start at \$150 (\$100 of which is tax deductible) and are available online at www.oaklandballet.org, by phone at 510-893-3132, or by mailing in a check to Oakland Ballet Company at 2201 Broadway, Suite 206, Oakland, CA 94612

DESCRIPTION: Oakland Ballet Company's 50th Anniversary Spring Gala features a cocktail reception, dinner, silent auction and live performance highlights, with proceeds supporting the company's 50th Anniversary spring season, *Five Decades of Dance*.

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