



Welcome to Southwest Ballet Theatre's 2020-2021 Season!

I am proud to welcome you to SWBT's 2020-2021 season! I don't want to overuse the cliché "absence makes the heart grow fonder," but it could not be truer for us entering our sixth season. On March 15 we ended our season with heavy hearts having to shutter our studio, walk away from our production of *The Sleeping Beauty* and miss out on milestones such as not being able to bid farewell to our senior Jadyn Zimmermann.

Even in our social-distanced separation, SWBT had great success continuing ZOOM classes. Now as we are ready to launch our sixth season, we are prepared for whatever lies ahead in our uncertain climate. We are poised to offer in-person classes, ZOOM classes, or even a hybrid of the two depending on COVID-19 health recommendations. SWBT is committed to safely bringing you the same high quality, classical dance education in whatever form possible.

In our efforts to maintain SWBT's mission to strive to enrich, inspire and uplift lives through classical ballet, we are always finding ways to strengthen our SWBT community. In addition to the COVID-19 safety measures we will be taking, we have also made internal changes that will improve many aspects of how SWBT operates.

Temporary Studio Space

COVID-19 has required so much patience, determination, and creativity as we navigate these unprecedented times. Historically, SWBT has the knack of being "at the right place at the right time" in so many instances. We are pleased to have found another local studio owner, Shalmarie Shook at Effusion Dance Center, who has graciously offered SWBT space to rent as we await EMCC to open. In order to offer our full schedule of classes, we will be combining classes with Effusion Dance Center. This will benefit not only SWBT, but also Effusion Dance Center! We are thrilled to have made this relationship and are grateful for the opportunity to meet in-person!

During the regularly scheduled class times, SWBT will be streaming live ZOOM classes for those students who aren't quite ready to meet in-person. Students will be able to take corrections from those given in class.

email: admin@swbtballet.org | phone: (623) 250-6366

website: www.swbtballet.org



COVID-19 Procedures and Precautions

Masks are required by all dancers, teachers, and administrators at all times, unless there is a documented medical condition which prevents dancer from wearing one. ****PLEASE NOTE: masks are required in Daniel's classes****

All dancers and teachers must wash/sanitize their hands upon entering and exiting the dance room. Hand sanitizer will be available in each dance room.

Barres and floors are sanitized in between classes. Classes will end 5 minutes early to allow for sanitation.

Six foot squares will be mapped on the dance floor to ensure social distancing. Class sizes will be limited.

Students' temperatures will be taken before entering the building.

Staff will take their temperatures daily before teaching.

Bathrooms will be cleaned throughout the day.

Future Studio Space



Southwest Ballet Theatre's new studio home is now Estrella Mountain Community College's Performing Arts Center Studio! Inside this beautiful, air conditioned state-of-the-art performance center, the studio will provide SWBT dancers a safe, comfortable, and professional environment allowing our dancers to thrive.

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Southwest Ballet Theatre Board of Directors

Southwest Ballet Theatre is a 501(c)3 non-profit charity organization that brings high quality productions to the community at an affordable price. A non-profit organization is run by a board of directors. You may ask, “what does it mean to our family and why is it important?” The board of directors is essential to how well SWBT abides by its mission, the expectations of its faculty, as well as its clients. It protects the interests of the organization and also legally represents the organization to the state of Arizona. The board is responsible for executing all of the business decisions for SWBT’s classes and performances. It oversees the budget, raises money, writes policies, etc.

The board of directors has been representing SWBT as a non-profit since 2015. In the past, the board has been overseeing the bi-annual performances. This year, not only will they be overseeing the performances, but also the classes at SWBT. This means, the board is in now also in charge of putting into place the infrastructure to run a successful school. For instance, the board rented EMCC, hired the artistic director and assistant, teachers, and set the tuition and budget.

You might be wondering, “how is this going to change the way that SWBT functions?” Having the board of directors overseeing both the classes and performances is going to bring continuity between the two so that they will literally be one entity. It will be a seamless transition for SWBT; one that will allow the organization to thrive and grow. Another way that it will change how SWBT functions is that you will see much more involvement and oversight from the board members. The board members will be checking in with the instructors and aiding the artistic director in achieving the vision for the classes and performances.

Board of Directors Executive Board:

President: Susan Richardson

Vice-President: Chris Seufert

Treasurer: Elizabeth Seufert

Secretary: Melissa Hahne

Members of the Board:

Legal Advisor: Cheryl Guz

Fundraising Chair: JoDee Wagner

Company Liaison: Karen Jaquez

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Southwest Ballet Theatre Faculty

Melissa Zervas Hahne, Artistic Director



Last year, my family relocated to Newport Beach, CA. From there, I continued to help transition SWBT by overseeing artistic and administrative decisions. This season, I have committed to continue as artistic director and even though you do not “see” me, I am working diligently behind the scenes! As the founder of SWBT, my heart and soul desires to see the success of our SWBT community!

Gillian George, Assistant Director and Ballet Mistress



Gillian George will be continuing as SWBT’s Assistant Director. Gillian will oversee the day-to-day affairs in teaching classes and communicating with you about your dancer’s progress throughout the year. Gillian will also be running rehearsals for our Nutcracker and spring show.

Daniel Baudendistel, Artistic Advisor, Choreographer and Master Teacher



We are thrilled to have one of the most sought after teachers in the valley as our teacher, choreographer, and advisor. For the sixth year, Daniel will set his Tchaikovsky’s The Nutcracker for our community performance as well as Sleeping Beauty. You will also see him teaching our level 4-6 classes.

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Angela Brown, Tap, Jazz, and Lyrical Instructor



Angela will continue as SWBT's Tap, Jazz and Lyrical instructor for levels 1-6. Angela brings the diversity that every dancer needs as they are developing their technique, skill, and coordination.

Sydney Walker, Administrative Assistant



Sydney will be continuing to work as SWBT's administrative assistant! During scheduled class time, Sydney will be present to help you with any needs you might have; payments, schedules, rehearsals. When classes are not in session, you can reach Sydney by phone (623) 250-6366 or by email admin@swbtballet.org.

Shalmarie Shook, Owner and Artistic Director of Effusion Dance Center



Shalmarie Shook welcomes SWBT to her new home, Effusion Dance Center! We could not be more grateful for EDC's hospitality and wish them the best in building their own dance community in Goodyear!

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Tentative Performance Dates Due to COVID-19, SWBT does not know it's performance capabilities. Though we are hoping for the best, we are preparing for changes to this schedule. We will keep you updated as things progress.

The Nutcracker December 17-20: Auditions TBD

Daniel Baudendistel will be setting Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker" for our sixth full length production. Dancers level 4 and above are required to audition. Dancers level 3 down to pre-ballet are to attend for a Nutcracker activity while parents will have a **mandatory meeting**.

Nutcracker Sign Up will occur online PRIOR to audition. You must bring signed company contract as well as your receipt of payment for Nutcracker fee.

Southwest Showcase February 27:

This year SWBT will have a performance for the friends and families of SWBT dancers as a demonstration of what SWBT students are learning in class. Taking place on Saturday, February 27, each class will be brought to the EMCC stage to perform a piece including modern, tap, jazz, lyrical, variations and ballet, depending on what each student is involved in!

Excerpts from Sleeping Beauty April 22-25:

SWBT will be performing Prologue and Act 3 of Sleeping Beauty. With choreography rooted in tradition, students will have the opportunity to explore and accomplish the in depth nuances of this classical ballet that have been carried through the centuries.

Helpful Tools for A Successful Year at SWBT

Read ALL EMAILS: SWBT Newsletters will be sent EVERY MONDAY. Emails are the primary way that we communicate to you to keep you up-to-date on rehearsal schedules or any necessary information regarding classes or performances. PLEASE, PLEASE read these emails!!

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Use the Website: Check out swbtballet.org for details about tuition, class schedules, faculty, dress code and more. The website is a valuable resource, filled with the information you need to enroll your child at SWBT.

Read the Handbook: SWBT's Handbook is designed so there is no miscommunication of expectations in the studio and at the theatre. There are so many components that make our school and productions successful. Even though many of you are becoming seasoned dance parents, each year SWBT makes changes and additions to our handbook. Please take a look and become familiar with the expectations of our theatre. It is required that each student and parent sign and return the SWBT contract and payment on or before the day of our Nutcracker audition.

Volunteer your time: We depend on each one of you to make this school and performance company a success. We need help with building sets, costumes, backstage crew, helping with fundraisers, the Sugarplum Shoppe, ticket sales, etc. We require parents to participate with us giving four hours volunteering per performance. All volunteers will be screened by SWBT.

Use the Online Calendar: In order to stay abreast of the ever changing rehearsal schedule, the schedule will be updated on our google calendar. I want to emphasize the importance of you utilizing this calendar throughout the season. Once rehearsals start, this will become an invaluable tool of communication for us.

Enjoy this year watching your dancer grow and mature through the commitment and determination it takes to master this craft. We are honored to have the opportunity to share our passion of dance with you and our community. Thank you for choosing SWBT for your dance training!

Sincerely,

Melissa Hahne, Artistic Director

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