

BALLET SAN JOSE

PRESS RELEASE

Valentines' Ballet Repertory Program in San Jose, Feb 15-18

BALLET SAN JOSE presents

"A Valentines' Potpourri"

February 15-18, 2007

Presented at San Jose Center for the Performing Arts

255 Almaden Boulevard in downtown San Jose

Tickets: \$25 - \$78

Box Office: 408.288.2800

or buy online [here](#).



ONTOGENY

Ballet San Jose

Choreography: Dennis Nahat

Music: Karl Husa's "String Quartet No. 3"

Photo by Robert Shomler

ONTOGENY traces the life cycle of an individual organism from its inception through its death. The piece combines modern ballet, pointe work and acrobatics to chronicle the development of the organism. Dancers move non-stop to pulsating music on a darkened stage, creating a continuous flow of extremely physical movement.

ONTOGENY premiered at the Royal Swedish Ballet in Stockholm in 1970. It was highly controversial and set critics on fire at its American debut (by American Ballet Theatre in New York City) in 1971. It was one of the first contemporary all leotard designed ballets utilizing a full vocabulary of modern movement to be danced on the ABT stage.

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The last time the piece was performed in San Jose was in 1994.

ONTOGENY will be presented with the Bay Area premiere of Nahat's "LE STYLE CLASSIQUE" and the Company premiere of Lew Christensen's "IL DISTRATTO" in a mixed repertory program, Feb 15-18, 2007.

LE STYLE CLASSIQUE is choreographed to W. A. Mozart's Symphony No. 39 in E Flat Major and costumed by the late David Guthrie with additional new costumes by Maggie Heaman, this ballet is for 11 couples. The curtain raises with two dancers center stage in period costumes (as in Mozart's time), where a court dance is performed. This stately dance is the theme upon which the entire ballet in 4 movements is built. Choreography that reflects the classical style of the past period is danced with contemporary classical ballet technique. A frenzy of quick darting movements brings LE STYLE CLASSIQUE and one of Mozart's musical masterpieces to a rousing and satisfying finish.

IL DISTRATTO is an intriguing, abstract work in five movements, set to Haydn's "Symphony No. 60", a middle-period Haydn work originally composed as incidental music for Regnard's 1774 play "Le Distrait." In the last movement, the violins retune their lowest string from F to G to reflect the "distracted" state of the play's principal character. Christensen reflects the music in his choreography. Christensen described the work as "an instructive analysis of how dancers learn...training each part of the body separately." But what sets it apart are its comic touches. Lights illuminate only legs and ankles. Ultra-violet lights make costumes appear fluorescent. You see the top of one dancer, the legs of another. Each part of the body is isolated...legs, feet, arms, hands, head. But all must come together to produce a final result. IL DISTRATTO is one of Christensen's most popular and enduring works.

SEPTEMBER is a dance for two about a relationship gone wrong. The woman is continually rejected by the man as he turns away from her with expressionless emotion. She runs to him only to be thrown away (over his shoulder and onto the floor, etc.). In the end she realizes that her attempts to reconcile are futile, and she, in turn, looks at him and leaves.

The ballet is dressed in stark black and white and will be danced in an empty space devoid of color. Composer Louis Hardin died in September 1999 and there is some speculation that the piece was titled "September" in memory of him. Hardin was called also known as MOONDOG. For years, he could be seen standing on the streets of NYC each day in a "Viking-like" outfit... Rain, snow or sun. Ballet San Jose Artistic Director Dennis Nahat remembers once stopping to talk to him on 6th Avenue and Hardin simply said, "I'm trying to think of a music theme just now." SEPTEMBER will be danced by Yui Yonezawa. Her partner for the piece will be Company Dancer, Maximo Califano. Ben lida was presented a Special IBC Award for choreography for the piece.

THE PROGRAM AT A GLANCE:

ONTOGENY

Choreography by Dennis Nahat

Music: String Quartet No. 3 (Note: This piece of music won a Pulitzer Prize)

Composer: Karl Husa

(A revival. Last performed in San Jose in 1994)

IL DISTRATTO

Choreography by Lew Christensen

Music: Symphony No. 60

Composer: Franz Joseph Haydin

A Company Premiere

LE STYLE CLASSIQUE

Choreography by Dennis Nahat

Music: Symphony No. 39

Composer: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

A Bay Area Premiere

SEPTEMBER

Choreography by Tsutomu Ben lida

Music: Romance in G

Composer: Louis Hardin

A West Coast Premiere

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Lee Kopp

Director, Marketing & Publicity

Ballet San Jose

40 North First Street

San Jose, CA 95113

(408) 288-2820 x210 office

(408) 839-2379 cell