BALLETX
OCT 1 - 6, 2019

Season Sponsor:
HOWARD GILMAN FOUNDATION
Listen in as Annabelle Lopez Ocha discusses the creation of *The Little Prince*, the show you are about to see, and how she remains open to inspiration in the studio in our Joyce podcast, Still Spinning.

To access the podcast, open the camera app on your phone and scan the QR code here.

You can access all of the episodes in our Joyce Podcast by searching for Still Spinning in your favorite podcast app. Hit subscribe to receive future episodes on dance and the creative process of your favorite artists.
Leadership support for The Joyce Theater Foundation has been received from the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust.

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Key support for The Joyce has been provided by First Republic Bank, The Jerome Robbins Foundation, The Thompson Family Foundation, and Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation.

Additional support for this engagement has been provided by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Endowment Fund to encourage the performances of out-of-town companies at The Joyce Theater.
ABOUT THE COMPANY

BalletX, Philadelphia’s premier contemporary ballet, unites distinguished choreographers with an outstanding company of world-class dancers to forge new works of athleticism, emotion, and grace. Founded in 2005 by Christine Cox and Matthew Neenan, and now under the direction of Cox as Artistic & Executive Director, BalletX challenges the boundaries of classical ballet by encouraging formal experimentation while preserving rigorous technique. The company is committed to producing new works of the highest quality and integrity that bring the combined visions of choreographers and dancers to life and cultivate in audiences a collective appetite for bold, new dance.

Since the company’s founding, BalletX has expanded its repertoire to include 76 world premieres by over 30 internationally renowned artists, including Matthew Neenan, Jodie Gates, Trey McIntyre, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and Darrell Grand Moultrie. BalletX presents three annual performance series as the resident dance company of The Wilma Theater in Philadelphia and has performed at such prestigious festivals as Vail Dance Festival in Colorado, Belgrade Dance Festival, Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival in Massachusetts, and The Joyce Theater and City Center in New York City. April 2018 marked the opening of BalletX’s Center for World Premiere Choreography, the company’s new 5,000 square foot studio and administrative home in Philadelphia. Conceived as a place of innovation, creation, inclusion, and education, BalletX’s Center for World Premiere Choreography sets the stage for the company’s next decade of dance making. For more information, visit www.balletx.org.
ABOUT THE PROGRAM
by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa

There are certain books you read when you are young that stay with you all your life. *The Little Prince* is certainly one of them. When I have re-read the book at different stages of my life, I have discovered more details and unraveled hidden meanings behind the symbolism. Though ostensibly styled and written as a children’s book, *The Little Prince* makes several observations about life and human nature.

Upon turning 45, the realization of my own mortality made me suddenly aware of the transiency of life. With that in mind, I decided to give the character of the Snake, who represents Death, a more prominent role in this adaptation. Death is omnipresent and the only certainty in our lives. We should not fear it; on the contrary, we should let it inspire us to live without restraint.

SYNOPSIS
by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa

A Pilot crashes in the desert. Assessing his plane’s damage, and rationing his eight-day supply of water, he wonders, "Am I hallucinating? Dying?" When, out of nowhere, a young boy named Little Prince appears.

"Draw me a sheep," the boy implores. Instead, the Pilot tosses him a nondescript box, explaining the sheep he seeks is inside. To the Pilot’s surprise, the boy is more than pleased. Little Prince tells the Pilot of his home, an asteroid far from Earth, where overgrown Baobab Tree roots threaten his beloved Rose. Only a grazing sheep, which he has come to Earth to find, can save her.

Mortality, in the form of a Snake, tempts the Pilot with the sweet release of death, but Little Prince intervenes, whisking away his new friend on an adventure to six planets that he visited before arriving on Earth.

Each planet is inhabited by a single irrational and narrow-minded adult:

- A King with no subjects, but plenty decrees
- A Narcissist craving constant praise
- A Drunkard who drinks to forget the shame of alcohol dependence
- A Businesswoman who possessivelycatalogues the stars, yet fails to see their beauty
- A Lamplighter on a planet so small that a full day lasts only a minute–she lights and extinguishes a lamppost every 30 seconds, never questioning her frantic schedule
- A Geographer who has never been to any of the places he studies

Back on Earth, the Pilot and Little Prince set out on a last-ditch effort to find water. They encounter a row of rose bushes. Initially delighted at the sight of so many beautiful roses, Little Prince quickly realizes his own Rose has lied to him about being unique. Dejected, he crumbles to the ground and weeps.

Along comes a Fox, who teaches Little Prince to tame that which is wild through patient devotion. In doing so, something quite ordinary becomes special. The Fox imparts a final secret: follow your heart, not your eyes–reconnecting Little Prince, in spirit, to his beloved Rose.

The omnipresent Snake nudges the Pilot ever closer to death, and informs Little Prince that he, alone, has the power to truly reunite the boy with Rose. Barely escaping the Snake’s grip one more time, the Pilot and Little Prince finally find a well to quench their thirst.

Revived, the Pilot reassembles his plane, only to discover his friend Little Prince slowly fading. Look at the stars to remember me is the boy’s departing message. The Pilot prepares for liftoff, escaping the desert, while the Snake carries off Little Prince to the land of the dead.

The Snake takes one last bow, and shows us that we are all, in some way, someone’s unique and special star in the universe.
CHRISTINE COX (Artistic & Executive Director) co-founded BalletX, Philadelphia’s premier contemporary ballet company, with Matthew Neenan in 2005. The BalletX team has produced more than 70 world premiere ballets by 39 renowned and emerging choreographers to date, reaching more than 100,000 dance patrons. Under her leadership as Artistic & Executive Director, the company has performed at prestigious national stages including The Joyce Theater, Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival, and Vail Dance Festival. Cox has committed BalletX to expanding dance’s vocabulary for all audiences, promoting initiatives that make contemporary ballet accessible and welcoming, including the company’s audience engagement program, The X-Process, and in-school educational outreach initiative, Dance eXchange. In addition, Cox led a TEDx talk, in December 2016, and subsequently published online, building a bridge to help audiences understand the art form more fully.

Cox was a full-time company member with the Pennsylvania Ballet from 1993 until her retirement from the stage in 2006. As an arts leader, Cox has served on review panels for the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and currently sits on the Advisory Board of the Philadelphia Arts & Business Council. For her work as a choreographer, educator, and performer, Cox has been recognized with two Rocky Awards for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts, as well as fellowships from the Independence Foundation and Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

ANNABELLE LOPEZ OCHOA (Choreographer) completed her dance education at the Royal Ballet School of Flanders in Belgium. She started choreographing at the early age of eleven, and decided in 2003 to end her dance career to focus her energies solely on choreography. The much in-demand Ochoa has created works for more than 50 companies around the world such as the Dutch National Ballet, Royal Ballet of Flanders, Pennsylvania Ballet, BalletX, BJM-Danse Montreal, Ballet Hispánico, Compania Nacional de Danza Madrid, Pacific Northwest Ballet, The Washington Ballet, Ballet Austin, Ballet Nacional de Cuba, Joffrey Ballet, English National Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Dance Theater of Harlem, San Francisco Ballet, and New York City Ballet, among others.

Last resistance, created for the Dutch National Ballet in 2018, was named Best Premiere by Dance Europe; Broken Wings, created for English National Ballet, was named one of 2016’s best premieres by Dance Europe and was nominated for a Critics’ Circle National Dance Award; Sombreroisimo received Cuba’s Villanueva Award in 2015; A Streetcar Named Desire won the Best Choreography [Classical] award from Critics’ Circle National Dance Awards and was nominated for an Olivier Award in 2012; and Replay won first prize at the Choreographers Competition in Bornem, Belgium in 2002. Lopez Ochoa is a versatile choreographer who creates in different styles of dance. Her fame and long list of commissions serve as an example of a successful female choreographer for future generations in the classical ballet world.
WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY

TARA KEATING (Associate Artistic Director) attended The Juilliard School where she received a BFA in Dance. While there, she was awarded the Jerome L. Greene Fellowship and the Most Outstanding Dance Major award from the National Dance Association. She has danced professionally with the American Repertory Ballet, “Tharp!” and as a soloist with the Pennsylvania Ballet. Throughout her career she has originated roles in numerous world premieres by renowned choreographers. In 2005, she became a founding member of BalletX, and danced in nearly every performance until her retirement in 2012. She has staged several ballets on BalletX, and has set Neenan’s work on Pennsylvania Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Nevada Ballet Theatre, SUNY at Purchase College, and Bucknell University. Keating was the Producing Director in 2006 and 2007 for Shut Up & Dance, an annual benefit for MANNA. She was also the recipient of a 2002 City Paper Choice Award. She is on faculty at University of the Arts, and is a guest teacher at various regional schools. She was named Associate Artistic Director of BalletX in February 2014.

FRANCESCA FORCELLA (Dancer) joined BalletX in 2013 after working as a company member with the Washington Ballet Studio Company and Los Angeles American Contemporary Ballet. At 16, she joined Houston Ballet II (HBII) and toured internationally, representing Houston Ballet at the International Youth Dance Festival in Budapest, Hungary.

STANLEY GLOVER (Dancer) joined BalletX in 2018, following performances as a Top 20 contestant on So You Think You Can Dance, and as a principal dancer in Cirque du Soleil’s Mystére. He has performed and trained under Sonya Tayeh, Random Dance, Hubbard Street, Pennsylvania Ballet, and several others. He is the recipient of the Princess Grace Award 2019.

ZACHARY KAPELUCK (Dancer) joined BalletX in 2013, following work with Mary Miller Dance in Pittsburgh in Confluence. He holds a BFA degree in Dance from Point Park University, where he had the opportunity to perform works by choreographers George Balanchine, Gerald Arpino, Toru Shimazaki, and Jessica Lang, among others.

BLAKE KRAPELS (Dancer) graduated from The Juilliard School with a BFA in dance, where he performed repertoire by William Forsythe, Merce Cunningham, Elliot Feld, Jose Limon and Peter Chu. He danced with The Metropolitan Opera, Keigwin & Company, GroundWorks Dance Theatre, and others before joining BalletX in 2018.
SKYLER LUBIN (Dancer) danced as a member of the Corps de Ballet with Miami City Ballet from 2010-2014. She has performed featured roles including Flower Festival pas de deux, Swan Lake pas de trios, and Jerome Robbins’ Afternoon of a Faun, and has premiered pieces by Alexei Ratmansky and Liam Scarlett. She joined BalletX in 2015.

CHLOE PERKES (Dancer) began her professional career in 2005 at the Foundry, a San Francisco-based contemporary company, returning to ballet for three seasons at the Sacramento Ballet in 2008. She joined BalletX in 2010, was named Pointe Magazine’s Best of the Best in 2014, and co-directs duende, an experimental dance company.

RODERICK PHIFER (Dancer) graduated from UArts on a full tuition scholarship in 2017, the same year he joined BalletX. He is also a contemporary teacher and choreographer at the University of Pennsylvania’s Arts House Dance Company, Dance Productions, Jena Burgin-Peters Entertainment, and Miller Street Dance Academy.

CAILI QUAN (Dancer) moved from her native Guam to NYC to further her classical training at Ballet Academy East at the age of 16. In 2007, she received a scholarship with Richmond Ballet, and in 2009 apprenticed with North Carolina Dance Theatre. Prior to joining BalletX in 2013, she danced with First State Ballet Theatre and Opera Delaware.

RICHARD VILLAVERDE (Dancer) graduated from New World School of the Arts in 2009. That same year he won the Senior Male Outstanding Dancer at New York City Dance Alliance, and was awarded a four-year full scholarship to UArts. In 2011 he was selected to study abroad in Venice at La Biennale. He joined BalletX in 2012.

ANDREA YORITA (Dancer) joined BalletX in 2012, the same year she graduated with a BFA in Dance Performance from the University of California, Irvine as a Gillespie Scholar. She has received Royal Academy of Dance’s Solo Seal Award, and has competed as a finalist in the Genée International Ballet Competition, and for the Clive Barnes Award.
The Joyce Theater Foundation ("The Joyce," Executive Director, Linda Shelton), a nonprofit organization, has proudly served the dance community for over three decades. Under the direction of founders Cora Cahan and Eliot Feld, Ballet Tech Foundation acquired and The Joyce renovated the Elgin Theater in Chelsea. Opening as The Joyce Theater in 1982, it was named in honor of Joyce Mertz, beloved daughter of LuEsther T. Mertz. It was LuEsther’s clear, undaunted vision and abundant generosity that made it imaginable and ultimately possible to build the theater. Ownership was secured by The Joyce in 2015. The theater is one of the only theaters built by dancers for dance and has provided an intimate and elegant home for over 400 U.S.-based and international companies. The Joyce has also expanded its reach beyond its Chelsea home through off-site presentations at venues ranging in scope from Lincoln Center’s David H. Koch Theater, to Brooklyn’s Invisible Dog Art Center, and to outdoor programming in spaces such as Hudson River Park. To further support the creation of new work, The Joyce maintains longstanding commissioning and residency programs. Local students and teachers (K-12th grade) benefit from its school program, and family and adult audiences get closer to dance with access to artists. The Joyce’s annual season of about 48 weeks of dance now includes over 340 performances for audiences in excess of 150,000 patrons. Visit Joyce.org for more information.
ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

The Joyce honors the following individuals, corporations, and foundations for their visionary support of our mission of advancing the vibrant and extraordinary art of dance. Funds contributed to the endowment campaign will allow The Joyce to continue its support of the dance community and to commission new work.

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Support for planning costs associated with establishing a third venue for dance as part of the redeveloped World Trade Center site has been generously provided by a grant from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, which is funded through Community Development Block Grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Leadership support has also been provided by:

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Resuscitation masks and latex gloves are located in the closet next to the drinking fountain in the Upper Lobby. AED is located downstairs in the reception area. LEARN CPR. For more information, contact the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association.

FIRE NOTICE: The exit indicated by a red light and sign nearest to the seat you occupy is the shortest route to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please walk —do not run— to that exit.

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