



Rosalie O'Connor

UGA
presents.

24|25 SEASON

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE STUDIO COMPANY

FRI, JAN 31, 7:30 pm

SAT, FEB 1, 2:00 pm

Fine Arts Theatre

Supported by

DRS. STEPHEN E. AND MARGARET CRAMER



Please silence all mobile phones and electronic devices. Photography, video and audio recording, and texting are prohibited during the performance.



AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE

Susan Jaffe – Artistic Director

Barry Hughson – Executive Director

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE STUDIO COMPANY

Sascha Radetsky – Artistic Director

Claire Florian – Managing Director

Yan Chen – Rehearsal Director

Audrey Schultz – Production Manager

ABT STUDIO COMPANY DANCERS

Max Barker, Maximilian Catazaro, YeonSeo Choi, Elijah Geolina, Daniel Guzmán, Paloma Livellara, Kayla Mak, Aaron Marquez, Nicholas Mihlar, Viktoria Papakalodouka, Sooha Park, Natalie Steele

American Ballet Theatre recognizes the following donors for their extraordinary giving in support of ABT Studio Company: Maria Cristina Anzola, Sofia Elizalde, Patricia R. Morton, James M. and Nora C. Orphanides, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and The Ted and Mary Jo Shen Charitable Gift Fund. Additional support provided by Edward "Chip" Beam in loving memory of John and Jack, Sandra and Charles Carmeci, Mr. and Mrs. Peter L. Malkin, The Agnes Varis Fund, Constance A. Woo, and four anonymous donors.

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ABT is supported, in part, with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York state legislature, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the city council.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

ABT Studio Company, the junior company of American Ballet Theatre, is currently made up of 12 rising stars of the ballet world between the ages of 16 and 21. ABT Studio Company prepares these outstanding young dancers, who hail from all over the globe, to enter American Ballet Theatre or other leading ballet companies worldwide. Eighty-five percent of current dancers in American Ballet Theatre are alumni of the ABT Studio Company, including 8 soloists and 15 principal dancers.

ABT Studio Company serves as an ambassador for American Ballet Theatre by engaging with communities in a range of venues worldwide, performing

masterworks of the classical and neoclassical canons alongside contemporary and newly created works. Each season, ABT Studio Company commissions new ballets from emerging and established choreographers.

To learn more about ABT Studio Company, visit www.abt.org/abtstudiocompany or follow ABT Studio Company on Instagram at [@abtstudioco](https://www.instagram.com/abtstudioco).

Join ABT Studio Company's email list to stay up to date about upcoming performances near you! Visit <https://mailchi.mp/abt/abt-studio-company> to sign up.

THE COMPANY



MAX BARKER began dancing at age 5 at the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School and has performed for many seasons with American Ballet Theatre at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City. He trained at the ABT JKO School for nine years and participated in the Prix de Lausanne in 2020, placing as a finalist. Continuing his training, Barker privately worked at the Fabrice Herrault Studio for two years, after which he joined The Royal Ballet School in London. In 2023, he performed on The Royal Opera House stage with The Royal Ballet School and in *Yondering* for John Neumier's 50th anniversary with the Hamburg Ballet.

Barker joined ABT Studio Company in September 2023 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky. In ABT Studio Company, he has created a role in *Within the Sunset* by Amy Hall Garner and performed in new ballets by Jamar Roberts, Houston Thomas, Lauren Lovette, and James Whiteside. Barker's ABT Studio Company repertoire also includes the principal role "Country Gardens" from Twyla Tharp's *Brief Fling*, the Diana and Acteon pas de deux, the Neapolitan Dance from *Swan Lake*, and a *Don Quixote* suite. He has performed in Alexei Ratmansky's *The Nutcracker* with the main company of American Ballet Theatre.



MAXIMILIAN CATAZARO was born in Canton, Ohio and began his dance training at The School of Canton Ballet under the tutelage of Cassandra Crowley and his mother, Jennifer Catazaro Hayward. In 2022, he began training at Miami City Ballet School in Miami, Florida on full scholarship. While at Miami City Ballet, Catazaro danced featured roles in George Balanchine's *Four Temperaments* and had the opportunity to perform with Miami City Ballet in John Cranko's *Romeo and Juliet*. In May of 2022, he was named the Eleanor Pao Scholar at Miami City Ballet School. In the summer of 2023, Catazaro was accepted into the American Ballet Theatre

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School on a full scholarship. While at the ABT JKO School, he performed the grand pas de deux from *Don Quixote* in the spring school performance. He joined ABT Studio Company in September 2024 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky.



YEONSEO CHOI was born in Seoul, Korea. She started dancing ballet at age 6 and began her serious ballet training at age 10 at Mechowlah Art Center, under the coaching of JoonHa Kang. She went on to win several gold medal awards and scholarships in Korea's top competitions. Choi was a finalist at the Prix de Lausanne in 2022 and was offered a full scholarship to the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School. After participating in the ABT New York Summer Intensive in Summer 2022, she was invited to join ABT Studio Company in September 2022 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky. In ABT Studio Company, she has created roles

in ballets by Gemma Bond, Houston Thomas, and James Whiteside and performed in new ballets by Hope Boykin, Amy Hall Garner, and Lauren Lovette. Choi's repertoire with ABT Studio Company also includes pas de deux from *Paquita*, *Raymonda*, Alexei Ratmansky's *The Seasons*, and *Diana and Acteon*, and the Rose Adagio from *The Sleeping Beauty*. She has performed in Alexei Ratmansky's *The Nutcracker* with the main company of American Ballet Theatre.



ELIJAH GEOLINA discovered his passion for dance at the age of 8 when he stumbled into a Latin ballroom class when a little girl needed a dance partner. Geolina danced for Champion Ballroom Academy in San Diego, California with coach Olga Ginzburg for six years and holds Latin ballroom championship titles in Southern California and in Las Vegas, Nevada. Geolina has been featured on the shows *So You Think You Can Dance Kids* on Fox and *Little Big Shots* on NBC. At the age of 14, Geolina switched his focus to ballet. After three years of training with Raul and Cindy Salamanca at Golden State Ballet Academy, he earned a scholarship

to the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School, where he trained for a year under Stella Abrera's direction. Geolina joined ABT Studio Company in September 2023 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky. In ABT Studio Company, he has created roles in ballets by Amy Hall Garner and James Whiteside and performed in new ballets by Jamar Roberts, Houston Thomas, Hope Boykin, Brady Farrar, and Lauren Lovette. Geolina's repertoire with ABT Studio Company also includes the Neapolitan dance from *Swan Lake* and Alexei Ratmansky's *The Seasons* pas de deux. He has performed in Alexei Ratmansky's *The Nutcracker* with the main company of American Ballet Theatre.



Avery Brunkus



DANIEL GUZMÁN began his training in Isle de Margarita, Venezuela under the direction of Martha Gomez, Artistic Director of Ballet de la Mar. He won numerous competitions in Venezuela and after graduation from Ballet de la Mar, Guzmán moved to the United States to continue his training. He was the gold medalist at the Youth America Grand Prix 2023 Finals for his performance of *Flames of Paris*, winning many scholarships nationally. He is also the 2023 grand prix winner at the Universal Ballet Competition. Guzmán joined ABT Studio Company in January 2024 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky. In ABT Studio Company,

Guzmán has created a role in *Young & Beautiful* by James Whiteside and his other repertoire includes *Within the Sunset* by Amy Hall Garner, the Neapolitan Dance from *Swan Lake*, and pas de deux from *Diana and Acteon* and *Don Quixote*.



PALOMA LIVELLARA was born in Mendoza, Argentina. She discovered her interest in dance in Buenos Aires at the age of 3 after unintentionally passing by a ballet class, sparking a passion that has never faded. She initially trained in a variety of styles, deciding to focus on ballet at the age of 8 when she auditioned for the Teatro Colon Ballet School. Throughout her ballet training, she had the pleasure of working with teacher Barbara Yacovone, who helped her grow until she left Argentina to study abroad. Livellara has been a Youth America Grand Prix Finalist three times, most recently in 2019, when she accepted a full scholarship from

Luca Masala, director of the Académie de Danse Princesse Grace in Monaco. She left Argentina at age 14 to continue her studies across the ocean. Livellara spent five valuable years studying in Monaco, where she had the opportunity to work with many renowned teachers, artists, choreographers, and company directors. In February of 2024, she competed at the Prix de Lausanne, placing as a finalist, prize winner, and winner of two additional prizes. Livellara joined ABT Studio Company in September 2024 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky.



KAYLA MAK grew up in Rye Brook, New York and is of Japanese, Chinese, and Cuban descent. Her inspiration for dance sparked at the age of 4 after seeing ABT's production of *The Nutcracker*. She trained at Westchester Dance Academy and Ballet Academy East and is currently studying at The Juilliard School in New York City, earning her BFA in dance under the direction of Alicia Graf Mack and associate director Mario Alberto Zambrano. She soon became involved in competitive dance, gaining additional exposure to stage performance. She was fortunate to participate in various television shows such as NBC's *World of Dance* and to play the role

of Clara in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular. Mak also developed a love for concert dance, working and performing with Juliano Nunes in projects for summer festivals in Switzerland and Mexico for two years. She joined ABT Studio Company in September 2024 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky.



AARON MARQUEZ was born in Mexico and began his dance training in Córdoba, Veracruz. After years of training, he won and participated in numerous national and international ballet festivals and performed in *Billy Elliot: the Musical*. After graduating from the Fernando Alonso National School of Ballet and participating in the Youth Grand Prix Mexico semifinals in 2021, he won a scholarship to the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School. Marquez traveled to New York City to continue his training at the ABT JKO School under the direction of Cynthia Harvey and later Stella Abrera. He joined ABT Studio Company in September 2024 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky.



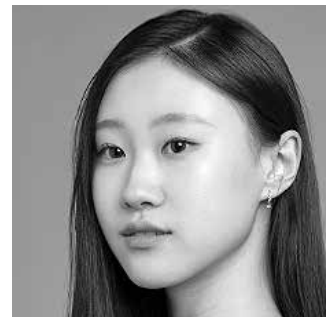
NICHOLAS MIHLAR trained at Goh Ballet in Canada, where he was fortunate to perform lead roles in *Peter and the Wolf*, *The Nutcracker*, *Cinderella* and *Coppélia*. He transferred his experience to the Tanzolymp International Dance Festival in 2020, bringing back gold for Canada. Mihlar's triumph at Tanzolymp was a gateway to international training and choreographic exploration, leading him to choreograph *Rotting Strawberry*, a solo that led to his selection as a Finalist for the Prix de Lausanne Young Creation Award and was performed at the Dance Basel Gala in 2023. Mihlar is a graduate of Tanz Akademie Zürich and toured with

London City Ballet following his 2024 graduation. With London City Ballet, he performed works including *Eve* by Christopher Marney, *Larina Waltz* by Ashley Page, and *Five Dances* by Arielle Smith. Mihlar joined ABT Studio Company in September 2024 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky.



VIKTORIA PAKALODOUKA, originally from Athens, Greece, took her first ballet class before turning 5 years old. At age 9, her family moved to New York City to pursue her ballet training. She began training at Ballet Academy East, joined the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School, and later joined Ellison Ballet's Professional Training Program. Papakalodouka won the Junior Grand Prix Award at the ADB IBC St. Petersburg Finals in 2023. In January 2024, she competed in the Prix De Lausanne Competition in Lausanne, Switzerland. Later that year, she participated in the Youth America Grand Prix 25th Anniversary Finals in which she won the

Natalia Makarova Award for Artistry. Papakalodouka also performed in numerous YAGP galas between 2023 and 2024. In fall 2024, she returned to the ABT JKO School in the Upper 3 level and had the opportunity to perform in Alexei Ratmansky's *The Nutcracker* with the main Company of American Ballet Theatre. She joined ABT Studio Company in January 2025 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky.



SOOHA PARK began her ballet journey at the age of 8, and by 10 decided to fully dedicate herself to the craft under the guidance of coach Joomi Hyun. She graduated from Sunhwa Art Middle School and completed her studies at Sunhwa Art High School. During this time, she was a member of the Junior Company of Universal Ballet, one of Korea's leading ballet companies. Park was a finalist at the Prix de Lausanne in 2023 and was offered a full-year scholarship to the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School under the direction of Stella Abrera. While studying at the ABT JKO School, Sooha had the opportunity to perform in

Alexei Ratmansky's *The Nutcracker* with the main company of American Ballet Theatre. She also performed as a trainee with ABT Studio Company, participating in the company's spring 2024 tour. Her repertoire included the *Don Quixote* grand pas de deux, Rose Adagio from *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Young & Beautiful* by James Whiteside. Park joined ABT Studio Company in September 2024 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky.



NATALIE STEELE, born in San Diego, California, discovered her love for dance at the age of 2. By 6, she found her true passion for ballet, training with Dmitri and Jennifer Kulev at the Dmitri Kulev Classical Ballet Academy in Orange County, California. Under their guidance, she excelled at the Youth America Grand Prix competition, winning both the Youth Grand Prix and the Grand Prix awards. At YAGP finals, Steele won the gold medal in her junior year and the silver medal in her first senior year. With YAGP, she showcased her talent in galas worldwide, including in New York City, Mexico, and Italy. In 2020, Steele won Music Center Spotlight's

grand prize in ballet. She joined the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School in 2023, training under Stella Abrera's direction. That same year, she performed in Alexei Ratmansky's *The Nutcracker* with the main company of the American Ballet Theatre. Most recently, in 2024, Steele competed at the Prix de Lausanne, where she was a finalist and honored with a prize from the Maurice Béjart Foundation. She joined ABT Studio Company in September 2024 under the artistic direction of Sascha Radetsky.