

BALLET SAN JOSE

Dennis Nahat, Artistic/Executive Director

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: July 21, 2006

Ballet San Jose NEWS Bytes Company Shortens Name... Adds Dancers

Ballet San Jose Silicon Valley has officially shortened its name to BALLETSAN JOSE. Artistic/Executive Director Dennis Nahat and the Ballet Board of Directors approved the name change at a recent Board meeting. "When we first took on our rather long name in the fall of 2000, Silicon Valley was more recognized nationally than was the city of San Jose," said Nahat. "But people today are increasingly aware that San Jose is the heart and center of 'Silicon Valley'. They 'know the way to San Jose' and we are proud to be a part of this thriving hub of art and technology. And by the way... 'Ballet San Jose' fits rather nicely on the marquee."

In other Ballet San Jose news, Nahat has announced the signing of seven new dancers to contracts. Ms. Yui Yonezawa and Ms. Akua Parker will become Company Members when rehearsals begin in the fall. Ms. Amy Marie Briones, Mr. Jeremy Kovitch and Ms. Mallory Welsh are new apprentices; and Ms. Sarah Stein, and Ms. Shannon Bynum (both of Ballet San Jose School) will be new trainees.

Ms. Yui Yonezawa was the winner of the Senior Woman's Bronze Medal at the VIII USA International Ballet Competition (IBC) this June in Jackson Mississippi. Her presentation with Russian partner Georgi Smilevksi of Ben Lida's "September" won rave reviews. Ms. Yonezawa, 19 years old, was born in Tokyo, Japan. Her training was at Tsukamoto Ballet Studios. Honors include the Bronze medal in the Japan International Ballet Competition, 2005 and the Gold Medal, Varna International Ballet Competition, 2004. She was previously a soloist with Tskamoto Yoko Ballet Company.



Yui Yonezawa

Note: The USA IBC is held every four years in Jackson, Mississippi. It is a 2-week, 3-round "Olympic style" competition. This year 99 dancers from 24 countries competed out of hundreds of applicants.

Ms. Akua Parker, 27 from Kinston, North Carolina, previously danced with Cincinnati Ballet (2005-06) and was a lead dancer with Dance Theatre of Harlem (2000-04). Her professional training was with Dance Theatre of Harlem and Academy of the Dance, Wilmington, DE.



Akua Parker

Ms. Amy Marie Briones, 16, was born in Redwood City and currently lives in San Mateo, CA. She trained at Ayako School of Ballet in Belmont and was named "Dancer of the Year" by the American Dance Association in 2002. She also was honored with the Hope Award in 2001, and the Grand Prix Award from Youth America in Long Beach in 2000, 2001 and 2004. She recently danced with Peninsula Youth Ballet.



Amy Marie Briones

Mr. Jeremy Kovitch, 19 of Mt. Pocono, PA trained at the New Jersey Ballet, the Harid Conservatory and the San Francisco Ballet School. He has been a trainee with San Francisco Ballet and most recently was a member of The Cincinnati Ballet. (2005-06)



Jeremy Kovitch

Ms. Sarah Stein, 18 of San Jose, CA, is currently a student at Ballet San Jose School. She has also studied Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre and San Jose Dance Theatre. She has performed with Ballet San Jose in The Nutcracker, Romeo and Juliet, Cinema Soundtracks, Les Sylphides and The Firebird.



Sarah Stein

-- more --

Ms. Shannon Bynum 21 of Fresno, CA is a student at Ballet San Jose School. She has trained additionally with American Ballet Theatre, Joffrey Ballet School and currently studies in private training with Grethel Domingo. She traveled to Italy with Ballet San Jose School last summer to compete in the Grand Prix Italia where the school took two first place awards.



Shannon Bynum

Ms. Mallory Welsh trained at the School of American Ballet in New York City and has performed in various Workshop performances such as George Balanchine's Square Dance and Bourree Fantasque. Prior to this, Ms Welsh studied at the ABT Summer Intensive and the San Francisco Summer Intensive. She has also performed with the New York City Ballet and in the production of Wall to Wall George Balanchine at Symphony Space in several roles.



Mallory Welsh

Nahat is still planning on adding additional dancers later this summer. Ballet San Jose currently has 31 company members, 4 apprentices and 2 trainees under contract. The 2006-07 season begins November 16, with a new mounting of GISELLE, and runs through April 29. The complete season includes 4 mainstage productions and The Nutcracker performed at San Jose Center for the Performing Arts, with an added children's program in May presented at the California Theatre.

For details visit www.balletsanjose.org.

*** end ***