

SMUIN

CONTEMPORARY BALLET

CELIA FUSHILLE / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

SMUIN CONTEMPORARY BALLET ANNOUNCES LIVE OUTDOOR PERFORMANCES

“SMUIN AL FRESCO”

AT BRUNS AMPHITHEATER, ORINDA

1:00pm & 4:00pm, Sunday, May 9, 2021

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (21 April 2021) — East Bay dance audiences may be pondering not “to be or not to be” but whether ‘tis nobler to dance when **Smuin Contemporary Ballet** takes the stage with *Smuin al Fresco* at the beautiful outdoor Bruns Amphitheater in Orinda. Performed live at the home of the California Shakespeare Theater, this delightful program will offer a vivacious line up of new works plus “Smuin Songbook” favorites of scintillating dances set to pop standards and jazzy classics by the late Tony Award-winning choreographer Michael Smuin. Excerpts from Smuin’s story ballet “The Tempest” with music by acclaimed composer Paul Chihara, and the exuberant “Sueños Latinos,” set to the Aaron Copeland score, will be featured. Also on the bill are a new pas de deux by Smuin alum Rex Wheeler and premieres by eight company artists. *Smuin al Fresco* will be performed at **1:00pm & 4:00pm, Sunday, May 9** at the **Bruns Amphitheater**, 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way, Orinda. For tickets (\$50), the public may visit www.smuinballet.org.

Each of the two performances will vary, with separate sets of Smuin artists who have been working in their own COVID-safe “pods.”

1pm show:

Smuin artists Tess Lane, Max van der Sterre, Tessa Barbour, Brennan Wall, and Ricardo Dyer (the “Iris” pod) will perform this program, showcasing Michael Smuin favorites including a cheeky duet from “Fly Me to the Moon” and an exquisite solo from “The Tempest.” New dances choreographed by Barbour, van der Sterre, and Wall will also be showcased.

The performance will also feature Smuin artists Maggie Carey, Ian Buchanan, Lauren Pschirrer, and Mengjun Chen (the “Poppy” pod), presenting three stunning solos from Michael Smuin’s “The Tempest,” plus classic dances from “Fly Me to the Moon” and “Sueños Latinos.” Smuin artists Carey, Buchanan, and Brennan Wall will premiere new creations.

4pm show:

Featuring Smuin artists Cassidy Isaacson, Brandon Alexander, Terez Dean Orr, and John Speed Orr (the “Peony” pod), this program includes the premiere of new dances created by Dean Orr, Speed Orr, and Isaacson. A new pas de deux by Smuin alum Rex Wheeler, a moving duet from acclaimed choreographer Trey McIntyre’s “Blue Until June,” and a sassy solo from Michael Smuin’s “Sueños Latinos” will also be performed, in addition to a collection of surprises from the Smuin repertoire.

The performance will also feature Smuin artists Maggie Carey, Ian Buchanan, Lauren Pschirrer, and Mengjun Chen (the “Poppy” pod), presenting three stunning solos from Michael Smuin’s “The Tempest,” plus classic dances from “Fly Me to the Moon” and “Sueños Latinos.” Smuin artists Carey, Buchanan, and Brennan Wall will premiere new creations.

The *Smuin al Fresco* performances at the Bruns Amphitheater will observe all current COVID-19 protocols. Upon arrival, all attendees over 12 years old must show a copy of their vaccination record or a negative COVID-19 test result taken within 72 hours of the event. Masks must be worn at all times, and no food or beverage consumption (with the exception of bottled water) is allowed in the amphitheater. All seating will adhere to current physical distancing guidelines mandated by the CDC. Seating will be preassigned based on the size of each party. For specific information, including details on ADA seating, patrons should email boxoffice@smuinballet.org.

Audiences in San Francisco will have the opportunity to view the *Smuin al Fresco* program danced live at the Smuin Center for Dance May 14-28. Audiences will also be able to enjoy a filmed version of the program from the comfort of home, streaming online May 6-30. For more information on all upcoming live and virtual performances, the public may visit www.smuinballet.org.

For more than 25 years Smuin has pushed the boundaries of contemporary ballet by presenting works that engage and delight audiences with their uncommon physicality and expression. Founded in San Francisco in 1994 by Tony and Emmy award-winning choreographer Michael Smuin, the company is committed to creating work that merges the diverse vocabularies of classical ballet and contemporary dance. Since 2007, Artistic Director Celia Fushille has built on Michael Smuin's legacy by creating her own vision and expanding the company's repertoire. Fushille has invited numerous choreographers to create works that highlight the Smuin artists' extraordinary versatility, presenting pieces that are unique, joyful, athletic and inventive.

For Calendar Editors

WHAT: East Bay dance audiences may be pondering not “to be or not to be” but whether ‘tis nobler to dance when **Smuin Contemporary Ballet** takes the stage with ***Smuin al Fresco*** at the beautiful outdoor Bruns Amphitheater in Orinda. Performed live at the home of the California Shakespeare Theater, this delightful program will offer a vivacious line up of new works plus “Smuin Songbook” favorites of scintillating dances set to pop standards and jazzy classics by the late Tony Award-winning choreographer Michael Smuin. Excerpts from Smuin’s story ballet “The Tempest” with music by acclaimed composer Paul Chihara, and the exuberant “Sueños Latinos,” set to the Aaron Copeland score, will be featured. Also on the bill are a new pas de deux by Smuin alum Rex Wheeler and premieres by eight company artists.

TICKETS: For tickets (\$50), the public may visit www.smuinballet.org.

WHEN: **1:00pm & 4:00pm, Sunday, May 9, 2021**

WHERE: **Bruns Amphitheater**
100 California Shakespeare Theater Way, Orinda

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PHOTOS: Media may download high-res photos at:
<https://cbpr.co/press/smuinspring21>