

SMUIN

CONTEMPORARY BALLET

CELIA FUSHILLE / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

SMUIN CELEBRATES 30 YEARS WITH HISTORIC 2023/24 SEASON

FEATURING WORLD PREMIERES BY DARRELL GRAND MOULTRIE AND
ANNABELLE LOPEZ OCHOA; TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL SMUIN;
WORKS BY JAMES KUDELKA, VAL CANIPAROLI, AND MORE

Performances September 15, 2023 to May 31, 2024
in San Francisco, Walnut Creek, Mountain View, and Carmel

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (19 April 2023) — Marking three decades at the forefront of innovative dance, **Smuin Contemporary Ballet** has announced a sensational lineup for its 30th anniversary season. Unveiled by Smuin Artistic Director **Celia Fushille**, Smuin's 2023/24 season will spotlight new works, honoring late founder Michael Smuin's legacy of launching new voices in ballet, and celebrate some of his most memorable pieces. Highlights of the announced season include a World Premiere by nationally acclaimed choreographer **Darrell Grand Moultrie**, who has staged works across an array of companies from ABT to Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Savion Glover, and Beyoncé. This work will be set to an original score by Grammy and Emmy Award winning Songwriters Hall of Fame composer **Charles Fox**. The company will celebrate its dynamic founder with a special program featuring Smuin's swashbuckling story ballet *Zorro!* and Frank Sinatra tribute *Fly Me to the Moon*. The spring will bring another thrilling World Premiere: an Elvis-themed ballet by international dancemaker **Annabelle Lopez Ochoa**. Additional works announced for the season include the return of **James Kudelka's** lauded *The Man in Black* set to the music of Johnny Cash, and **Val Caniparoli's** charming and eccentric *Tutto Eccetto il Lavandino (everything but the kitchen sink)*. The company also announced the return appearances of company artist **Brennan Wall's** *Untwine*, **Michael Smuin's** dreamy adagio *Starshadows*, and **Amy Seiwert's** *Broken Open*. **Smuin's The Christmas Ballet**, a beloved Bay Area tradition, returns during the holiday season to spread cheer with its signature mixed repertoire of classical ballet and contemporary dance. Smuin's programs will be presented from September 15, 2023 through May 31, 2024 in San Francisco, Walnut Creek, Mountain View, and Carmel. For subscriptions (\$96-\$240) or more information, the public may call **(415) 912-1899** or visit www.smuinballet.org. Single tickets (\$25-\$119) will be available in August.

In chronological order, the 23/24 season programming is as follows:

Dance Series 1

World Premiere by Darrell Grand Moultrie, set to music by Charles Fox
The Man in Black by James Kudelka, set to recordings by Johnny Cash
Tutto Eccetto il Lavandino (everything but the kitchen sink) by Val Caniparoli, set to Vivaldi

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In its thrilling season opener, Smuin presents a World Premiere from Darrell Grand Moultrie set to an original score by lauded composer Charles Fox. One of America's most sought-after choreographers, Moultrie's impressive career has spanned theater, ballet, modern, and commercial dance genres, with work created for American Ballet Theatre, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and other leading companies around the world, individuals from Beyoncé (for her Mrs. Carter World Tour) to tap legend Savion Glover, and theatre productions. He returns to Smuin following the company's performances of his work *Jazzin'* in 2013. His premiere for Smuin will unite him with Grammy, Emmy, and Golden Globe Award winning composer Fox, who composed the scores for Michael Smuin's *Zorro!* (to be revived later this season) and *A Song for Dead Warriors* (presented by San Francisco Ballet and filmed for PBS' *Dance in America*). Inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2004, Fox has composed music for hundreds of films from "Barbarella" and "Goodbye Columbus" to "Nine to Five," as well as television shows, theatre productions, ballets, and music artists, winning a Song of the Year Grammy for the Roberta Flack megahit "Killing Me Softly with His Song," among many other honors. Also on the program is the return of James Kudelka's *The Man in Black*, an acclaimed work set to music covers by Johnny Cash choreographed for three men and one woman, danced in cowboy boots. Kudelka's piece is an ode to American working-class grit featuring complex choreography influenced by popular country-western dance styles including line, square, swing, and step dancing. *The Man in Black*'s company premiere with Smuin in fall 2019 was called "moving and powerful" by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Completing the program is a work created for Smuin by lauded San Francisco-based, internationally acclaimed choreographer Val Caniparoli. The playful *Tutto Eccetto il Lavandino (everything but the kitchen sink)* is a dynamic 11-part neoclassical work set to the music of Vivaldi.

Dates/Locations for Smuin's Dance Series 1

September 15-16, 2023: Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek

September 21-24, 2023: Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View

September 29-October 7, 2023: Cowell Theater, 2 Marina Blvd., San Francisco

Smuin's The Christmas Ballet

Choreography by Michael Smuin and guest choreographers

Smuin's joyful holiday tradition returns to spread yuletide cheer with its signature showcase of classical and contemporary dances set to delightfully festive tunes. *Smuin's The Christmas Ballet* offers something for everyone: an elegant first act presenting beautiful classical ballet set to beloved carols, followed by the red-hot second act with joyful contemporary numbers set to pop favorites. With the surprise unwrapping of new treats each year, this celebratory medley incorporates a variety of dance styles including ballet, tap, jazz, swing, and more. Smuin's holiday spectacular was declared "sheer joy...the finest toast to the season" by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The LGBTQ+ Night performance of Smuin's irrepressible holiday classic will also return December 19, featuring surprise guests and fun twists, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting local non-profit organizations.

Dates/Locations for Smuin's The Christmas Ballet

November 18-19, 2023: Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek

December 1-2, 2023: Sunset Center, San Carlos Street at 9th Ave., Carmel-by-the-Sea

December 7-10, 2023: Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View

December 14-24, 2023: Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA, 700 Howard St., San Francisco

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Celebrating Michael Smuin

Zorro! by Michael Smuin

Fly Me to the Moon by Michael Smuin

Smuin celebrates its three decades with a special added program dedicated to its dynamic late founder Michael Smuin. A consummate ballet choreographer, as well as a Tony Award winning Broadway dancemaker, Smuin was equally renowned for his incandescent, heartbreaking ballets, his magnetic storytelling, and his bold, athletic, audience-pleasing choreography that expanded the boundaries of traditional ballet. This one-week only program will showcase Smuin's inimitable pizzazz with *Zorro!*, the "sword fighting, whip cracking spectacular" (*Talkin' Broadway*) story ballet about the adventures of a beleaguered movie theatre usher who longs to emulate the swashbuckling masked California folk hero. Set to an engaging original score by Grammy, Emmy, and Golden Globe Award winner Charles Fox, the *San Francisco Chronicle* declared this piece "Delicious. Irrepressible. Every movement of this dance ensemble is meant to entertain. It is Broadway meets ballet in the greatest terms." Paired with *Zorro!* is Michael Smuin's joyful tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes, *Fly Me to the Moon*. Performed against a twinkling backdrop of glowing stars, the ballet brings to luscious life an array of warm and witty Sinatra favorites including "I've Got You Under My Skin," the funny and charming "I Won't Dance," the brash and brassy "That's Life," and many more, culminating in a full chorus, high kicking "New York, New York" finale.

Dates/Location for Celebrating Michael Smuin

February 29-March 3, 2024: Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA, 700 Howard St., San Francisco

Dance Series 2

World Premiere by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, inspired by the works of Elvis Presley

Broken Open by Amy Seiwert, set to a commission from cellist/composer Julia Kent

Untwine by Brennan Wall, set to Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons"

Starshadows by Michael Smuin, set to Ravel's "Piano Concerto in G Major"

Smuin's season finale is headlined by the World Premiere of a major name in choreography. International superstar **Annabelle Lopez Ochoa** will unveil a ballet inspired by the life and music of Elvis, an extraordinary new work to be created for Smuin's versatile artists. Ochoa's profile has continued to skyrocket since Smuin first introduced Bay Area audiences to the Colombian-Belgian dancemaker in 2017 with the West Coast Premiere of her critically acclaimed *Requiem for a Rose*. Also on the bill is Smuin Associate Artistic Director Amy Seiwert's *Broken Open*, set to a lush score from acclaimed cellist and composer Julia Kent, who creates music using looped cello, found sounds, and electronics. Its premiere in fall 2015 was called "inspired" by *The Mercury News* and lauded for its "keen craftsmanship." A former Smuin dancer, Seiwert was appointed by Smuin Artistic Director Celia Fushille as the company's first Choreographer-in-Residence, a post she held from 2008 to 2018. In April 2023, she was named Smuin's Associate Artistic Director. Named one of "25 to Watch" by *Dance* magazine, her signature choreography has been met with consistent acclaim, described by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as "keeping founder Michael Smuin's legacy of unabashed showmanship alive." Closing this season grand finale are current Smuin dancer Brennan Wall's vivid and complex *Untwine* for four couples, set to Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" reinterpreted by Max Richter, and Michael Smuin's dreamy *Starshadows*. Set to Maurice Ravel's "Piano Concerto in G major," this evocative adagio for three couples explores the mystery and beauty of intimate relationships.

Dates/Locations for Smuin's Dance Series 2

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May 3-12, 2024: Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA, 700 Howard St., San Francisco
May 16-19, 2024: Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View
May 24-25, 2024: Leshner Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek
May 30-31, 2024: Sunset Center, San Carlos Street at 9th Ave., Carmel-by-the-Sea

ABOUT SMUIN

For 30 years Smuin has expanded the boundaries of contemporary ballet, engaging and delighting audiences with 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. As Artistic Director since 2007, Celia Fushille has maintained Michael Smuin's legacy while enriching the Company's impressive repertoire by collaborating with inventive choreographers from around the world, commissioning world premieres, and bringing new contemporary choreographic voices to the Smuin stage. This season, Amy Seiwert joins Fushille as the company's new Associate Artistic Director.

All programs are subject to change.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: Marking three decades at the forefront of innovative dance, **Smuin Contemporary Ballet** has announced a sensational lineup for its 30th anniversary season. Unveiled by Smuin Artistic Director **Celia Fushille**, Smuin's 2023/24 season will spotlight new works, honoring late founder Michael Smuin's legacy of launching new voices in ballet, and celebrate some of his most memorable pieces. Highlights of the announced season include a World Premiere by nationally acclaimed choreographer **Darrell Grand Moultrie**, who has staged works across an array of companies from ABT to Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Savion Glover, and Beyoncé. This work will be set to an original score by Grammy and Emmy Award winning Songwriters Hall of Fame composer **Charles Fox**. The company will celebrate its dynamic founder with a special program featuring Smuin's swashbuckling story ballet *Zorro!* and Frank Sinatra tribute *Fly Me to the Moon*. The spring will bring another thrilling World Premiere: an Elvis-themed ballet by international dancemaker **Annabelle Lopez Ochoa**. Additional works announced for the season include the return of **James Kudelka**'s lauded *The Man in Black* set to the music of Johnny Cash, and **Val Caniparoli**'s charming and eccentric *Tutto Eccetto il Lavandino (everything but the kitchen sink)*. The company also announced the return appearances of company artist **Brennan Wall**'s *Untwine*, **Michael Smuin**'s dreamy adagio *Starshadows*, and **Amy Seiwert**'s *Broken Open*. **Smuin's The Christmas Ballet**, a beloved Bay Area tradition, returns during the holiday season to spread cheer with its signature mixed repertoire of classical ballet and contemporary dance.

TICKETS: For subscriptions (\$96-\$240) or more information, the public may call **(415) 912-1899** or visit www.smuinballet.org. Single tickets (\$25-\$119) will be available in August. Discounts are available for students and groups of 10 or more.

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PHOTOS: For high-res photos, please visit: <http://cbpr.co/press/smuin30/>

	San Francisco: Cowell Theater (2 Marina Blvd) Tickets: (415) 912-1899 or smuinballet.org	San Francisco: Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA (700 Howard St) Tickets: (415) 912-1899 or smuinballet.org	Walnut Creek: Leshner Center for the Arts (1601 Civic Dr) Tickets: (925) 943-7469 or smuinballet.org	Mountain View: Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts (500 Castro St) Tickets: (650) 903-6000 or smuinballet.org	Carmel: Sunset Center (San Carlos St at 9th Ave) Tickets: (831) 620-2048 or smuinballet.org
<i>Dance Series 1</i> World Premiere by Darrell Grand Moultrie <i>The Man in Black</i> by James Kudelka <i>Tutto Eccetto il</i> <i>Lavandino</i> by Val Caniparoli	Sept 29-Oct 7, 2023 7:30pm Fri Sept 29 2pm & 7:30pm Sat Sept 30 2pm Sun Oct 1 7:30pm Thurs-Sun Oct 5-7		Sept 15-16, 2023 7:30pm Fri Sept 15 2pm Sat Sept 16	Sept 21-24, 2023 7:30pm Thurs-Fri Sept 21-22 2pm & 7:30pm Sat Sept 23 2pm Sun Sept 24	
<i>The Christmas Ballet</i>		Dec 14-24, 2023 7:30pm Thurs-Fri Dec 14-15 2pm & 7:30pm Sat Dec 16 2pm Sun Dec 17 7:30pm Tues Dec 19 (<i>LGBTQ</i> <i>Night</i>) 2pm Wed Dec 20 7:30pm Thurs-Fri Dec 21-22 2pm & 7:30pm Sat Dec 23 2pm Sun Dec 24	Nov 18-19, 2023 2pm & 7:30pm Sat Nov 18 2pm Sun Nov 19	Dec 7-10, 2023 7:30pm Thurs-Fri Dec 7-8 2pm & 7:30pm Sat Dec 9 2pm Sun Dec 10	Dec 1-2, 2023 7:30pm Fri Dec 1 2pm Sat Dec 2
<i>Celebrating Michael</i> <i>Smuin</i> <i>Zorro!</i> by Michael Smuin <i>Fly Me to the Moon</i> by Michael Smuin		Feb 29-Mar 3, 2024 7:30pm Thur-Fri Feb 29-Mar 1 2pm & 7:30pm Sat Mar 2 2pm Sun Mar 3			
<i>Dance Series 2</i> World Premiere by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa <i>Broken Open</i> by Amy Seiwert <i>Untwine</i> by Brennan Wall <i>Starshadows</i> by Michael Smuin		May 3-12, 2024 7:30pm Fri May 3 2pm & 7:30pm Sat May 4 2pm Sun May 5 7:30pm Thurs-Fri May 9-10 2pm & 7:30pm Sat May 11 2pm Sun May 12	May 24-25, 2024 7:30pm Fri May 24 2pm Sat May 25	May 16-19, 2024 7:30pm Thurs-Fri May 16-17 2pm & 7:30pm Sat May 18 2pm Sun May 19	May 30-31, 2024 7:30pm Thurs-Fri May 30- 31