



#### **Artistic Director's Letter**

Dear Friends.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Tampa City Ballet, our artistic director, administrative staff, dancers, choreographers, and volunteers, we take great pleasure in welcoming you to "CARMEN 2022", our closing performance of the 2021-2022 Season.

I would like to recognize and thank my son Andres Saez, Osmany Montano, Luana Hidalgo, Javier Ruiz, Beatriz Correa, Juli Lopez and Sol Nicoletti for always being optimistic and for being the force behind the artists, making the impossible possible.

I am thankful to all the dancers for their extraordinary contributions and dedication to this project and to the art of dance. My eternal gratitude is extended to Marguerite Pinard, Sophia Berrios, Sandra Robinson and our newest Board Member Carlos Flores-Gordon. Without their time and commitment, we would not be here today.

A big thanks to collaborators Bliss Kohlmyer, Elizabeth Indianos, Jennifer Petuch, Daniella Mass, and Ruben Celibertti, whose extraordinary professional-level quality work remains unprecedented in Tampa City Ballet. We are fortunate to be able to work amongst experts like you!

Special thanks to Stanton Storer, Sharmila Seth, Margaret Miller, and Elizabeth Fifer for their invaluable support and encouragement.

With the tremendous support I received from my family and mentors, I was able to perform on stages all over the world as a professional dancer for many years. One of my missions in life is to provide the same opportunities I had to future generations. It was from this heartfelt desire that I envisioned the birth of Tampa City Ballet. I can't think of a better way to give back to my home of the past 21 years than to promote the growth and development of the arts.

I personally invite you to attend all our performances and support Tampa City Ballet in building bridges, creating bonds, and inspiring hope in our Tampa Bay area communities.

Together we can make a positive difference through the transformative power of the arts.

Paula Nuñez

Enjoy the performance!

Artistic Director, Tampa City Ballet

Through this production, Ms. Nuñez and her collaborators hope to raise awareness of domestic violence through the lens of the central character of the gypsy Carmen.

Carmen is an abused woman who dies at the hands of Don Jose, whose jealousy pushes him to the unthinkable. Our story of Carmen brings attention to complex social and mental health issues that are at the core of many of the current events in our country, from mass murders to domestic violence.

In Carmen 2022, the polka-dots seen throughout the installation and in the costumes have special meaning. Polka dots were incorporated into gypsy clothing design, their inspiration deriving from small, round mirrors sewn onto fabrics to ward off the "evil eye". In this production polka dots represent the souls of human beings whose lives have

been lost through domestic violence.

This tragic story is still relevant today and we invite you to join our conversation about this subject after the performance.

In Collaboration with The Spring of Tampa Bay

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

We provide safe spaces and Empowering services to survivors of domestic violence and their children. If you need help, you will find it at The Spring of Tampa Bay.

The Spring of Tampa Bay 24-Hour Crisis Hotline (813) 247-SAFE

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU REACH OUT

- (1) SUPPORT Our trained advocates are here 24/7 to listen and support you in getting to safety. They will create a safety plan with you to determine the safest next steps.
- (2) CONFIDENTIAL It's natural to feel anxious about contacting our hotline, especially if it's your first time reaching out for help. We're here to listen without judgment, and our services are confidential. Every member of our team wants to support you in being safe.
- (3) RESOURCES & SHELTER We have a variety of programs and services to help each person in their journey to safety. Our Hotline Advocates will help you sort through your choices to figure out if you need safe shelter or what resources are available for your specific situation.

For more information visit: https://thespring.org/

# B TAMPA CITY BALLET

Tampa City Ballet began its evolution in 2012, when Paula Nunez founded the company as a non-profit organization with the original mission of developing the outreach program "On Your Feet". It was not until 2018 that Tampa City Ballet as a company nurtured the cultural life of our community with innovative performances that are relatable to daily life.

Tampa City Ballet considers the artistic representation of cultural and racial diversity essential and focuses on cultivating such diversity as a priority of our mission in our

Performances, our Educational Programming and our Employment

**Practices.** Tampa City Ballet provides educational programming to our community by engaging with senior living facilities and home-schooled youth, as well as by presenting education as recreation to youth. We also enrich the artistic life of our community by our employment of professional dancers, choreographers, musicians, videographers, and designers. In these and other ways, Tampa City Ballet seeks to present the rich cultural diversity of the Tampa Bay area to the widest possible audience.

Tampa City Ballet's **Performance Program** aspires to develop new works that draw on the creative talents of contemporary choreographers and speak to the time in which they are made and the history that inspired them. During the COVID-19 pandemic, TCB's resilience was tested. Through the talents of artistic director Paula Nunez and the brilliant filmmaker Natalie Marty, 7th Avenue & Ybor-102 Degrees was produced. The short film about the cycle of life, loss, and love in 1918 Ybor City, hit hardest by the Spanish Flu, has been accepted to several prestigious national and international film festivals. In addition, family-friendly events such as newly inspired creations of classic stories like Pulcinella, Cinderella, and The Nutcracker along with cutting-edge contemporary choreographic works such as After Image, If I Cry, and It's Been a Minute helped us to maintain our stage presence. TCB creates and stages a minimum of four unique events annually, promoted and presented to communities across Tampa Bay. Some are presented at no cost; others are ticketed events.

**Tampa City Ballet's Education Program** is designed to meet the needs of anyone from children to senior citizens at all levels from novice to pre-professional. In partnership with the University Area Community Development Corporation and their program "Dream Catchers", TCB provides instruction and offers scholarships to talented youth.

Tampa City Ballet's **Community Engagement Program** is designed to inspire the Tampa Bay communities with the power of dance. TCB believes dance is a social rite for all people, regardless of age, class, race, ability, or economic station. In fact, the cast of TCB's 2021 spring performance of Cinderella consisted of 60% minority dancers.

#### THE COMPANY

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Paula Nuñez Sophia Berrios Carlos Flores-Gordon Sandra Robinson, Professor Emerita, USF Dance Marguerite Pinard, M.D.

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Juliana Lopez Director of Finance

Luana Hidalgo Outreach Director & Ballet Mistress
Osmany Montano Associate Artistic Director & Ballet Master

Beatriz Correa Special Projects and Administrative Specialist

Andrew Carroll Development Consultant

#### **PRODUCTION**

Paula Nuñez
Osmany Montano
Luana Hidalgo
Bliss Kohlmyer
Sarah Walston
Artistic Director
Rehearsal Assistant
Guest Choreographer and Re

Sarah Walston Choreographer and Rehearsal Assistant

Javier Ruiz Lighting Designer

Andres Saez Audio

Ruben Celibertti Music Director

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Michael Sheehan
\*Dance Alive National Ballet
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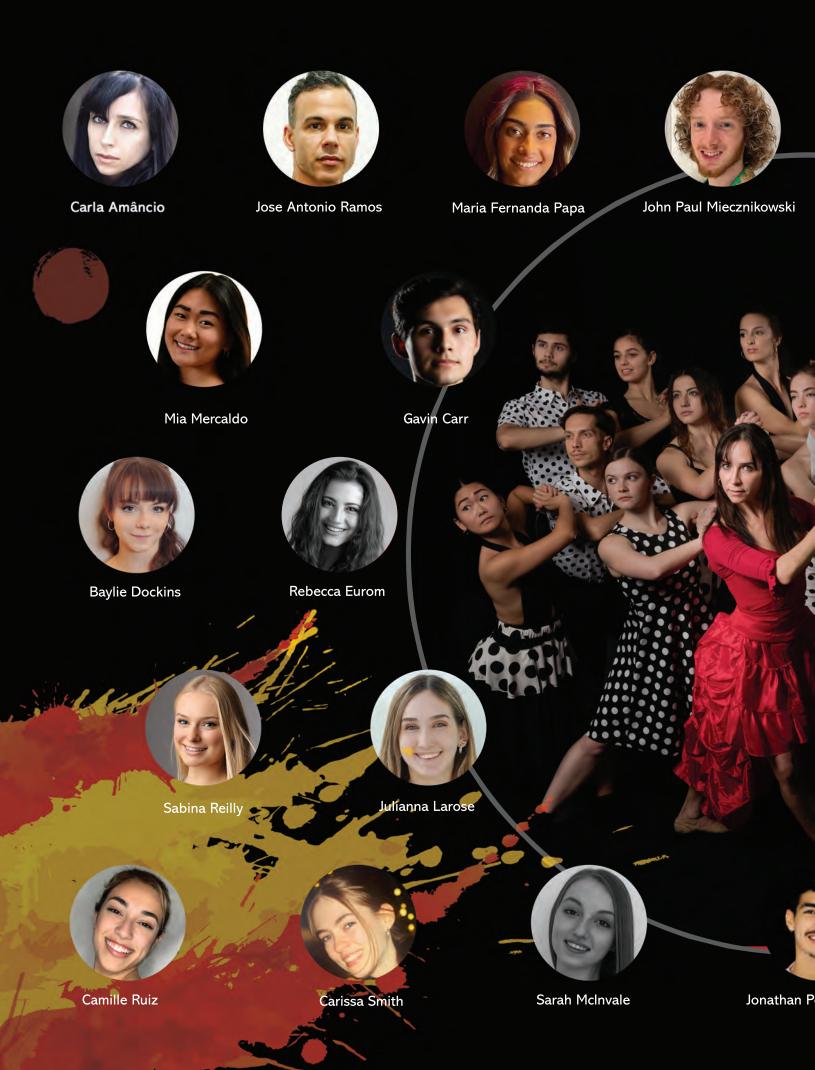














#### ARTISTIC TEAM AND COLLABORATORS

### PAULA NUÑEZ

Paula Nuñez is a former professional principal dancer, choreographer, and current Faculty member at the University of South Florida. Nuñez trained at the Gustavo Franklin School in Caracas, Venezuela and her career began at the International Ballet of Caracas. She subsequently went on to become a celebrated principal dancer with the Ballet Nuevo Mundo de Caracas and Cleveland - San Jose Ballet. Upon arriving in Tampa 21 years ago, she founded internationally renowned America's Ballet School, where she serves the community by providing world-class training and scholarships to young dancers. Nuñez is thrilled to continue contributing to Tampa's cultural life as the founder and artistic director of Tampa City Ballet and its community engagement programs.

#### LUANA HIDALGO

Luana Hidalgo started studying dance at the Institute of Art at an early age and graduated from Madame Irene Levandoski's Ballet School. She became a soloist with Ballet of Maracaibo before she became a principal dancer for Ballet Nuevo Mundo de Caracas, continuing on to becoming a principal dancer with The Cleveland - San Jose Ballet. In 1995, she was awarded "Best Classical Dancer - Casa del Artista" in Venezuela and in 2001 received the honor of the "City of Avignon" in France. Hidalgo has been a dance teacher for The Cleveland - San Jose Ballet School, The Nevada Ballet Theater, Ballet San Jose and the Vladimir Issaev School of Classical Ballet. Upon her move to Tampa in 2017, Hidalgo joined the America's Ballet School faculty and Paula Nunez's community engagement project "On Your Toes" with Tampa City Ballet.

#### OSMANY MONTANO

Osmany Montano trained at the Escuela Nacional de Ballet in La Habana, Cuba, under the direction of Alicia Alonso, Ramona De Saa, and Magda Campo. Among his many achievements as a ballet student, he was awarded a Silver Medallion at the Cuban Ballet Festival. In Cuba, Montano danced with the Cuban National Ballet and Ballet of Santiago de Cuba, under the direction of Alicia Alonso and Maria Elena Martinez respectively, as well as Ballet of Camaguey under the direction of Fernando Alonso. He also had a distinguished career with the National Ballet of Caracas under the direction of Vicente Nebrada. Internationally, he performed in Israel, Germany, Italy, Peru, Mexico, Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago, among others. In the United States, he performed with the Tulsa Ballet and Sarasota Ballet. In 2007, he joined the faculty of America's Ballet School, and since 2011, he has been an Adjunct Dance Professor at the University of South Florida.

#### DANIELLA MASS

A classically trained singer whose vocal range extends beyond four octaves over six languages: Italian, French, Portuguese, Spanish, English, and Japanese. She completed degrees at the EMMAS Music cademy in Barranquilla in 2008 and then at the University Reformada in Barranquilla in 2011. Daniella has also trained at the Broadway Dance Center in Manhattan, exploring different styles of voice lessons, dance, and instruments. Her dedication has led her to perform with numerous legendary artists, such as Jose Carreras, The Bond Quartet, Il Volo, Nestor Torres, and Andrea Bocelli.

#### BLISS KOHLMYER

Bliss has danced and toured internationally with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company and the Sean Curran Company, as well as with companies in San Francisco such as Janice Garrett and Dancers, Robert Moses' Kin, and the San Francisco Opera Ballet. She received her MFA in Dance from the University of Washington in 2011. Currently she is Associate Professor of Dance at the University of South Florida, Co-Artistic Director of Project Agora, and is working on a collaborative film titled Murmurs of the River. She has collaborated with pianist Svetozar Ivanov, which was presented both nationally and internationally. Her choreographic works have been commissioned by the LINES Ballet Summer Program, Dickinson College, Florida State College, Florida Dance Festival, among others.

#### FLIZABETH INDIANOS

Elizabeth is a multidisciplinary artist from the Tampa Bay area. Her creative repertoire is vast, having written numerous plays about art and artists, specifically what it means to be one, as well as public art projects at The Thirteenth Street Pedestrian Bridge in Gainesville, the Northwest Florida State College Sundial in Niceville, and the Tampa International Airport - just to name a few. Her works have been noted for "enhancing the quality of life, exhibiting long-term vision and innovation." She was also part of one of the 5,000 design teams in the world to contribute a proposal for the World Trade Center Memorial.

#### JENIFER PETUCH

Jennifer trained for fourteen years at the Academy of Ballet Florida, where she performed in numerous professional ballets. She went on to graduate Magna Cum Laudé from the University of South Florida, receiving her Bachelor's in Dance Studies, then going on to teach at three dance studios in the Tampa Bay area and performing/choreographing with the Shoes at the Door Dance Company. In 2017, she graduated Summa Cum Laudé from Florida State University's Dance Program - receiving her Master's of Fine Arts in Choreography and Performance with a focus in Dance Technology. Since 2019, she has worked with Corps de Ballet International as their Technological Coordinator and Facilitator, Videographer, and Editor for their annual global conference. She has also produced 15 full-stage production designs for numerous universities and companies. Jennifer is currently Co-Director with Annali Rose on an underwater dance film titled Liminality, which has received a number of awards, as well as national and international recognition. She is also currently Adjunct Faculty and Staff at Florida State University's School of Dance.

#### SOLOIST DANCERS

#### CARLA AMÂNCIO - CARMEN

Born in Brazil, started her dance studies at the Grupo Corpo Ballet School. In 1996 joined Ballet Cristina Helena, as a Soloist. In 1997 she danced at the Cuballet, in Havana, Cuba. In 1998, she participated at the Brasília Dance Congress, where she got a scholarship to study in Vienna, Austria. At her graduation she danced "La Bayadère" at the Vienna Opera. In 2002 Carla joined the Sesiminas Dance Company, where she performed as Principal until 2006. As Principal, Carla stood out at the following pieces of the traditional repertoire: "La Esmeralda", "The Corsaire", "La Bayadère", "Coppélia", "The Nutcracker", "Majissimo", "Don Quijote", "Diana and Acteon", "The Sleeping Beauty", "Spring Waters", "The Black Swan" e "La Fille Mal Gardée". Among her prizes and awards are: 1st Place at the Ill Junior Capezio Festival, Brazil; 1st and 2nd places at the CBDD Unidança Competition, Brazil; Honorable Mention at the XIX CBDD National Ballet Competition, Brazil; Finalist at the Concours Internacional de Danse de Paris, France. Carla is now a Principal Dancer with Dance Alive National Ballet.

#### JOSE ANTONIO RAMOS - DON JOSE

Jose Antonio is a former soloist from the National Ballet of Cuba, Principal dancer from the Sesiminas Dance Company and Deborah Colker Dance Company in Brazil. He won several international ballet competitions and served as Ballet master at Ballet de L'Opera National du Rhin in France. Currently he is a Principal dancer at the Dance Alive National Ballet.

#### **BRANDON CARPIO - ESCAMILLO**

Originally from Tampa, Florida, Brandon Carpio began his training at America's Ballet School at eleven years old, through the On Your Feet Program. He graduated in 2019 from the USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance in Los Angeles as part of their first graduating BFA class. During this time, he worked intimately under the direction of William Forsythe, learning his improvisational approaches and choreographies. He has performed in works by George Balanchine, Martha Graham, Jon Boogz, Aszure Barton, Alejandro Cerrudo, Bill T. Jones, Jiří Kylián, Jerome Robbins and many other artists. After graduating, Brandon went on to participate in battles and cyphers within the street dance communities of Los Angeles and Paris, which has deeply influenced his own movement and creations. In 2021, he graduated from a two-year acting program at the Baron Brown Studio in Los Angeles. Carpio has been dancing with the Tampa City Ballet since 2020.

#### NICOLE ASSAAD - MICAËLA

Nicole Assaad started dancing ballet at the age of eight at the Patel Conservatory. After a year, she moved to All American Classical Ballet School in Tampa, Florida where she received training from Julio Montano and Gisell Durand. She won many awards and scholarships from competitions such as the Youth America Grand Prix, American Dance Competition, as a gold medalist and a recipient of the Fernando Bujones Award, and World Ballet Competition, receiving the bronze medal in the final round. At age 15, she moved to New York City to study with the Gelsey Kirkland Academy under a full scholarship. At age 16, she joined the Gelsey Kirkland Ballet Studio Company, performing various roles, such as "Marie" and "Sugarplum" in The Nutcracker, "Columbina" in the Flames of Paris, "Kitri" in Don Quixote, Diamond and Charity fairy in the Sleeping Beauty, along with many other roles. At age 18, she joined the Hong Kong Ballet's corps de ballet under the direction of Madeleine Onne, where she performed in many productions such as Romeo and Juliet, Coppelia, Pinnochio, Carmen, Lady of the Camellias, and many other original productions that toured in Canada, the US, Macau, and Mainland China. Currently, she is teaching in the Tampa Bay Area and has been dancing with Tampa City Ballet since the 2020-2021 season.

#### MARIA FERNANDA PAPA - MICAËLA

Maria Fernanda Papa started dancing at Vladimir Issaev School of Classical Ballet. She has had the opportunities to attend Youth America Grand Prix and receive multiple scholarships. Her repertoire includes The Nutcracker, Chipollino, Dr. Ouch!, Shostakovich Suites, Coppelia, Danzon, Firebird, Stone Flower, Le Papillon, Rite of Spring, and Cinderella. Maria Fernanda joined Tampa City Ballet in June of 2021.

#### ORIGINS OF CARMEN

The original version of Carmen was written and published in 1845 as a novella by French writer Prosper Mérimée. Set in the early 19th century, the novella is based on a story that Mérimée heard from the Countess of Montijo on a visit to Spain in 1830. Mérimée narrates the story as if he is recounting actual events that occurred on his trip to Spain.

The most recognized adaptation of Carmen is the opera of the same name by French composer Georges Bizet. Bizet's Carmen premiered in 1875, and at first, it received an extremely scandalized and negative reception. Audiences deemed it "vulgar" and "contemptible" because of its portrayal of immoral women and graphic murder on stage. However, after only a decade, Bizet's Carmen garnered critical acclaim and immense popularity. Today, the opera is one of the most famous and frequently performed in the world.

#### **PROLOGUE**

#### A FLASHBACK TO CARMEN'S WEDDING PREPARATION AT AGE 13 TO A MUCH OLDER MAN.

ACT 1: Soldiers in the city square stand guard watching the passersby. Along comes Micaëla, Sergeant Don Jose's childhood sweetheart, bearing a letter from his ill mother imploring him to marry Micaëla. When the bells ring, the soldiers gather to watch the female workers—especially the captivating Carmen. She tells her admirers that love is free and obeys no rules. Only one man pays no attention to her: Don José. Intrigued, Carmen throws a flower at him, and the women go back to work. Don José picks up the flower and hides it from Micaëla when she returns. A fight erupts inside the coffee shop between Carmen and another woman. Lieutenant Zuniga orders Don José to arrest Carmen, taking her to prison. There, she seduces Don José who allows her to escape, suffering the consequences by being arrested himself.

ACT 2: Carmen is with her friends when Lieutenant Zuniga tells her that Don José has finally been released from prison. Escamillo (traditionally, a bullfighter) enters, boasting about the pleasures of his profession, and flirts with Carmen, who tells him that she is involved with someone else. Carmen's gang withdraws as Don José approaches. She dances with him seductively, but upon hearing the sound of a bugle, Don José tries to return to his duties. Infuriated, Carmen mocks him relentlessly. Lieutenant Zuniga, who is infatuated with Carmen, bursts in and tries to sexually assault her. Don José becomes enraged and kills him. He now has no choice but to join her posse, or suffer arrest.

Carmen and Don José get married but after a short while she feels bored, they quarrel and she begins a relationship with Escamillo. Don Jose becomes enraged and destabilized by Carmen's rejection of him and her affair with Escamillo. Micaëla then arrives with the news of Don Jose's mother's death, and begs him to return with her. Before leaving with her, he threatens that Carmen will never be able to have a relationship with another man.

Back in Seville, the crowd cheers the flamboyant Escamillo in the arena. Carmen arrives on Escamillo's arm. Unafraid, she waits outside the entrance as the crowds enter the arena. Don José appears and begs Carmen to forget the past and start a new life with him. She calmly tells him that their marriage is over; she was born free, and free she will die. Seeing no promise of her return, Jose descends into a murderous rage. Carmen, fearless of the consequences, defiantly takes off his ring and throws it at his





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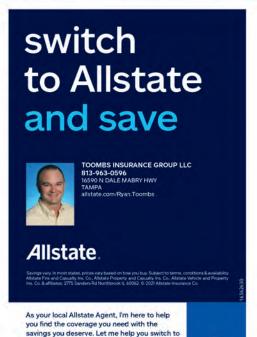
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#### **TESTIMONIALS**

"Being a student of the "On Your Feet" program gave me the foundational discipline and framework that has supported me with every action I've taken in my life. Because ballet is such a physically demanding art form, and your body takes time to achieve the strength needed to make all of the difficult movements look effortless, I was able to learn patience within the ritual of showing up for myself every day and putting in the work."

# Brandon Carpio, graduate from USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance

"My mom sacrifices and brings me to the studio 5 - 6 days a week along with my sister. Stays and helps out sometimes for 3 hours. The teachers from my previous school have come to my performances and helped advertise the show on campus and in the newsletter. Ms Paula is always encouraging me to be the best dancer possible."

Joey Bell, student of the "On Your Feet" Program

#### TAMPA CITY BALLET SPONSORS





















This production is dedicated to the memory of our late TCB benefactor Maryn Coker Carlyle, for believing in the power of the arts and in Tampa City Ballet since the beginning of the company's journey.

Tampa City Ballet 15365 Amberly Dr., Tampa, Fl 33647 813-558-0800 www.tampacityballet.org



# CARMEN