GRIT SARASOTA CONTEMPORARY DANCE 16TH SEASON | 2021-2022





SARASOTA CONTEMPORARY DANCE 16TH SEASON | 2021-2022

Voices – Rising Choreographers

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FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

It is with great joy that we present to you our 16th anniversary season: **GRIT**. If our last season marked our coming of age as a contemporary dance company, this season exemplifies our growth and ability to thrive as we progress from a young company to one that has and will continue to succeed, no matter the circumstance. While facing the enormous challenges of performing in the age of COVID, we have done just that—*thrived*—by putting on both streamed and in-person shows, restarting our in-studio series, and persevering in our commitment to uplift artists: quite the fulfilling task!



Our patrons, funders, volunteers, and audience make this work possible. We are in awe of your commitment over the past 16 years, and your support has been the defining factor in helping us become the strong company we are today. Your dedication during this difficult time has been inspiring, showing us how committed YOU are to our continued work; **you're showing us your GRIT**. Your presence at our events and your ongoing support sustains us and provides the foundation of our company.

Our 3 1/2 year-old studio is bustling with activity with safety guidelines in place. We are proud and committed to be able to continue our company practice sessions, workshops and ongoing classes in Beginning to Advanced contemporary dance, Improvisational Dance, Afro-Modern, Tap, Pilates, Yoga, our training ensemble (SCDE), and our In-Studio Performance Series. This is a testament to the energy contemporary dance creates.

Now, our dancers are energized and excited to perform with more vigor and enthusiasm than ever. The vision of SCD is being realized; we are all showing our tenacity and commitment to dance in spite of challenging times, **and this is reason to celebrate!**

We send a special thanks to our inspirational Artistic Director, Leymis Bolaños Wilmott, and our company dancers who pour their heart and soul into Sarasota Contemporary Dance and every performance.

We applaud all of you who have walked alongside SCD on our path to passion and purpose. We thank you, and we are grateful you are on this journey with us!

Dan Barzel, President

FROM THE FOUNDER & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

In our sixteen years, Sarasota Contemporary Dance has exponentially broadened its reach and adapted to uncertainty—which is why we have aptly titled this season **GRIT**: we are dancing with Purpose, Passion, and Perseverance. For me, as someone who believes in the power of prayer, family, and dance, it is the GRIT, the focus, and the sheer power of our craft that keeps me leading this company.

We are thrilled to make our long-awaited return to the Cook Theatre at the FSU Center for the Performing Arts. This season's Main Stage lineup might just be one of my all-time favorites: we're launching this remarkable season with a dedication to the Voices of the next generation of choreographers. Then, we're kicking off December with a live music collaboration honoring the legendary Duke Ellington, alongside our long-time encourager and friend, Shane Chalke. We'll be roaring into 2022, rekindling my love of dance and piano with composer Francis Schwartz in a program that features some of NYC's finest *Dance Makers*. And we'll bring it to a rousing finale at the close of our season, with a performance examining *Operation Pedro Pan*, a moment in time in Cuban-American history through a contemporary lens.

Since an early age, I witnessed my parents navigate this world with an impenetrable shield of faith, as they have upheld their core values and preserved their cultures. They instilled in me a responsibility to walk in my purpose, be passionate in whatever I do, and to never give up. I have stood on the shoulders of survivors, innovators, dreamers—all the while acknowledging the sacrifices they made to come to this country. It is because of their *GRIT* that I bring my artistry today.

It is our *GRIT*, our purpose, passion, and perseverance that enables us to bring our community the joy of dance, and to advocate for aspiring and established dance artists, as well as choreographers of all abilities and walks of life; to make dance accessible to all. And we want to say thank you.

Thank you for showing up, be it in-person or from home, coming together with <u>purpose</u>. It means everything to us to share our <u>passion</u> with you. Because of you, Sarasota Contemporary Dance <u>perseveres</u>.

This season brings to the foreground the unyielding *GRIT* of our company, ourselves, and our community. I am so grateful to welcome you to our 16th Season.

Keynis Bolaños Wilmatt

Leymis Bolaños Wilmott, Artistic Director

ABOUT THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Leymis Bolaños Wilmott,

a Cuban-American artist, mother, and teacher with rhythm inextricably in her bones found her voice through dance at an early age. As the Founder and Artistic Director of Sarasota Contemporary Dance, she has the privilege of using those bones to create art that has been called "stunning and imaginative" by Carrie Seidman of the Herald Tribune. As Artist-in-Residence at New College of Florida, she has the opportunity to share her love of dance and to be an influential member of Florida's dance community. Featured in Sarasota Scene Magazine's Arts & Cultural Issue: Ladies of the Arts, Leymis has been the recipient of numerous artistic achievement and leadership

awards throughout her career. She was honored to receive the Dance Magazine award for "Southeast Best Choreographer" and was listed in Sarasota Magazine as one of the Top 28 Most Powerful People in the Arts. Her 80+ dance works include collaborations with artists and organizations of various disciplines from musicians to museums. Collaborative highlights include: Sarasota Orchestra, Choral Artists of Sarasota, Westcoast Black Theater Troupe, Asolo Rep, Salvador Dalí Museum, Kaleidoscope, John and Mable Ringling Museum, Art Center of Sarasota, Stephen Miles of New Music New College, composer Eduard Cosla, percussionist Scott Blum, Mark Dancigers of NOW Ensemble, multitalented Francis Schwartz, and legendary principal harpist, Ann Hobson Pilot. Her works have been performed nationally at the John F. Kennedy Center, Ailey Citigroup Theater in NYC, Colony Theater and Jackie Gleason Theatre in Miami, and internationally in Ramallah, Argentina, and Spain. Leymis pioneered the Dance and Healing certificate at the University of Florida and holds a Master of Fine Arts in Performance and Choreography from Florida State University. Her research in dance as a healing art form and its ability to harness and foster community building came to fruition in 2006 when she and Rachael Inman founded Fuzión Dance Artists, now Sarasota Contemporary Dance. Leymis is a professor of dance at New College of Florida, a certified Pilates instructor, and through her Dance for PD certificate experience founded and developed the dance program at Parkinson Place in 2012. She served as Vice President of the Florida Dance Association from 2013-2017 and is a member of the Arts and Health Coalition in Sarasota. Her most precious honor, however, is being married to her husband, Kavin, of sixteen years and mother to eleven-year-old Charles Edward and five-yearold, Valda Elizabeth who inspires her dance-making daily.

ARTISTS



Melissa Rummel (Dancer/Associate Director of SCDE) was raised in Dryden, Michigan where she started dancing at the age of seven. She graduated from Belhaven University with a BFA in dance, emphasis on modern dance and choreography. She has trained with companies such as Eisenhower Dance Ensemble, RiverNorth Chicago, Ad Deum Dance Company, and Sarasota Contemporary Dance. This is Melissa's seventh season as a dancer with Sarasota Contemporary Dance, her third year as Studio Coordinator and Associate

Director for SCD Ensemble, and currently teaches with SCD and Woodland Fine Arts Academy. She also enjoys fitness and the positive effect it can bring to others, and she strives to find new ways to combine her love of dance and fitness. She strives to never stop stretching herself as a performer, choreographer, and teacher.



Jessica Obiedzinski (Dancer/Rehearsal Assistant) holds a Bachelor's degree in Dance and a Master's Degree in Science in Tourism and Hospitality Management from the University of Florida. She has performed professionally in works of New York City based artists, Elizabeth Streb, Laurie Devito, Vencl Dance and Beth Soll and has been most recently dancing with the Sarasota Contemporary Dance Company for three seasons. Jessica has presented works

for the New Grounds Festival, Creative Pinellas, and Sarasota Contemporary Dance. Jessica has a love for choreographing and teaching Yoga, Pilates, and Simonson dance technique, and has most recently been appointed the Rehearsal Assistant position at SCD.



Juliana Cristina (Dancer) was born in West Palm Beach, FL. A graduate of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA). She received her B.F.A Degree in Dance under the direction of Dean Susan Jaffe and Associate Dean Brenda Daniels. Juliana has studied in Trainee Programs with Nashville Ballet and Ballet Palm Beach. Ms. Cristina has performed works by Azure Barton, Kira Blazek, Helen Simoneau, Ming Lung-Yang, Juel D. Lane, Orange Grove, and

Doug Giseppi. Juliana is also on faculty at The Sarasota Ballet. This is Ms. Cristina's third season with the Sarasota Contemporary Dance Company.



Sea Lee (Dancer) Born and raised in South Korea, Sea (pronounced as "Say") Lee was trained both conservatively and professionally at SunHwa Arts High School under the direction of Seung Yup Hong. She received a BFA with Cum Laude honors from the University of Florida and MFA with a fellowship from Hollins University/ American Dance Festival. Sea has performed professionally with Moving Current Dance Collective, independent projects with Paula Kramer

and a photographer Tom Kramer, and collaborated with Asolo Repertory Theatre with Kaleidoscope Connect project. Sea has been on the faculty at the University of Tampa, St. Petersburg College, and directed a dance program at Cypress Creek middle school. Sea's choreography has been presented by Co-motion Dance Theatre (2013, 2014), HCC Dance Ensembles (2015-2021), ACDFA in University of North Carolina Greensboro (2013) and Florida State University (2011), University of Tampa (2015, 2016), Moving Current Dance Collective (2019) and presented at Hollins University, NewGrounds Festival, Sarasota Contemporary Dance and the American Dance Festival. Sea currently serves as a dance faculty at Hillsborough Community College and Sarasota Ballet, and teaches and performs with SCD, and with a physically integrated dance company, REVolutions Dance, regionally, nationally, and internationally.



Monessa Salley (Dancer) South Carolina native, Monessa Salley, is currently in her third season dancing and teaching professionally with the Sarasota Contemporary Dance Company. She is also a teaching artist for the Sarasota Ballet and Wholehearted Education. She holds a B.A. in Dance Performance from Winthrop University and an M.Ed. from Columbia College. After performing and serving as a certified dance educator for 12 years, she went on to pursue her

MFA in Dance Performance and New Media at New York University's Tisch School of Arts. She has previously toured and performed professionally with Sapphire Moon Dance Company, Vibrations Dance Company, T.O. Dance Inc., The Power Company Collaborative, and NYU's Second Avenue Dance Company. Salley enjoys choreographing and presenting new works. She has a mind, body, spirit approach to dance and relishes in practicing and refining her craft, generating healing through dance, and enhancing community relations.



Samantha Miller (Dancer) is an emerging dance artist originally from Kendallville, Indiana. She trained for 16 years in the areas of tap, jazz, ballet, and modern at Tri-County Dance Academy for the Performing Arts. In 2013, Samantha continued her studies at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, PA under the direction of Donna Faye Burchfield. During her time at the University of the Arts, Samantha was able to perform works by Curt Haworth, Douglas

Becker, Esther Baker Tarpaga, Jen McGinn, Sidra Bell, Robert Burden, and Lauren Putty White. She was also able to work with Jeanine McCaine performing her work "Under Her Skin" in the Philadelphia Fringe Art Festival in 2015. Samantha received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance, in May 2016 and is now exploring the world of dance in St. Petersburg, FL. Since residing in Florida. Samantha has been able to work and perform alongside Helen Hansen French, Mary Chase Doll, and Lauren Slone. She is a member of RogueDance Company and a new member of Sarasota Contemporary Dance.



Eugenia Titterington (Company Member/ Dramaturge for Cuban Project) graduated from New College of Florida with a B.A. in Literature and Performance Studies. She is excited and humbled to start her second season with Sarasota Contemporary Dance as a full-fledged company member. Eugenia has collaborated as a performer, choreographer, and movement consultant for local arts organizations including The John and Mable Ringling Museum, Historic Spanish Point, New Music New College, MARA

Gallery, Ringling College of Art and Design, and New College of Florida. She has been a recipient of the John Ringling Tower and Andrew W. Mellon Grants of which the latter allowed her to develop and set choreography for "The Rhino Project: Human // Nature" (2019); an interdisciplinary film and live-performance collaboration between NCF, RCAD, and local Sarasota artists. As an artist, Eugenia is fascinated by the communicative threshold between audience and performer. To her, every performance is a unique opportunity to pull an audience out of the role of the passive viewer and into the realm of shared experience where they can embrace an active role in co-producing meaning and dialogue. Eugenia credits the performing arts for deepening her ability to exist in the present moment and learning to value the impact her day-to-day interactions may have on the lives of those around her. It is also what's led her to passionately start pursuing her INELDA certification as an End-of-Life Doula while volunteering with Tidewell Hospice.



Jordan Leonard (Dancer) grew up in Michigan where her love for the performing arts developed. Through her training, she discovered the endless possibilities dance offered in exploration and storytelling. The idea that she would never stop learning intrigued her, and she began her journey at Point Park University earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance, Bachelor of Science in Pre-Medical and Pre-Professional Studies, and Minor in Chemistry. While at the conservatory, she had the privilege of performing works by Larry Keigwin, John Heginbotham, Mark Burrell, Jess

Hendricks, Garfield Lemonius, Kiesha Lalama, Jason McDole, Robert Priore, and others. She furthered her training at Keigwin & Company, Sarasota Contemporary Dance, and chuthis. summer intensives. Youth education is an important part of her life and she strives to promote healthy, positive ways of movement and selfacceptance. When she is not dancing or teaching, Jordan enjoys working in the field of clinical research and spending time with family. Jordan is very excited and honored to be joining the SCD family this year!



Gabrielle Henry (Apprentice) began her dance training with Pittsburgh Youth Ballet Company & School under Jean Gedeon, at the age of three. She furthered her dance education at Slippery Rock University with Nola Nolen-Holland, Ursula Payne, and Teena Custer. Her most notable performances while at SRU, were the repertory works of Nora Ambrosio and Helen Simoneau. In just three years, she graduated Suma Cum Lade with her Bachelor's of Arts degree in Dance. Professionally she's danced with Vivid Ballet, Exhalations Dance Theatre and now Sarasota Contemporary Dance Company. Her other passions include teaching and

choreographing. She loves to motivate students to reach their full potential and to create works that stimulate and captivate performers and audience members. Ms. Henry has also completed her RYT200 Yoga certification along with her Lagree Fitness certification. Both of which she loves to practice in her free time to help keep her grounded and strong mentally and physically. She looks forward to continuing learning and expanding her career in dance.

GUEST PERFORMERS & MUSICIANS



Brian Dean Fidaglo II is a 3rd generation Tampanian. He has been an active member of the arts in Tampa for over two decades. While attending Howard W. Blake Magnet Arts High School, dance called to him. It was there he fell in love with the duality of physicality and emotion, without vocal expression. After college, dance led him in many directions, performing with numerous local companies including Spanish Lyric Theatre (Tampa), The Florida Orchestra, Fuzion Dance (Sarasota), Gaudere Danza (Tampa), Moving Ethos (Sarasota), Moving Current dance collective (Tampa)

and Ledges and Bones (Los Angeles/ San Francisco). His projects both nationally and abroad have taken him to places such as California, Utah, New York, St. Louis, Seattle, and Colombia. Brian is a past recipient of the Hillsborough County Emerging Artist Grant, Florida Dance Association's Choreographer in Residence and 25 to Watch from 'Creative Loafing'. He has been honored to work with inspiring artists: Holly Johnston, Paul Matteson, Lynne Wimmer, Nina Watt, Andy & Dionne Noble and many others. He has choreographed for St. Petersburg College, Musinc, SLT productions (The Full Monty) and served as co-Artistic Director of Moving Current dance collective. He co-developed the base//flight partnering technique for modern dance with his life partner Erin Cardinal. Together they have taught and presented at festivals and schools including American College Dance Festival, Howard W Blake Magnet High School (Semester Residency), Dance Gallery Festival (Sam Houston State University), Dr. Phillips High School (Orlando), and Hillsborough Community College, to name a few. With his family, he continues to explore the human condition by both, experiencing life to the fullest and artistically investigating the choices we make in life. He spends his days working in IT as a Service Manager for PriceWaterhouseCoopers Llp.



Michael Foley has been performing, teaching, and choreographing internationally for nearly 30 years. His choreography has been commissioned by major international dance companies from the U.S., Mexico, Ireland, Italy, Sweden, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Panama, and by the Cirque du Soleil organization. Michael received his MFA in Dance from the University of Washington and has taught workshops and master classes at over 100 universities, academic institutions, dance festivals and private studios around the globe. Michael has received numerous

recognitions for his work in the Arts including a William J. Fulbright scholarship from the United States government for his research and teaching in Mexico with Delfos Danza Contemporànea, a Kennedy Center/American Theater Festival Award, and he was the Ruth Page Visiting Artist at Harvard University. In 2019, he received the Chicago National Association of Dance Masters' "Artistic Achievement Award." Michael is currently a Professor of Dance at the University of South Florida, where he is also director/creator of the USF Dance in Paris Programs. He is thrilled to be a part of *Cuban Project* and working with this inspiring group of artists.



Valda Elizabeth Wilmott, the grandchild of Pedro Pans, is a five-year-old premiering on the stage for the first time in the *Cuban Project*. Her favorite dish is empanadas which she enjoys making with her mom and adding her own special sauce. She likes all things that sparkle and hearts. She hopes to grow up and become a fashion designer who makes costumes for her mom's company and sings at her church.



José G. Martínez (Composer) José's music incorporates a wide range of influences from Colombian folk tunes to contemporary composition techniques while borrowing from Latin music, heavy metal, and audio sampling techniques. His works range from solo pieces with electronics to orchestral works, passing through chamber ensembles, electroacoustic pieces, and interdisciplinary

collaborations. Among others, his music has been performed by groups such as Alarm Will Sound, Wild Up, Grammy award-winning quartet Third Coast Percussion. An alumnus in percussion and composition of the National University of Colombia, he studied composition at the University of Missouri and UT Austin. José was Visiting Professor at East Carolina University and at the New College of Florida. Currently, he is Assistant Professor of Music at Colby College.

José's music has also been presented by Spanish ensemble Taller Sonoro, LA based Piano duo Hockett Duo, the Orchestra of St. Luke's from New York City, Grupo de Cámara de Bogotá, and Austin based percussion ensemble Line Upon Line, among others. He has participated in institutes and festivals such as Banff Ensemble Evolution program, DeGaetano, Splice, SEAMUS, Missouri International Composer Festival, Line Upon Line Winter Composer Festival, ClarinetFest, and VIPA.

José is a recipient of the 2008 National Composition Prize for Young Composers, the 2011 "Ciudad de Bogotá" Composition Award, and the 2013 National Cultural Prize. In the US has received the 2013 Sinquefield Composition Prize and the 2019 Rain Water Grant for Innovation. He is part of the C3 Collective and also artistic director of the concert series Stack Overflow that creates opportunities for composers interested in electronics.



Hugo Viera-Vargas (Accompanied Musician) Hugo Viera-Vargas received a Ph.D. in Latin American history from Indiana University, Bloomington. As a cultural historian, his research focuses on the intersection of race and musical expressions in Puerto Rican and Caribbean societies. Currently, an assistant professor of Caribbean and Latin American studies and music at New College, he teaches Afro-Caribbean musical expressions and Latin American and Caribbean Studies and History courses. Dr. Viera-Vargas has combined his

teaching and scholarly endeavors with performing as a percussionist. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, he received a non-formal music education through years of family and community musical interactions. These experiences allowed him to perform with numerous groups in Puerto Rico, Cuba, Mexico, and the United States since the 1990s. Dr. Viera-Vargas recorded with Nova Ilusion (1993), a Cancion Protesta group, singer and songwriter Gamaliel Pagan (1999), and a broad range of Afro-Puerto Rican plena groups. He specializes in Afro-Puerto Rican percussion, particularly the guiro, a gourd folk Puerto Rican percussion instrument. As a studio musician he has recorded in various plena productions, including with Los Relampagos de la Plena (1997), Terraplén (2002), Son del Almendro (1998 & 2011) Pirulo y la Tribu (2017), Manuel "Manny" Collazo (2012) Jerry Ferrao (2015, 2017 & 2021). In 2017 he co-produced Plena Adentro's first production *Rompecabezas*.



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Lighting Designer/Videographer	Celeste N. Silsby Mannerud
Sound Engineer	Alex Pinchin
Stage Manager/Operator	Chloe Dipaola
House Manager	Raychel Ceciro
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CREW



Celeste N. Silsby Mannerud (Lighting Designer/ Videographer) is co-founder of Flip Flop Productions and specializes in design and archival for theatrical and private events. She received her BA in theatre design from USF and her MFA in design management from IADT, and her repertoire includes lighting design and production video/ photography for local and international dance and theatre companies; stage lighting instruction at various Florida colleges; and production management, technical/artistic

design, and lighting/audio installations for the Dali Museum, Tampa Museum of Art, L'Unione Italiana Ybor City, and ArtLab Studios in Germany. Aside from her "real job," Celeste is in the midst of renovating an old Airstream to tour the U.S. and is most at peace when under sail with her husband, Andreas, and son, Cobyn.



Alex Pinchin (Sound Engineer) is a multimedia designer based out of Sarasota who has been working with the Sarasota Contemporary Dance since the 2019-2020 season. He also works with Urbanite Theatre as their Lighting and Audio/Visual Supervisor as well as acts as resident sound designer for the FSA/Asolo Conservatory. He also designs for several other companies in the Sarasota/Manatee area and across the state designing lights, sound, and projections.



Chloe Dipaola (Stage Manager/Operator) is thrilled to be joining her first season at Sarasota Contemporary Dance. She is excited for the audience to experience live shows again as we continue our efforts in sharing creativity, and talent to those who support us! She would like to thank her family, friends, and mentors who continue to support her, and hopes you enjoy the show!

ADMINISTRATION



Raychel Ceciro (General Manager) has been working administratively and creatively in the arts since their days at the New College of Florida, where they first met Leymis and graduated with honors in 2018. Raychel has worked in administrative and managerial positions at the Koresh Dance Company, National Constitution Center, and New College of Florida, and couldn't be more thrilled to be working alongside Leymis as the General Manager at SCD. In their performance career, Raychel has had work featured at the Annenberg Performing Arts Center at the University of Pennsylvania,

954 Dance Movement Collective, Ursinus College, the Shoebox Theater Festival, the Ringling Museum of Art, the National Association of Interpretation, Vox Populi, and with the Windmill Theatre Company at NCF. Their artistic work has been supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Florida Humanities Council, Sarasota Arts and Cultural Alliance, and the Florida Public Archaeology Network.



Laura Chambers (Administrative & Marketing Associate) cconsiders herself an intuitive thinker and creator that is continuously striving to explore and grow in a variety of creative fields. Originally from Sarasota, FL, she has spent the last several years living in New York City where she completed her Bachelor of Science in Arts Management and Marketing from The New School. Prior, Laura received an Associate of Arts concentration in Modern Dance from the University of South Florida. Laura has studied dance extensively with a variety of movement artists as well as attending numerous

dance festivals on scholarship including the American Dance Festival, Bates Dance Festival, University of the Arts Summer Program, and the Florida Dance Festival. In addition, she has completed several arts administration internships, her first being through Sarasota Contemporary Dance (2014/2017) as well as MICHIYAYA Dance in New York City (2019). Laura joined the SCD team as the Administrative & Marketing Associate in May 2021 and is thrilled to be combining her love of modern dance with the variety of administrative skills she has obtained.

împ

This performance was Recorded and Broadcasted by Integrated Media Productions

We help purpose-driven brands and businesses create lasting impact in the connected world. Sarasota Contemporary Dance is where IMP's founder Brett Hoehne met his wife Molly, a company dancer at that time. Brett and our team are glad to partner with SCD again following last years Gold award for "Best Virtual Performance" SRQ Mag.

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The Found Sarasota Cool leadershi (\$10,000 per ye present and plea ight .le, igh fis A .TION. The Founders Circle is a funding initiative through which Sarasota Contemporary Dance seeks to establish a circle of ten leadership funders committed to a three-year giving term (\$10,000 per year), which will further secure the Company's ever bright present and future. To become a member of our Founders Circle, please contact Dan Barzel: Dan.Barzel@gmail.com.

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