

# FELD BALLETTECH

## *Ballet Tech Quarterly*

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### **MANDANCE PROJECT returns to the Stage**

"The man behind the "Mandance Project" is Eliot Feld, a beloved, home-grown choreographer who at 65 remains as provocative, as brilliant... as ever."

-Robert Johnson, The Star-Ledger



After a two year hiatus, MANDANCE PROJECT returned to the stage for two weeks in April. The program included the premieres of *Undergo* and *Isis in Transit*, two new ballets by Eliot Feld, and reprises of *Backchat* and *Pursuing Odette*. Kids Dance, Ballet Tech's student performance troupe, also took to the stage during four weekend matinees with the energetic premieres of *Quickstep* and *Dotty Polkas* and revivals of crowd favorites *Apple Pie* and *Meshugana Dance*.

On April 9, Ballet Tech celebrated the return of MANDANCE PROJECT with a special Opening Night Gala. Kicking off the evening with a cocktail reception, Ballet Tech welcomed 170 guests to its recently renovated 8th floor lobby. Guests had a chance to sit in on a spirited, open ballet class led by long-time faculty member Dan Levans and featuring 20 students from the Ballet Tech School. Continuing the celebration at the Joyce Theatre, MANDANCE PROJECT opened to a sold-out house. The program was packed full with six ballets, including all four premieres. The season, which continued to entertain and delight audiences over the course of its two-week run, came to an end on April 20 with would-be audience members lining up down Eighth Avenue for a chance to catch the last show.

MANDANCE PROJECT was made possible, in part, by a first-time grant from the Rudolf Nureyev Dance Foundation. Based in Chicago, the Rudolf Nureyev Dance Foundation is dedicated to advancing Rudolf Nureyev's vision and contribution to dance. The Foundation provides financial grants to non-profit organizations that preserve and protect the legacy of dance while encouraging its progress and development.



## **“Charming and Imaginative,” HORSE Debuts in NY**

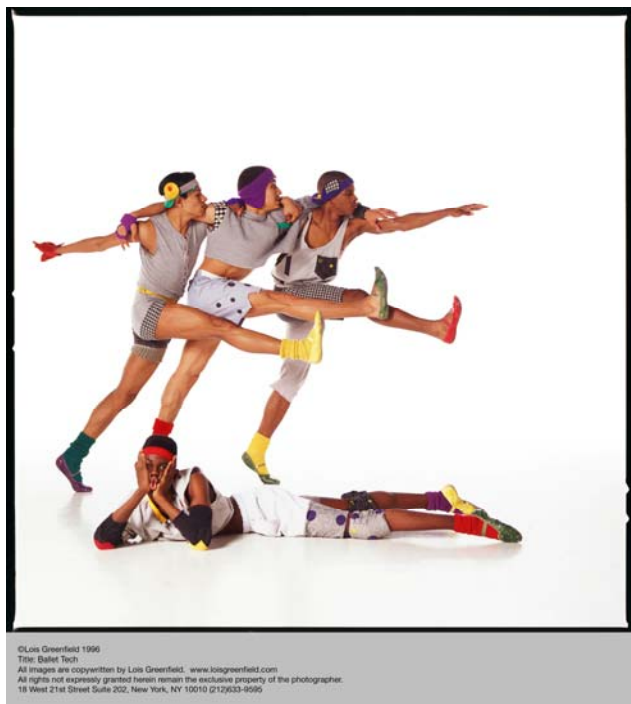
During Ballet Tech’s two-week season, New York audiences had the opportunity to witness the exciting United States debut of the Taipei-based dance group HORSE. Led by Wu-Kang Chen, a featured dancer in Mr. Feld's ballets over the last five years, the five-member company presented *Velocity*, an evening-length work. Jennifer Dunning of The New York Times declared *Velocity* "was a feast of evocative, playful small dances showcasing the supple physicality and subtle dramatic gifts of its performers." To borrow the closing words of Ms. Dunning's review, "HORSE is a very good company. May it soon return." (It just might... stay tuned for details on Ballet Tech’s scheduled 2009 performance season.)

In order to bring HORSE to the stage, Ballet Tech partnered for the first time with the Taipei Cultural Center of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Center of New York. The Taipei Cultural Center plans and promotes Taiwan-related arts activities and international cultural exchanges. In addition, the Center works to enhance Taiwan's cultural image.

## **Kids Dance Across the City**

“I thought this Joyce Theater show really reflected what kids can do. They are smart and active and can understand dancing. Thank you, Mr. Feld.”

-Suparna, P.S. 56 in Queens



Showcasing the accomplishments of our young dancers, Kids Dance performances provide a great opportunity to introduce children to dance. In addition to performing during the Opening Night Gala and four weekend matinees during Ballet Tech's spring season, Ballet Tech's student performance troupe also put on a special matinee performance on April 17 to dance for New York City public elementary school children. These young audience members responded with rave reviews. Among them, Marissa of P.S. 56 wrote, "Most of all I really enjoyed watching teenagers instead of adults perform. I truly believe that performing arts and dance should begin now while we are still young."

On June 2, Kids Dance participated in PS Arts Week, a celebration of arts education in New York City. Students performed selections of *Apple Pie* at the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem. PS Arts Week showcases achievement in the arts across New York City public schools. During the week-long event, different disciplines were presented, including visual arts, dance, music, and theater. The Dance Program was hosted by Arthur Mitchell, founder and artistic director of the Dance Theatre of Harlem, and Kids Dance had the privilege of opening the show. Ballet Tech's students enjoyed the opportunity to perform for and along with their peers from other performing arts schools across the city.

## Catch Kids Dance in Chicago

If you are in Chicago on August 20, stop by the Chicago Dancing Festival to see Kids Dance perform *A Stair Dance*. Accompanied by Ballet Tech staff, five students will fly to Illinois to participate in the festival. These students will perform alongside professional dancers from American Ballet Theatre, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and the Joffrey Ballet.



## Graduating Seniors Reflect on Ballet Tech

On June 25, Angela Cascone, Alejandra Simon, Jeremy Summerville and Crystal Zaman graduated from the Ballet Tech School. These four dedicated students enrolled in the Beginners program in 1997 and were bused from their elementary schools to dance classes at Ballet Tech twice a week until 2001, at which point they entered Ballet Tech's 6th grade as full-time students (Ballet Tech did not start offering full-time training for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders until 2001). Before leaving, these graduating seniors reflected on their experiences at Ballet Tech.



Angela Cascone auditioned for Ballet Tech at P.S. 204 in Brooklyn. Besides performing at the Joyce Theater (favorite roles include dancing in *Papillon* and *Patootie*), Angela most enjoyed the "small, family-like community." Of her time at Ballet Tech, Angela says it "has instilled in me a love of dance, which I wouldn't have known if not for Ballet Tech." Angela will enroll in Skidmore College in the fall to pursue international studies with a minor in dance.

Alejandra Simon is originally from P.S. 19 in the Bronx. Ballet Tech taught Alejandra dedication and commitment and she most enjoyed dancing on stage, notably in *Simon Sez*, *Apple Pie* and *Dotty Polkas*. When speaking of Ballet Tech's impact on herself as an individual, she says, "I've become stronger and found something I love to do." Alejandra is currently auditioning for dance companies.

Jeremy Summerville is also from P.S. 19 in the Bronx. His favorite ballets to dance include *Simon Sez* and *Dotty Polkas*. During his time at Ballet Tech, Jeremy learned discipline and respect and says, "Ballet Tech has taught me the discipline that is needed to be successful in life [and] to put 100% effort into whatever you do." Jeremy will enter college in the fall and will continue to audition for dance companies.



Crystal Zaman auditioned at P.S. 124 in Queens and, like her fellow graduates, during her time at Ballet Tech she most enjoyed dancing on stage at the Joyce Theater. Crystal especially loved dancing *Simon Sez* along with her closest friends. Ballet Tech taught her "discipline, self confidence, [and] to work hard to achieve greatness." Crystal will attend Hunter College in the fall to study nursing and dance.

Please join us in wishing our graduates well. We hope you share our pride in their success.

### News on Our Funders:

Each year, Ballet Tech relies on private support to meet our programming needs. This year, we are pleased to welcome new institutional funders to the Ballet Tech Family:

- Florence Belsky Charitable Foundation
- Broadview Networks
- Joseph & Joan Cullman Foundation for the Arts
- Samuel & Rae Eckman Charitable Foundation
- Glickenhau Foundation
- Tiger Baron Foundation
- Rudolf Nureyev Dance Foundation
- The Taipei Cultural Center

Thank you to all of Ballet Tech's supporters! For more information on our contributors or to make a contribution of your own to Ballet Tech, please visit our website, or call (212) 777-7710, x316.

### **Upcoming Events:**

#### July 7-August 1

Summer Session at the Ballet Tech School

#### August 20:

Kids Dance perform in Chicago as part of the Chicago Dancing Festival

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