

BOSTON BALLET

MIKKO NISSINEN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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BOSTON BALLET ANNOUNCES 2016–2017 SEASON PROMOTIONS

ANAÏS CHALENDARD AND SEO HYE HAN PROMOTED TO PRINCIPAL

JUNXIONG ZHAO PROMOTED TO SOLOIST

CORINA GILL PROMOTED TO SECOND SOLOIST

SAMIVEL EVANS AND DESEAN TABER PROMOTED TO CORPS DE BALLET FROM BOSTON BALLET II

May 26, 2016 (BOSTON, MA)—Mikko Nissinen, Artistic Director of Boston Ballet, has announced six promotions from within the company for the 2016–2017 season. Soloists Anaïs Chalendar and Seo Hye Han have been promoted to the rank of Principal Dancer, Second Soloist Junxiong Zhao to Soloist, and Corina Gill to Second Soloist. Samivel Evans and Desean Taber, two dancers from Boston Ballet II—Boston Ballet’s second company—will join the Company as Corps de Ballet dancers. All promotions are effective August 15, 2016. The full 2016–2017 roster of dancers will be announced at a later date.

Anaïs Chalendar of Renaison, France, trained in the Ecole Nationale de danse de Marseille with Dominique Khalfouni and Roland Petit, and also studied throughout Germany with a variety of artistic directors and teachers including Youri Vamos, Vladimir Malakhov, and Birgit Keil. Prior to joining Boston Ballet, Chalendar was a first soloist with English National Ballet. She has also appeared as Guest Artist with companies around the globe. In 2009, Chalendar received the "Emerging Dancer Award" after dancing Nikiya's Death from *La Bayadère*. She has also been listed in the "100 Best Dancers in the World" by *Dance Europe Magazine*. Chalendar joined Boston Ballet in 2013 as Second Soloist, and was promoted to Soloist in 2014. She will return next season as **Principal Dancer**.

Seo Hye Han of Seoul, Korea, graduated from the Korea National University of Arts in 2009. Upon graduation, she joined Universal Ballet Company as a soloist. She has received honors and awards at an array of international competitions including a silver medal in 2004 at Bulgaria's Varna International Ballet Competition; a scholarship to Vaganova Ballet Academy in the 2005 Prix de Lausanne; a silver medal in the 2008 Varna International Ballet Competition; a silver medal in the 2008 Seoul International Dance Competition; the Joffrey Prize in the 2010 USA International Ballet Competition; and the Gold Medal in the 2012 Boston International Ballet Competition. Han joined Boston Ballet in 2012; she was promoted to Second Soloist in 2013 and Soloist in 2014. She will be a **Principal Dancer** upon her return next season.

Junxiong Zhao of Chongqing, China, began his training at age 11 with Shanghai East Ballet School. In 2010, he began training with Kee Juan Han and Carlos Vacarcel at the Washington Ballet School, where he later joined the Washington Ballet’s studio company. In 2012, Zhao joined Ballet Arizona. He has received many national and international accolades including Senior Silver Medal at World Ballet Competition 2012; Senior Gold Medal at the 2012 Cape Town International Ballet Competition in classical and contemporary categories; Senior Gold Medal in the Classical Category at the 2011 Youth American Grand Prix Semifinals, Torrington, Connecticut; Junior Bronze Medal at the 2009 Helsinki International Ballet Competition in Helsinki, Finland; and Top 12 at the 2009 Youth American Grand Prix Finals, New

York, among others. Zhao joined Boston Ballet in 2014 as Second Soloist. For the 2016–2017 season, he will be a **Soloist** with the Company.

Corina Gill of San Diego, California, began her dance training in her hometown with Sylvia Palmer and Ahita Ardalan. Gill completed her studies under scholarship at the University of California, Irvine, where she graduated with a BA in Dance. Gill went on to perform as a company dancer with Eliot Feld's Ballet Tech, San Diego Ballet, Ballet Pacifica, State Street Ballet, and Molly Lynch's National Choreographer's Initiative. In 2006, Gill became an inaugural member of the Los Angeles Ballet and in 2009, she joined Boston Ballet. Gill has been featured in *Dance Magazine's* "On the Rise" column and *Pointe Magazine's* "Dance Spotlight." Most recently, Gill completed her Master's Certificate in Nonprofit Management under Boston Ballet's partnership with Northeastern University. Gill will return next season as **Second Soloist**.

Samivel Evans of Santa Fe, New Mexico, began his ballet training at Aspen Santa Fe Ballet School, under Jefferson Baum. He attended the University of North Carolina School of the Arts where he studied under the direction of Ethan Stiefel. Upon graduation as a Ballet Major, Evans joined the Trainee Program at Boston Ballet School. He joined Boston Ballet II in 2014 and will join the **Corps de Ballet** for the 2016–2017 season.

Desean Taber of Salisbury, Connecticut, began his training at age 12 at the Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts. He studied at Miami City Ballet School on full scholarship in 2011, and joined Boston Ballet School as a Trainee in 2012. Taber has attended summer programs at the School of American Ballet, The Harid Conservatory, San Francisco Ballet School, and Boston Ballet's Summer Dance Program. Taber was selected for the exchange program between Boston Ballet and Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen, and was invited to the Banff Professional Dance Program in Banff, Canada. After two years training at Boston Ballet School, Taber joined Boston Ballet II in 2014. He is promoted to the **Corps de Ballet** for the upcoming season.

For full biographies, please visit www.bostonballet.org.

About Boston Ballet

Since 1963, Boston Ballet's internationally acclaimed performances of classical, neo-classical, and contemporary ballets, combined with a dedication to world class dance education and community initiative programs, have made the institution a leader in its field, with a 52-year history of promoting excellence and access to dance.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen and Executive Director Max Hodges, the Company maintains a diverse repertoire, ranging from full-length ballets to new works by some of today's finest choreographers. Boston Ballet's second company, Boston Ballet II, is comprised of dancers who gain experience by performing with the Company and independently, presenting special programs to audiences throughout the Northeast.

Programming for Boston Ballet's 2015–2016 season includes Third Symphony of Gustav Mahler: A Ballet by John Neumeier, making Boston Ballet the first North American Company to perform the work; captivating classical works such as John Cranko's Onegin and Mikko Nissinen's Swan Lake; masterpieces by world-renowned choreographers such as George Balanchine and 20th century masters Leonid Yakobson and Léonide Massine; and two highly anticipated world premieres by Karole Armitage and Yury Yanowsky.

Boston Ballet School, the official school of Boston Ballet, has a long-standing dedication to excellence and access. Led by Director Margaret Tracey, the School reaches more than 5,000 students (toddler to adult) each year through Boston Ballet School classes, the Summer Dance Workshop, Pre-professional Summer Dance Program and the Pre-Professional Training held at three studio locations in Boston, Newton, and Marblehead.

Boston Ballet's nationally-acclaimed education programs include Citydance, Adaptive Dance, and ECI On Location. The programs are offered in partnership with the Boston Public Schools and in communities throughout the city and region.

For more information, please visit www.bostonballet.org.

Boston Ballet gratefully acknowledges the following institutional partners:

Barr Foundation

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National Endowment for the Arts

State Street Corporation, 2015 Innovation Partner

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