

American[®] MASTERS



Press Contacts:

Natasha Padilla, WNET

212.560.8824, padilla@wnet.org

Lynn Tejada, Green Galactic

213.840.1201, lynn@greengalactic.com

Press Kits: pbs.org/pressroom or thirteen.org/pressroom

Websites: pbs.org/americanmasters, facebook.com/americanmasters, #AmericanMasters

American Masters *Joffrey: Mavericks of American Dance*

Premieres nationally Friday, December 28 at 9 p.m. (ET) on PBS
(check local listings)

Interviewees (in alphabetical order)

Sasha Anawalt, Author and lecturer

Sasha Anawalt is director of University of Southern California Annenberg Arts Journalism Programs, including the Masters degree in Specialized Journalism (The Arts) program, a partnership with the five arts schools at USC that she helped create and launch in 2008. She is a lecturer on the Annenberg School of Journalism faculty. Anawalt also directs the USC Annenberg/Getty Arts Journalism Program. Anawalt's best-selling cultural biography, *The Joffrey Ballet: Robert Joffrey and the Making of an American Dance Company* (Scribner, 1996), was re-issued in January 2012 as an e-book. ***American Masters Joffrey: Mavericks of American Dance*** is heavily based on her book.

Charthel Arthur, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1965-1979

Charthel Arthur began her dance training in Pasadena, California with Eva Lorraine. After graduating from high school with honors, she went to New York and was given a full scholarship to the Joffrey Ballet School followed by an apprenticeship to the Joffrey Ballet and three months

later she became a full company member. Arthur performed with the Joffrey Ballet for 13 years as a principal dancer. In 1983, Arthur and her husband, Robert Estner moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan to establish a professional ballet school now known as The School of the Grand Rapids Ballet. Ms. Arthur's career with the Joffrey Ballet came full circle when she joined the company as a Ballet Mistress in 1998. Currently, she is the Executive Director of the Gerald Arpino and Robert Joffrey Foundation.

Dermot Burke, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1965-1976

Dermot Burke was a principal dancer with the Joffrey Ballet and was featured in a number of the company's pieces including *Trinity* and *Astarte*. He was Artistic Director of the American Repertory Ballet in New Jersey for 10 years and he recently retired from the Dayton Ballet, where he served in a dual capacity as the company's Chief Administrative Officer, as well as its Artistic Director, a post he held for nearly 20 years.

Fabrice Calmels, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 2001-present

Born and raised in France, Fabrice Calmels studied at the prestigious Paris Opera School, under the direction of Claude Bessy. In 1998, he was spotted by John Meehan, director of American Ballet Theatre's Studio Company, and moved to New York. In 2002, Calmels settled in Chicago with the Joffrey Ballet, under the direction of company co-founder Gerald Arpino. Calmels is currently a lead dancer at the Joffrey Ballet.

Gary Chryst, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1966-1979

Born in La Jolla, California, Gary Chryst was one of the Joffrey's most notable dancers. He also was a member of the Nederlans Dans Theater before turning his talent to Broadway in productions such as *Guys and Dolls*, Bob Fosse's *Dancin'* and *A Chorus Line*. In 2006, Chryst returned to the Joffrey as one of the Ugly Stepsisters in the Company's premiere of Frederick Ashton's *Cinderella*. He now tours the world staging productions of Fosse's *Chicago*.

Diane Consoer, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1956-1958

A native of Louisville, Kentucky, Diane Consoer first met Robert Joffrey while he was teaching classes at the American Ballet Theater School in New York. She became part of the original six dancers in his company in 1956. She left to join the New York City Ballet in 1958, but joined the Joffrey Ballet on their Middle East tour in 1963 as a guest artist.

Christopher Clinton Conway, Joffrey Ballet Executive Director

Christopher Clinton Conway has served in highly visible positions at major cultural and consultancy organizations around the country and came to the Joffrey in September 2005 as counsel from a national consultancy to non-profit organizations, where he served as Vice President and Chief Client Liaison for the Eastern U.S. (including Joffrey and Miami City Ballet).

April Daly, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 2003-present

A native of Rockford, Illinois, Ms. Daly studied with the Rockford Dance Company and later with New School University in New York. She joined the Joffrey Ballet after performing for two seasons with The Washington Ballet. She has performed in featured roles in *Apollo* (Calliope), *Cinderella* (Autumn Fairy), *Deuce Coupe*, *Le Sacre du Printemps*, *Light Rain*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Square Dance*, and *Viva Vivaldi*.

Ann Marie De Angelo, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1973-1985; Associate Director, 1995-1998

Former principal dancer with Joffrey and later Associate Director of the Joffrey Ballet, Ms. De Angelo has created over 50 works for ballet companies including the National Ballet of Cuba; Ohio Ballet; Pittsburgh Ballet Theater; Oregon Ballet Theater; Ballet Pacifica; Nevada Ballet Theater; BalletNY, and ABT Studio Company. She founded her own experimental dance troupe in the late-80s called Ballet D'Angelo, which toured extensively in Europe and was the founding Artistic Director of Ballet de Monterrey in 1990, the first privately funded arts organization in Mexico. Ms. De Angelo is now a choreographer, coach and runs her own nonprofit development company De Angelo Productions creating dance events for City Center and various dance festivals.

Alex Ewing, former Joffrey Ballet General Director

Alex Ewing is the former general director of the Joffrey Ballet who started with the company in 1956. It was his business savvy and connections that established the Joffrey Ballet as a nonprofit organization eligible for federal and corporate funding and secured a home for them at City Center in New York from 1966-1976. The son of legendary ballet impresario Lucia Chase of American Ballet Theater, Ewing is now the chancellor emeritus of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and author of a book about his mother, *Bravura!: Lucia Chase and the American Ballet Theatre*.

Mark Goldweber, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1975-1988; Ballet Master, 1996-2007

Mark Goldweber joined the Joffrey Ballet in 1975 as a member of Joffrey II, and he was invited to join the main Joffrey Ballet company in 1977. His first role was the "Boy in Blue" in the Joffrey recreation of Sir Frederick Ashton's *Les Patineurs*, which he later reprised for public television's *Dance in America* series. He was the founding Ballet Master for Oregon Ballet Theatre and was Ballet Master and Director of Apprentices for the Joffrey Ballet from 1996-2007 before accepting the positions of Ballet Master of Ballet West and Director of Ballet West II. Goldweber played himself in Robert Altman's film *The Company*, based on the Joffrey Ballet. The production was sad to learn that after a long battle with lymphoma, Mark Goldweber passed away on December 9, 2011, at the age of 53.

Meg Gurin-Paul, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1986-1994

Ms. Paul began her training at Southern Ballet Theater and was on full scholarship at the Joffrey Ballet School before joining the Joffrey Ballet, where her principal roles included the Sugar Plum Fairy in Robert Joffrey's *The Nutcracker* and Gerald Arpino's *Valentine*. On Broadway, she danced the roles of Brenda and Judy and was dance captain for Twyla Tharp's Tony award winning *Movin' Out*. Ms. Paul is currently the Director of Dance for Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts in Detroit, Michigan.

Christian Holder, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1966-1979

Christian Holder was a leading dancer with the City Center Joffrey Ballet from 1966 to 1979 where he worked with some of the choreographic masters of 20th century including Jerome Robbins, Agnes de Mille, Alvin Ailey, Kurt Jooss and Leonide Massine. He appeared as guest solo dancer with San Francisco Opera from 1979 – 1981 and choreographed their production of *The Merry Widow* with Dame Joan Sutherland. In 2006, he performed in the Joffrey Ballet's production of Frederick Ashton's *Cinderella* as one of the Ugly Sisters along with Gary Chryst. Holder has choreographed and designed costumes for the Joffrey Ballet, Washington Ballet, Ballet Concierto de Puerto Rico, Ballet Théâtre de Bordeaux and American Ballet Theater. He now resides in London.

Anna Kisselgoff, former Chief Dance Critic, *The New York Times*

Anna Kisselgoff was named Chief Dance Critic of *The New York Times* in 1977. Prior to this, she had been a dance critic and cultural news reporter for the paper and she continued as a staff writer until leaving *The Times* at the end of 2006. She still remains a contributor.

Suzanne Lopez, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1990-2008

Suzanne Lopez was a principal dancer of the Joffrey Ballet who performed in works including Arpino's *Birthday Variations*, *Kettentanz*, The Sugarplum Fairy in Joffrey's *Nutcracker*, and Marie Taglioni in Joffrey's *Pas des Deesses*, Ms Lopez appeared in a featured role in Robert Altman's *The Company*. She also worked directly with Gerald Arpino in staging and rehearsing his ballets including *Suite Saint-Saens*, *Light Rain*, and the Joffrey *Nutcracker*. She retired from the Joffrey in 2008, but continues to stage ballets on prominent companies in the U.S. and serves as répétiteur for the Arpino/Joffrey Foundation.

Lar Lubovitch, Choreographer

Born in Chicago, Lar Lubovitch was educated at the University of Iowa and the Juilliard School in New York where his teachers included Anthony Tudor, Jose Limon, Anna Sokolow and Martha Graham. He danced in numerous modern, ballet, jazz and ethnic companies before forming his own company, the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, in 1968.

Kevin McKenzie, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1974-1979

Kevin McKenzie was a leading dancer with both the Joffrey Ballet and the National Ballet of Washington before joining American Ballet Theatre as a Soloist in March 1979. He was appointed a Principal Dancer the following December and danced with the company until 1991. A native of Vermont, McKenzie received his ballet training at the Washington School of Ballet. In 1972, McKenzie was awarded a silver medal at the Sixth International Ballet Competition in Varna, Bulgaria. McKenzie was appointed Artistic Director of American Ballet Theatre in October 1992 and remains so today.

Francoise Martinet, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1956-1964

Francoise Martinet was born in Morocco, moving with her family to Spokane, Washington in 1949 where she studied dance with famed teacher Mary Anne Wells who is known as the teacher of Robert Joffrey and Gerald Arpino. She studied with Robert Joffrey in New York City around 1954 and was one of the first members of his newly formed company. Martinet joined the faculty of the University of Iowa Department of Dance in 1978 and remained there until her retirement in 1997.

Herbert Migdoll, long-time Joffrey Ballet photographer

Herbert Migdoll is a Chicago-based artist who has worked as the official photographer for the Joffrey Ballet for more than 40 years. He is now in charge of special projects photography with the company. Migdoll holds a design degree from the Cooper Union, New York City, and also pursued undergraduate studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of California Berkley. His paintings, graphics and photographs are represented in several museums, corporate and private collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Ikona Gallery, Venice, Italy. He received a Fulbright fellowship in photography (1970) and a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship in painting (1980). An experimental artist, Herbert Migdoll actively pursues his own art in various mediums.

Davis Robertson, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1991-2003

Davis Robertson trained at the Joffrey Ballet School and School of American Ballet before joining the Joffrey Ballet in 1991 where he danced for over a decade. During his tenure with the Joffrey, his principal roles included the Cavalier in Robert Joffrey's *The Nutcracker*, George Balanchine's *Prodigal Son*, Petruccio in John Cranko's *Taming of the Shrew*, Death in Kurt Jooss' *The Green Table*, and the Faun in the Joffrey's reconstruction of Vaslav Nijinsky's *L'Après-Midi D'un Faune*. Mr. Robertson has appeared in film, television and on Broadway in *Save the Last Dance*, *The Company*, *Law and Order*, *Movin' Out* and *Dirty Dancing*. Robertson is now a director of the Joffrey Ballet School in New York and is committed to continuing the vision of Robert Joffrey and Gerald Arpino.

Harriet Ross, Joffrey Ballet General Manager, 1995-2006

Harriet Ross served as General Manager at the Joffrey from its beginning in Chicago in 1995. She was responsible for touring, the artistic budget and contracting with various outside artists with whom the company worked. She oversaw two major motion pictures that involved the Joffrey: *Save the Last Dance* starring Julia Styles and Robert Altman's *The Company*, a film about a year in the life of the Joffrey Ballet. From 2005-2011, she served as Managing Director of The Gerald Arpino Foundation, an organization that owns and leases the rights to Gerald Arpino and Robert Joffrey's ballets.

Brunilda Ruiz, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1956-1964

Brunilda Ruiz received her early training from Robert Joffrey at the High School for the Performing Arts in New York City in the 1950s. She was one of the six founding members of the Joffrey Ballet. Today, she travels with her husband, Paul Sutherland, to set ballets on the nation's most prominent companies.

Bruce Sagan, Joffrey Ballet Board of Directors member

Bruce Sagan has been publisher of Chicago's Hyde Park Herald for 58 years. He has spent more than half a century reporting, writing and publishing for and about the neighborhoods and communities of the Chicago area. During his journalism career he has published newspapers in four states, been a partner of the English company that publishes the *Financial Times*, worked with *The New York Times* on developing their national edition and started a regional daily newspaper in the Chicago suburbs. He is on the board of directors of the Steppenwolf Theater Company, the Joffrey Ballet, the Chicago Public Library Foundation and the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts.

Willy Shives, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1999-2007; Ballet Master, 2008-present

Willy Shives began his dance training in his native south Texas before receiving his formal training with the School of American Ballet and the Harkness Ballet School on full scholarship in New York. His professional career began in 1981 with the Eglevsky Ballet. In 2003, Mr. Shives received the Dance Achievement Award from the Chicago Dance and Music Alliance and the Chicago Tribune named him "Chicagoan of the Year." In 2008, Mr. Shives became a ballet master for the Joffrey Ballet and remains so today.

Trinette Singleton, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1965-1970

Trinette Singleton began her professional career with the Joffrey Ballet in 1965 after attending their New York City school on full scholarship. As the lead dancer in Robert Joffrey's masterwork, *Astarte*, Singleton appeared on the cover of Time Magazine in 1968 and remained part of the company in various capacities until the mid-1980s. Singleton has toured throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico and Europe, performing in ballets by notable choreographers such as Joffrey, Arpino, Ashton, Balanchine, Cranko, DeMille, Jooss, Tharp and Tudor. She also

performed at the White House for two U.S. Presidents and King Olaf of Norway, and appeared on Broadway as part of *Nureyev and Friends*, a tribute to Diaghilev. She is currently the co-Artistic Director of Repertory Dance Theater in Allentown, PA.

Adam Sklute, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1985-2007

A native of Berkeley, California, Adam Sklute began dancing at the age of 16. He took early training at the Oakland Ballet and San Francisco Ballet schools, joining Joffrey II after only two years of formal study. Two years later he was asked to join the Joffrey Ballet as one of the last two artists personally chosen by Robert Joffrey. He was with the company for nearly 25 years, serving also as Ballet Master and then as Associate Artistic Director of the company. In 2007, he became Artistic Director of Ballet West. Sklute was listed as one of the “25 Movers and Shakers of the Utah Arts Scene” in 2007.

Paul Sutherland, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1961-1964

As an 18 year old ROTC lieutenant colonel in Fort Worth, Texas, Paul Sutherland was poised to start a scholarship at West Point and a military career when he saw his first ballet, Agnes de Mille’s *Rodeo*. He promptly informed his parents that he was not going to be a soldier, but a ballet dancer. Sutherland soon studied ballet with a passion and moved to New York in 1957 to join ABT. His first role? A cowboy in *Rodeo*! He later would dance with the Joffrey Ballet and the Harkness Ballet and has been the sole répétiteur authorized to teach deMille’s *Rodeo* since the choreographer herself appointed him to the position in 1979. He has been married to former Joffrey principal dancer Brunilda Ruiz for over 43 years.

Helgi Tomasson, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1962-1964

Born in Reykjavik, Iceland, Helgi Tomasson began his early ballet training with an Icelandic teacher and then joined the National Theatre's affiliated school, which was led by Danish instructors Erik and Lisa Bidsted. At 15, the emerging dancer began his professional career with the celebrated Pantomime Theatre in Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens. Two years later, Jerome Robbins met Tomasson and, impressed by his dancing, arranged a scholarship for him to study at the School of American Ballet in New York City. He began his professional career with the Joffrey Ballet and two years later joined The Harkness Ballet. He won the Silver Medal at the 1969 Moscow International Ballet Competition. Tomasson accepted the invitation from San Francisco Ballet to become artistic director in 1985 and remains there today.

Jonathan Watts, Founding Director, Joffrey II

Jonathan Watts met Robert Joffrey during his training at the O’Donnell Shurr Modern Dance School in New York in 1949 while still a student at the New York High School for the Performing Arts. He later joined the New York City Ballet at George Balanchine’s invitation in 1954, but returned as a guest artist to the Joffrey on several occasions. He was the founding director of Joffrey II, the apprentice program to the main company, for seven years.

Hedy Weiss, Theater and Dance Critic, *Chicago Sun-Times*

Hedy Weiss has been Theater and Dance Critic of the *Chicago Sun-Times* since 1984, reporting on local, national and international productions, as well as a wide range of other subjects including art and architecture, books, travel and international affairs. Born in New York, Weiss graduated from Hunter College with a degree in English literature and art history, and early on pursued a career as a dancer and choreographer, with professional training at the Metropolitan Opera and Joffrey Ballet Schools. She moved to Chicago in 1980 and worked for four years as an assistant professor at the Theatre School of DePaul University before turning to full-time journalism.

Ashley C. Wheeler, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1984-1989; Artistic Director, 2007-present

Born in Scotland and trained at the Royal Ballet School in England, Ashley C. Wheeler danced with Rudolph Nureyev in *Nureyev and Friends* at the London Coliseum, and on Nureyev's advice joined the London Festival Ballet performing in their large repertoire of classic and new works. He was asked to join the Joffrey Ballet by Gerald Arpino in 1985 and performed various works by American choreographers including William Forsythe, Gerald Arpino, Mark Morris, Paul Taylor, and Laura Dean. He joined the San Francisco Ballet in 1989 under the direction of former Joffrey dancer Helgi Tomasson, but returned to the Joffrey in 2007 as the new Artistic Director when Gerald Arpino retired.

Maia Wilkins, Joffrey Ballet Dancer, 1991-2008

Born and raised in Truckee, California, Maia Wilkins continues Gerald Arpino's legacy as a répétiteur for his works and the Gerald Arpino Foundation. She enjoys performing and teaching throughout the country. Wilkins has performed more Joffrey and Arpino ballets than any other ballerina and in 2004, Arpino created his duet, *Ruth, Ricordi per Due*, for Wilkins and her frequent partner Willy Shives. Wilkins loves dancing both on stage and off with her husband and fellow artist Michael Levine.

###