

2020 Spotlight Ballet Preliminary Panel

Jukka Aromaa is a former principal dancer with New York City Ballet, Finnish National Ballet and Deutsche Oper am Rhein Dusseldorf. He was a guest principal dancer with Deutsche Oper Berlin and English National Ballet. In 1980 he won First Prize at the Prix de Lausanne Competition and 1984 in Helsinki International Ballet Competition. Honors during Mr. Aromaa's long 25 year dancing career include the Benoit de la Dance award received in Bolshoi Theatre 1995. He served as Artistic Director of Finnish National Ballet School from 2003 to 2006. Currently, Aromaa teaches internationally and serves as a judge, lecturer and répétiteur for both the classical and Balanchine repertory.

Leslie Carothers-Aromaa is a former principal dancer with the Joffrey Ballet and Pennsylvania Ballet. She was featured on television in Dance in America's A Night at The Joffrey, televised on PBS. She has danced principal roles in works by George Balanchine, Sir Frederick Ashton, Jiri Kylian, Twyla Tharp, Anthony Tudor, John Cranko, and Mark Morris, amongst many others, and danced the leads in many of the full-length classical ballets, including Swan Lake, Giselle, Coppelia, Romeo and Juliet, and Sleeping Beauty. During her career, leading roles were created for her by Robert Joffrey, William Forsythe, Gerald Arpino, Dwight Rhoden, and others. Carothers-Aromaa has served as Dance Institute Director, Artistic Director, Ballet Chair, and dance faculty at The Colburn School of Performing Arts. Currently, she teaches both ballet and Zena Rommett Floor-Barre® nationally and internationally, and serves as a Mentor and Managing Board Member of the Zena Rommett Floor-Barre Foundation.

Ellen Bauer, danced professionally as a member of the National Ballet of Canada, Pacific Northwest Ballet and Los Angeles Ballet. Her principal roles have included many of Balanchine's master works: Allegro Brillante; Rubies, from the ballet, Jewels; Concerto Barocco, Raymonda Variations (after Petipa), Scotch Symphony, Square Dance, Swan Lake Act II, Valse Fantaisie, and Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux. Other repertoire includes leading roles in Coppelia, Don Quixote, Le Corsaire, The Nutcracker, Flower Festival Pas de Deux, among other ballets.

Antonio Lopez - former Principal Dancer with the San Francisco Ballet. Lopez has had roles created for him by choreographers such as Michael Smuin, William Christensen, and Jiri Kylian. He received an Emmy for his work in Michael Smuin's Emmy Award Winning A Song For Dead Warriors. Antonio's repertoire includes leads in Nutcracker, Cinderella, In the Night, Forgotten Land, Bolero, Spartacus, Don Juan and Beauty and the Beast. He recently created a new ballet for National Ballet de Mexico. Antonio choreographed four short pieces for the National Geographic television series "Party Like..." which were televised on "The Queen of France" and "A Roman Emperor" episodes. He teaches master classes nationally and maintains an on-going teaching relationship for Smuin Ballet in San Francisco and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago.