

Cleveland Ballet

“Celebrates the Stars”

The Cleveland Ballet hosted a cocktail party on April 16, at a private home in Brecksville overlooking the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, where guests had exclusive access to meet the creative team of “stars” behind its spring performance of George Balanchine’s masterpiece “Serenade” and a new work titled “Symphony of Life” from April 21-22.

Deborah Wingert, former New York City Ballet dancer and current co-artistic director of the Manhattan Youth Ballet, was chosen by the George Balanchine Trust to work with the Cleveland Ballet dancers in staging the ballet here in Cleveland. Wingert danced professionally at the New York City Ballet under the tutelage of the iconic Russian-born choreographer Balanchine when she was just 16. She and Cleveland Ballet Artistic Director Gladisa Guadalupe both studied at the School of American Ballet simultaneously.

Balanchine’s “Serenade” was first performed in 1934, by students of the School of American Ballet. It is the first original ballet he created in America and is one of the signature works of New York City Ballet’s repertory.

The company, now in its eighth season, continues to innovate by presenting live music with traditional classical ballet repertoire, but also by featuring new contemporary choreography created by young international artists, presented at Playhouse Square.



Caleb Young, Anna Segal, Gladisa Guadalupe, Ilya Zhivoy, Deborah Wingert, and Michael Krasnyansky

Under the direction of Guadalupe and Cleveland Ballet’s president and CEO, Michael Krasnyansky, the company commissioned its first-ever musical score by Israeli-based and critically-acclaimed classical composer Anna Segal, originally from Ukraine. The music is set to contemporary choreography by Ilya Zhivoy, an award-winning Russian dancer and choreographer formerly with the Mariinsky Theatre of Saint Petersburg. Zhivoy’s wife, Sonya Vartanyan, served as costume designer. The couple has worked extensively throughout Russia, Europe and the United States.

The new 25-piece Cleveland Ballet Orchestra was led by concertmaster Alexandra Preucil and Berlin-based conductor Caleb Young. Preucil is the former Assistant

Concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra, who now resides in Vienna. She has a long-time relationship with the Cleveland Ballet, as guest musician, consultant, and ballet student.

Known for his outstanding interpretations of American music, Young has gained international renown as one of the most exciting emerging American artists of today by combining European classical traditions and specific features of American music.

For its 2023-24 season, the company announced it will perform “Carmen” in September, “The Nutcracker” in December, and “Aurora: A Sleeping Beauty Story” in April 2024. STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY AN-DREA C. TURNER