

Dear NBS Supporters,

Welcome to your Fall 2020 Edition edition of Turnout, which marks the start of a new school year at Canada's National Ballet School. As with every September, the renewed energy of the new school year is palpable. But this year especially, there is also a sense of forward momentum as we build on the significant developments, strategic adaptations and critical initiatives of the past several months. Together, we are building on our work with renewed vitality and optimism.

As is so often the case, much of our optimism is derived from NBS dancers, many of whom are now transitioning to a combination of online and in-person programming. NBS' Associates Program and Adult Ballet Program have resumed classes with a full suite of online courses, as well as the option for participants to attend one in-person class per week. Similarly, cohorts of Professional Ballet Program students are pursuing their ballet training in-studio while completing their academic education online. We are particularly fortunate that our rigorous health and safety plan for dancers-in-training —developed in collaboration with the provincial government—has allowed for a small increase in enrollment in NBS' Professional Ballet Program and Post-Secondary Program, allowing the School to continue our work in making world-class training and support accessible to more gifted young artists.



NBS Cross Country 2020/21

Auditions for NBS' Professional Ballet and Teacher Training Programs will take place online this year. Learn more at www.nbs-enb.ca/crosscountryauditions

Excerpt from *Napoli*, Act III; Spring Showcase 2019.
Photo by Bruce Zinger.

The topic of accessibility brings me to a vital update, which pertains to NBS' commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI). Over the past several months, we communicated our broad plans to create systemic change by removing barriers and increasing access and inclusion in training and employment at NBS, within the Canadian dance sector, and within fellow performing arts training organizations across the country. And we articulated our goal to ensure that all people are represented within the NBS community, including those who have been historically and are currently under-represented, such as members of racialized and/or marginalized groups, the LGBTQ2S+ community and persons living with disability/ies. *(continued)*

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Today, I'd like to share some specific measures that NBS has taken so far:

- Formed an EDI Staff Committee, including two co-chairs and 11 members that represent a diverse sample of the NBS staff team.
- Established a dedicated EDI position: Natasha Findlay, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Lead.
- Made an inclusivity update to PBP uniforms: students are now encouraged to wear the uniform/dancewear and hairstyles that are most comfortable for them.
- Updated inventory at The Shoe Room: the retail outlet now carries a wider range of inventory, including offering dancewear and pointe shoes in a full range of colours onsite.
- Hired diverse external EDI Consultants, Artistic Advisors and Guest Teachers to assist with organizational change at NBS toward becoming an equity-informed School with equitable outcomes.



Pointe shoes on display in NBS' The Shoe Room

This update represents just one step in our long-term accountability measures, and I look forward to sharing more with you regularly. One method of sharing information that has been profoundly important to NBS for six decades has been events, where we invite our close community to gather at our campus at important occasions throughout the year. While our plans for the fall semester do not yet accommodate in-person gatherings, I am pleased to invite you to join us for a number of upcoming virtual events that are no less significant or informative. You will find details about the first of these events in this edition of Turnout.

As always, I extend my most heartfelt thanks for your vital support and commitment, and maintain my hope that you and your loved ones are safe and healthy.

With sincere respect and appreciation,

Mavis Staines | Artistic Director and CEO

Upcoming Events

Save the Date: Welcome Back!

Online event—Wednesday October 28, 2020 7:00 p.m.

Join us for an online gathering to share our gratitude, announcements and a discussion on key initiatives planned for the year ahead. Hosted by NBS students and featuring an in-depth conversation with Mavis Staines, Artistic Director, CEO and John Dalrymple, Executive Director – tune in to hear from various guests from the NBS community. Donors will be invited to submit questions or topics in advance, along with the electronic invitation to RSVP in the week ahead.

NBS Supporter's Meeting and Presentation

Online event—Thursday December 3, 2020 Evening

NBS' Supporter's Meeting will move to an online format this year, with all the important information, news and updates from NBS Leadership, including the Chair of the Board of Directors, that supporters have come to expect from this annual event. The event will also feature a presentation from NBS Professional Ballet Program students, including ballet variations. Donors will receive an electronic invitation to RSVP closer to the event.

Other News & Announcements

Thank you! – Your generous financial support will help talented young artists achieve their dreams of professional dance training, and inspire people of all ages and abilities to enrich their lives through dance.

While visitor access will likely remain restricted into the new school year, we hope to find opportunities to welcome you and our community of supporters back to the School as soon as it is safe to do so. Until then, we will continue to keep you at the heart of our community by sharing important news and updates.