

Los Gatos Ballet

Marcie Ryken, Artistic Director

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Associate Director at Los Gatos Ballet Stages Choreography at Exclusive Beijing Dance Academy

Los Gatos, CA – Los Gatos Ballet’s Associate Director, Raul Salamanca, returned from a month-long choreography project this past June in Beijing, China with the prestigious Beijing Dance Academy.

Mr. Salamanca was invited to partner with the world-renowned contemporary choreographer, Jorma Elo, to stage his work Over Glow, for the Beijing Dance Academy. Salamanca’s work as a stager included teaching upper-division students the choreography, counts and spacing of the ballet. He also handled the lighting and costume design. Salamanca worked previously with Elo during his time dancing with Boston Ballet. “Jorma was a catalyst for my interest in contemporary movement and choreography.”, according to Salamanca.

Mr. Salamanca’s opportunity to teach at the Beijing Dance Academy was quite an honor, as it has a reputation for creating some of the best dancers in the world. The Academy is a renowned institution of higher education for dance in China, which offers Masters and Bachelor degrees. There are over 2,000 students who attend the institute and admission is highly competitive. Mr. Salamanca worked with students aged 17-22 years, who are preparing for a professional career in dance. “The school and staff were extremely friendly and very respectful. The dancers were trained exquisitely and put in a lot of effort and hard work to get the steps and style of the choreography.”, says Salamanca.

Mr. Salamanca plans to bring this experience back to the Los Gatos Ballet community. “Having paid close attention to the ballet classes, I tried to pick up as much as I could to improve my skills

as a teacher. The combinations, corrections, musicality, syllabus, and style; all of it was really inspiring and refreshing to see. I look forward to sharing what I learned with the students at Los Gatos Ballet. I also used my experience in China as the inspiration for my next piece of choreography for Los Gatos Ballet.” This piece will premiere during the Informance for the Los Gatos Ballet Summer Intensive on Friday, July 22nd. The Summer Intensive Informance is an “informal-performance” in which Los Gatos Ballet dancers perform various works learned during their summer classes.

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About Los Gatos Ballet

Our mission is to inspire and cultivate an appreciation and love of dance within our local community by providing quality educational and training programs, superb performances, and collaboration with other artists and arts organizations. We are known for our delightful production of **The Nutcracker at the Flint Center in Cupertino**, have a repertoire of 5 full-length spring ballets and provide outreach programs in our community. For more information, visit: **LosGatosBallet.org**

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