GRAND PRIX
Dance open
AMERICA

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2026
IS PRESENTED TO

Susan Jaffe

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF
AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE

A Warm Welcome from the Founder.

GRAND PRIX DANCE OPEN AMERICA FINALS 2026.

It is a true joy and honor to be here with all of you.

Tonight, we are especially proud to present the **Lifetime Achievement Award** to one of the most influential figures in the world of dance, **Susan Jaffe.**

Her extraordinary career, artistry, and contributions continue to inspire dancers and audiences across the globe. We are truly privileged to recognize her with this well-deserved honor.

We also extend a warm welcome to our distinguished international jury, whose presence reflects the global spirit and artistic excellence that Dance Open America strives to uphold. Their diverse cultural backgrounds and wealth of professional expertise bring invaluable perspective to this celebration.

To the dancers, teachers, and school directors from around the world—thank you. Your passion, dedication, and belief in this mission are the heartbeat of Grand Prix Dance Open America. We are thrilled to welcome participants from Italy, Spain, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Canada, Colombia, Hungary, Taiwan, Mexico, Bulgaria, Brazil, Switzerland, Panama, England, and the United States.

At Dance Open America, our mission is clear: to discover and nurture the next generation of dance artists, celebrate cultural diversity, encourage innovation, and preserve the legacy of dance as a living, evolving art form.

In just six years, we have awarded nearly one million dollars in scholarship certificates, providing meaningful support to young dancers as they pursue life-changing opportunities and dreams.

This achievement would not be possible without the unwavering support of our partner organizations and the many individuals who believe in our vision. Your generosity continues to open doors and change lives.

A heartfelt thank you to the **Lauderhill Performing Arts Center**, as well as to the remarkable staff, sponsors, and supporters whose efforts have brought this event to life. Your commitment creates a lasting impact.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey.

Let the celebration of our **6th Anniversary** begin!

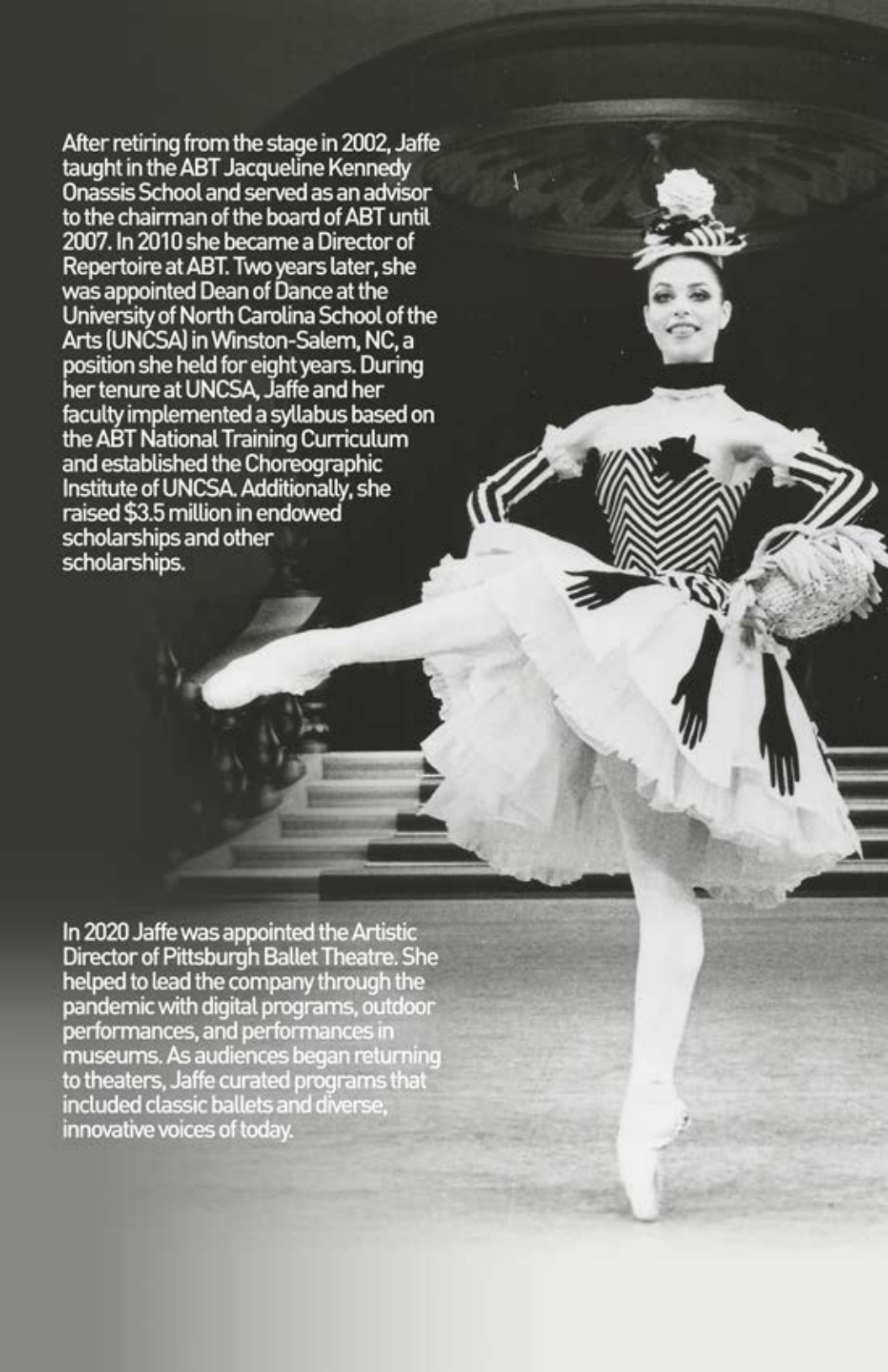
Deborah Marquez

SUSAN JAFFE

Artistic Director of American Ballet Theatre.
Lifetime Achievement 2026
Grand Prix Dance Open America.

Declared by The New York Times as "America's Quintessential American Ballerina," Susan Jaffe enjoyed a career as a Principal Dancer at American Ballet Theatre for 22 years. She performed on the international stage with the Royal Ballet, the Kirov Ballet, the Stuttgart Ballet, La Scala Ballet, Vienna State Opera Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, Royal Swedish Ballet, and the English National Ballet.

Her versatility as a dancer brought acclaimed interpretations to ballet classics, such as Swan Lake and The Sleeping Beauty, and dramatic works by Agnes de Mille, Antony Tudor, John Cranko, Ronald Hynd, and Kenneth MacMillan. She also worked with many prominent contemporary choreographers of her time, such as Twyla Tharp, Jerome Robbins, Merce Cunningham, Nacho Duato, Mark Morris, Ulysses Dove, and Jiří Kylián.



After retiring from the stage in 2002, Jaffe taught in the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School and served as an advisor to the chairman of the board of ABT until 2007. In 2010 she became a Director of Repertoire at ABT. Two years later, she was appointed Dean of Dance at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA) in Winston-Salem, NC, a position she held for eight years. During her tenure at UNCSA, Jaffe and her faculty implemented a syllabus based on the ABT National Training Curriculum and established the Choreographic Institute of UNCSA. Additionally, she raised $3.5 million in endowed scholarships and other scholarships.

In 2020 Jaffe was appointed the Artistic Director of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. She helped to lead the company through the pandemic with digital programs, outdoor performances, and performances in museums. As audiences began returning to theaters, Jaffe curated programs that included classic ballets and diverse, innovative voices of today.

Our Judges

ANLIN LI
Assistant Artistic Director
Texas Ballet Theater

LAUREN ANDERSON
Education & Community Engagement
Associate Director – Houston Ballet

ADAM SKLUTE
Artistic Director
Ballet West

ZOICA TOVAR
School Director of NW and SE Campuses
Washington Ballet

DARYL GRAY
International Acclaimed Choreographer
DOA Board of Directors

JULIANETTE N. ROSADO COLLAZO
Contemporary Choreographer

Guest Artist

AMANDA ROSE HALL
Global freelance artist and
educator

ALEJANDRO OLIVERA
Principal dancer
at Cincinnati Ballet

Romeo and Juliette Susan Jaffe and McKenzie

Apollo Susan Jaffe and Mijail Baryshnikov

Susan Jaffe

Our Scholarship Partners

OUR INTERNATIONAL DANCE COMMUNITY

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Academia de la Danza Mexicana
Academia Quijote En Danza
Albemarle Ballet Theatre
Alihaydee Carreno Ballet School
Andanza
Ballet 646
Ballet Escenario
BalletArrj Scola de Dança
Barbara Garza Ballet
Centro Danza
Chorea & Rhythmus
Conservatorio De Ballet Concierto
Cuban Classical Ballet of Miami
DA Dance And Arts Studio
Danceway
Danzafusion
Danzarte
Dart Dsp
Elevate Dance Company
Escuela De Danza Almudena Lobón
Escola De Dança E-Motion
Escuela Especializada en Bellas Artes MIguel A. Juliá Collazo
Estudio 4 Alto Rendimiento
Étoile Ballet
Fort Lauderdale Youth Ballet
Hollywood Ballet Academy
Innovaciones Danzares
L'Ecole De Ballet Classique
Mauro Ballet
Miami International Dance Academy
Next Generation Ballet
Ovations Dance Academy of Tampa
Pembroke Ballet
Pennsylvania Ballet Conservatory
Scuola Di Ballo Marina Genovesi
SJ Dance Company
SoFlo Ballet Academy
Stars Dance Studio
Step By Step
The Art Of Classical Ballet
The Sarasota Cuban Ballet School
Victoria's Ballet School

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We extend our sincere appreciation to our partners for their support during the Grand Prix Dance Open America Finals.

Special thanks to our official host hotel, Hyatt Place Fort Lauderdale/Plantation, and to our restaurant partners, Olive Garden - Italian Cuisine and Las Vegas - Cuban Cuisine, for their valuable contribution to this event.

Dancing Supplies Depot
"For the Love of Dance since 1979"

Thank you for your support

Luis Negrón
DANCE PHOTOGRAPHER

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