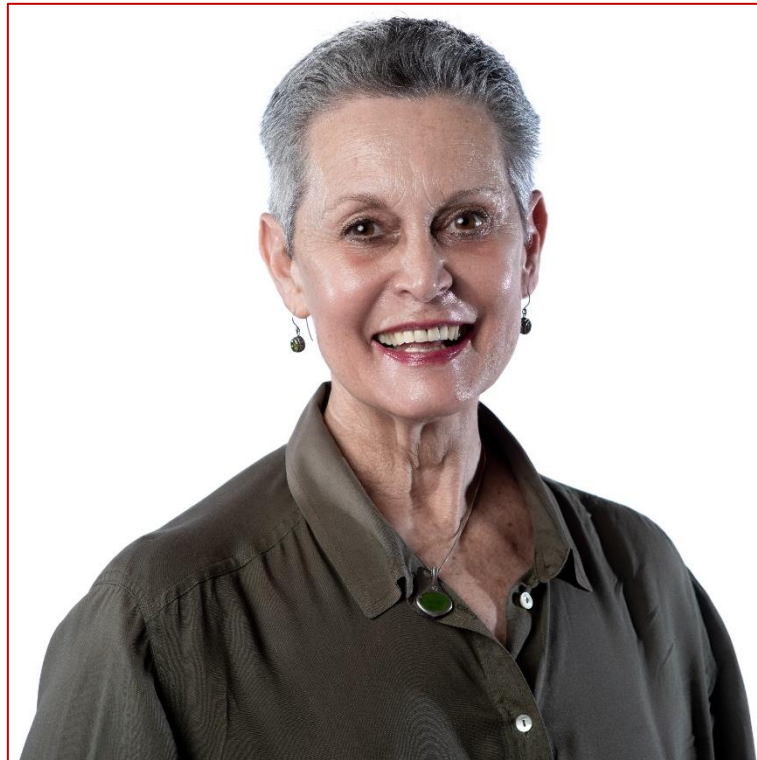




**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT
2022**



Esther Nasser
Chief Executive Officer

It is my privilege to report on Joburg Ballet's (JB) activities and achievements during 2022.

During the year under review we were able to start emerging from the restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic and adapting to life in a post-pandemic world. This has not, however, meant a "return to normal". Covid-19 has left us wounded and Joburg Ballet certainly faces a journey of healing and recovery.

January 2022 presented a difficult start to the year. A meeting was held on 27 January to discuss a new Addendum presented to Joburg Ballet by the Joburg City Theatres (JCT) management with reference to the 2020 Service Level Agreement.

The issues raised by the JCT Board were:

1. Progress of the Transformation Plan

2. The Memorandum of Incorporation (MOI)
3. The appointment of new members to the Joburg Ballet Board

The response to the Addendum was forwarded to the Joburg Theatre COO, Bridget Mashika, on 9 March in which she was made aware of the progress regarding these issues.

Joburg Ballet ended 2021 in the black and I would like to thank financial accountant Marina Korkie and Board Chair Melanie de Nysschen for their support and guidance.

TRANSFORMATION PLAN

The Joburg Ballet Transformation Plan (TP) proposal was presented by 21st Century on 16 March. The communication to Joburg Ballet staff and dancers was sent on 22 March. The TP project communication to employees at the end of this report outlines the decisions and the way forward.

The next step was a 2-day workshop on 13 and 14 April where the repositioning, restructuring and new organogram of JB's top management was debated and decided.

The review of the MOI and the appointment of new board members was intended to run alongside the transformation process. With the Transformation Plan implemented, the MOI was to be reviewed accordingly and new Board members introduced. The MOI was revised once the sign-off of the Transformation Plan had taken place.

Part B of the Organisational Design of the Transformation Plan was presented by 21st Century on 23 June. Once this had been discussed, the Transformation Plan was signed off and forwarded to the City and the Theatre and the Joburg Ballet Board began the implementation process.

The management, dancers and staff had several meetings in which they were informed of the process to date. A meeting with the Chairman of the JCT Board, Zane Meas, and representatives of the JCT Board was held with the Joburg Ballet organisation, including Board members.

Mr. Meas met with all stakeholders to discuss their involvement and expectations relating to the Joburg Ballet Transformation Plan. These bodies included the Friends of the Ballet (FOTB) and the South African Ballet Theatre Trust (SABTT). The Ball Family Foundation had a meeting with Joburg Ballet Board members Melanie de Nysschen, Iain MacDonald and Esther Nasser and a meeting with Bernice Feldshon of the Michel Tesson Trust also took place. Mr. Meas met with Iain MacDonald and Esther Nasser separately.

The signing off of the Micro Management structure awaits the finalisation of the job descriptions under the new titles of HEAD: Administration, HEAD: Artistic/Creative, HEAD: Training and Development, HEAD: Finance, and HEAD: Marketing under the guidance of Board member Lulu Letlape.

A third communication was forwarded to management, dancers and staff regarding the Joburg Ballet Transformation Implementation on 21 July.

INVESTIGATING BEHAVIOUR IN THE COMPANY

A Board resolution was passed to investigate behaviour in the company, led by the Board.

SEASON 1: EVOLVE

Joburg Ballet opened the long-awaited *Evolve* at the Joburg Theatre on 25 March, presenting eight performances through to 3 April. *Evolve* had originally been scheduled for 2021 but plans stalled in the face of the pandemic and the season was postponed to 2022. The season took R700 000 at the box office.

Evolve comprised three new works and an expanded revival of the classical *Paquita Grand Pas* which had first been presented by Joburg Ballet in 2015. The new works were *Legae* choreographed by Tumelo Lekana, *The Afterlife: Souls* choreographed by Shannon Glover and *The Game* choreographed by Mario Gaglione.



Nicole Ferreira-Dill (*Paquita Grand Pas*); Monike Cristina (*Legae*); Shana Dewey and Revil Yon (*The Afterlife: Souls*); Gabriel Fernandes (*The Game*) (Photos: Lauge Sorensen)

SEASON 2: LA TRAVIATA-THE BALLET

The second major season of 2022 was *La Traviata–The Ballet* by South African choreographer Veronica Paeper’s which was presented at the Joburg Theatre from 1 to 10 July. Despite being a highly acclaimed production, the season did not reach the anticipated target of R1 200 000. This could have been due the excessive loadshedding experienced during the early weeks of July. One performance had to be cancelled due to the malfunctioning of a substation which cost the company R174 000. The box office took R936 000 after the deduction of the R174 000 that had to be refunded to ticket buyers as a result of the cancelled performance.



Left: Monike Cristina and Ruan Galdino with dancers of the company; right: Shannon Glover and Revil Yon; *La Traviata-The Ballet*, 2022 (Photos: Lauge Sorensen)

SEASON 3: CINDERELLA

Joburg Ballet opened *Cinderella*, choreographed by Iain MacDonald, on Friday 30 September and the season ran until 9 October. We had to change starting times as a result of loadshedding as had been the case with *La Traviata-The Ballet*. Unfortunately the generator for the theatre has not yet been connected due to delays from City Power. Loadshedding negatively impacts box office income as it is potentially an impediment to bookings and can result in the loss of income due to cancellation of bookings already made. When dates are changed ticket holders have the option of changing performances or receiving a refund. *Cinderella* brought in R1 330 000 at box office with R845 000 received after deductions.



Nicole Ferreira-Dill, Shannon Glover, Monike Cristina, Tammy Higgins
Cinderella, 2022 (Photos: Lauge Sorensen)

INFERNO

Mario Gaglione's *Inferno*, which was successfully presented for the first time the Market Theatre in October 2021, was performed at the Sneddon Theatre in Durban on 16 October in collaboration with Ismail Mohamed and the Italian Cultural Institute.



Tumelo Lekana in *Inferno* (Photo: Ken Jerrard)

GRANTS, GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

1. Joburg Ballet received R100 000 from ABSA. It was agreed the money would go towards funding the participation in Joburg Ballet's Aspirant Programme of Nigerian dancer Olawale Olameda Ajoke to enhance Joburg Ballet's position on the African continent. As Ms Ajoke's South African visa was declined three times, the grant from ABSA will now go towards assisting promising aspirant dancers with accommodation and travel.
2. Joburg Ballet was named a beneficiary of R100 000 from the Cynthia Roeske Estate.
3. Joburg Ballet was awarded R300 000 by the Chiappini Ballet Trust.

4. Joburg Ballet received an additional R435 000 from the theatre with its new tranche. As the 16-seat bus was incurring repair costs every month, it was decided by the CEO, Chair and Financial Accountant to invest in a new bus which was delivered on 23 September.

NEW WEBSITE DEVELOPER

At the end of 2021 Joburg Ballet appointed a new website developer, ECAT, and I would like to thank Board member Rethabile Kikine, Jonathan Hurwitz and the team that participated in the selection process.

PROMOTIONS AND AWARDS

The following promotions and awards were announced from the stage on the opening night of *Evolve*:

- Monike Cristina to Principal
- Ivan Domiciano to Senior Soloist
- Armando Barros, Gabriel Fernandes and Cristina Nakos to Soloist
- Chloé Blair and Darragh Hourrides to Senior Corps de Ballet
- Nina Simpson to Corps de Ballet
- The Giselle Award to travel agent Helen Mina of Bon Voyage Travel Agency. This award is made annually to outside partners and service providers who deliver a standard and commitment to the company consistently above and beyond the norm.
- The Madge Cade Awards to Darragh Hourrides and Tumelo Lekana. These awards are made to younger dancers in the company in recognition of excellence; in addition to a signed, numbered lithograph of the award sculpture, the award includes R10 000.



The promoted dancers take a bow, front row left to right: Armando Barros, Ivan Domiciano, Gabriel Fernandes, Monike Cristina, Cristina Nakos, Darragh Hourrides, Chloé Blair and Nina Simpson (Photo: Lauge Sorensen)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ms. Rethabile Kikine resigned from the Board effective 31 March 2022.

Ms. Lulu Letlape was appointed to the Board effective June 2022.

Adv. Jean Meiring was appointed to the Board effective September 2022.

Resolutions were passed at the Board meeting on 15 October 2022 appointing the following to the Board:

Mr. Mavuso Shabalala

Mr. Nkopane Maphiri

Ms. Lufuno Mathuba

DEPARTURES AND NEW APPOINTMENTS

In the period covered by this report, Joburg Ballet said goodbye to two long-serving members of the company, Shana Dewey and Edgar Moagi.

- Senior soloist Shana Dewey made her mark in a wide range of leading and supporting roles. We thank Shana for her outstanding services to Joburg Ballet and wish her every success for the future.
- Office and ticketing manager Edgar Moagi left Joburg Ballet after many years with the company. Often first port of call for members of the public in interactions with Joburg Ballet, Edgar was known for his kindness and willingness to assist, qualities he also extended to his colleagues.

Also leaving the company during 2022 was corps de ballet dancer Nina Simpson.

We welcomed to Joburg Ballet:

- Futhi Zwane (interim office and ticketing manager)
- Tammy Higgins (senior soloist)
- Tayla De Bie and Luhle Mtati (Junior Corps de Ballet)
- Thabani Ntuli (ad hoc dancer from 15 August to 14 October)
- Taliah Coleman, Josephine Delpont, Daniel Levy, Kayleigh Smith and Lisa Stapelberg (Aspirant dancers)

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DANCE TRUST (SANDT)

An invitation was extended to four of our senior dancers – Shannon Glover, Revil Yon, Monike Cristina and Ruan Galdino – to perform with the South African National Dance Trust (SANDT) at the Theatre on the Bay in Cape Town from 17 to 29 October and at The Playhouse in Durban from 15 to 19 December. In the event, Shannon Glover was indisposed and was replaced by Darragh Hourrides. The programme included dancers and companies from South Africa and abroad. The contributions by the Joburg Ballet dancers were warmly received by critics and the public.



Left to right: Monike Cristina, Ruan Galdino, Darragh Hourrides, Revil Yon (Photos: Lauge Sorensen)

JOBURG BALLEt RAW

On 11 and 12 June, Joburg Ballet presented Joburg Ballet RAW 3: A Showcase for New Choreography in the company's studios. An initiative designed by artistic director Iain MacDonald to give choreographers a platform to create new works in a setting where the audience has the opportunity to interact with the process, RAW 3 showcased new ballets created by Thabang Mabaso, Mbongeni Moyake, Bruno Miranda and Donavin Ciatello. This was the third iteration of the RAW project.



Left to right: Monike Cristina and Bruno Miranda in *Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix* by Thabang Mabaso; Darragh Hourrides and Bruno Miranda in *The 3rd Day* by Mbongeni Moyake; Chloé Blair in *Hidden* by Bruno Miranda; Ruan Galdino and cast in *Paraluein* by Donovin Ciatello (Photos: Lauge Sorensen)

CAPE TOWN

I travelled to Cape Town in July, attending the ZAMA senior students' competition in Gugulethu. This is a school Joburg Ballet needs to identify for the company auditions. The level of teaching is excellent and the talent more than acceptable for the Aspirant Course and Junior Corps de Ballet. Contact was made with returning South African Dane Hurst who performed with Rambert Dance Company and Phoenix Dance Theatre in the UK, was artistic director of Phoenix Dance Company in 2021 and 2022 and is a choreographer of note. He has been appointed artistic director of Jazzart in Cape Town and it would be wonderful to have him as a choreographer for Joburg Ballet.

I approached Lara Foot, CEO of the Baxter Theatre, to give Joburg Ballet a slot in 2023 to perform *La Traviata-The Ballet* in the Pam Golding Theatre. Dates discussed were 24 to 29 July 2023 but it has transpired that a Joburg Ballet season at the Baxter Theatre at that time would clash with a season of *Swan Lake* at the Artscape Opera House by the St. Petersburg Ballet Theatre. This would make a July season unsuitable for Joburg Ballet. Alternative dates of 13 to 18 November have been identified.

I attended Cape Town City Ballet's *Romeo and Juliet* with both company dancers and guest artists.

LONDON

My visit to London from 13 to 20 October yielded positive and exciting results in the areas of the wellness, development and training programmes to be introduced under the new structure over the next three years as well as teaching, coaching, choreography, invitations and new work for Joburg Ballet. A report will follow once the Board has approved the recommendations made.

DIS-CHEM

Dis-Chem requested a pas de deux for the Sandton City store on 30 July for their Million Comforts Campaign for girls. Nicole Ferreira-Dill and Armando Barros obliged and received a warm welcome from the staff and shoppers.

TEENAGE EMPOWERMENT FOUNDATION

Nozipho Mhlambi arranged with Hillbrow's Teenage Empowerment Foundation to attend a rehearsal of *Cinderella* on 10 September. A wonderful time was had by all. This is a worthwhile Foundation with which to build a working relationship.

BRAZIL DAY OF INDEPENDENCE

The company's Brazilian dancers attended the Brazil Day of Independence with the CEO on 7 September where it was decided we would meet after the Brazilian elections in October to discuss a possible tour to Brazil by Joburg Ballet. Our Brazilian dancers performed at the Brazilian Embassy's concert at the Linder Auditorium on 10 September accompanied by the Buskaid Ensemble.

VYVYAN LORRAYNE NIEMINEN

Joburg Ballet hosted a memorial for South African dancer and teacher Vyvyan Lorraine Nieminen (1939-2022) in our downstairs studios on Sunday 25 September. Under the name Vyvyan Lorraine she had a distinguished 22-year career with The Royal Ballet. Following her retirement from the stage, she returned to South Africa where she was an admired teacher at the National School of the Arts.

FLUWEEL

The Chair extended an invitation to Joburg Ballet to perform at the Marcellus Theatre at Emperor's Palace on 29 October in the production of *Fluweel*.

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Joburg Ballet performed an abridged version of *Cinderella* at the Festival of Lights at the Johannesburg Zoo from 25 November to 4 December 2022. As this takes place in an outdoor venue, many of the scheduled performances had to be cancelled due to rain. Participation in the Festival of Lights has been a feature of Joburg Ballet's schedule for several years.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITION

The advertisement for the CEO position will appear from the beginning of January 2023. Applicants will be interviewed by the end of March 2023 and an appointment made by the end of March 2023 following which the positions of Artistic Director, Human Resources (HR) and Marketing will be advertised.

DANCER RECRUITMENT

After discussion with the Artistic Director, it was decided Joburg Ballet would go on an active drive to identify aspirants to train and dancers for seasonal contracts besides the annual auditions.

JOBURG BALLETS SCHOOL

The presentation by the Joburg Ballet School and Satellite Schools in the studio on 26 November was well presented and showed a marked improvement in the standard of the students.



Students of the Joburg Ballet School (Photos: Lauge Sorensen)

FRIENDS OF THE BALLET

The Friends of the Ballet had their year-end function in the Joburg Ballet studios on 27 November after a performance of *Inferno* and a pas de deux, *The Prayer*. The Friends presented all management, dancers and staff with cash gifts.

JOBURG BALLET DANCERS PERFORM IN COPENHAGEN

Following an invitation from Peter Bo Bendixen, artistic director of Tivoli Ballet Theatre in Copenhagen, dancers Nicole Ferreira-Dill and Armando Barros performed in *The Nutcracker* at the Tivoli Theatre from 7 to 17 December. Our artistic director accompanied the dancers and was invited to teach ballet classes while in Copenhagen.

YOUTH DANCE COMPANY OF TSHWANE

Dancer Revil Yon performed in *The Nutcracker* with the Youth Dance Company of Tshwane at the South African State Theatre from 30 November to 3 December.

WORLD BALLET DAY

Joburg Ballet participated in World Ballet Day, a streamed event featuring more than sixty international dance companies, on 2 November 2022. Following an inauspicious first showing in World Ballet Day 2021, Joburg Ballet substantially enhanced the company's showing in World Ballet Day 2022 in a process managed by publications and marketing administrator Jonathan Hurwitz and hosted by artistic director Iain MacDonald.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2023

Next year promises to be a bumper year for Joburg Ballet, starting with the three-part *Dialogues* in March (Joburg Theatre) and continuing with *Romeo and Juliet* in July (Joburg Theatre), *Don Quixote* in October (Joburg Theatre), *La Traviata-The Ballet* in November (Baxter Theatre, Cape Town) and *The Nutcracker* in December (The Playhouse, Durban).



Left: Monike Cristina and Ruan Galdino in *La Traviata-The Ballet*; right: Shannon Glover and Ruan Galdino in *Don Quixote* (Photos: Lauge Sorensen)

FINANCES AND AUDIT

I am able to report that the finances of the company are in good order. The annual audit by undertaken by Mazars.

THANK YOU

Joburg Ballet extends its gratitude to our stakeholders, sponsors and supporters for their generosity during 2022. We look forward to bringing the joy and magic of dance to our audiences across South Africa in 2023.

I extend my personal thanks to the Board, Management, Dancers and Staff of Joburg Ballet for their passion and commitment and for all they do to contribute to the success of the company.

ESTHER NASSER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Date of this document: 29 March 2023