

VITA



ARTS

Take A Masterclass With A Prima Ballerina

JANUARY 18, 2022



SHARE:

Vancouver-based prima ballerina Chan Hon Goh is bringing her [Canadian Masterclass Series](#) to 17 cities across Canada between January 23 and March 11, 2022, along with two scholarship opportunities. Renowned for her prolific career as a principal dancer with the National Ballet of Canada and her work as director of Goh Ballet Academy, Chan Hon Goh is providing this opportunity for mentorship to dance students looking to bridge the gap from student to professional. We chatted with Chan to find out more. —*Vita Daily*

What does it take become one of Canada's Prima Ballerinas?

Well, there is no formula here but most definitely, it takes a lot of hard work, perseverance and talent. Everything from practising to finding the mental strength to constantly strive to be better makes us life long learners and unrelenting artists. Being a ballerina is not only a career, it is your life.

You also have a great passion and commitment to mentoring and diversity. Where do these values come from, and how do they inform your work?

The ability for me to give back and mentor the next generation of dancers is my great privilege. This is an artform passed down from one generation to the next with homage to tradition but with a need for innovation. I continue to learn how I can best support the students that I mentor through their diverse and individual needs. In order for classical ballet to continue to be relevant, I strengthen the mindset to be open to new possibilities but never at the sacrifice of standard. My values mostly come from my own experiences of being the first Principal Dancer of Chinese Heritage at the National Ballet of Canada and those that I have witnessed in pursuit of producing the best work possible.

Congratulations on the return of your Canadian Masterclass Series! Please tell us what this series is about, who it is for and how we can access it.

The Canadian Masterclass Series is definitely a highlight of my annual projects and this year, I am thrilled to offer classes in person (in studio) and online. Open to students of two age groups in all 17 cities.



How is the Swan Lake repertoire piece that's being used in this series integral for all dancers looking to rejuvenate their performance skills?

Swan Lake is possibly the most recognizable repertoire in classical ballet history and I would like to introduce sections of this iconic ballet suitable to the two age groups to inspire performance aspirations which they can take with them to use in any repertoire. To bring to life story and characterization as well as to express through swan movement to show lyricism are some of the elements.

With the world gradually embracing a return to live performances, how do you plan to mentor participants on how to rekindle the vibrancy of performing variations?

Much of this will be to coax a level of confidence and belief in our own individuality. Nerves and anxiety are sometimes naturally associated with performance and since we have been away from the stage for a long while, I hope to empower and provide strengthening tools for each dancer to dance with joy and confidence when we are back on stage.

The scholarship component sounds very exciting! What are the two funding opportunities available, and to whom, through the Canadian Masterclass Series?

I am truly appreciative of our presenters and sponsors, Goh Ballet Canada Society, RBC and Reitman's Canada who have enabled scholarship awards totalling \$10,000. The National Scholarship Award is sponsored by the Goh Ballet Canada Society is available to any student taking part in the class, they would automatically be eligible. The Reitman's Diversity Scholarship is available to gifted and

persevering students who belong to or identify with underrepresented populations in the art of classical ballet. Students would apply for this with the support of their dance school.

Why, in your opinion, is diversity so important to/in dance?

Diversity and inclusivity is important in all professions and in classical ballet, we have noticed certain barriers which deter full potential to success. As a part of the Canadian Masterclass Series we are working hard to assist identify these barriers and to offer support. Classical Ballet should be enjoyed by everyone and all artistic talents need to be nurtured.

Additionally, why is accessibility to dance important, and what steps can be taken to ensure more people can access dance?

One of our first steps is to offer financial assistance and opportunities for representation. We need to continue to do much more.

gohballet.com