

Born in Vancouver, Simone Orlando received her early dance training at the Carisbrooke School of Dance, the Vancouver Academy of Dance, and the Goh Ballet Academy. She completed her training at the National Ballet School in Toronto and subsequently joined the National Ballet of Canada in 1989 under the direction of Reid Anderson whereas a young professional she danced a wide range of repertoire from the ballets of John Cranko and Kenneth MacMillan to those of George Balanchine and Glenn Tetley.

In 1995, Robert Desrosiers, one of Canada's most innovative and imaginative choreographers, invited her to join his company. While with Desrosiers Dance Theatre, she originated roles in several new productions and toured to Brazil and Aruba. In 1996, Ms. Orlando joined Ballet British Columbia under the direction of John Alleyne where she danced for twelve years as one the company's most celebrated principal artists. She has performed in theatres and festivals around the world including The Kennedy Centre, The Joyce Theatre, The Bayerische Staatsoper, The Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Cervantino Festival, Canada Dance Festival, and Ballet Expo Seoul.

While dancing with Ballet BC, Ms. Orlando was prominently featured in new creations by John Alleyne, garnering ovations and accolades for her performances as Blanche Dubois in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Puck in *The Faerie Queen*, Fate in *Carmina Burana*, and the Elder in *The Rite of Spring*. She has also created roles with James Kudelka, Crystal Pite, Dominique Dumais, Mikko Nissenen, and Jean Grand-Maitre and has been featured in the works of William Forsythe, Paul Taylor, Nicolo Fonte, Jiri Kylian, Martha Graham, and Twyla Tharp, among others.

Ms. Orlando's choreographic explorations began in 1997. Praised for her mature and sensitive ideas, vision, musicality, and delineation of movement and space, her work has been presented at the Vancouver International Dance Festival, Dancing on the Edge, the Chutzpah Festival, Romp!, and Dances for a Small Stage. She has received numerous commissions including those from Ballet BC, Ballet Kelowna, Toronto Dance Theatre, Move: the company, the Turning Point Ensemble, Dancers Dancing, and a short dance film, *Chimère*, for BRAVO! TV. She has also created, co-produced and performed in a short dance film, *Duet*, for CODE Motion Pictures for the Vancouver 2010 Cultural Olympiad.

Ms. Orlando was the inaugural recipient of the Performing Arts Commission at the 2004 Vancouver Arts Awards and won the prestigious 2006 Clifford E. Lee Choreography Award for which she created the work, *Winter Journey*, at the Banff Centre. In 2009, she received a Fellowship Initiative Grant from the New York Choreographic Institute, an affiliate of New York City Ballet, to develop new choreography on the dancers of Ballet BC. After winning the 2013 Pretty Creatives International Choreographic Award, she travelled to Portland, Oregon to create a new work at Northwest Dance Project.

Ms. Orlando has also enjoyed teaching and setting repertoire on the dancers of Ballet BC and the pre-professionals in the Ballet BC Mentor Program and Summer Dance Intensive. She has been invited to guest teach, choreograph, and coach at schools such as the Goh Ballet Academy and The Richmond Academy of Dance.

In 2010, Ms. Orlando travelled to Germany to mentor with Reid Anderson, Artistic Director of Stuttgart Ballet. Following this, she was invited to direct and produce the Dancer Transition Resource Centre's 25th Anniversary Gala in Vancouver, which brought together over 50 artists and guest speakers. To further support her career objective of Artistic Director of a dance company, Ms. Orlando entered the Business Management diploma program at the British Columbia Institute of Technology and graduated with distinction in June 2014.

During her tenure at Ballet Kelowna, Ms. Orlando has brought over 40 new works into the Company's repertoire including two full-length ballets. She was the recipient of the City of Kelowna's 2017 Honor in the Arts Award and she served as a member of the BC Arts Council from 2018-2024.