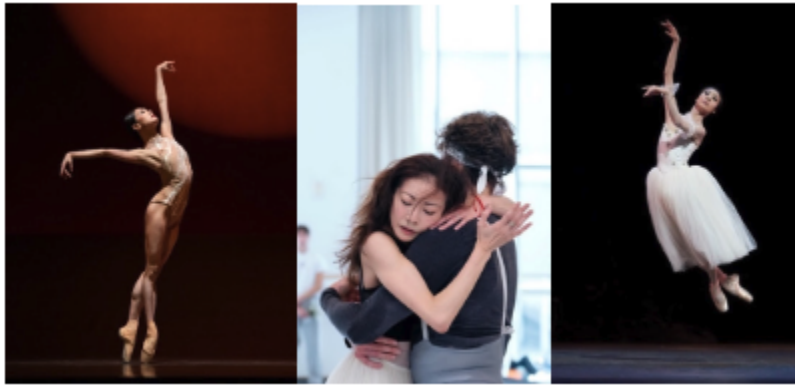




SAN FRANCISCO BALLET  
TAMARA ROJO, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Tan in Edwaard Liang's *The Infinite Ocean* // © Erik Tomasson; Tan with Aaron Robison in Ashton's *Marguerite and Armand* // © SF Ballet, photo by Lindsey Rallo; Tan in Helgi Tomasson's *Giselle* // © Erik Tomasson

**PRINCIPAL DANCER YUAN YUAN TAN TO GIVE FINAL PERFORMANCE  
WITH SAN FRANCISCO BALLET  
IN *MARGUERITE AND ARMAND*, FEBRUARY 14 AT 7:30 PM**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, January 12, 2024—[San Francisco Ballet](#) (SF Ballet) Principal Dancer Yuan Yuan Tan will give her final performance with San Francisco Ballet on Wednesday, February 14 at 7:30pm, dancing the role of Marguerite in Sir Frederick Ashton's *Marguerite and Armand* at the War Memorial Opera House. Tan will also dance with former SF Ballet Principal Dancer Tiit Helimets in a selection from Helgi Tomasson's *7 for Eight* at the [2024 Opening Night Gala](#) on Wednesday, January 24, 2024.

"I am indebted to my mentors and teachers, whose wisdom, encouragement, and belief in my potential have been instrumental in my success," said **Ms. Tan**. "To my dancer colleagues and collaborators, thank you for the shared moments of triumph. Through collective dedication and hard work we have created a legacy that goes beyond individual accomplishments. Finally, to the San Francisco audiences over the last three decades, I express my sincere thanks. Your belief in me has been a driving force, and I am grateful for the inspiration you have provided. As I reflect on the years gone by and enter the next stage of my career, I am reminded of the importance of contributing to the growth and success of others and inspired to continue making a positive impact in ballet and beyond."

“Yuan Yuan has made an extraordinary contribution to San Francisco Ballet and to the global community of artists and has inspired generations of ballerinas and audience members. I look forward to following her future endeavors,” said **SF Ballet Artistic Director Tamara Rojo**.

Born in Shanghai, Tan joined SF Ballet as a soloist in 1995 and was promoted to principal dancer in 1997, making her the youngest and first Chinese principal dancer in the company’s history. Her unprecedented 29-year career at SF Ballet has exemplified her devotion to dance and a passion to create art that is elegant, human, and astonishing. Her repertoire encompasses nearly 100 classical, neoclassical, and contemporary ballets choreographed by George Balanchine, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, John Neumeier, Christopher Wheeldon, Helgi Tomasson, Yuri Possokhov, Edwaard Liang, and Wayne McGregor, among others. Most notably, she has memorably interpreted classical characters such as Giselle, Aurora, and Odette/Odile, as well as contemporary characters such as the Little Mermaid, Tatiana, and the Princess (*RAkU*).

As an international ambassador of ballet, she is a role model for and symbol of ballet across the world. Since 2002, she has served as the artistic director and co-choreographer for the *Tan Yuan Yuan and Her Friends* production in China. In 2016, she established the Tan Yuan Yuan International Ballet Art Studio in partnership with the Shanghai Theater Academy, dedicated to building a community of ballet exchange, creation, teaching, and performance. This community of patrons promoted ballet as a popular art form in China, enhanced cultural exchange between the United States and China, and gave rise to SF Ballet’s first two tours to China in 2009 and 2015. She has published ballet books; served as a dance instructor training children, adults, professionals, and amateurs; and given numerous lectures and seminars on ballet—touching audiences globally.

Tan’s remarkable artistry and the inspiration she imparts on aspiring dancers continue to define the role of a principal dancer. She has been awarded the Mayor of San Francisco Art Award on two separate occasions, in 2018 and in 2022. Former San Francisco Mayor Mark Farrell noted “Her grace, skill, versatility, and strength have helped her become the first Chinese prima ballerina in the United States and one of the greatest Chinese ballerinas of all time. She has gracefully served as cultural ambassador for San Francisco and the United States. We are immensely grateful for her contributions to our city’s cultural history.” Tan received SF Ballet’s inaugural Silver Artists Society award in 2022, recognizing her 27th anniversary with the Company and longstanding contributions to SF Ballet.

Tan was the first Asian dancer appearing in the World Star Show in Prague. Her appearance on TEDxShanghai in 2016 titled “My Life as a Ballerina” was critically received and garnered her the reputation as the “irreplaceable pride of China on the global stage.” In 2004, Tan was featured on a cover of *Time* as a “Hero of Asia;” named one of the world’s most influential

Chinese people for her contribution to the arts by Hong Kong's Phoenix TV in 2015; was honored with the "You Bring Charm to the World" award from HKSTV in 2017; and in 2018, appeared on the Chinese cultural program *The Reader*. Chelsea Clinton featured Tan in her 2018 children's book *She Persisted Around the World*, alongside other female leaders in science, the arts, sports, and activism who are role models in their determination to break barriers and change the status quo.

Tickets to Yuan Yuan Tan's farewell performance on February 14 may be purchased online at [sfballet.org](https://sfballet.org) or by calling [415-865-2000](tel:415-865-2000), Monday through Friday from 10 am to 4 pm Pacific.

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**ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO BALLET**

San Francisco Ballet is a leading ballet company and trailblazer in dance locally, nationally, and internationally. Performing, commissioning, and collaborating with exceptional artists in dance and across disciplines, SF Ballet balances an innovative focus on new and contemporary choreography with a deeply held dedication to the classics. SF Ballet is a catalyst for the future of ballet by cultivating creativity, bringing dance of the highest caliber to a wide audience, and providing exceptional training opportunities for the next generation of professional dancers in its world-renowned School.

Since its founding in 1933 and as the oldest professional ballet company in the United States, the Ballet has been an innovator in the artform and an originator of beloved cultural traditions, from staging the first American production of *Swan Lake* to bringing an annual holiday *Nutcracker* to U.S. audiences.