

THE 2016-2017 SEASON OF LES GRANDS BALLETS CANADIENS DE MONTREAL MARKS THE COMPANY'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY

A season of emblematic works as a final farewell to Gradimir Pankov

Montreal, April 5, 2016—Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal is delighted to unveil the program of its 60th season. This very special season will be the last overseen by Gradimir Pankov, the company's Artistic Director for the last 18 years. For the occasion, he wished to present a selection of emblematic works. "For this goodbye, I invite you to relive some of the

pivotal moments in our history and some of our greatest triumphs," explained Pankov, who will pass on the torch to a new artistic director next season. "Dance will remain forever in my heart; may it continue to inspire you, one and all."



On the program are two absolute favourites from Les Grands Ballets' repertoire: Jean-Christophe Maillot's *Romeo and Juliet* and Ohad Naharin's *Minus One*, as well as a pair of classics, *Swan Lake* and *Le Mariage de Figaro*, performed by two prestigious ballet companies: the Perm Opera Ballet and the National Ballet of Ukraine. Finally, to Jiří Kylián falls the honour of closing the season with two jewels from his repertoire, *Falling Angels* and *Evening Songs*, which will share the bill with Stephan Thoss' *Searching for Home*, yet another of the company's triumphs. Not forgetting, of course, *The Nutcracker*, so dear to Montrealers, which will once again illuminate the holiday season for young and old alike. The 2016-2017 season will also mark the return of the orchestra (and choir) of Les Grands Ballets, as five of the six productions feature live music.



"Thus with a kiss I die."

ROMÉO & JULIETTE

BY JEAN-CHRISTOPHE MAILLOT

Based on the tragedy by William Shakespeare

Music by Serge Prokofiev

With Les Grands Ballets Orchestra

October 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 27 and 28, 2016

Théâtre Maisonneuve, Place des Arts

With this mythical love story, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal will launch its 60th season. Jean-Christophe Maillot's *Romeo and Juliet*, based on Shakespeare's immortal play, will start the ball rolling on October 13 at the Théâtre Maisonneuve of Place des Arts. Serge Prokofiev's magnificent score will be performed by Les Grands Ballets Orchestra.

With *Roméo & Juliette*, French choreographer Jean-Christophe Maillot has created one of his masterworks, originally produced in 1996 for the Ballets de Monte-Carlo (where he has been the artistic director since 1993), which was awarded Russia's prestigious Benois Prize for Best Choreography. His interpretation of the tragedy of the lovers of Verona, directly inspired by Prokofiev's musical structure, underscores the duality and ambiguity of adolescence. *Roméo & Juliette* captures the very essence of Shakespeare, with unadorned and luminous sets designed by artist Ernest Pignon-Ernest. A work of rare beauty, which shows no signs of aging!



PHOTO: DAMIAN SIQUEIROS / ZETAPRODUCTION.COM
DANSEURS / DANCERS: RUBÉN JULLIARD & ÉMILY HE

Pure enchantment

THE NUTCRACKER

BY FERNAND NAULT

Music by P. I. Tchaikovsky

With Les Grands Ballets Orchestra

December 10 to 30, 2016

Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, Place des Arts

Since 1964, this marvellous ballet choreographed by Fernand Nault, based on the Hoffmann tale with music by Tchaikovsky, has continued to draw record crowds. Children love it, and parents return year after year. Let yourself be swept away by the magic of *The Nutcracker*. Travel to the fairy-tale Lands of Snow and Sweets. Rediscover your inner child with this timeless classic of the holiday season. Still going strong after 53 years!



PHOTO: DAMIAN SIQUEIROS / ZETAPRODUCTION.COM
DANSEURS / DANCERS: SAM COLBEBY & MAHOMI ENDOH



A jewel of the classical repertoire

SWAN LAKE

BY MARIUS PETIPA AND LEV IVANOV

Adapted by Natalia Makarova

Music by P. I. Tchaikovsky

With Les Grands Ballets Orchestra

February 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26, 2017

Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, Place des Arts

The Perm Opera Ballet, renowned for its dancers' impeccable technique, is making its first appearance in Montreal with a monumental work from the classical repertoire, a pinnacle of Romantic ballet. This version of *Swan Lake* by Natalia Makarova, a former principal dancer of the Kirov Ballet and Royal Ballet of London, will delight ballet enthusiasts and all those wishing to discover an undisputed masterpiece, performed with the soul and lyricism of the Russian school. A red-letter day for all ballet-lovers!



PHOTO: BALLET DE L'OPÉRA DE PERM
MONTAGE / EDITING: DAMIAN SIQUEIROS / ZETAPRODUCTION.COM

A cult favourite

MINUS ONE

BY OHAD NAHARIN

Set to diverse musical pieces

March 23, 24, 25 30, 31, April 1, 2017

Théâtre Maisonneuve, Place des Arts

If there is a cult favourite in the repertoire of Les Grands Ballets, one that has been presented worldwide, it would be Ohad Naharin's *Minus One*. Without this piece, Gradimir Pankov's farewell season would not have the same impact. This electric, exhilarating work has been a huge success for the company since its creation in 2002. A choreographic quilt woven with excerpts from seven works by Ohad Naharin, it is set to traditional and popular music, ethnic rhythms and original compositions. In a highly charged atmosphere, the powerful dance of *Minus One* leaves viewers spellbound from beginning to end, with moments ranging from wild extravagance to lyricism and introspection. The singularity of its 26 dancers is illustrated in as many innovative variations. Absolutely staggering. To be seen without fail, over and over again!



PHOTO: DAMIAN SIQUEIROS / ZETAPRODUCTION.COM
DANSEUR / DANCER: JÉRÉMY GALDEANO



A mad day—and wildly entertaining
THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO
BY VICTOR YAREMENKO

National Ballet of Ukraine

Based on the comedy by Beaumarchais
Music by W. A. Mozart

With Les Grands Ballets Orchestra

April 26, 27, 28 and 29, 2017

Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, Place des Arts

To the delight of one and all, the National Ballet of Ukraine is back in Montreal, three years after presenting *La Bayadère*. Based in Kiev, the company has made its name with top-flight productions in the great tradition of Russian ballet. This time around, the troupe is presenting Victor Yaremko's choreography of *Le Mariage de Figaro*, based on the comedy by Beaumarchais and set to the music of Mozart. Figaro, valet to Count Almaviva, along with his fiancé Susan and the Countess outdo themselves in ingenuity over the course of a mad day, to ensure that the Countess regains the affections of her womanizing husband, and that Figaro is finally able to wed his beloved Susan. A sparkling comedy of intrigue and manners, danced on pointe shoes—and wildly entertaining!



PHOTO: BALLET NATIONAL D'UKRAINE
MONTAGE / EDITING: DAMIAN SIQUEIROS / ZETAPRODUCTION.COM

Ending things in style
FALLING ANGELS
BY JIŘÍ KYLIÁN

Music by Steve Reich

EVENING SONGS
BY JIŘÍ KYLIÁN

Music by Antonín Dvořák

SEARCHING FOR HOME
BY STEPHAN THOSS

Music by Philip Glass

May 25, 26 and 27, June 1, 2 and 3, 2017

Théâtre Maisonneuve, Place des Arts

The final word belongs to Jiří Kylián, a giant of contemporary dance, and to Stephan Thoss, a rising star in Europe's dance community, whom Gradimir Pankov has helped to make better known both here and abroad.

Set to Steve Reich's extraordinary music and percussion, Kylián's *Falling Angels* is a mesmerizing study for eight dancers, a powerful work of the highest order. His pure and refined *Evening Songs* are set to Dvořák's a cappella songs of the same name, and performed live by a choir. Finally, Stephan Thoss's *Searching for Home*, an inner voyage into the multiplicity of the self, features 16 dancers in a piece inspired by the music of Philip Glass and the images it evokes. Magical, spellbinding.

This triple bill marks the end of Gradimir Pankov's final season at the helm of Les Grands Ballets. "Recognized as one of the finest artistic directors of his generation, Gradimir Pankov reinforced the company's international reputation and was a spokesman for Canadian culture around the world," declared Constance Pathy, C.M., C.Q., D.Mus. Chair of the Board of Directors of Les Grands Ballets.



PHOTO: DAMIAN SIQUEIROS / ZETAPRODUCTION.COM
DANSEUSE / DANCER: ANYA NESVITAYLO



A LONG TERM VISION

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal is a world-renowned company of creation, production and showcasing, dedicated to the development of ballet in all its forms, based on the discipline of classical ballet. It has ignited the imagination of audiences from here and abroad, sparking new discoveries and sharing its passion for dance. It thrives on an inspired and generous vision of society: To move the world. Differently.

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