

## *Les Grands Ballets Reveals*

### *2024-2025 Season: Feel the Emotion at the Heart of Dance*

**Montreal, March 14, 2024** – Les Grands Ballets is thrilled to announce a vibrant 2024-2025 season at la Place des Arts, commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of founder Ludmilla Chiriaeff's and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fernand Nault's beloved *The Nutcracker*. Under the artistic direction of Ivan Cavallari, this upcoming year promises to be a celebration of ballet's rich history and artistic innovation.

*"Ludmilla Chiriaeff laid much more than the cornerstone of our company. Her courage and passion for dance established a tradition of excellence and innovation that continues to inspire our artists and audiences."*

- Ivan Cavallari, Artistic Director

This season kicks off with ***Maestro***, a captivating exploration of the nuances of human existence with two works by choreographer Jiří Kylián, brimming with the playfulness of Mozart's compositions, alongside Garrett Smith's stirring choreography set to Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5*, celebrating self-acceptance and the beauty of embracing one's individuality.

Les Grands Ballets pays homage to its founder with ***Ludmilla***, a mixed bill featuring works by esteemed choreographers Jean Grand-Maître, George Balanchine, James Kudelka, and Ginette Laurin. This tribute shines a light on Chiriaeff's life and achievements through the artistic brilliance of those she encountered or who were influenced by her legacy.

The timeless magic of ***The Nutcracker*** returns this holiday season, marking the 60th anniversary of Fernand Nault's enchanting masterpiece. This production promises to warm the hearts of audiences young and old alike.

Set to Tchaikovsky's mesmerizing score, ***The Sleeping Beauty*** as choreographed by the legendary former prima ballerina Marcia Haydée is set to enchant its audience with its elaborate costumes and magnificent sets. This timeless production cleverly portrays the contrast between good and evil with grace and precision as it brings Charles Perrault's fairy tale to life.

***Vendetta: Storie di mafia*** takes center stage in spring, transporting viewers to 1950s America with tales of power and vengeance. Choreographed by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, this cinematic ballet seamlessly blends the allure of cabaret with the raw intensity of street brawls.

Closing out the season with flair, Maria Villanueva's ***Don Quixote*** brings a taste of Spanish romance to a burgeoning summer in this playful and narrative ballet, with sumptuous costumes and rich set designs.



## Maestro

September 12 to 15, 2024  
Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier – Place des Arts

This mixed bill deftly explores the nuances of human existence, drawing on the compositions of Mozart and Beethoven.

Jiří Kylián's globally acclaimed *Petite Mort* celebrates the alchemy of bodies to the melody of Mozart's Piano Concertos No. 21 and No. 23. This ballet, a seductive interplay of the sexes, crescendos into ecstasy.

Kylián's *Sechs Tänze* (Six Dances) playfully engages with Mozart's eponymous 1789 work, blending lightness and mischief. In this virtuosic burlesque, the dancers reflect the carefree yet profound spirit of the 18<sup>th</sup> century—a time marked by wars and revolutions. A duality that still echoes today.

Garrett Smith transcends time and genres with his choreography—set to Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5*, the Fate Symphony. He celebrates individuality and self-acceptance, an ode to diversity and regained freedom as masks fall away.

Choreographies: Jiří Kylián and Garrett Smith | Music: Mozart and Beethoven



## Ludmilla

October 24 to 26, 2024  
Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier – Place des Arts

In celebration of her centennial, a resounding tribute is being paid to Ludmilla Chiriaeff (1924–1996), founder of l'École supérieure de ballet du Québec and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. Chiriaeff was acclaimed for her profound impact on the development and teaching of dance in the country and was repeatedly honoured throughout her career. Her remarkable journey, from her beginnings in Berlin and weaving through the hardships of World War II to her eventual settlement in Canada, is commemorated through the works of artists who crossed her path or were inspired by her legacy.

Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*, an undisputed masterpiece, dissects the four human character traits derived from ancient medical humorism: Melancholic, Sanguine, Choleric, and Phlegmatic. The precise body language and minimalist scenography create a visually captivating spectacle.

This is followed by Ginette Laurin's recreation of *Funambule*, a ballet that stands out for its innovative blend of pointe dance and theatre.

James Kudelka's *Desire*, which melds classical and modern dance with Prokofiev's compositions, delves into the complexities of passion and human relationships through a series of pas de deux.

Finally, Jean Grand-Maître, the distinguished Canadian choreographer known for his collaborations with the likes of Elton John and Sarah McLachlan presents *Continuum*. In this segment, the memory of Chiriaeff is intertwined with the acclaim and talent of a new generation of dancers.

Choreographies: Jean Grand-Maître, George Balanchine, James Kudelka, and Ginette Laurin | Music: Ligo, Traditional song of Latvia, Peteris Vasks, Paul Hindemith, Sergei Prokofiev, and Andreas Burckhard



## The Nutcracker

December 12 to 30, 2024  
Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier – Place des Arts  
With Les Grands Ballets Orchestra

It wouldn't be the holidays in Montreal without *The Nutcracker*. This timeless classic created by Fernand Nault has been enchanting audiences for 60 years. An unforgettable experience enjoyed by generations of children and adults, this two-act ballet based on Hoffmann's classic tale is set to the music of Tchaikovsky. It takes us on a magical journey filled with wonder across the Land of Snow and the Land of Sweets.

Choreography: Fernand Nault, based on Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov | Music: P. I. Tchaikovsky



## The Sleeping Beauty

February 19 to 23, 2025  
Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier – Place des Arts  
With Les Grands Ballets Orchestra

*The Sleeping Beauty*, one of the most famous classical ballets, receives a unique adaptation through the vision of Marcia Haydée, a former prima ballerina and dance legend. Set to Tchaikovsky's beautiful score, this ballet provides a distinctive interpretation of Charles Perrault's fairy tale.

The wicked fairy Carabosse, inadvertently excluded from Aurora's christening, curses the princess and announces that she will die on her sixteenth birthday. Thanks to the good fairy Lilac, the malevolent spell is broken: the princess remains alive but falls into a 100-year sleep that can only be broken by a prince's kiss.

This adaptation cleverly highlights the contrast between good and evil, while offering a nuanced psychological portrait of the character Carabosse. Elaborate costumes and grandiose sets meticulously bring the fairy tale's magic to life, revealing the enchanting choreographic poetry in a captivating manner.

Choreography: Marica Haydée, based on Marius Petipa | Music: P. I. Tchaikovsky



## Vendetta: Storie di Mafia

April 10 to 13, 2025

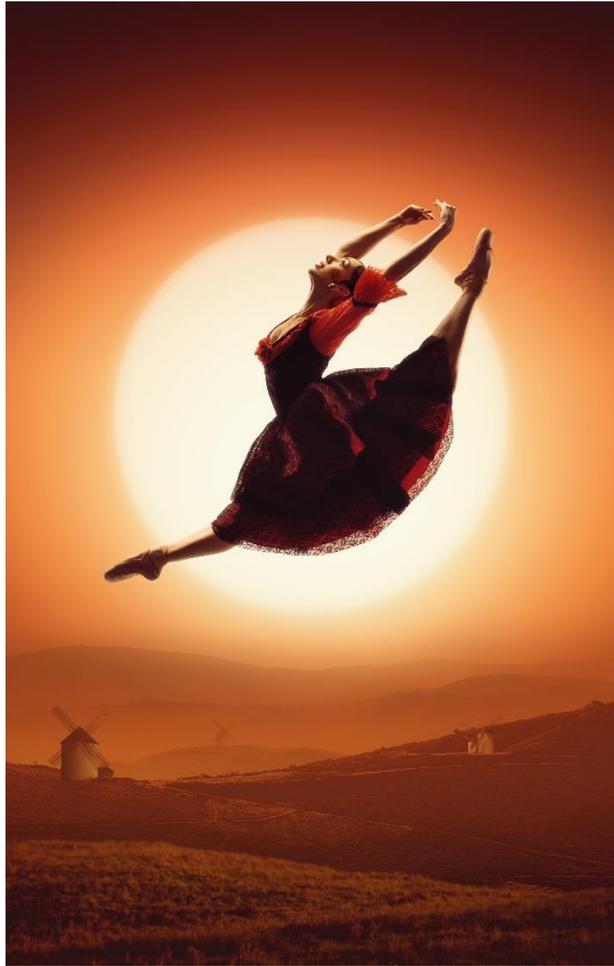
Théâtre Maisonneuve – Place des Arts

From the grim streets of Chicago to the neon lights of Las Vegas, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa reveals an epic ballet about clashes among mafia families. Evoking the shadows of *West Side Story* and *The Godfather*, the choreography guides us through the 1950s, amidst themes of power and vengeance.

Ochoa's genius lies in her narrative talent that seamlessly blends the allure of cabaret with the brutality of street brawls. This ballet transcends performance to become a theatrical revelation. Ochoa shapes emotions, with each step a testament to her acclaimed mastery.

The music itself is a protagonist. Ranging from dizzying waltzes to the sultry embraces of tango, from the genius of Piazzolla to the timeless Bach, each note carries the weight of the narrative. Ochoa's work is a cinematic journey, a blend of film noir intrigue and the undeniable charm of Broadway. A symphony of movements, a dance of light and shadow.

Choreography: Annabelle Lopez Ochoa | Music: Astor Piazzolla, Georg Philipp Telemann, Henry Mancini, G.B. Pergolesi, J. S. Bach, Domenico Modugno, and more



## Don Quixote

May 29 to 30, and June 5 to 7, 2025  
Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier – Place des Arts  
With Les Grands Ballets Orchestra

In 17th century Spain, Don Quixote is a dreamer in search of an ideal who lives through tales of chivalry. Convinced that he is destined to restore justice and defend the oppressed, he embarks on an adventure with his faithful squire, Sancho Panza. Both comical and endearing, Don Quixote sees giants where there are only windmills and princesses in beautiful Romani women.

This two-act ballet is adapted from one of the most important works in Spanish literature, *The Ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote of La Mancha*, written by Miguel de Cervantes in 1605. Staged by Marina Villanueva, this narrative and playful ballet remains true to the tradition of classical dance with sumptuous costumes and rich set designs. Dotted with flamboyant dances and virtuoso pas de deux, it's a true explosion of colour and energy.

Choreography: Marina Villanueva, based on Marius Petipa | Music: Ludwig Minkus

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**Les Grands Ballets on tour**

The company is committed to reaching out to new audiences and make art more accessible. Several productions are in the works to be presented on tour during the 2024-2025 season:

- Festival de Lanaudière
  - National Arts Center in Ottawa
  - Quebec
  - Mexico
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**SPONSORS AND PARTNERS**

Les Grands Ballets are supported by **Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, Canada Council for the Arts**, and **Conseil des arts de Montréal**.

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**About Les Grands Ballets**

A creation and production company, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens is devoted to the development of dance in all its forms, building on the discipline of classical ballet.

Under the artistic direction of Ivan Cavallari, some fifty Canadian and international dancers - accompanied by Les Grands Ballets Orchestra - bring the great classics of ballet to the stage, as well as the creations and repertoire of established and emerging contemporary artists.

Located in the heart of Montréal's Quartier des spectacles, Les Grands Ballets is wholly committed to give to as many people as possible access to dance, whether through the Nutcracker Fund for Children, leisure activities in Studios GB or with the National Centre for Dance Therapy (NCDT), which is devoted to greater wellbeing through the benefits of dance.

Through the excellence of its productions and the scope of its cultural and social actions, the company seeks to inspire discovery and conjure emotions, stimulate the imagination, convey a passion for dance and create a lasting impact.

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