

PRESS RELEASE
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60
YEARS

LES
GRANDS BALLETS
GRADIMIR PANKOV ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



presents

FALLING ANGELS

MAY 25 – JUNE 3



PHOTO: DAMIAN SIQUEIROS - DANSEUSE / DANCER: ANYA NESVITAYLO

An inner voyage in three pieces

Montreal, May 9th, 2017 – Les Grands Ballets invites you to an inner voyage in three pieces with triple-bill *Falling Angels*. Last show of the year, this production will also mark the final season of Les Grands Ballets' Artistic Director Gradimir Pankov, who is bowing out after 18 years at the helm of the company. Featuring a magnificent a capella choir performing Dvořák's eponymous work, *Evening Songs* is a refined and poignant contemporary ballet. Performed to Steve Reich's extraordinary percussions and music, *Falling Angels* is a mesmerizing study for 8 dancers. Finally, Stephan Thoss' *Searching for Home* is an inner voyage into the multiplicity of the self, featuring 16 dancers in a piece inspired by the music of Philip Glass and the images it evokes. Magical and evocative, this triple-bill is presented from **May 25th to June 3rd**, at **Place des Arts' Théâtre Maisonneuve**.

EVENTING SONGS

Duration: **13 minutes**

Choreography: **Jiří Kylián**

Music: **Antonín Dvořák**

Stage and costume design: **Walter Nobbe**

Lighting design (original): **Jennifer Tipton**

Lighting redesign: **Kees Tjebbes**

Featuring a magnificent a capella choir performing Dvořák's eponymous work, *Evening Songs* is a refined and poignant contemporary ballet. Masterful choreographer Jiří Kylián brings together a group of men and women who discover, at twilight, the wonders of nature.



FALLING ANGELS

Duration: **15 minutes**

Choreography: **Jiří Kylián**

Music: **Steve Reich**

Costume design: **Joke Visser**

Lighting design: **Jiří Kylián (conception), Joop Caboort (realisation)**

With *Falling Angels*, Kylián explores the duality that drives artists, the opposition between their discipline and their pursuit of freedom. Steve Reich's percussions structure Kylián's choreography, a tribute to the dancers and their brilliance, vulnerability and humour. This struggle between the need to belong and the desire for independence is a dilemma that haunts us all.

SEARCHING FOR HOME

Duration: **28 minutes**

Choreography: **Stephan Thoss**

Stage, costume and lighting design: **Stephan Thoss**

Music: **Philip Glass**

Searching for Home by Stephan Thoss is an inner voyage into the multiplicity of the self. Rooted in a fascinating aesthetic, it interweaves classical ballet with German expressionist dance. Mysterious, evocative, magical.

"Toward the end of the rehearsals, we chose the title 'Heim Suchen' (*Searching for Home*). The woman's passionate search embodies it. It's a real physical feat, the tension between the desire for awareness and the alluring ability to avoid it. Exterior happenings become interior. As elusive as these happenings might be, they leave behind her a unique perfume, a strong sensory impression that the woman tries to capture so that, thanks to her search, she is able to find herself." - Stephan Thoss

"That's Thoss, and it's exhilarating." - Paula Citron, The Globe and Mail

"For the audience, it's an intellectual and emotional dive into deep space." - Victor Swoboda, The Gazette

ONE EVENING, TWO CHOREOGRAPHERS

Jiří Kylián

A master of European neo-classical dance, Jiří Kylián celebrates his 70th birthday this year. He has created over one hundred choreographies, drawing inspiration from a wide range of sources while constantly reinventing his vocabulary. A great friend of Gradimir Pankov, they have often collaborated over the past two decades, enriching considerably Les Grands Ballets' contemporary repertory. It was only natural for Mr. Pankov to choose two Kylián pieces to properly mark his final curtain with the company.

Born in Prague in 1947, Kylián studied at the Prague Conservatory and the Royal Ballet School in London before joining the Stuttgart Ballet and taking his first steps as a choreographer.

As Artistic Director of the Nederlands Dans Theater from 1975 to 1999, he created some ninety works and founded two sister companies for young professionals and mature dancers / performing artists.

After leaving this position, he remained NDT's Artistic Advisor and Resident Choreographer until 2009. Adept at revealing the paradoxes and vulnerabilities of the human soul, and at questioning the times in which we live, this humanist is gifted with seemingly limitless inventive powers.

Today, more than 80 companies and schools around the world perform his works. The repertoire of Les Grands Ballets already counts a number of Kylián's works, including *Symphony of Psalms*, *Bella Figura*, *Six Dances*, *Forgotten Land* and *Kaguyahime*.



Stephan Thoss

Born in Leipzig, Stephan Thoss studied dance at the Palucca School in Dresden, East Germany, and then went on to further studies, with a focus on German Expressionist dance, based on the theories of Rudolf Laban. In 1983, he joined the ballet company of the Saxon State Opera Dresden, then the Komische Oper Berlin and the Staatstheater Kassel, before returning to the Dresden Opera as a soloist and later, resident choreographer.

In the mid-90s, he began accepting commissions to choreograph works for a number of renowned companies, including the Stuttgart Ballet, the Bavarian National Ballet, the Hamburg Ballet, the Balletto di Toscana in Florence and Nederlands Dans Theatre II.

He has directed several ballet companies: the Bühnen der Landeshauptstadt / Kiel Theatre, the Staatsoper Hannover, and from 2007 to 2016, the State Theatre Wiesbaden, changing the company's profile from classical to modern and contemporary. He has created over 70 ballets, including reinterpretations of such works as *Giselle*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake* and *The Rite of Spring*. He has earned a number of awards and distinctions.

As a young choreographer, Thoss' talent is immediately recognized by Gradimir Pankov. In May 2011, Les Grands Ballets presented the North American premiere of *Searching for Home* and in 2015, *Death and the Maiden*, two productions by Stephan Thoss. Since the beginning of the 2016/2017 season, Thoss is the Dance Director and Chief choreographer at the National Theatre Mannheim.

In recent years, in addition to conceiving the choreography, he has also selected the music, and designed the sets, costumes, and lighting for his works. His meticulous, minimalist visual aesthetic and unique choreographic language bring a heightened intensity to his ballets.

AN HOMMAGE EVENING TO GRADIMIR PANKOV

To highlight Gradimir Pankov's 18 years at the head of Les Grands Ballets, an homage evening will be held during the premiere. Dancers, choreographers, marking figures of the dance and cultural world as well as friends will be in attendance to acknowledge nearly two decades of creation, passion and dedication that allowed Les Grands Ballets to establish itself as a high-caliber company, both on local and international stages.

FALLING ANGELS

Triple-Bill

May 25, 26, 27 and June 1, 2 and 3 2017, at 8 P.M.

Théâtre Maisonneuve, Place des Arts

A pre-show talk will be held an hour before each performance

Sponsors and partners

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal wishes to thank Hydro-Québec, Title Sponsor of the show. They also wish to thank IDC, Evening Sponsor for the May 26 performance.

Information :

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