



## Canada's National Ballet School's Assemblée Internationale Begins on Sunday

28/50

November 13, 2009....Canada's National Ballet School (NBS) is pleased to announce further details about the upcoming Assemblée Internationale (AI). Beginning on November 15 and running until the 22, the Assemblée Internationale is an international, student-centred choreographic festival. Bringing together 12 of NBS' international partner schools, the AI is a unique opportunity for ballet students from around the world to rehearse and learn together. Each student will perform in both a work of existing repertoire significant to their school or their culture, as well as in a work choreographed by a student and performed by a group of students from each of the participating schools.

Not only will all participating students share rehearsal time as they work on the student choreographed pieces, but they will take daily mixed ballet classes together. Teaching the classes will be a roster of artistic staff from both Canada's National Ballet School and the visiting ballet schools.

In addition to the rehearsals and performances occurring throughout the week, all visiting artistic directors will participate in daily Think Tank Sessions, moderated by Joysanne Sidimus, founder of Toronto's Dancer Transition Resource Centre. These sessions are a chance for the community of ballet training artistic staff to come together and discuss the issues they face and the best way to ensure ballet training is kept to the highest standards the world over.

On Saturday, November 21, all participating AI students, staff and all NBS students will watch The National Ballet of Canada's production of The Sleeping Beauty at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts. Before the performance, dance critic Michael Crabb will host the Ballet Talk, with a panel discussion of artistic directors from some of NBS' visiting partner schools including The Royal Ballet School, Ecole de Danse de l'Opera national de Paris and more.

The Assemblée Internationale concludes on Sunday, November 22, with a Student Forum and Ideas Exchange. This event is hosted by Deborah Bull, Creative Directory at London's Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, with contributions from David Nixon, Artistic Director, Northern Ballet Theatre. In advance of the Sunday Forum, students will be surveyed to see what they believe Artistic Directors are looking for in a dancer, and what they think dancers might expect from artistic directors. At the same time, Artistic Directors will be surveyed to see what skills, qualities and characteristics they look for in dancers, and the key challenges and pressures Artistic Directors face in their roles. At the end of the Forum and Ideas Exchange, the two groups will come together to discuss their findings and brainstorm solutions for ensuring these emerging artists enter the world of professional dance with extensive preparation.

An additional session during the Assemblée Internationale has been organized for all student choreographers. The AI is a unique opportunity for aspiring student choreographers to draw an international group of peers into their artistic vision and to present their efforts to an international audience. To ensure that each student choreographer receives appropriate support within this process, and to allow each to give and receive commentary about the experience, the Student Choreographer Forum was established. Renowned choreographer and director of Northern Ballet Theatre, David Nixon (an NBS alumnus), will lead these sessions.

The guest list for NBS' Assemblée Internationale is a veritable who's-who of the international ballet community. Confirmed guests include:

Fernando Alonso, Founder, National Ballet School of Cuba  
Lola de Avila, Associate Director, San Francisco Ballet School  
Reid Anderson, Artistic Director, Stuttgart Ballet  
Mark Annear, Head of Teacher Training & Community Access, Australian Ballet School  
Neils Balle, Headmaster, Royal Danish Ballet School  
Amanda Beck, Interim Director, National Ballet Academy, Amsterdam  
Jason Beechey, Rector, Palucca Schule Dresden  
Philippe Braunschweig, Founder and Honorary Chairman of the Prix de Lausanne  
Wim Broeckx, Artistic Director, Royal Conservatory, The Hague/Prix de Lausanne  
Deborah Bull, Creative Director, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden  
Jean-Yves Esquerre, Artistic Associate, San Francisco Ballet School  
Jane Hackett, Former Director, English National Ballet School  
Marianne Kruise, Pedagogical Principal & Deputy Director, School of The Hamburg Ballet  
Tadeusz Matacz, Director, John Cranko School  
Arlene Minkhorst, Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet School  
Keith Morino, AD, EESA/CPD de l'Institute del Teatre, Barcelona  
David Nixon, Artistic Director, Northern Ballet Theatre  
Elisabeth Platel, Ecole de Danse de l'Opera national de Paris  
Ramona de Saa, Director, National Ballet School of Cuba  
Gailene Stock-Norman, Director, The Royal Ballet School  
Gretchen Ward Warren, Professor, School of Theatre and Dance, University of South Florida  
Samuel Wuersten, Artistic Director, Rotterdam Dance Academy & Holland Dance Festival  
Joanne Zimmerman, Interim Director, National Ballet Academy, Amsterdam

Tickets for all Assemblée Internationale performances, which run Wednesday November 18 – Saturday November 21, are on-sale now. All performances will take place in the Betty Oliphant Theatre, at 404 Jarvis Street. Tickets available through NBS' box office, at 416 964 5148 for \$50 per ticket and the Box Office is open Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. There are no refunds or exchanges on tickets.

The fiftieth-anniversary celebrations for Canada's National Ballet School officially began on September 28, 50 years to the day that NBS first opened its doors and welcomed students. This date marked the unveiling of NBS' archival display, *Reflections*. Other events scheduled to take place throughout the year include an alumni reunion weekend, the annual fundraising gala, an International Dance Day celebration and Spring Showcase featuring special guest performers. For details on the Assemblée Internationale or other 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events, please visit [www.nbs-enb.ca/50th](http://www.nbs-enb.ca/50th)

## About Canada's National Ballet School

Canada's National Ballet School is a world leader in the training of professional dancers and teachers. Dedicated to advancing the art of ballet, NBS develops dance professionals in a student-centred environment by weaving innovation with evolving practice in the finest teaching traditions. NBS graduates can be found as dancers, choreographers, artistic directors, teachers, and administrators in over 65 dance companies world wide, and in even more schools around the globe. NBS' fiftieth anniversary celebrations began on September 28, 2009 and continue throughout the academic school year.

- 30 -

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