

Canada's National Ballet School Announces Spring Showcase 2016 Repertoire

TORONTO, ON (April 26, 2016) - Canada's National Ballet School (NBS) is pleased to announce the repertoire for its upcoming Spring Showcase 2016 performances, taking place from Wednesday, May 25 to Saturday, May 28 at the Betty Oliphant Theatre in Toronto, ON. This year's program will feature a vibrant mixed program of both classical and contemporary works including: John Neumeier's modern classic *Yondering*; and George Balanchine's iconic *Serenade*. Rounding out the program will be two contemporary works created on NBS students by NBS Alumni, Shaun Amyot and Demis Volpi.

Since 1959, Spring Showcase has been a renowned annual performance tradition at NBS, and an invaluable training tool for students in the School's full-time Professional Ballet Program. Presenting captivating dance and celebrating leading choreographers with the community, this highly anticipated event embraces some of the most well-known classical and modern ballets of all time

This year marks the 20th anniversary of John Neumeier's *Yondering*, set to music comprised of a selection of songs by 19th century American composer, Stephen Foster and sung by the great American baritone, Thomas Hampson. Neumeier, an American born choreographer has been the Director of the Hamburg Ballet since 1973. Neumeier was already an internationally recognized choreographer and director when, in 1996, he agreed to create a new work for the students of NBS. Over a period of ten days, Neumeier created *Yondering*. Through its exploration of youthful innocence and sense of adventure, *Yondering* is an ideal vehicle for young dancers. *Yondering* had its North American premiere at NBS in May 1996 and was enthusiastically received. *Yondering* has no story. Rather it is a series of vignettes that offers a glimpse of youth: what they do, how they behave, their budding relationships and their dreams. While the ballet explores youthful innocence, it also hints at its loss. Since 1996, *Yondering* continues to be performed by selected professional schools around the world.

Russian-born choreographer George Balanchine's *Serenade*, set to music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, is a ballet of patterns, and one of Balanchine's most widely performed ballets. Integrating academic ballet technique with musical and choreographic overtones of love, loss and yearning, *Serenade* is considered by many to be Balanchine's masterpiece. *Serenade* was Balanchine's first work upon arriving in America. Created in 1934 for the School of American Ballet, *Serenade* has since become the signature piece of the New York City Ballet – the company Balanchine founded and directed until his death in 1983.

"One of my most cherished memories as Artistic Director of NBS continues to be the creation of the ballet *Yondering*. 'Magic' imbued the ten days in February 1996 when John Neumeier was at NBS, creating the ballet. The vitality and creativity of those initial days are deeply embedded in the ballet itself and so learning and performing *Yondering* continues to be a seminal experience for every cast who has performed the ballet since," states Mavis Staines, NBS Artistic Director & CEO. "Rounding out this year's Spring Showcase program is George Balanchine's equally compelling, and technically challenging ballet, *Serenade*. The opportunity for NBS students to be part of a program with such diverse works is an invaluable one that helps prepare them for the increasing demands of the professional dance world. I look forward each year to witnessing the artistry our students develop as they prepare for this highly-anticipated annual event."

Spring Showcase 2016:

- Wednesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday May 25, 26, 27 & 28 at 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday May 28 at 2:00 p.m.
- Box Office opens to the general public Monday, May 2
- Box office hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Purchase tickets by email, boxoffice@nbs-enb.ca, or by phone at 416 964 5148
- Performances take place at the Betty Oliphant Theatre, 404 Jarvis St., Toronto
- Ticket prices: \$50 for adults, \$30 for students (with valid student ID) & seniors

About Canada's National Ballet School

Established in 1959, Canada's National Ballet School is a world leader in the training of professional dancers and teachers. NBS alumni can be found as dancers, teachers, choreographers and artistic directors in over 80 dance companies and schools around the globe. NBS is at the forefront of professional ballet schools in delivering a broad range of community programs. The excellence of the Professional Ballet Program is reflected in all of NBS' programs. For more information, please visit: www.nbs-enb.ca.

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