

Canada's National Ballet School launches choreography, resources for Sharing Dance Canada 2017 in celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation

TORONTO, ON (January 19, 2017) – Canada's National Ballet School (NBS) is excited to launch Sharing Dance Canada 2017 (sharingdance.ca) to celebrate Canada's 150th Anniversary of Confederation. One of 38 Canada 150 Signature Projects—funded in part by the Government of Canada through the Canada 150 Fund, and with Shaw Communications Inc. as presenting partner—NBS' Sharing Dance Canada 2017 will share and showcase Canada's history, cultural richness and diversity through dance, while also bringing together and empowering communities across the country to share their stories of what it means to be Canadian.

"Dance plays an invaluable role in Canada; and Sharing Dance is all about encouraging Canadians to celebrate Canada's strength of diversity and cultural richness through embracing the benefits and joy of dance," says Mavis Staines, Artistic Director and CEO of NBS. "We are thrilled to be counted among the Government of Canada's Signature Projects, and deeply appreciative of Shaw Communications' championship of community and youth as NBS' presenting partner. Through their support, NBS' Sharing Dance will provide a creative and expressive platform for all Canadians to engage with our country's 150th celebrations in an uplifting, artistic and beneficial way."

"By creating more opportunities for kids to be physically active, we provide a platform to develop healthy habits, build self-confidence, and connect socially with their friends and peers," said Chethan Lakshman, Vice President, Communications and Public Relations, Shaw Communications. "To celebrate Canada's 150th birthday, we're pleased to support Sharing Dance Canada 2017 and their work to help get kids moving by bringing dance into classrooms and communities across the country."

"I am pleased that Sharing Dance Canada 2017, from Canada's National Ballet School, has finally been unveiled to Canadians," said the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage. "Communities all across the country will have the opportunity to celebrate Canada's cultural diversity through dance. The 150th anniversary of Confederation gives us a chance to think about what it means to be Canadian. Let's make the most of the celebrations to strengthen the bonds of friendship that bring us together!"

Sharing Dance Canada 2017 kicks off today and leads up to a series of dance performances across the country beginning June 2. The program includes:

- A unique choreography reflecting Canadian values of diversity and celebrating peoples' stories
- Rehearsal videos and toolkits to enable all Canadians—the young and young-at-heart—to learn the choreography
- Free open rehearsals in communities across the country
- Community performances at Sharing Dance Day events beginning June 2

For this year's dance performance, four Canadian choreographers—representing distinct styles of dance, cultural backgrounds and geographic locations in Canada—have collaborated to give voice and movement to a unique work that embodies and celebrates Canada's diversity and artistic identity. Choreographers include Kimberley Cooper (Calgary), Eugene Baffoe (Winnipeg), Tracee Smith (Toronto) and Roger Sinha (Montreal).

Schools and communities are encouraged to register at sharingdance.ca to access free rehearsal videos and resources to learn the choreography and plan their own grassroots Sharing Dance Day events across the country. Canadians can also take part in Signature Official Events being held in major cities across Canada, including (with time and locations still to be confirmed in some cities):

Sharing Dance

- Calgary on June 2 – free rehearsals are every Saturday at Wildflower Arts Centre beginning January 28, 3:30-4:30pm; and every Wednesday at Decidedly Jazz Danceworks beginning February 8, 7:30-8:30pm
- Winnipeg on June 8 at the University of Winnipeg RecPlex, 10:15am-12:15pm – free rehearsals are every Tuesday, 6:30-7:30pm at Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet School
- Toronto on June 2 at Yonge-Dundas Square, 12-6pm – free rehearsals are every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 6:45-8:00pm at NBS (400 Jarvis Street)
- Montreal on June 2 at Les Jardins Gamelin, Quartier Des Spectacles, 4-6pm
- Halifax on June 2 at Grand Parade, 11am-1pm – free rehearsals will be offered at North Preston Community Centre beginning week of Feb 8
- Ottawa on July 1 – free rehearsals will be offered at multiple locations across the City (please check website for rehearsal schedule)

Sharing Dance Canada 2017 is made possible with the support of **national partners** Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet School, Physical and Health Education Canada, and the Globe and Mail; founding donors Joan and Jerry Lozinski; and leading supporters William R. and Shirley Beatty Charitable Fund and Yvonne YK Chiu Fund for Youth.

NBS gratefully acknowledges the support for Sharing Dance by community partners including: Wildflower Arts Centre, Decidedly Jazz Danceworks and Ever Active Schools (Alberta) in **Calgary**; FitSpirit Girls, dancED Movement Project, Hart House, The Dance Ability Movement, Arts Etobicoke, Toronto Community Housing, 60 Minute Kids Club | Sport for Life, Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, ParticipACTION and TakingITGlobal in **Toronto**; Sinha Dance and Les Grands Ballets in **Montreal**; Halifax Dance, Dance Nova Scotia, and Kinnected Leadership in **Halifax**; The School of Dance in **Ottawa**.

Join the movement and stay connected on the latest with Sharing Dance

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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.

Sharing Dance Canada 2017 is part of Sharing Dance, Canada's National Ballet School's flagship community outreach initiative, which offers FREE opportunities for Canadians—of all ages and abilities—to get healthy, active and artistically engaged. Featuring multifaceted programming and supported through a collection of free online resources, Sharing Dance—which removes barriers while increasing access to free, high-quality, culturally-inclusive dance activities—includes:

- High-quality dance activities for children and youth—both in and out of the classroom
- Health and wellness dance programs for seniors, focused specifically on improving quality of life and creating community
- Sharing Dance Canada 2017

For more information, please visit: www.nbs-enb.ca.

About Shaw Communications

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