

NEWS

For immediate release

LES GRANDS BALLETS CANADIENS DE MONTRÉAL 2010-2011 SEASON A VOYAGE WITH LES GRANDS BALLETS



Montréal, March 16, 2010 – Following a season in which six brilliant works from the past decade were remounted as a tribute to **Gradimir Pankov's** 10th anniversary as company Artistic Director, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal's 2010-2011 season takes a deliberate turn toward innovation, audacity and discovery.

This year's program includes *Leonce and Lena* by Christian Spuck, *Searching for Home (Heim Suchen)* by Stephan Thoss and a **new work** by Marco Goecke : three avant-garde German choreographers, renowned talents on the European dance scene but still unknown here. Les Grands Ballets offers the public a chance to discover them. The company will also welcome distinguished guest companies. For its first appearance in Montréal, the National Ballet of Cuba, indisputably one of the world's best classical dance companies, will bring its majestic version of *Giselle*. As well, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet will perform Jorden Morris's *Moulin Rouge – The Ballet*, as part of an exchange agreement. Finally, there will be a return engagement of the *Italian Evening* featuring *Four Seasons* and *Cantata* by Mauro Bigonzetti, two works that garnered wide success and gave great pleasure to Montréal audiences in 2007, to Parisian audiences in 2008 as part of *Les Étés de la danse* series, as well as on tour in Egypt and at the Jacob's Pillow Festival in the United States.

Germany (not just once but three times), Italy, Cuba and Paris – Les Grands' 2010-2011 season offers a magnificent invitation to embark on a trip, without forgetting, of course, the traditional detour during the holiday period to the kingdom of childhood and dreams in *The Nutcracker*.

OCTOBER 2010, GERMANY offers North America's introduction to choreographer **Christian Spuck**, a former dancer with Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker and an assistant of Marco Santi. Spuck made his startling choreographic debut in 1996 with *Duo/Towards the Night*, a duet that has become famous. Resident choreographer of Stuttgart Ballet since 2001, Spuck is a new preeminent figure of European contemporary dance whose reputation and commissions extend far beyond Germany's borders. He has drawn material from the 1838 political satire *Leonce and Lena*, by Georg Büchner, author of *Woyzeck*, to create an absurd vision of the unlikely romance between Leonce, prince of Popo, and Lena, princess of Pipi. To the music of Johann Strauss and other composers, Spuck puts the emphasis on the story's tragicomic aspect. From its première at the Aalto Ballet Theater in Essen in April 2008, this unusually deep and wide-ranging work has been showered with praise. Les Grands' dancers will perform *Leonce and Lena* under Spuck's direction to kick-start the new season with a true *chef-d'oeuvre* that is unusual, original and, above all, totally hilarious. The work is accompanied by Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal Orchestra under the baton of German conductor **Florian Ziemer**. **Théâtre Maisonneuve, October 21, 22, 23, 28, 30 and November 4, 5, and 6, 2010, at 8 p.m.**

DECEMBER 2010, WINTER WONDERLAND with *The Nutcracker*. Let yourself be swept away by a magical voyage full of surprises. Since 1964, this marvellous ballet by **Fernand Nault**, adapted from E.T.A. Hoffmann's story set to Peter Tchaikovsky's music, has never failed to attract big audiences. Be warned – the more often you see it, the more you'll enjoy it! It's guaranteed to warm the heart for a 47th year. The work is accompanied by the Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal Orchestra led by the company's Resident Conductor, **Allan Lewis**. **Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, from December 11 to 30, 2010, at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.**



FEBRUARY 2011, CUBA beckons with the first appearance in Montréal of the National Ballet of Cuba. This company, led by the great ballerina **Alicia Alonso**, is recognized as one of the best in the world and performs on all the major international stages. Montréal's many classical ballet fans will be delighted to discover this legendary company with an even more legendary ballet: **Giselle**. The choreography was created by Alonso in 1948 following the original 1841 version set to the music of Adolph Adam. Alonso herself danced *Giselle* for many years, notably with the American Ballet Theatre. This quintessential romantic ballet, **Giselle**, like *La Sylphide* and *Swan Lake*, reveres love that is pure and impossible. The incomparable National Ballet of Cuba dancers bring to the work an extra element of emotion, poetry and enchantment that has made them legends and brought worldwide fame to their ballet school. Their appearance is truly a gift for dance fans and an event in itself. **Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, February 17, 18 at 8 p.m. and February 19, 2011, at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.**

MARCH 2011, ITALY means warmth, colours and songs in the double-bill program by **Mauro Bigonzetti** that Montréal audiences praised in May 2007. Two works, two worlds, two unusual styles of gesture in which Les Grands' dancers excel and charm. **Four Seasons**, commissioned by Les Grands, is an airy, complex work of subtlety. It is a veritable concert for the senses danced to Antonio Vivaldi's much celebrated music. Following, the incredible **Cantata**, a touching tribute to popular Italian culture, earthy and replete with the powerful, passionate energy of Neopolitan women represented by the four a cappella female singers of Gruppo Musicale Assurd who accompany the dancers with tambourines and castanets. Energy to spare that is at once perfect and sensual. **Théâtre Maisonneuve, March 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 2011, at 8 p.m.**

APRIL 2011, PARIS limbers up with **Moulin Rouge – The Ballet** by **Jorden Morris** performed by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, guest company of Les Grands. Passionate red sets the tone for this highly colourful show with its high spirits and hectic atmosphere. Created for the 70th anniversary of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Canada's oldest ballet company, the work has enjoyed considerable success. Morris, who also created *Peter Pan*, mounted a mega-production for 26 company dancers that grandly resurrects *Belle-Époque* Paris and the Moulin Rouge cabaret, the birthplace of the French Can-Can and the quadrille, and meeting place for unforgettable artists like painter Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and alluring dancers like La Goulue and Môme Fromage. Can-Can on toe-shoes – a first! **Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, April 14, 15 at 8 p.m. and April 16, 2011, at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.**

MAY 2011, TWO VOYAGES TO INNER SPACE with two young German choreographers, **Marco Goecke** and **Stephan Thoss**, who are currently the centre of focus of the dance scene. With the assistance of the **Goethe-Institut** of Montréal, Germany will open and close the 2010-2011 season with original, particularly audacious revelations. Pankov commissioned one work from Goecke, Co-resident Choreographer of Stuttgart Ballet, who was singled out for his first works at the Noverre Society series in 2000 and immediately invited by the New York City Ballet to create a work. An unclassifiable and eccentric *rara avis* of the young German generation, he will create a new work for Les Grands. Thoss, for his part, is a mysterious and altogether original choreographer and Artistic Director of Wiesbaden Ballet, who presents a fascinating aesthetic outlook that is a contemporary mix of classical ballet and German expressionism. He will stage the North American première of **Searching for Home (Heim Suchen)**. A beautiful double bill danced by Les Grands to close its season. **Théâtre Maisonneuve, May 12, 13, 14, 19, 20 and 21, 2011, at 8 p.m.**

Among other tour destinations, Les Grands Ballets will depart for China in the summer of 2011, so the journey will continue... Follow along at www.grandsballets.com.

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