

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

2011-2012 SEASON LES GRANDS BALLETS CANADIENS DE MONTRÉAL RESONANCES IN THE HEART

Montreal, April 5, 2011 – For his 12th year as Artistic Director of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal (GBCM), Gradimir Pankov is offering a 2011-2012 season that combines classics and innovative new works, featuring two world premieres, two reinterpretations based on the music of Stravinsky, and two masterpieces from the world's choreographic heritage performed by two acclaimed foreign companies. Six shows, six windows on the human condition, on the extraordinary destinies that resonate within us, within our hearts.

Two sparkling new works will open and close the season: **Rodin/Claudel**, a full-length ballet by Canadian Peter Quanz, and **The Little Prince**, a poetic adaptation by Dutch choreographer Didy Veldman. **Noces** and **The Rite of Spring**, two powerful pieces created for the company by Belgian choreographer Stijn Celis, will share the bill in an all **Stravinsky Evening**. Fernand Nault's traditional **The Nutcracker**, in its 48th year, will once again illuminate the holiday season, while ballet-lovers will not want to miss another classic, **Swan Lake**, performed by the Novosibirsk Ballet. In 2012, another mythical ballet returns: **Revelations**, which the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre will combine with works by Christopher L. Higgins, Judith Jamison and Robert Battle.



Photo : Damian Siqueiros Dancers : Vanesa G.R. Montoya & Raul Salamanc

OCTOBER: Wild passion with **Rodin/Claudel**. The tumultuous relationship between renowned French sculptors Auguste Rodin and Camille Claudel finished tragically, with the broken-hearted sculptress ending her days in poverty, and finally in an asylum. Actress Isabelle Adjani played the role in the film *Camille Claudel*, while choreographer Marie-Claude Pietragalla portrayed her in *Sakountala*, a stage production that blended dance with circus arts. With the support of an entirely Canadian team, **Peter Quanz** will offer a new perspective on this story of consuming passion in a ballet cast in the neo-classical mould. With the music of Roussel, Honegger, Debussy and Schnittke, his emotionally charged narrative ballet will exalt the body and its lines—inspirational sources for dance and sculpture alike. Gradimir Pankov commissioned this full-length ballet from the young artist, who at age 27 was the first Canadian choreographer commissioned by the Kirov Ballet, and whose *Kaleidoscope* was added to Les GBCM repertoire in 2008. At the Théâtre Maisonneuve of Place des Arts for eight shows, on October 13, 14, 15, 20, 22, 27, 28 and 29, 2011 at 8 p.m., with the Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal Orchestra.

DECEMBER: Sweet dreams with **The Nutcracker**, the enduring classic based on the Hoffman tale set to the music of Tchaikovsky. A fabulous world that has enchanted generations of children, this ballet in two acts brings together some one hundred dancers who take us on a magical journey through the cultures and wonders of the world, displaying a wide range of dance styles in the process. Ranked as one of the finest versions of the numerous versions of this ballet, the choreography by **Fernand Nault** dates back to 1964. A dancer, choreographer, teacher and stage director, this outstanding Quebec artist worked in various capacities at Les Grands Ballets between 1967 and 1976, creating some thirty accessible and innovative pieces that contributed enormously to the troupe's development and stature. At the Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier of Place des Arts for 15 performances, from December 10 to 30, 2011, with the Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal Orchestra conducted by Allan Lewis. Also at the Grand Théâtre de Québec, December 1, 2, 3 and 4, 2011.

MARCH: A fatal duality in **Swan Lake**, with music by Tchaikovsky performed by the Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal Orchestra. The immense success of the film *Black Swan* is testimony to both the place of *Swan Lake* in the world's cultural heritage and the diversity of interpretations it engenders. Reading between the lines of the libretto, the dual personality depicted by Natalie Portman can be seen as a reflection of our quest for identity, of the duality inherent in all of us. After



delighting audiences with a *Giselle* performed by the National Ballet of Cuba in the purest Romantic tradition, the GBCM is now offering a *Swan Lake* in the purest tradition of Russian excellence, as performed by the prestigious **Novosibirsk Ballet**. For its first visit to North America, the company, on a par with the famous Bolshoi and Marinsky Ballets, will arrive from distant Siberia with its sixty top-flight dancers to perform this masterpiece of Romantic ballet, adapted from **Marius Petipa's** choreography by artistic director **Igor Zelensky**. An unmissable event for ballet connoisseurs and novices alike. Five performances, including two matinees, at the Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier of Place des Arts, on March 8, 9 and 10 at 8 p.m., and on March 10 et 11 at 2 p.m.

MARCH: Social pressures are explored in *The Rite of Spring* and *Noces* in a special **Stravinsky Evening**. A revolutionary figure in 20th century music, **Igor Stravinski** is associated with the radical transformations that classical ballet underwent at the hands of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. With this creation for the GBCM, **Stijn Celis** is adding his name to the list of eminent choreographers who have taken on these scores, which initially inspired Vaslav Nijinski and his sister, Bronislava Nijinska. Nearly a century later, this music has lost none of its modernity, providing the perfect framework for the Belgian choreographer's creative imagination—and his critical view of the world and its institutions. Acclaimed by critics and public alike since its inception, *Noces* (2002) and *The Rite of Spring* (2009) each denounce the loss of freedom that can result from life in society. A double bill that has already bewitched thousands on tour. Six performances at the Théâtre Maisonneuve of Place des Arts, on March 22, 23, 24, 29, 30 and 31, 2012.

APRIL: Afro-American realities are at the heart of the **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's** phenomenal *Revelations*, another iconic ballet. Since premiering in 1960, *Revelations* has lost none of its vitality, humour or evocative powers. A keystone in the Afro-American repertoire, it is perhaps the most frequently performed modern dance production in the world. **Alvin Ailey**, who freed Afro-American art from its shackles and stereotypes, depicts the religious fervour and harsh conditions endured by the blacks of rural Texas in the 1930s. Subject to change, the program features three other works, including one by **Robert Rattle**, who succeeds **Judith Jamison** as the company's Artistic Director. In this second visit as guests of the GBCM, the company will deliver a joyful mix of classical, modern, jazz and African dance. Four performances, including a matinee, at the Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier of Place des Arts, on April 19 and 20 at 8 p.m., and April 21, 2012, at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

MAY: A heartfelt and personal interpretation of Saint-Exupéry's legendary *The Little Prince* by **Didy Veldman**. This children's story, intended for adults as well, can be read on many levels. In a narrative ballet midway between figurative representation and abstraction, Dutch choreographer Didy Veldman has drawn inspiration from the story's universal poetry and infinite wisdom to question the lives we choose. Will we find the aviator, the lamplighter, the businessman, the alcoholic, the king, the rose or the fox, characters engrained in our memory by the iconic watercolour illustrations? Perhaps not in any literal way. But the essence of their encounters with the Little Prince will no doubt inform this initiatory journey in a choreography that is sure to be theatrical, dynamic, humorous and riveting. Six performances at the Théâtre Maisonneuve of Place des Arts, on May 3, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12, 2012 at 8 p.m.

GBCM's next tour – To kick off the new season in style, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal is flying to China in July for a four-city tour, with stops at the New Opera House in Beijing, the Shanghai Oriental Art Centre, the Grand Theatre in Suzhou and the Guangzhou Opera House. The company will present *Minus One* by Israeli choreographer Ohad Naharin, a work that has captivated audiences wherever it has been performed.

Learn about subscriptions

For complete details on subscription rates, group packages and their special advantages, the public is invited to call **514-849-0269**, consult the season brochure, or visit **www.grandsballets.com**. Subscriptions can also be obtained online at **www.grandsballets.com**. Those under 30 can obtain the "Je me pointe!" card, on sale at the Place des Arts box office for only \$10. This card offers 40% discounts on all of the season's productions (except *The Nutcracker*). Individual tickets can also be purchased at Place des Arts beginning in August 2011: **514-842-2112 / www.laplacedesarts.com**.

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal would like to thank **Cinémas Guzzo**, season sponsor. The company is also grateful to the **Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec**, the **Canada Council for the Arts** and the **Conseil des arts de Montréal** for their financial support.

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