

**PRESS RELEASE**

For immediate release

## *The Little Prince* by DIDY VELDMAN SAINT-EXUPÉRY'S LEGENDARY TALE ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE

**Montreal, April 5, 2011** – A literary classic has inspired the new work commissioned by Gradimir Pankov, the Artistic Director of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal, from Dutch choreographer **Didy Veldman**. Her free and soul-stirring adaptation of *The Little Prince*, which captures the essence of this allegorical tale, will be presented in its world premiere. Year after year, this initiatory journey through the twists and turns of life has fascinated young and old alike all over the world. With a diverse musical score arranged by Philip Feeney, the piece will be presented on **May 3, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12, 2012** at the **Théâtre Maisonneuve of Place des Arts**.

### **The project**

Didy Veldman was in her early twenties when she read *The Little Prince*. Like many adults, she was surprised by the existential questions raised by what she presumed was a simple children's story. After several re-readings, she felt the urge to translate into movement its special atmosphere, its poetry and purity. "I feel the need to keep certain narrative elements," she explains, "but not the need to be overly literal. For me, *The Little Prince* is the story of a rediscovery. I would therefore like to focus on certain aspects of our behaviour and life choices, so as to question them in a spirit similar to that of the book. But this is only the starting point. Who knows where it will all lead?"

### **Didy Veldman**

Born in The Netherlands, Didy Veldman trained in classical dance in her native country before winning renown as a dancer with the Ballet Scapino in Rotterdam, the Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève and the Rambert Dance Company in London. When she began her career as a choreographer in 1987, she created works for these three companies, and others as well, while continuing to dance. Thirteen years later, after founding her own company, Alias, she decided to devote herself exclusively to independent choreography. By age 44, she had created some thirty works for such companies as Cedar Lake Ballet in New York, the Gulbenkian Ballet, Cullberg Ballet and New Zealand Ballet. In 1999, her "hard-core" version of *Carmen*, her first narrative ballet, reflected her sense of drama and her ability to combine humour with social commentary. She restaged the work for Les Grands Ballets before offering the company her inventive and theatrical *TooT* and electric *Tender Hooks*. While working on the choreography for *The Little Prince*, she is involved in eight other projects, including two musicals.



Photo : Damian Siqueiros Dancer : Kenji Matsuyama



---

### ***The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry**

"If you please—draw me a sheep!" Published in French and English during World War II, *The Little Prince* is one of the two most translated books of French literature. To date, the book has been translated into 210 languages and dialects, and the phenomenon shows no signs of waning. For the story of the little boy from asteroid B-612 reaches us on a deeply human level. Its poetry, beauty and message are universal. From the 1960s, artists from all disciplines were inspired by it. There have been hundreds of theatrical adaptations, a comic book, a film, two television series (including a recent 3D version), an opera... As for dance, the film by Stanley Donen, the musical by Richard Cocciante and the stage production by Sonia Petrovna, in France, all contain choreographed sequences, but are largely illustrative in nature. Didy Veldman is the first to draw on the work's inexhaustible sources for the creation of a ballet.

### ***The Little Prince* by Didy Veldman**

Music by various composers, arranged by Philip Feeney

**May 3, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12, 2012 at 8 p.m.  
Théâtre Maisonneuve, Place des Arts**

#### **Pre-show talks**

Pre-show talks will be held at the Théâtre Maisonneuve before each performance.

### **Learn about our subscriptions**

For complete details on subscription rates, group packages and the exceptional advantages they offer, call **514-849-0269**. You can also consult the season brochure, visit **[www.grandsballets.com](http://www.grandsballets.com)**, or subscribe on-line at **[www.grandsballets.com](http://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 (*The Nutcracker* not included). Individual tickets can also be purchased at Place des Arts beginning August 2011: **514-842-2112 / [www.grandsballets.com](http://www.grandsballets.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.

- 30 -

**Information:** Francine Arsenault, Communications Director  
514 849-8681, extension 227  
[farsenault@grandsballets.com](mailto:farsenault@grandsballets.com)

Photos : [www.grandsballets.com/press room / photos gallery / Gbc /001](http://www.grandsballets.com/press room / photos gallery / Gbc /001).