

LES GRANDS BALLETS

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate distribution

FIVE DANCERS JOIN LES GRANDS BALLETS! While Ivan Cavallari names two First Dancers

Montreal, August 28, 2018 – Ivan Cavallari, artistic director of Les Grands Ballets, is pleased to announce the arrival of five new dancers as part of the corps de ballet:

“For this second season in Montreal, I’m happy to be welcoming five dancers to complete the Grands Ballets corps de ballet. It’s through them that the creations at the heart of the programming will be conveyed, so that the Montreal audience can make new discoveries. I extend my warmest greetings, and wish them long life with us!”

Quebecer **Maude Sabourin** is returning home following more than ten years in Monaco. After dancing at the Jeune Ballet du Québec (2003-2006), Maude joined the ranks of Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo under the artistic direction of Jean-Christophe Maillot in 2006. She was appointed soloist in 2012, then principal soloist in 2014. Maude Sabourin was incidentally the first woman to perform Carabosse in Jean-Christophe Maillot’s *La Belle*, a role originally intended for a man.

Meg Honey Parry was born in Brisbane, Australia. She danced for ten years (2008-2018) at the West Australian Ballet, where in 2014 she was promoted to second soloist.

Julia Bergua was born in Zaragoza, Spain. After training at the Conservatorio Municipal Profesional de Danza (2000-2009) in Zaragoza and with John Cranko Schule in Stuttgart (2009-2011), she danced for six years (2011-2017) at the Stuttgart Ballet before joining the Ballet of the Opéra national du Rhin in Strasbourg (2017-2018).

A native of Rochford, England, **Nicholas Jones** studied at the Royal Ballet school before joining the Stuttgart Ballet (2010-2016). He then danced with the Ballet of the Opéra national du Rhin under the artistic direction of Ivan Cavallari (2016-2018).

Melih Mertel, who hails from Istanbul, studied at the Istanbul State Conservatory with the Vaganova method. He later took a bachelor’s degree and then a master’s in performing arts at Istanbul University. First dancer at the Antalya State Ballet (Turkey, 2003-2007) and then at the Istanbul Ballet (2007-2018), he has been a soloist with the Washington Ballet (2012-2013) as well as with Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo (2015-2016).

Ivan Cavallari and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal extend a heartfelt welcome to their new members.



Photos: Sasha Onyschenko. Maude Sabourin, Meg Honey Parry, Julia Bergua, Nicholas Jones.

SIX APPOINTMENTS AT LES GRANDS BALLETS

Les Grands Ballets is taking advantage of the start of the season to underscore the outstanding work of **Vanesa García-Ribala Montoya** and **Myriam Simon**, who this year obtain the title of First Dancers. A native of Madrid, Spain, and trained at the Conservatorio Superior de Madrid, Vanesa debuted with the Jeune Ballet d'Europe, and then danced with the Compañía Nacional de Danza 2 (Spain) and the Ballet of the Opéra national du Rhin before joining Les Grands Ballets in 2006. Myriam Simon studied at the École supérieure de ballet du Québec from 1992 to 1994 and completed her training at Canada's National Ballet School in Toronto. She danced with the ballet companies of Guangzhou, Leipzig, the Hanover and Lisbon operas and for the Royal Ballet of Flanders before joining the Stuttgart Ballet in 2006, where she was promoted to soloist in 2011.

Four of the company's dancers have also changed rank: **Célestin Boutin**, **Anya Nesvitaylo** and **Yui Sugawara** become **soloists**, while **Emily He** achieves the status of **second soloist**.

THE COMPANY

Grands Ballets dancers for the 2018-2019 season are therefore: **Vanesa G.R. Montoya**, **Myriam Simon** (first dancers); **Hervé Courtain**, **Jean-Sébastien Couture**, **Emma Garau Cima**, **Marcin Kaczorowski**, **Valentine Legat** (first soloists); **Raphaël Bouchard**, **Célestin Boutin**, **Mai Kono**, **Sahra Maira**, **Anya Nesvitaylo**, **Stephen Satterfeld**, **Chen Sheng**, **Yui Sugawara** (soloists); **Emily He**, **Chisato Ide**, **Anna Ishi**, **Vera Kvarcakova**, **Éline Malègue**, **André Santos**, **Ryo Shimizu** (second soloists); **Julia Bergua**, **Esabelle Chen**, **Matthew Cluff**, **Kiara Denae Felder**, **Dane Holland**, **Nicholas Jones**, **Yi-Li Law**, **Diana Léon**, **James Lyttle**, **Tetyana Martynova**, **Melih Mertel**, **Hamilton Nieh**, **Meg Honey Parry**, **Maude Sabourin**, **Alessio Scognamiglio** and **Éléonore Thomas** (corps de ballet). The company also wishes to call attention to the contribution of Jeremy Raia, who retired this past June after more than 20 years at Les Grands Ballets, and to note the departures of Ruben Julliard, Jérémy Galdeano, Sarah Kingston and Andrew Wright.

NEXT RENDEZVOUS

The five new Grands Ballets dancers will join the thirty-three dancers already in place for the opening of the 2018-2019 season on **October 4**, with a premiere by Britain's Cathy Marston, ***Lady Chatterley's Lover***.

About Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal

For over 60 years, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal has been a creation, production and international performance company devoted to the development of dance in all its forms, while always faithful to the spirit of classical ballet. The dancers of Les Grands Ballets, under the artistic direction of Ivan Cavallari, perform choreographies by creators both long-established and trendsetting. Situated at the heart of Montreal's Quartier des spectacles, Les Grands Ballets embodies an innovative holistic approach, unique in the world. That approach has resulted in Les Studios and in the National Centre for Dance Therapy, which together promote all the benefits that dance can bring. The company's mission is also to ensure accessibility to art for everyone; in that spirit its achievements include the founding of The Nutcracker Fund, which every year enables thousands of children to enjoy a first ballet experience. Les Grands Ballets, recognized for its excellence, its creativity and its daring, is fully committed to the local community, and is acclaimed on stages around the world.

— 30 —

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