



COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2015

NEW YORK CITY BALLET ANNOUNCES 2015-16 SEASON

**HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE SEVEN WORLD PREMIERE BALLETS
TWO BY NYCB RESIDENT CHOREOGRAPHER AND SOLOIST JUSTIN PECK
ONE BY NYCB CORPS MEMBER TROY SCHUMACHER
AND ONE EACH BY CHOREOGRAPHERS ROBERT BINET, KIM BRANDSTRUP,
MYLES THATCHER, AND CHRISTOPHER WHEELDON**

**THE SEASON'S REPERTORY WILL FEATURE
THE MUSIC OF 47 COMPOSERS INCLUDING
COMMISSIONED SCORES FROM BRYCE DESSNER OF THE NATIONAL
AND ELLIS LUDWIG-LEONE OF SAN FERMIN
AND THE INAUGURAL PERFORMANCES OF MUSIC DIRECTOR ANDREW LITTON**

**TWENTY-ONE WEEK SEASON TO FEATURE A TOTAL OF 58 BALLETS
WITH 28 WORKS BY NYCB CO-FOUNDER GEORGE BALANCHINE
INCLUDING THE FULL-LENGTH *JEWELS* AND *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*
AND THE ANNUAL HOLIDAY SEASON OF *GEORGE BALANCHINE'S THE NUTCRACKER™***

**The Season Will Also Feature Works By NYCB Co-Founding Choreographer Jerome Robbins
and Works by NYCB Ballet Master in Chief Peter Martins
Including Martins' Stagings of *Swan Lake* and August Bournonville's *La Sylphide*
As Well as Additional Works by Alexei Ratmansky,
Justin Peck, and Christopher Wheeldon**

The Travelers Companies, Inc. is the Global Sponsor of New York City Ballet

New York City Ballet will open its 2015-16 Season at Lincoln Center on Tuesday, September 22 with eight performances of Peter Martins' production of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*, through Tuesday, September 29, to launch the Company's 2015 Fall Season, which will continue for four weeks through Sunday, October 18.

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The year of performances will continue with the annual holiday season of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™* (November 27 through January 3); the 2016 Winter Season (January 19 through February 28); and the 2016 Spring Season (April 19 through May 29).

The 21-week season of performances at the David H. Koch Theater will feature 58 ballets performed by the Company's 94 dancers and the 62-piece New York City Ballet Orchestra.

In keeping with New York City Ballet's unparalleled commitment to new work, the 2015-16 Season will feature seven world premiere ballets, including two from NYCB's Resident Choreographer Justin Peck (fall and winter season), and one each from choreographers Robert Binet (fall season), Kim Brandstrup (fall season), Myles Thatcher (fall season), Troy Schumacher (fall season), and Christopher Wheeldon (spring season). The season will also include commissioned scores from the acclaimed American composers Bryce Dessner, for Peck's winter season premiere, and Ellis Ludwig-Leon, for Schumacher's fall season premiere.

The 2015-16 Season will also be highlighted by the inaugural performances of NYCB Music Director Andrew Litton who was appointed last year and will conduct his first performances as the Company's new Music Director during the opening weekend of the 61st annual season of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™*, beginning Friday, November 27.

Litton will also conduct the opening night of the 2016 Winter Season on Tuesday, January 19, in a program that will feature the music of three American composers whose works have had a major influence on Litton's career – Leonard Bernstein (*Candide Overture* and Jerome Robbins' *Fancy Free*), Samuel Barber (Peter Martins' *Barber Violin Concerto*), and George Gershwin (*George Balanchine's Who Cares?*). Litton, who will be the sixth Music Director in NYCB history, also serves as Music Director of both Norway's Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra and Denver's Colorado Symphony Orchestra, and is also an acclaimed pianist and a Grammy Award-winning recording artist with a discography of more than 120 recordings.

All performances will take place at the David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center, which is located at West 63rd Street and Columbus Avenue. Subscription tickets for the 2015-16 Season will be available beginning April 28; single tickets for repertory performances will go on sale on August 3; and single tickets for performances of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™* will go on sale on September 20. Tickets are available online at nycballet.com, by phone at 212-496-0600, or in person at the David H. Koch Theater Box Office.

2015 FALL PERFORMANCES – September 22 through October 18

Featuring World Premiere Ballets by Justin Peck, Troy Schumacher, Robert Binet, Myles Thatcher, and Kim Brandstrup; Eight Performances of Peter Martins' full-length staging of *Swan Lake*; and Two All Balanchine Programs

New York City Ballet's 2015 Fall Season will open on Tuesday, September 22 at 7:30 p.m. with the return of Peter Martins' full-length staging of *Swan Lake*. Set to Tchaikovsky's beloved score and featuring sets and costumes by the acclaimed Danish painter Per Kirkeby and lighting by Mark Stanley, the production was last performed by NYCB in the fall of 2013 to sold-out houses. For the 2015 Fall Season the production will be performed eight times, through Tuesday, September 29.

Following the eight-performance run of *Swan Lake*, the Company will present its annual Fall Gala performance on Wednesday, September 30. The evening will feature four World Premiere ballets, including works by NYCB Resident Choreographer and Soloist Justin Peck, and NYCB Corps de Ballet member Troy Schumacher, who will make his second work for NYCB. The evening will also feature ballets by choreographers Robert Binet and Myles Thatcher, both of whom will be making their first-ever works for NYCB. In addition, once again this year the evening will celebrate the worlds of dance and fashion with costumes created by some of the fashion world's most acclaimed designers. The costume designers for the four Fall Gala premieres will be announced at a later date.

Troy Schumacher World Premiere – Fall Gala

The Schumacher premiere will feature a commissioned score from composer Ellis Ludwig-Leone, who has previously collaborated with Schumacher on several works for BalletCollective, the dance, music, and art collective founded by Schumacher in 2010 and where Ludwig-Leone serves as Composer and Music Director. Ludwig-Leone is also the frontman and composer for the baroque pop band San Fermin, whose self-titled debut album was named one of the "50 Best Albums of 2013" by National Public Radio. Born in Rhode Island, and raised in rural Massachusetts, Ludwig-Leone studied composition at Yale University and currently resides in Brooklyn.

The Fall Gala premiere will be the second work that Schumacher, who has danced with NYCB since 2005, has created for the Company. His first piece for NYCB, *Clearing Dawn*, was created for the 2014 Fall Gala.

Justin Peck World Premiere – Fall Gala

Peck, NYCB's Resident Choreographer, will work with Steve Reich's *Variations for Vibes, Pianos and Strings* for his Fall Gala premiere, which will be the ninth work that Peck has created for NYCB since 2012.

Peck, who is a Soloist with NYCB and has also created ballets for such companies as Miami City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and LA Dance Project, among others, is also the subject of the acclaimed documentary film *Ballet 422*, which is currently playing in movie theaters across the country. Named NYCB's second-ever Resident Choreographer in 2014, Peck's recent works for NYCB include *'Rōdē,ō: Four Dance Episodes*, which premiered during the 2015 Winter Season, and his acclaimed collaborations with composer Sufjan Stevens – *Year of the Rabbit* (2012) and *Everywhere We Go* (2014).

Robert Binet Premiere – Fall Gala

For his first-ever ballet for NYCB, Canadian-born choreographer Robert Binet will work with two movements from *Miroirs* – "Oiseaux Tristes" and "Une Barque sur l'Océan" – a piano score by Maurice Ravel. In 2013 Binet, who trained at Canada's National Ballet School, was appointed Choreographic Associate at The National Ballet of Canada. Prior to this appointment, Binet served as the first-ever Royal Ballet Choreographic Apprentice, a position the British company created expressly for Binet in which he was mentored by the company's Resident Choreographer Wayne McGregor.

In addition to creating works for The National Ballet of Canada and Wayne McGregor | Random Dance, Binet has also created works for The Royal Ballet as part of the company's Draft Works program which showcases new choreography. In addition, in 2011 Binet shadowed The Hamburg Ballet's Artistic Director John Neumeier as he created a full-length work, and in 2012 Binet created his own full-length work for the German National Youth Ballet, The Hamburg Ballet's second company. Binet has also participated in working sessions at the New York Choreographic Institute, an affiliate of NYCB, during the spring of 2011 and the fall of 2014.

Myles Thatcher World Premiere – Fall Gala

The final premiere of the Fall Gala evening will be created by Myles Thatcher, a member of the San Francisco Ballet's corps de ballet since 2010, who will choreograph to the first movement of William Walton's Piano Quartet in d minor, for his first-ever work for NYCB.

Thatcher is currently one of seven artists participating in the 2014-15 Rolex Mentor & Protégé Arts Initiative, which matches emerging artists in various disciplines with established artists working in the same fields. Thatcher was selected for the program by his mentor, choreographer Alexei Ratmansky, and has spent the last year observing Ratmansky at work on various projects, including time at New York City Ballet while Ratmansky was choreographing *Pictures at an Exhibition* for NYCB's 2014 Fall Season.

As a dancer Thatcher has performed numerous corps and soloist roles with the San Francisco Ballet, and has also participated in a number of choreographic workshops and showcases with both the San Francisco Ballet and School. Thatcher's first work for his home company, called *Manifesto* and set to excerpts from Bach's *Goldberg Variations* and *The Musical Offering*, premiered in February 2015.

Kim Brandstrup World Premiere – Thursday, October 8

On Thursday, October 8, NYCB will present the final premiere of the 2015 Fall Season which will be created by the Danish-born, British-based choreographer Kim Brandstrup, who will make his first-ever work for an American dance company. The ballet will be set to Claude Debussy's *Jeux*, the French composer's last orchestral work, which was commissioned by Serge Diaghilev for the Ballets Russes and premiered in May 1913.

Brandstrup, who studied film at the University of Copenhagen, founded Arc Dance Company in Britain in 1985 where he created numerous works over a span of 20 years. Brandstrup is the recipient of two Olivier Awards, one for Outstanding Achievement in Dance in 1990 (*Orfeo* – London Contemporary Dance Theater) and one for Best New Dance Creation in 2010 (*Goldberg: The Rojo/Brandstrup Project*, a collaboration with the ballerina Tamara Rojo at the Royal Opera House's Linbury Studio).

Brandstrup has worked extensively in Britain where he has created works for The Royal Opera and Royal Ballet Covent Garden, the English National Ballet, and the Rambert Dance Company. He has also created works for the Royal Danish Ballet, Danish Dance Theater, Royal Swedish Ballet, and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, among others. In New York, Brandstrup's work has been seen at the Metropolitan Opera where he has created choreography for two productions – *Death in Venice* (1994), and *Eugene Onegin* (2013).

Other highlights of the 2015 Fall Season will include two All Balanchine Programs, the first featuring *Liebeslieder Walzer* and *Tschaikovsky Suite No. 3*, and the second, a Black & White program consisting of *Concerto Barocco*, *Monumentum pro Gesualdo*, *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*, *Episodes*, and *The Four Temperaments*. A program featuring the works of five American composers will include Martins' *Ash*, to a score by Michael Torke; Richard Tanner's *Sonatas and Interludes*, to a score by John Cage; Peck's *'Rōdē,ō: Four Dance Episodes*, to a score by Aaron Copland; and Balanchine's *Tarantella*, to a score by Louis Moreau Gottschalk, and *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*, to a score by Richard Rodgers.

The final program of the fall season will feature Balanchine's charming commedia dell'arte story ballet *Harlequinade*, set to a score by Riccardo Drigo and featuring more than 80 dancers from both NYCB and the School of American Ballet; and Robbins' *N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz*, which the choreographer created to a score by Robert Prince in 1958, one year after his landmark musical *West Side Story* opened on Broadway.

George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*TM
November 27, 2015 through January 3, 2016

New York City Ballet will present its annual engagement of the holiday classic *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*TM from Friday, November 27, 2015 through Sunday, January 3, 2016.

Balanchine's beloved production, which premiered on February 2, 1954 at the City Center of Music and Drama in New York, helped to establish *The Nutcracker* and its score as perennial favorites in the United States, evident by the now countless versions of the ballet performed all over the country. NYCB's acclaimed production is seen by more than 100,000 people annually and has been performed more than 2,300 times.

Set to Tschaikovsky's glorious score, *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*TM features choreography by Balanchine, scenery by Rouben Ter-Arutunian, costumes by Karinska, and lighting by Mark Stanley, after the original designs by Ronald Bates. The production includes the Company's entire roster of more than 150 dancers and musicians, as well as more than 125 children, in two alternating casts, from the School of American Ballet, the official school of New York City Ballet.

The 2015 season of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*TM is once again sponsored by The Travelers Companies, Inc.

2016 Winter Season Performances – January 19 through February 28

Featuring a World Premiere by Justin Peck to a Commissioned Score by Bryce Dessner with Sets and Costumes Designed by Artist Marcel Dzama; NYCB's New Music Director Andrew Litton to Conduct January 19 Opening Night Performance; and George Balanchine's Annual Birthday Celebration – Saturday at the Ballet with George

Music Director Andrew Litton Conducts Winter Season Opening Night Performance

New York City Ballet will open its 2016 Winter Season on Tuesday, January 19 with an evening designed by NYCB Ballet Master in Chief Peter Martins and NYCB's new Music Director Andrew Litton to celebrate the music of three American composers who have had a major influence on Litton's career – Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, and George Gershwin -- whose music will accompany ballets by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, and Peter Martins.

The evening will begin with the New York City Ballet Orchestra performing the overture from Bernstein's *Candide*, followed by Martins' *Barber Violin Concerto*, Robbins' *Fancy Free* (music by Bernstein), and Balanchine's *Who Cares?* (music by Gershwin).

A native New Yorker, Litton grew up on New York's Upper West Side and received his bachelor's and master's degrees from The Juilliard School of Music in piano and conducting. In addition to his duties with the Bergen Philharmonic and Colorado Symphony, Litton regularly appears with orchestras throughout the world and has also conducted for many of the world's leading opera companies including The Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera Covent Garden, and Deutsche Oper Berlin. Litton is also recognized as an authority on the music of George Gershwin and led the Covent Garden premiere of the composer's *Porgy and Bess*.

While still a student at Juilliard Litton's first professional experiences were with the ballet world, collaborating with both Rudolph Nureyev and Natalia Makarova, including performing as the onstage pianist for Nureyev's legendary Broadway performances in the 1970s.

Justin Peck World Premiere – February 2

New York City Ballet's annual New Combinations Evening on Tuesday, February 2 will feature a World Premiere Ballet by NYCB Resident Choreographer and Soloist Justin Peck. For this new work, Peck will create his first-ever narrative ballet, which will be based on the Hans Christian Andersen fairytale *The Most Incredible Thing*, the story of a young man who creates a magnificent clock in an effort to win a contest and the incredible consequences that ensue.

For this one-act story ballet Peck is collaborating with composer Bryce Dessner on a commissioned score and artist Marcel Dzama for the visual and costume design. The ballet will also be Peck's largest work to date featuring more than 50 dancers, including 11 children from the School of American Ballet.

Dessner, the co-founder and guitarist for the Grammy Award-nominated rock band The National, is a Brooklyn-based composer who holds a master's degree in music from Yale University and has collaborated with such artists as Steve Reich, Philip Glass, David Lang, Sufjan Stevens, Nico Muhly, and the Kronos Quartet, among many others. He is also the founder of the influential MusicNOW Festival, the Cincinnati-based showcase for contemporary music from around the world that recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. Dessner and Peck previously collaborated in 2013 on *Murder Ballades* for LA Dance Project.

Dzama is one of the contemporary art world's most celebrated young artists whose work is characterized by an idiosyncratic visual language that draws from a wide range of references and influences including Dante, William Blake, and Marcel Duchamp. Best known for his prolific drawings, the Canadian-born Dzama received his B.F.A from the University of Manitoba, and in recent years has also worked in sculpture, painting, diorama, film and video. Represented by the David Zwirner Gallery in New York, Dzama has exhibited extensively in solo and group presentations in the U.S. and abroad, and his work is held in the collections of such institutions as the Museum of Modern Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, and the Tate Gallery in London. Dzama currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

The New Combinations Program, which will premiere on Tuesday, February 2 with encore performances on Saturday, February 6 at 8 p.m., and February 9, 10 and 11 at 7:30 p.m., will also feature the new Schumacher, Binet and Thatcher ballets from the winter season, and the return of Christopher Wheeldon's *Estancia*, which was created for NYCB's Architecture of Dance Festival in 2010.

Estancia is set to the score of the same name by the Argentinian composer Alberto Ginastera, which was commissioned in 1941 by NYCB Co-Founder Lincoln Kirstein and intended to be choreographed by Balanchine for American Ballet Caravan. Wheeldon's ballet brought Ginastera's score to the NYCB repertory nearly 70 years after it was commissioned by Kirstein in a production that features set designs by the acclaimed architect Santiago Calatrava. *Estancia* now returns to the NYCB repertory to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Ginastera, who was born in Buenos Aires on April 11, 1916.

Other highlights of the 2016 Winter Season include the Company's annual celebration of George Balanchine's birthday – "Saturday at the Ballet with George" – on Saturday, January 23. The festivities will include two All Balanchine programs consisting of *Walpurgisnacht Ballet*, *Sonatine*, *Mozartiana* and *Symphony in C* at the 2 p.m. matinee; and *Ballo della Regina*, *Kammermusik No. 2* and *Tschaikovsky Suite No. 3* at the 8 p.m. evening performance. The day will also feature pre-performance talks and other special events that will be announced at a later date. 2016 will mark the 112th anniversary of George Balanchine's birth on January 22, 1904.

The winter season will include an additional All Balanchine program, consisting of the Black & White leotard ballets *Episodes*, *Agon*, and *The Four Temperaments*, which will be performed during the final week of the season – February 24, 26, 27 (eve), and 28.

Other winter season highlights include the return of Peter Martins' staging of August Bournonville's *La Sylphide*, which will be performed with Balanchine's *Tschaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2* for eight performances from February 12 through 19.

Contemporary works returning to the repertory during the winter will include Wheeldon's *This Bitter Earth*, Martins' *The Infernal Machine*, and Peck's *Paz de la Jolla*, the creation of which was chronicled in Jody Lee Lipes' acclaimed documentary film *Ballet 422*.

2016 Spring Performances – April 19 through May 29.
Featuring a World Premiere Ballet by Christopher Wheeldon
George Balanchine's *Jewels* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*;
and Works by Bournonville, Robbins, Martins, Peck, and Ratmansky

New York City Ballet's 2016 Spring Season will open on Tuesday, April 19 with a performance of George Balanchine's *Jewels*, the three-act, evening length work that was created for New York City Ballet in 1967. Each section of the ballet is distinct in both music and mood with *Emeralds* to music by Fauré an evocation of France, *Rubies* to music by Stravinsky epitomizing the speed and rhythms of America, and *Diamonds* to music by Tschaikovsky recalling the grandeur of Imperial Russia and the Maryinsky Theater, where Balanchine received his early ballet training. *Jewels* will receive five performances during the 2016 Spring Season – Tuesday, April 19, Saturday, April 23 (eve), Wednesday, April 27, Thursday, April 28 and Sunday, May 1.

The opening week of the spring season will also feature a Contemporary Choreographers program consisting of Christopher Wheeldon's *Estancia*, which premiered in 2010; Alexei Ratmansky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, which premiered in 2014, and Justin Peck's *Everywhere We Go*, which also premiered in 2014; an American Music program consisting of Peter Martins' *Barber Violin Concerto*, Jerome Robbins' *N.Y. Export: Opus Jazz*, and Justin Peck's winter season premiere to music by Bryce Dessner; and a final program consisting of August Bournonville's *Bournonville Divertissements*, Robbins' *Moves*, and Balanchine's *Tschaikovsky Pas de Deux* and *Symphony in Three Movements*.

Other program highlights include an All Balanchine program consisting of *Ballo della Regina*, *Kammermusik No. 2*, and *Vienna Waltzes*; and an All Robbins program consisting of *Dances at a Gathering* and *West Side Story Suite*.

The final week of the 2016 Spring Season will feature seven performances of Balanchine's beloved full-length staging of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from May 24 through May 29.

Christopher Wheeldon Premiere – Spring Gala, May 4, 2016

The final World Premiere of the 2015-16 Season will be created by Christopher Wheeldon and will take place at NYCB's annual Spring Gala performance on Wednesday, May 4. Wheeldon, who danced with NYCB from 1993 to 2000 and was the Company's Resident Choreographer from 2001 to 2008, has created 19 works for NYCB since 1997. The score for Wheeldon's new work and additional Spring Gala programming will be announced at a later date.

Currently an Artistic Associate of The Royal Ballet, Wheeldon has created numerous works for the British company, including his acclaimed full-length productions of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (a 2011 co-production with the National Ballet of Canada) and *The Winter's Tale* (2014). This spring Wheeldon is directing and choreographing the Broadway production of *An American in Paris*, which stars NYCB Principal Dancer Robert Fairchild and The Royal Ballet's Leanne Cope, and is currently playing at the Palace Theatre. Wheeldon has also created numerous works for ballet companies around the world including American Ballet Theatre, San Francisco Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, and Royal Danish Ballet. He has also choreographed for The Metropolitan Opera, and for his own company, Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company, which he founded in 2009.

See the attached season calendars for a complete schedule of NYCB's 2015-16 Season programming. For more information on New York City Ballet visit www.nycballet.com.

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