UNLV
presents

RUSSIAN NATIONAL BALLET THEATRE
Elena Radchenko, Artistic Director

Wednesday, February 11, 2009 • 8 p.m.
Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall

Presented by arrangement with
Columbia Artists Management, LLC
Producer: Andrew S. Grossman · Associate Producer: W. Seton Ijams
1790 Broadway, New York, NY 10019 · www.cami.com
Company Manager: Maria Keith · Technical Director: David Cauley

Although unanticipated, programs and artists are subject to change without notice.
TONIGHT’S PROGRAM

BALLET GALA
An Evening of Ballet’s Greatest Moments

ACT I

Pas de deux from Act III of The Sleeping Beauty

Choreography: Marius Petipa
Music: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Dancers: Marianna Chemalina, Dmitry Dmitriev

Pas de trois (“Ocean and Pearls”) from The Humpbacked Horse

Choreography: Arthur Saint-León
Music: Cesare Pugni
Dancers: Maria Klueva, Viktoria Krakhmaliova, Dmitry Shchemelinin

Pas de deux from Act II of Carmen

Choreography: Alberto Alonso
Music: Georges Bizet, Rodion Schedrin
Dancers: Carmen - Maria Barkova, Ekaterina Egorova
        Don Jose - Vitaly Zabelin

Melody

Choreography: Asaf Messerer
Music: Christoph Willibald Gluck
Dancers: Nadezda Illarionova, Marat Abdrahmanov

Pas de deux from Act III of Le Corsaire

Choreography: Marius Petipa
Music: Adolphe Adam
Dancers: Oxana Bondareva, Alexandr Daev

Grand Pas de deux from Act III of Don Quixote

Choreography: Marius Petipa
Music: Leon Minkus
Dancers: Marianna Chemalina, Ruslan Mukhambetkaliev

~Intermission~
TONIGHT’S PROGRAM, continued

ACT II

Pass de Quatre
Choreography: Jules Perrot
Music: Cesare Pugni
Dancers: Nadezda Illarionova, Elena Khorosheva,
         Maria Barkova, Ekaterina Egorova

Dance with Snake from Act I of La Bayadère
Choreography: Marius Petipa
Music: Leon Minkus
Dancers: Marianna Chemalina, Oxana Bondareva

Allegro from Symphony No. 6 in b minor, Op. 74
Choreography: Vitaly Zabelin
Music: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Dancers: Maria Klueva, Vitaly Zabelin, Denis Morozov,
         Marat Abdrakhmanov, Dmitry Shchemelinin

The Dying Swan
Choreography: Michel Fokine
Music: Camille Saint-Saëns
Dancers: Ekaterina Egorova, Marianna Chemalina, Nadezda Illarionova

Paquita
Choreography: Marius Petipa
Music: Leon Minkus
Dancers: Paquita - Oxana Bondareva, Maria Poludova, Marianna Chemalina
         Lucien - Dmitry Dmitriev, Vladimir Statniy, Alexandr Daev

Plus Corps de Ballet
PROGRAM NOTES

ACT I

Pas de deux from Act III of The Sleeping Beauty

The Sleeping Beauty, a ballet in a prologue and three acts with choreography by Petipa, had its first production in 1890 at the Maryinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, ballet on the Imperial Russian stage had sunk to a very low level artistically. The director of the Imperial Theatres, Ivan Vsevolojsky, a talented and cultured man, was determined to raise the artistic level on all counts, and as a first step he approached the composer Tchaikovsky to supply him with a ballet score. Owing to the slight success in Moscow of his previous attempts at ballet music (Swan Lake), it is not wholly surprising to find Tchaikovsky insistent on having minute and detailed instructions from the choreographer himself. These he followed slavishly, down to the exact number of bars required in a given scene or variation, which circumstance amazingly, far from shackling his imagination, seems positively to have inspired it, for the resulting enchanting score remains possibly his best ballet music.

The grand Pas de deux of Act III of The Sleeping Beauty is the climax of Prince Desire and Princess Aurora's wedding celebration. In the ending, Aurora whirls into the Prince's arms and dives toward the floor as the Prince catches her around the waist and supports her in the famous inverted pose known as the "fish dive."

Marius Petipa (1818-1910), served as ballet master of the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg from 1862 to 1903, where he choreographed such classics as Don Quixote, The Sleeping Beauty, Raymonda and Le Corsaire.

Pas de trois ("Ocean and Pearls") from The Humpbacked Horse

The Humpbacked Horse is based on the popular fairy tale by P.P. Yershov, and tells the story of the hero Ivanushka, who performs spectacular deeds with the help of the Humpbacked Horse. The Pas de trois, known as “Ocean and Pearls,” is from the divertissement that forms part of Ivanushka's journey to the Underwater Kingdom. It features the Genie of the Underwaters and two Corals.

Pas de deux from Carmen

The impetus and cause for the creation of Carmen was the cherished dream of the celebrated Russian ballerina Maya Plisetskaya to depict the highly strung and riveting character of Carmen in a ballet.

In the famous opera, Soldier Don Jose falls in love with Carmen, a cigarette vendor, but she later abandons him for the toreador Escamillo. Don Jose suffers from an unhealthy passion for Carmen; he can no longer endure this situation and he urges her to come back to him. Carmen, who loves her freedom above all things and who does not accept being controlled by anyone, denies him the opportunity. Fate, an ambiguous character who takes on the shape of a bull, sketches the tragic conclusion of this exhilarating love story.

The program states, “Carmen is a beautiful woman who is free, true to herself, and completely honest. Don Jose lies, and thus he loses her. The Bull represents Fate. Therefore Carmen and the Bull die at the same time because she and her Fate are one.” The final pas de deux, a danced contest between Carmen and Don Jose, is a simulated bullfight in which the ballerina assumes the combined roles of heroine and Fate in the form of a bull.

Melody

Asaf Messerer, one of the Bolshoi Ballet’s most individual and dynamic principal dancers, graduated from the Bolshoi Ballet in 1921 and continued to perform until 1954. His occasional choreographic works include such concert pieces as Melody. It is performed to the music of Christoph Willibald Gluck, from Act II of his famous Italian Opera, Orfeo ed Euridice.
PROGRAM NOTES

Pas de deux from Le Corsaire

The ballet Le Corsaire is based on Lord Byron's poem The Corsaire. Its plot centers on Medora, a Greek girl who is sold into slavery but is ultimately rescued by the pirate Conrad. The spectacular Pas de Deux at the end of the ballet celebrates Medora and Conrad's triumph after being shipwrecked and having survived.

Grand Pas de deux from Act III of Don Quixote

The full-length ballet of Don Quixote concentrates on the love affair between Kitri and the barber Basil from Volume Two of Cervantes's masterpiece. The characters of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza merely serve as a thread to link the various scenes of the ballet. This striking pas de deux performed by Kitri and Basil takes place during their wedding festivities, and is one of the most famous dances for its flair and stamina. After a bold, lyrical entrance the ballerina and her partner dance a sustained duet followed by an engaging, diamond-like variation for her and a spectacular solo for him. A joyous climax is reached with her famous fouettés (quick whipping movement of the raised leg while turning on the other) and his tours à la seconde (turns on one leg with the other raised and extended throughout).

ACT II

Pas de Quatre

In 1845, Benjamin Lumley, manager of Her Majesty's Theatre in London, had the idea of combining the four most famous ballerinas of the time to appear together in the same work. Lumley then commissioned Jules Perrot, French choreographer and ballet master, to choreograph such a work for Marie Taglioni, Carlotta Grisi, Fanny Cerrito, and Lucile Grahn. Cesare Pugni, composer for the scores of over 300 ballets, was assigned to write the music, and the Pas de quatre had its premiere at Her Majesty's Theatre on July 12, 1845 between the acts of Donizetti's opera Anna Bolena.

Dance with Snake from Act I of La Bayadère

La Bayadère, a ballet set in India, tells the story of Nikiya, a bayadère, or temple dancer, who is in love with Solor, a noble warrior. But the Rajah decides to marry his daughter Gamzatti to Solor, who, overwhelmed by her beauty, forgets his vows of love to Nikiya. When the Rajah learns of Nikiya's and Solor's love from the High Brahmin (who is also in love with Nikiya), he decides to have the bayadère killed. When festivities are presented in honour of the betrothal of Gamzatti and Solor, the High Brahmin brings Nikiya to dance for the ceremony. She cannot accept the engagement and expresses her sadness in dance. She is given a basket of flowers which she believes are from Solor. However when Nikiya lifts the basket to smell the flowers, it is soon realized that the basket was actually sent by Rajah and Gamzatti, as a hidden poisonous snake fatally bites her.

Allegro from Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74

Tchaikovsky's last symphony, nicknamed “Pathétique,” which in Russian translates to “passionate” or “emotional,” was composed between February and August of 1893. Tchaikovsky conducted its debut in St. Petersburg on October 28, 1893, nine days before his death (it is said that five days after he conducted his final symphony, he drank a glass of unboiled water, which was the cause of many cholera cases in St. Petersburg at the time, although some refute that it was an accidental death). The choreographer for this work is also a member of the company, and sets the music to the third movement from Tchaikovsky's famous symphony to highlight the talent of his fellow dancers.

The Dying Swan

Originally choreographed for the great ballerina Anna Pavlova and performed at a gala performance in St. Petersburg in 1907, Michel Fokine employed the music of Le
Program Notes

Cygne from Saint-Saens's “Le Carnival des Animaux.” The dance, evoking the final struggle for the life of a dying bird, became particularly identified with Pavlova. It remains one of the most famous solo dances ever created, representing for many the very essence of ballet dancing.

Paquita

Paquita is one of the most celebrated displays of technical fireworks from the old Imperial Russian Ballet. Marius Petipa made a series of revisions to the famous French ballet Paquita when he was ballet-master in St. Petersburg, the most important being in 1881 when he inserted a trio and Grand Pas to new music by Ludwig Minkus as a showcase for the considerable talents of his ballerinas at that time. These gems of Petipa's choreography have been treasured in Russia ever since and remain wonderful examples of his genius. Paquita was originally staged at the Paris Opera in April 1846. The first Paquita was Carlotta Grisi. A year after its creation it was staged in St. Petersburg, where Marius Petipa danced the leading role - his first steps on a stage to which he would devote the rest of his long career in Russia. As chief ballet-master in St. Petersburg, Petipa revived the ballet in 1881 for his favored ballerina, Yekaterina Vazem, and with the new music by Ludwig Minkus, he created the dazzling Grand Pas, which was revived by Pyotr Gusev for the Bolshoi Ballet.

The ballet takes place in Spain during the Peninsular War and tells of a Gypsy girl Paquita who saves the life of Lucien, an officer in Napoleon's army, from a plot to murder him. Lucien's father, a French general, wants his son to marry Doña Seraphina, daughter of the Spanish Governor, but the Governor looks at the proposed alliance with disdain and bribes the Gypsy King Idigo to kill the young Frenchman. Idigo offers Lucien a glass of drugged wine, but Paquita, who knew about the plot, changes the glasses. When hired assassins enter the Gypsy's hut, Paquita and Lucien escape. Lucien approaches his father and introduces Paquita during a ball. The Governor is arrested and Paquita discovers that she is a daughter of noble parents, and thus she is able to marry Lucien.

About the Russian National Ballet Theatre

Artistic Director: Elena Radchenko

The Russian National Ballet Theatre was founded in Moscow during the transitional period of Perestroika in the late 1980s, when many of the great dancers and choreographers of the Soviet Union's ballet institutions were exercising their creative freedom by starting new, vibrant companies dedicated not only to the timeless tradition of classical Russian Ballet but to invigorate this tradition as the Russians began to accept new developments in the dance from around the world.

The company, then titled the Soviet National Ballet, was founded by and incorporated graduates from the great Russian choreographic schools of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Perm. Today, the Russian National Ballet Theatre is its own institution, with over 50 dancers of singular instruction and vast experience, many of whom have been with the company since its inception.

In 1994, the legendary Bolshoi principal dancer Elena Radchenko was selected by Presidential decree to assume the first permanent artistic directorship of the company. Ms. Radchenko is the founder of the Russian National Ballet Theatre, and she has focused the Company on upholding the grand national tradition of the major Russian ballet works and developing new talents throughout Russia, with a repertory of virtually all of the great full works of Petipa: Don Quixote, La Bayadere, The Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake, Raymonda, Paquita, Coppelia and La Sylphide, as well as productions of The Nutcracker, Sylvia, and La Fille Mal Gardee, among others.