

BOSTON BALLET

MIKKO NISSINEN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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BOSTON BALLET PRESENTS *ROBBINS/THE CONCERT*

IN ADDITION TO THE RETURN OF JEROME ROBBINS' COMIC SEND-UP, REPERTORY PROGRAM FEATURES COMPANY PREMIERE OF GEORGE BALANCHINE'S *STRAVINSKY VIOLIN CONCERTO* AND WORLD PREMIERE OF JORMA ELO'S *CREATURES OF EGMONT*

April 6, 2017 (Boston, MA) – Boston Ballet's 2016–2017 season concludes with *Robbins/The Concert*, a mixed-repertory program featuring works by George Balanchine, Jorma Elo, and Jerome Robbins set to music by several composers: Igor Stravinsky, Frédéric Chopin, Ludwig van Beethoven, J.S. Bach, and Robert Schumann. The Company premiere of Balanchine's *Stravinsky Violin Concerto* adds another work by the seminal choreographer to Boston Ballet's repertoire. The world premiere of Elo's *Creatures of Egmont* pays homage to his classical roots with a contemporary twist. The program closes with the return of Robbins' hilarious audience favorite *The Concert (Or, The Perils of Everybody)*. *Robbins/The Concert* runs May 5–27 at the Boston Opera House.

"*Robbins/The Concert* represents three distinctly different ballets produced by pairing the work of a musical genius with a brilliant choreographer," said Boston Ballet Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen. "It is an exciting way to end a season, with new works and the return of favorites that will leave audiences inspired and amused."

Stravinsky Violin Concerto

Balanchine choreographed *Stravinsky Violin Concerto* in honor of his longtime friend and frequent collaborator, and it was a highlight of the Stravinsky Festival at the New York State Theater when it premiered in June 1972. The ballet is set to Stravinsky's *Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra*, to which Balanchine had previously choreographed a ballet by another name, *Balustrade*, for the Ballets Russes in 1941. Balanchine approached the concerto anew in 1972, creating an intricately designed work for 20 dancers with two of his most famous and contrasting pas de deux. One of 16 ballets Balanchine choreographed to the composer's scores, *Stravinsky Violin Concerto* demonstrates the relationship between the two artists that "gave ballet a new pulse" (Gia Kourlas, *The New York Times*).

George Balanchine (1904–1983) is one of the 20th century's most prolific choreographers. He created more than 400 works throughout his career and is celebrated widely for his signature "neoclassical style" that transformed the ballet world. Born in St. Petersburg in 1904, Balanchine came to the United States in 1933 and went on to establish the School of American Ballet and ultimately the New York City Ballet, where he was Ballet Master and Principal Choreographer. Many of Balanchine's works are considered masterpieces and are performed by ballet companies all over the world.

Creatures of Egmont

Boston Ballet Resident Choreographer Jorma Elo's *Creatures of Egmont* is set to a collection of music by Beethoven, Bach, and Schumann with lighting design by John Cuff. The work for 12 dancers reflects Elo's classical dance roots with his signature contemporary flair. Robert Perdziola, who designed costumes for Nissinen's celebrated productions of *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake*, is the costume designer for Elo's world premiere. The title refers to Elo's opening and closing musical selections—Beethoven's *The Creatures of Prometheus* and *Egmont*.

Finnish choreographer Jorma Elo was appointed Boston Ballet's resident choreographer in 2005, and has created 14 works for the Company including *Bach Cello Suites* and *Plan to B*. He danced with Finnish National Ballet and Cullberg Ballet until joining Netherlands Dance Theater in 1990, where he enjoyed a 15-year career. He has choreographed numerous world premieres for companies worldwide, including American Ballet Theatre, San Francisco Ballet, New York City Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, Netherlands Dance Theater, and Finnish National Ballet. In 2010, Elo was awarded the Benois de la Danse award for best choreography for his production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, commissioned by Vienna State Opera Ballet, and *Slice to Sharp* for the Stanislavsky Music Theatre.

The Concert (Or, The Perils of Everybody)

Robbins' *The Concert (Or, The Perils of Everybody)* is a comic parody that gives honest insights into human nature and the complexities of relationships. Set to music by Frédéric Chopin, the ballet follows a colorful cast of characters at a classical music concert and the uproarious antics that ensue. *The Concert* premiered in 1956 at New York City Ballet and at Boston Ballet in 2015. With sets by visual artist and Tony Award-winning designer Edward Gorey and lighting by internationally-recognized designer Jennifer Tipton, this light-hearted ballet has been hailed by critics as "one of the funniest ballets ever made" (Marcia Siegel, *The Arts Fuse*) and "sublimely ridiculous" (Jeffrey Gantz, *The Boston Globe*).

Jerome Robbins (1918–1998) is celebrated for his ballet choreography and his work as a director and choreographer for Broadway, television, and film. He choreographed more than 60 ballets, including *Afternoon of a Faun*, *The Concert*, *Dances at a Gathering*, *In the Night*,

Fancy Free, and *Glass Pieces*, which remain in the repertoires of ballet companies around the world. His Broadway shows include *On The Town*, *West Side Story*, *The King and I*, *Peter Pan*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*, among others. Robbins was the recipient of two Academy Awards for the film *West Side Story*, and his final Broadway production, *Jerome Robbins=Broadway* (1989), won six Tony Awards (including Best Musical and Best Director).

All performances of *Robbins/The Concert* take place at the Boston Opera House (539 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111):

Friday, May 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 11 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 13 at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 14 at 1 p.m.

Thursday, May 18 at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 21 at 1 p.m.

Friday, May 26 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 27 at 1 p.m.

Tickets start at \$35. For more information, visit bostonballet.org or call 617-695-6955.

Stravinsky Violin Concerto

Choreography: George Balanchine

Music: Igor Stravinsky: *Violin Concerto in D Major*

Lighting Design: John Cuff

Creatures of Egmont

Choreography: Jorma Elo

Music: Ludwig van Beethoven: *Overture to The Creatures Of Prometheus*, Op. 43

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Fantasia & Fugue in g minor*, BWV 542

(arranged for orchestra by Dmitri Mitropoulos)

Robert Schumann: *Fugue No. 6 from Six Fugues on the Name B.A.C.H.*, Op. 60

(arranged for string orchestra by Paul Angerer)

Ludwig van Beethoven: *Overture to Egmont*, Op. 84

Costume Design: Robert Perdziola

Lighting Design: John Cuff

The Concert (Or, The Perils of Everybody)

Choreography: Jerome Robbins

Music: Frédéric Chopin, arranged by Clare Grundman

Set Design: Edward Gorey

Costume Design: Irene Sharaff

Lighting Design: Jennifer Tipton

Lighting Recreation: John Cuff

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About Boston Ballet

Since 1963, Boston Ballet's internationally acclaimed performances of classical, neo-classical, and contemporary ballets, combined with a dedication to world-class dance education and community initiative programs, have made the institution a leader in its field, with a 53-year history of promoting excellence and access to dance.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen and Executive Director Meredith Max Hodges, the Company maintains a diverse repertoire, ranging from full-length ballets to new works by some of today's finest choreographers. Boston Ballet's second company, Boston Ballet II, is comprised of dancers who gain experience by performing with the Company and independently, presenting special programs to audiences throughout the Northeast.

Boston Ballet School, the official school of Boston Ballet, has a long-standing dedication to providing exceptional dance education and ballet training to students across three studios in Boston, Newton, and the North Shore. Led by Director Margaret Tracey, the School reaches more than 5,000 students (toddler to adult) each year through its four core programs: Children's Program, Classical Ballet Program, Adult Dance Program, and Pre-Professional Program.

Boston Ballet's Department of Education and Community Initiatives (ECI) provides programming, events, and activities that connect the community to dance. ECI reaches more than 4,000 individuals in Boston, North Shore, and the surrounding communities each year through Citydance, ECI on Location, Adaptive Dance, and other community programs.

For more information, please visit bostonballet.org.

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