

On Stage
Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts

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The Walter Carsen
Centre for
The National Ballet
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2008/09 Season

North American Premieres of *The Seagull* and *Carmen* Three World Premieres Four Company Premieres Return of International Competition for the Erik Bruhn Prize

February 11, 2008... **Karen Kain**, Artistic Director of The National Ballet of Canada, today announced the 2008/09 season. The company's 58th season features the North American premiere of two new ballets, *The Seagull*, based on Chekhov's timeless drama and a provocative dance interpretation of Bizet's opera *Carmen*. The 2008/09 season also includes world premieres by three of Canada's most exciting choreographic talents, a Canadian premiere by Twyla Tharp and the return of the classics *Romeo and Juliet* and *Giselle*.

The 2008/09 Season

The Seagull, created by acclaimed choreographer and Artistic Director of The Hamburg Ballet **John Neumeier**, makes its North American premiere on November 14, 2008. Recipient of the 2007 Stanislavsky Award in Moscow, *The Seagull* is a full-length ballet based on Anton Chekhov's classic drama of spurned love and self-deception. The ballet maintains Chekhov's themes of intergenerational conflict and the role of the artist, while changing the occupations of the main characters from actresses and writers to dancers and choreographers.

Davide Bombana's *Carmen* makes its North American premiere on June 6, 2009. Although there have been numerous retellings, choreographer Bombana's *Carmen* is a clever and provocative re-conceptualization that maintains the intensity and passion of the Bizet opera. *Carmen* is performed with the company premiere of **Dominique Dumais' Skin Divers**.

The vibrancy and richness of contemporary Canadian choreography is demonstrated in a programme of short works by three of the country's brightest dancemakers, **Peter Quanz**, **Crystal Pite** and **Sabrina Matthews**. *Innovation*, three world premieres by Mr. Quanz, Ms. Pite and Ms. Matthews opens March 4, 2009.

Twyla Tharp's *In The Upper Room* was first performed in 1986. Set to music by **Philip Glass**, this piece exhibits Ms. Tharp's characteristic physicality and speed, while exploring the virtuosity of both contemporary and classical ballet. *In The Upper Room* receives its company premiere on November 5, 2008 and is performed with **George Balanchine's** *Symphony in C*.

Skin Divers is choreographed by former National Ballet Soloist and current Co-Artistic Director of Ballet Mannheim **Dominique Dumais**. Inspired by the remarkable

Karen Kain
Artistic Director

poetry of Canadian writer **Anne Michaels**, *Skin Divers* incorporates dance, spoken word and video projection.

Amidst a season of world and company premieres, the National Ballet's signature ballets, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Giselle* return, along with *The Eighth International Competition for the Erik Bruhn Prize*.

The Nutcracker will be performed December 6 - 28, 2008 with 25 performances.

The company will tour to the National Arts Centre in Ottawa with *Romeo and Juliet* from April 16 - 18, 2009. Other touring will be announced at a later date.

Ballet Talks will take place 45 minutes prior to all performances during the 2008/09 season.

National Ballet ticket prices range from \$20 to \$200. New for 2008/09, the back three rows in Ring 5 will be available to the public for \$20. DanceBreak members from 16 to 29 also have access to \$20 tickets, best available on the day of the performance, by registering online at dancebreak.ca.

The National Ballet of Canada's 2008/09 season at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts:

Fall Season
In the Upper Room* & Symphony in C
November 5 - 9, 2008

The Seagull*
November 14 - 23, 2008

Holiday Season
The Nutcracker
December 6 - 28, 2008

Winter Season
Innovation: Three World Premieres by Peter Quanz⁺, Crystal Pite⁺ and Sabrina Matthews⁺
March 4 - 8, 2009

Romeo and Juliet
March 11 - 22, 2009

The Eighth International Competition for the Erik Bruhn Prize
March 18, 2009

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Karen Kain
Artistic Director

Summer Season
Giselle
May 27 - 31, 2009

Skin Divers * & Carmen*
June 6 - 14, 2009

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*Company Premiere + World Premiere

The 2008/09 Season is presented by CTV and The Globe and Mail.

BMO Financial Group presents *The Seagull*.

TD Waterhouse presents *The Nutcracker*.

Romeo and Juliet is presented by Harry Winston Diamond Corporation.

The following are presented with thanks to our donors:

Symphony in C: THE VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE, THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA

The Seagull: an Anonymous Friend of the National Ballet

The Nutcracker: Sandra & Jim Pitblado, Lawrence & Ann Heisey, an Anonymous Friend of the National Ballet

World Premiere by Peter Quanz: THE VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE, THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA.

The Eighth International Competition for the Erik Bruhn Prize: John & Claudine Bailey

Romeo and Juliet: Walter Carsen, O.C.

Giselle was produced as a memorial to the late William P. Walker and was made possible through the courtesy of many generous friends of the National Ballet.

The National Ballet of Canada gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the Canada Council for the Arts; the Ontario Arts Council; the City of Toronto through the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Department; The Government of Canada through the Honourable Josée Verner, Minister, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Government of Ontario; the Ontario Arts Foundation; the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Karen Kain
Artistic Director

Media Release

ONLINE IMAGE LIBRARY:

Media are invited to download photos of The National Ballet of Canada's 2008/09 season at www.national.ballet.ca/Media/MediaImageGallery/

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