

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FESTIVAL BALLET THEATRE presents

20th Anniversary Gala Concert

A Tribute to Passion & Dance

Irvine Barclay Theatre | March 30 & 31, 2008 at 7pm

Contact: Marica Pendjer

949.293.8125

mpendjer@mac.com

Festival Ballet Theatre celebrates 20 years of dance in Orange County with a gala tribute featuring company dancers, children of Southland Ballet Academy, world renown guest artists from American Ballet Theatre, San Francisco Ballet and Scottish Ballet, and special guest artists from the Upper Division of The Royal Ballet School - making their first appearance in Southern California. The program includes the U.S. premiere of Jessica Lang's *Splendid Isolations III* and Royal Ballet School's *Suite Classique*, choreographed by Petal Miller-Ashmole. Performances are scheduled for Sunday, March 30 and Monday, March 31 at 7 p.m.

The intimate setting of Irvine Barclay Theatre is the backdrop to a varied program of classical and contemporary ballets. Highlights include classics such as Marius Petipa's *Paquita*; Sir Kenneth MacMillan's *Concerto Pas de Deux*; and two George Balanchine masterpieces, *Concerto Barocco* and *Valse Fantaisie*. More contemporary offerings include two original works, *Oops* and *Raindrops*, by Viktor Plotnikov; *Tango Fuego* created for the company by Jodie Gates in 2005; and a commissioned work set on the company by Edwaard Liang, *In the Line Between*.

Jessica Lang's *Splendid Isolation III*, a romantic duet set to Gustav Mahler's *Adagietto* from his 5th Symphony and performed by guest artists Maxim Beloserkovsky and Irina Dvoroenko, explores the intimacies between a man and woman. The ballet - costumes designed by Elena Comendador - centers around a woman enveloped in a large skirt that defines the boundary between the pair. Through the evolution of the piece the skirt that once separated the couple, becomes the object that binds them together in their splendid isolation from the world.

One of two Balanchine works being presented is the exhilarating *Valse Fantaisie*. Set to music by 19th-century Russian composer Mikhail Glinka, the nine-minute work for four women and a principal couple is classic "dancing on the edge" Balanchine, a craftsman most consider "The greatest choreographer of our time..." (U.S. News & World Report). Buoyant, technical and extremely musical, the 1953 work created for New York City Ballet bears the neo-classic master's signature fast, intricate footwork.

Former Festival Ballet Theatre featured dancer and beloved hometown girl, Quenby Hersh will make her first Orange County appearance since joining the Scottish Ballet in 2006. Hersh's exquisite classical prowess will be on display in Petipa's timeless masterpiece *Paquita*.

Making their first appearance in the Southland, the Upper Division of The Royal Ballet School will be showcased in MacMillan's *Concerto Pas de Deux*, and the U.S. premiere of Miller-Ashmole's *Suite Classique*.

Guest Artists include: Maxim Beloserkovsky, José Manuel Carreño, Irina Dvoroenko & Gennadi Saveliev of American Ballet Theatre; Lorena Feijoo of San Francisco Ballet; and Quenby Hersh of Scottish Ballet.



Sunday, March 30 17 pm

Concerto Barocco | George Balanchine

Concerto Pas de Deux | Sir Kenneth MacMillan [Upper Division - Royal Ballet School]

In the Line Between | Edwaard Liang

Oops | Viktor Plotnikov

Paquita | Marius Petipa [Quenby Hersh & Gennadi Saveliev]

**Splendid Isolation III* | Jessica Lang [Irina Dvorovenko & Maxim Beloserkovsky]

**Suite Classique* | Petal Miller-Ashmole [Upper Division - Royal Ballet School]

Tango Fuego | Jodie Gates

Valse Fantaisie | George Balanchine

Monday, March 31 17 pm

Concerto Barocco | George Balanchine

Concerto Pas de Deux | Sir Kenneth MacMillan [Upper Division - Royal Ballet School]

In the Line Between | Edwaard Liang

Le Corsaire | Marius Petipa [Lorena Feijoo & Jose Manuel Carreno]

Oops | Viktor Plotnikov

Paquita | Marius Petipa [Quenby Hersh & Gennadi Saveliev]

Raindrops | Viktor Plotnikov

**Suite Classique* | Petal Miller-Ashmole [Upper Division - Royal Ballet School]

Tango Fuego | Jodie Gates

Valse Fantaisie | George Balanchine

* U.S. Premiere

Sunday, March 30 & Monday, March 31 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$38 for adults; \$33 for children, seniors and students

Irvine Barclay Theatre box office: **949.854.4646**

Online purchases: visit thebarclay.org or ticketmaster.com

Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover accepted.

Download high resolution images at: <http://press.thebarclay.org>

Irvine Barclay Theatre is located at **4242 Campus Drive** [Bridge and West Peltason Roads in Irvine]

To learn more about Festival Ballet Theatre, go to festivalballet.org

Company History

Under the direction of Salwa Rizkalla, since its founding in 1988, Festival Ballet Theatre has become one of Southern California's most vibrant and accomplished regional ballet companies. Celebrating its 20th anniversary of artistic service to Orange County, FBT is dedicated to presenting works that epitomize the artistry of professional ballet, offering cultural awareness of dance through educational programs, and nurturing a creative environment for some of our county's most talented dancers. Boasting a roster of impressive up-and-coming talent, the company's productions also feature internationally acclaimed guest artists from American Ballet Theatre, Boston Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, the Kirov Ballet, New York City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, San Francisco Ballet and Scottish Ballet.

Festival Ballet Theatre strives to enrich the experience of Orange County's dance audience by highlighting the work of world-renowned guest and resident choreographers who have received critical acclaim for original ballets around the globe. With reverence for masterpieces of the past and a clear focus on developing future tour de forces, FBT presents a varied repertoire of full-length classical ballets including *Coppélia*, *Don Quixote*, *Giselle*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake*; as well as contemporary works by some of the nation's most sought-after choreographers.

Aspiring to the heights of artistic excellence, Festival Ballet Theatre simultaneously attracts the best in professional dance to its home-base while sending its own dancers out as artistic ambassadors to the nation. FBT's significant work has been recognized with a 2001 Arts Orange County Award for Outstanding Arts Organization of the Year.

Salwa Rizkalla, Artistic Director

Salwa Rizkalla's artistic vision and community involvement led to the creation of Festival Ballet Theatre, and its precursor Southland Ballet Academy. Her credentials as a classical ballet dancer include an impressive list of leading roles in well-known classical ballets, as well as appearances in original contemporary pieces. During her distinguished career

as a professional dancer, Rizkalla had the privilege of working under the direction of world-renowned choreographers Leonid Lavrovsky and Serge Lifar. Trained in the Russian Vaganova method and having studied with ballet masters of the Bolshoi and the Kirov, Rizkalla holds a bachelor of arts degree in Ballet Pedagogy. In addition to her responsibilities as the artistic director of Festival Ballet Theatre and her busy teaching schedule at the Southland Ballet Academy, Rizkalla was a faculty member of several area institutions, including Goldenwest College and the Huntington Beach Academy for the Performing Arts. A fully credentialed California teacher, she has been a dedicated educator, a tireless promoter of the arts, and an active participant in the cultural life of her community for more than 25 years. Her contributions have been recognized by The Orange County Music and Arts Administrators and Orange County Performing Arts Center with an Orange County Arts Educator of the Year Award for Secondary Dance (2003). Youth America Grand Prix awarded Rizkalla Outstanding Teacher accolades in 2002, 2004 and 2005.

Maxim Beloserkovsky, Guest Artist

A principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre, Maxim Beloserkovsky received his dance training at the Kiev Ballet Institute. In 1990, he danced as leading soloist with the National Opera of Bulgaria. As a principal dancer with the National Opera Ballet of the Ukraine (1991-1994), he toured Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Mexico, Spain and the U.S., and performed most of the major roles in the classical repertory: The Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake, Giselle, Le Corsaire, Don Quixote and La Sylphide. In 1993, Beloserkovsky was honored by the president of the Ukraine for outstanding artistic achievement. Joining ABT in 1994, Beloserkovsky was appointed principal dancer in 2000, following a brilliant season in which he was repeatedly cited for his superior artistry. Equally confident in both classical and contemporary works, his repertoire with ABT includes the Prince in Ben Stevenson's Cinderella, Coppélia, The Dream, La Bayadère, La Fille mal Gardée, The Merry Widow, Onegin, Raymonda, Romeo and Juliet, The Snow Maiden, Sylvia, The Nutcracker and Themes and Variations. He has also danced leading roles in The Leaves are Fading, Lilac Garden, Dim Lustre, Bruch Violin Concerto, Mozartiana, Symphonic Variations, Études and Apollo. His athleticism and style have earned him leading roles in Push Comes to Shove, The Elements, The Brahms-Haydn Variations, Without Words, Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes, Sinfonietta, Spring and Fall, Kaleidoscope, Diversion of Angels and Afternoon of a Faun. Beloserkovsky has appeared as a guest artist with numerous companies around the world, in videos and television specials, as well as on covers of such publications as People and Dance Magazine. He is married to Irina Dvorovenko, and they are the proud parents of Emma Galina.

José Manuel Carreño, Guest Artist

A principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre, Jose Manuel Carreño was born in Cuba, where he received his training at the Provincial School of Ballet and the National Ballet School. He won the Gold Medal at the New York International Ballet Competition in 1987 and the Grand Prix at the International Ballet Competition in Jackson, MS, in 1990. A sought-after guest artist who has appeared extensively throughout Europe, Latin America and the United States, Carreño has danced lead roles in classics such as Coppélia, Don Quixote, Giselle, Swan Lake, Le Corsaire, Diana and Acteon and "Black Swan" pas de deux.

Carreño joined the English National Ballet in 1990, where his repertoire included Solor in "The Kingdom of the Shades" from La Bayadère, the Prince in Cinderella and The Nutcracker, Romeo in Romeo and Juliet and Petruchio in The Taming of the Shrew. Additional roles in one-act ballets and pas de deux, include A Stranger I Came, Études, Graduation Ball and Prince Igor.

In 1993, Carreño joined The Royal Ballet as a Principal Dancer. There his repertoire ranged from The Sleeping Beauty and The Dream to leading roles in Herman Schmerman and Matthew Hart's Caught Dance. In 1995, he joined American Ballet Theatre, also as a Principal Dance. His repertoire with the company includes title or lead roles in ballets such as Apollo, Ballet Imperial, Don Quixote, Fancy Free, Giselle, Grand Pas Classique, HereAfter, Le Corsaire, Manon, The Merry Widow, Other Dances, Polovtsian Dances, Prodigal Son, Romeo and Juliet, The Snow Maiden, Swan Lake, Symphony in C, the Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux, Variations for Four, Without Words and Push Comes to Shove as well as Études, Petit Mort and Theme and Variations. A much-celebrated dancer, Carreño created a leading role in Within You Without You: A Tribute to George Harrison.

Irina Dvorovenko, Guest Artist

A principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre, Irina Dvorovenko was born in Kiev, Ukraine, and began her ballet training at the Kiev Ballet School. She joined the National Opera Ballet of Kiev in 1990 as a soloist, rising to the rank of principal dancer in 1992. A dancer of infinite range, her repertoire with the company included leading roles in many of the great classics: La Bayadère, Don Quixote, Giselle, The Nutcracker, Paquita and The Sleeping Beauty.

Dvorovenko's superlative style and technique have been recognized in competitions throughout the world. Her most notable awards include the Grand Prix at the International Ballet Competition Serge Lifar in the Ukraine (1994), the Gold

Medal and "Anna Pavlova" Prize at the International Ballet Competition in Moscow (1992), the Bronze Medal at the International Ballet Competition in Osaka, Japan (1991), and the Silver Medal at the Jackson International Ballet Competition in Jackson, MS (1990). A member of ABT since 1996, Dvorovenko was appointed principal dancer in 2000. Her diverse repertoire with ABT includes leading roles in Apollo, Coppélia, Le Corsaire, the title role in Ben Stevenson's Cinderella, HereAfter, Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux, The Merry Widow, Offenbach in the Underworld, Onegin, Prodigal Son, Raymonda, Romeo and Juliet and Odette-Odile in Swan Lake. Her talents have been showcased in works such as Études, In The Upper Room, Petite Mort, Without Words, Push Comes to Shove and The Brahms/Haydn Variations. Dvorovenko has danced with an impressive list of premier companies around the world, appeared in television specials and videos, and has been featured on numerous magazine covers. She is married to Maxim Beloserkovsky; together they are the proud parents of Emma Galina.

Lorena Feijoo, Guest Artist

San Francisco Ballet's Cuban born and trained principal dancer Lorena Feijoo is a former prima ballerina of the Nacional Ballet de Cuba, under the direction of legendary Alicia Alonso. A bronze medalist at the International Ballet Competition in Varna, Bulgaria (1985), Feijoo left Ballet Nacional de Cuba in 1990 to pursue other artistic opportunities. She became principal dancer of Ballet de Monterrey (1990-1993) and The Royal Ballet of Flanders (1993-1995). In 1995, she joined The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago as principal dancer and, in 1999, she joined San Francisco Ballet, under the direction of Helgi Tomasson, again as a principal dancer. The combination of her Havana upbringing, Russian influenced training, musicality and passionate interpretations of classic roles such as Giselle and Kitri in Don Quixote have dazzled audiences around the world. Feijoo has danced every major classical role in ballet's repertoire to critical acclaim and performs important contemporary works by influential choreographers such as: Balanchine, Tudor, Forsythe, Wheeldon, Lubovich and Morris. She regularly appears on the international stage to sold-out audiences in cities from New York, Paris and Tokyo to London and Milan. She has forged memorable partnerships with Carlos Acosta from The Royal Ballet, Jose Manuel Carreño from American Ballet Theatre and Yuri Possokhov from San Francisco Ballet. A dancer noted for her brilliance and acting talent, Feijoo is featured in the soon-to-be released film *The Lost City*, directed by Andy Garcia and starring Dustin Hoffman and Robert Duvall.

Quenby Hersh, Guest Artist

A member of Scottish Ballet since 2006, Quenby Hersh received her primary classical training at Southland Ballet Academy. In 2005, she was awarded a scholarship with the Royal Ballet School, where she worked with Gailene Stock. In addition to dancing the role of Angel in the Royal Ballet School's *The Nutcracker*, Quenby has performed lead roles in *Swan Lake*, *Giselle* and *Don Quixote* during her tenure with Festival Ballet Theatre, where she was a featured dancer. She has also worked with companies such as Kaatsbaan International Dance Center and American Ballet Theatre. Hersh's list of honors include an Inspiring Achievement Award at the Helsinki International Ballet Competition, the Grand Prix at Youth American Grand Prix Ballet and Contemporary Dance Competition, and a Gold Medal at USA National Youth Ballet Competition.

Gennadi Saveliev, Guest Artist

Born in Moscow, Russia, Gennadi Saveliev began his ballet studies at the Bolshoi Ballet School. At 18, he joined the Bolshoi Ballet Grigorovich Company where he was showcased in classics such as *The Nutcracker*, *Raymonda* and *Swan Lake*. Saveliev went on to dance with the Nevada Dance Theatre, Tulsa Ballet, Los Angeles Classical Ballet and the New Jersey Ballet. He won the Silver Medal at the 1996 New York International Ballet Competition and was a finalist at the Nagoya Ballet Competition in 1999. A member of American Ballet Theatre since January 1996, his repertoire with the company includes featured roles in *La Bayadère*, *Coppélia*, *Le Corsaire*, *Diana and Acteon*, *Diversion of Angels*, *Don Quixote*, *VIII*, *Flames of Paris*, *Giselle*, *Manon*, *The Merry Widow*, *Onegin*, *Pillar of Fire*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. He has danced leading roles in ballets such as *Without Words*, *Ballet Imperial*, *In The Upper Room*, *Les Sylphides* and *Theme and Variations*, as well as *Black Tuesday*, *Clear*, *HereAfter*, *Petite Mort* and *Symphony in C*. Saveliev is a member of two touring ensembles - *Angel Corella* and *Friends*; and *Stiefel* and *Stars*. He is the founder and artistic director of Youth America Grand Prix, America's first student ballet scholarship competition.

