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# Dance at the Music Center

## Announcing 2008-2009 Season

- **Miami City Ballet October 24-26, 2008**  
**West Coast Premiere *NIGHTSPOT* by Twyla Tharp**
- **Kirov Ballet's *The Nutcracker* December 17-20, 2008**
- **Alvin Ailey® American Dance Theater March 18-22, 2009**  
**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**
- **Ballet Hispanico June 5-7, 2009**
- **Nederlands Dans Theater I June 26-28, 2009**
- **American Ballet Theatre *Romeo and Juliet* July 16-19, 2009**

April 28, 2008 – Los Angeles. The Music Center of Los Angeles County announces the sixth season of the **Dance at the Music Center** series. The season opens with the return of **Miami City Ballet** led by Artistic Director Edward Villella, performing the much anticipated, West Coast premiere of *NIGHTSPOT* a Twyla Tharp and Elvis Costello collaboration, October 24-26. Known for her innovation and creativity, Twyla Tharp has created some of the most memorable dances in modern repertory. Elvis Costello, whose adventurous musical talents make him one of the most revered artists of our time, provides an original musical composition intertwined with various motifs and quotations from existing songs. Also on this program are Christopher Wheeldon's *Liturgy* and George Balanchine's *Tarantella* and *Symphony in Three Movements*.

The season continues with a special, limited engagement of **Kirov Ballet's *The Nutcracker***, under the Artistic Direction of Valery Gergiev and Director of the Ballet Makhar Vaziev, December 17 to 20, 2008, to celebrate the holiday season for six performances only. The choreography is by Vasily Vainonen.

**Alvin Ailey® American Dance Theater**, celebrating its 50th anniversary, returns March 18-22, marking the company's fifth visit to the Music Center. Led by Artistic Director Judith Jamison and Associate Artistic Director Masazumi Chaya, a highlight of Ailey's 50th anniversary celebration will be the eagerly anticipated collaboration with Sweet Honey In The Rock (performing live on Opening Night.) All programs include the inspirational *Revelations*.

**Ballet Hispanico**, led by Artistic Director Tina Ramirez, presents an evening of repertory work at the Ahmanson Theatre June 5-7, 2009, that fuses ballet, modern and Latin dance forms into a spirited representation of contemporary Latino culture. Later that same month, **Nederlands Dans Theater I**, led by Artistic Director Anders Hellström, will offer a program featuring Jiří Kylián's *Wings of Wax* and *Shoot the Moon* by Paul Lightfoot and Sol León, at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion June 26-28, 2009.

Following sold-out performances this year, **American Ballet Theatre**, America's National Ballet Company®, led by Artistic Director Kevin McKenzie, returns with Sir Kenneth MacMillan's *Romeo and Juliet* for five performances July 16 -19, 2009. This marks **ABT's** fifth engagement in the six seasons of **Dance at the Music Center**.

Rena Williams, Director of Dance Presentations said, "We are thrilled to have audiences join us as we celebrate our sixth season of dance presentations filled with audience favorites and exciting debuts. **Miami City Ballet**, **Kirov Ballet** and **Alvin Ailey® American Dance Theater**, will all be returning to our series this season. **Miami City Ballet** will perform the West Coast premiere of *NIGHTSPOT*, Twyla Tharp's latest work, set to the music of Elvis Costello. **Kirov Ballet** will usher in the holiday season in grand style, with their opulent production of *The Nutcracker*. **Alvin Ailey® American Dance Theater** marks its 50th anniversary of bringing African-American cultural expression and the American modern dance tradition to the world's stages. Both **Ballet Hispanico** and **Nederlands Dans Theater I** will be making their Music Center debuts. Finally, we welcome back one of the pillars of our series -- **American Ballet Theatre**. As we welcome them to the Music Center for the seventeenth time, we celebrate the company, which defines ballet not just for us, but for the entire nation."

All performances will be at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, except Ballet Hispanico, which will perform at the Ahmanson Theatre.

To receive season ticket information, please call (213) 972-0711 or visit [www.musiccenter.org/dance.html](http://www.musiccenter.org/dance.html).

Single tickets will become available on August 1<sup>st</sup> at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion Box Office, 135 North Grand Avenue. At that time, single tickets will also be available through Ticketmaster Phone Charge at 213/365-3500 or 714/740-7878, online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com), and at all Ticketmaster Outlets.

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**Companies of the Dance at the Music Center 2008-2009 Season**

*Please note programs are subject to change.*

**Miami City Ballet**

West Coast Premiere  
***NIGHTSPOT*** choreography by Twyla Tharp  
Music by **Elvis Costello**

***Symphony in Three Movements*** choreography by **George Balanchine**  
Music by **Igor Stravinsky**

***Liturgy*** choreography by **Christopher Wheeldon**  
Music by **Arvo Pärt**

***Tarantella*** choreography by **George Balanchine**  
Music by **Louis Moreau Gottschalk**

October 24-26, 2008  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Miami City Ballet performs the West Coast premiere of *NIGHTSPOT*, a Twyla Tharp and Elvis Costello collaboration.

Known for her innovation and creativity, Twyla Tharp has created some of the most memorable dances in modern repertory. Elvis Costello, whose adventurous musical talents make him one of the most revered artists of our time, provides an original musical composition intertwined with various motifs and quotations from existing songs. *NIGHTSPOT* features costumes designed by famed fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi.

Also on this program are Christopher Wheeldon's *Liturgy* and George Balanchine's *Tarantella* and *Symphony in Three Movements*.

Miami City Ballet is among the largest ballet companies in the United States, with 55 dancers – and has four home counties in South Florida: Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach, and Collier on Florida's west coast, where MCB is the resident company at the Naples Philharmonic Center. In addition to its Repertory Series, MCB performs "*George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™*" annually in Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach Counties, and Clearwater. Miami City Ballet's inaugural performance was on October 17, 1986, at Miami's Gusman Center for the Performing Arts

Founding Artistic Director Edward Villella was the first American-born male star of the New York City Ballet (1957-1975); his career established the male's role in classical dance in the United States. Mr. Villella's vision and style for the Company is based on the techniques established by choreographer George Balanchine. In 1997, Mr. Villella received the highest and most prestigious cultural honor that can be bestowed upon an artist by the United States, the National Medal of Arts, presented by President Clinton. Also in 1997, he was named a Kennedy Center Honoree and was inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame. In 2003 Miami City Ballet premiered Mr. Villella's four-act ballet, "*The Neighborhood Ballroom*."

The Company's repertoire includes 97 ballets, including 13 world premieres. It includes George Balanchine masterworks, most notably "*Prodigal Son*," "*Apollo*," "*Agon*," and the full-evening "*Jewels*," and works by contemporary choreographers such as Paul Taylor, Twyla Tharp, Jerome Robbins, and Trey McIntyre. Ballets by Frederick Ashton, Petipa, Bournonville, Edward Villella, and others also highlight the repertoire. The Company repertoire also includes classical works such as "*Giselle*" and "*Coppélia*."

The dancers of Miami City Ballet are an international mix. The Company's 55 dancers have come to MCB from Boston Ballet, Ballet Nacional de Caracas, Ballet Nacional de Cuba, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Joffrey Ballet, New York City Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, Royal Ballet of Belgium, and from world-famous training facilities such as the School of American Ballet, North Carolina School of the Arts, and the Schools of the Paris Opera Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet and San Francisco Ballet, among others.

Miami City Ballet has toured all over the United States. National performances include The Kennedy Center, the 1996 Olympic Arts Festival in Atlanta, Wolf Trap Farm Park, Orange County (CA) Performing Arts Center, New Jersey Performing Arts Center, the Shubert Theater (CT), McCarter Theater (NJ), SUNY at Purchase, ArtPark, and the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts. Internationally, MCB has performed in Europe, Great Britain, South America, Central America, and Israel, including the 1994 & 1995 Edinburgh International Festivals (Scotland), the 1990 Lyon Biennale Internationale de la Danse (France), the Festival Internacionel de Cultura Paiz (Guatemala), and a two-week engagement at the Torino Danza 2000 Festival (Italy).

MCB was the seventh & final major American dance company to receive a Kennedy Center Ballet Commission; choreographer Lynne Taylor-Corbett created "*Mystery of the Dancing Princesses*," which premiered at The Kennedy Center in April 1995.

In January 2000, Miami City Ballet took occupancy of its own Miami Beach headquarters, the Ophelia & Juan Js. Roca Center, achieved through a Capital Campaign begun in 1997. The 63,000 square foot facility houses eight rehearsal studios (two of which combine to create a 200-seat theater), increased school facilities, MCB's wardrobe department and costume shop, a fully-equipped therapy room, and increased administrative space. The building was designed by the award-winning architect Bernardo Fort-Brescia of ARQUITECTONICA.

The Miami City Ballet School, which opened in Miami Beach in January 1993, trains students for professional careers in ballet. The School has an enrollment of 350 students, and no child of talent is turned away for lack of funds. In June 1997, Miami City Ballet accepted the first School graduate for a professional position. The School launched the Miami City Ballet School Summer Program in July 2001.

**Kirov Ballet**  
***The Nutcracker***  
**Choreography by Vasily Vainonen (1934) Music by Peter Tchaikovsky**  
December 17-20, 2008  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

The 200-year-old Kirov Ballet, under the Artistic Direction of Valery Gergiev since 1988, and Director of the Ballet Makhar Vaziev is one of the world's most renowned ballet companies. It performs the beloved, family holiday classic *The Nutcracker*, accompanied by live orchestra, in a production filled with wonderment and child-like delight, dazzling audiences for 6 performances only. The choreography, from 1934, is by Vasily Vainonen.

St. Petersburg ballet is the collective result of the work of many years and many people within the Mariinsky Theatre. St. Petersburg ballet is almost as old as the city itself, and these centuries are made up of different epochs. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, St. Petersburg ballet mainly spoke French. The century was split between the French choreographers Charles-Louis Didelot, Jules Perrot, Arthur Saint-Leon and Marius Petipa. Their Mecca was Paris, their tastes were cultivated by the Academy of Dance and the Grand Opera. St. Petersburg was the place where the harsh rules of an alien order receded, the rigid French school of dance being softened by the rhythmical Russian tendency towards sloth and the open vowels of the Russian language. These choreographers settled at the theatre for lengthy period, almost as if they were at home. "This is paradise!" exclaimed the young Petipa when he first came out of the Russian theatre director's office.

"Ballet Petersburg," the "St. Petersburg of ballet" was born - the same intangible, but indisputable phenomenon of cultural geography as the "St. Petersburg of Dostoevsky." And just as the "St. Petersburg of Dostoevsky" took shape in the form of *Crime and Punishment* or *White Nights*, so the "St. Petersburg of ballet" was represented by *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Raymonda* and *La Bayadere*.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, ballet spoke only in Russian. The century began with Michel Fokine's modernist revolution, and the 1920s saw the explosive burst of Fyodor Lopukhov's avant-garde. Later, high-level politics helped to suppress this influence: the country was fenced off from the world by the Iron Curtain. This was a death knell for many arts. But Leningrad ballet was able to maintain its high artistic standards, having become the focus of spiritual life for people of the time and even a unique kind of cultural Fronde. Petipa's ballets, the "gold reserves" of Russian choreography, remained as a source of nourishment for the greatest Soviet choreographers of pre-war Leningrad - Leonid Lavrovsky, Vasily Vainonen and Vakhtang Chabukiani. The grandiose dramatic ballets of pre-war Leningrad - *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, *Laurencia* and *Flame of Paris* - would not have been possible without 19<sup>th</sup> century ballet. Promoted by Soviet choreographers, only "psychological realism" was new. It had the effect of a magic spell for whole acuity and acting talents of Galina Ulanova, Tatiana Vecheslova, Alla Shelest, Konstantin Sergeyev, and the multitude of second and third rank dancers.

The whole company of the then Kirov Theatre was striking, from the ballerinas down to the last line of the corps de ballet. At the same time, first-class virtuoso dancers such as Natalia Dudinskaya, Feya Balabina, Vakhtang Chabukiani and Nikolay Zubkovsky permitted Leningrad ballet to preserve the glory of the most important Russian temple of classical dance.

The “new wave” of ballet evolved from a dispute, but to a still greater degree from the dialogue with the dramatic ballets of the late 1950s and early 1960s. The leading figures of the “new wave” were the young choreographers Yuri Grigorovich and Igor Belsky and the dancers Alla Osipenko, Irina Kolpakova, Gabriela Komleva, Yuri Solovyev, Rudolph Nureyev, Natalia Marakova, and Mikhail Baryshnikov.

The “fathers” were referred to as “dramatic ballet” and the rebellious “children” as “symphonic ballet”, but the combined tradition of succession preserved its power over both.

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it learned to speak in English. Leningrad ballet once more started calling itself St. Petersburg ballet, but this time it went forth into the world. It started to perform works by 20<sup>th</sup> century Western choreographers such as Jerome Robbins, Kenneth MacMillan, Roland Petit, Anthony Tudor and John Neumeier which had previously been inaccessible, neglected during the years of forced Soviet isolation. But the main development is connected with the Russian-American choreographer George Balanchine: today, the repertoire of the Mariinsky Theatre contains almost as many ballets by Balanchine as by Petipa.

## **Alvin Ailey® American Dance Theater**

March 18-22, 2009  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

This year Alvin Ailey® American Dance Theater (AAADT), America’s cultural ambassador to the world, marks its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of bringing African-American cultural expression and the American modern dance tradition to the world’s stages.

A highlight of Ailey’s 50th anniversary performances will be the eagerly anticipated collaboration with Sweet Honey In The Rock. Performing live onstage (opening night only) with the incomparable Ailey dancers, the Grammy Award-winning female a cappella ensemble will match their soulful harmonies and intricate rhythms to company member Hope Boykin’s powerful choreography.

Each performance will open with the showing of a short film, *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at 50 – A Golden Anniversary Celebration* commemorating the rich 50-year history of this internationally renowned dance company. Program A features the Southern California premiere of a new work with music by Sweet Honey In The Rock. All programs include the inspirational *Revelations*.

In 1958, Alvin Ailey led a group of young black modern dancers in a performance in New York City that changed forever the perception of American dance. During those early years, the Company traveled across the country on what were known as the “station wagon tours.” In 1962, the Company embarked on an extensive tour of the Far East, Southeast Asia and Australia as part of President John F. Kennedy’s “President’s Special International Program for Cultural Presentations”, the first of many state department tours and significant international engagements.

Today, led by acclaimed Artistic Director Judith Jamison and with the artistry of 30 extraordinary dancers, the Ailey company has gone on to perform for an estimated 21 million people on six continents, including two historic residencies in South Africa and the first performances ever by a modern dance company at the legendary Mariinsky Theatre in Russia.

Born in Rogers, Texas on January 5, 1931, Alvin Ailey moved to Los Angeles at age 12 where he was first introduced to dance by performances of the Katherine Dunham Dance Company and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. His formal dance training began when his friend Carmen de Lavallade encouraged him to join her in classes taught by Los Angeles-based modern dance pioneer Lester Horton.

When Mr. Ailey began creating dance, he drew upon his "blood memories" of Texas, the blues, spirituals and gospel music for inspiration, resulting in the creation of his most popular and critically acclaimed work - *Revelations*. Since its premiere in 1960, Mr. Ailey's masterpiece has been seen by more people around the world than any other dance piece.

In 1965, Ailey discovered an extraordinarily talented young dancer named Judith Jamison who danced with the Company for 15 years to great acclaim. Her brilliant dancing and creative style provided the inspiration for a number of Ailey works, including his best-known solo *Cry*.

Although he created 79 ballets in his lifetime, the Company continues Mr. Ailey's generous mission of presenting important works from the past and commissioning new ones. The ever-evolving repertoire now encompasses over 200 works by more than 70 choreographers, including Ulysses Dove, Alonzo King, Talley Beatty, Donald McKayle, Bill T. Jones, Lar Lubovitch, Ohad Naharin, David Parsons, Donald Byrd, Robert Battle, Twyla Tharp, Ronald K. Brown and Judith Jamison.

Before his untimely death in 1989, Mr. Ailey chose Judith Jamison to become Artistic Director of Alvin Ailey® American Dance Theater. Her presence has been a catalyst of renewal, leading the organization in new directions and AAADT to historic performances - 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, 2002 Cultural Olympiad in Salt Lake City, where she carried the Olympic torch for the opening ceremonies relay; two unprecedented engagements in South Africa; and historic performances at the 2005 White Nights Festival in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Ms. Jamison has created many works for AAADT, including *Reminiscent* (2005), inspired by great female jazz artists and Edward Hopper's famous painting *Nighthawks*; *Love Stories* (2004), with additional choreography by Robert Battle and Rennie Harris; *HERE . . . NOW*. (2002), commissioned for the Cultural Olympiad in Salt Lake City. *Hymn* (1993), her stirring tribute to Mr. Ailey, was adapted for a PBS "Great Performances: Dance In America" special, *A Hymn for Alvin Ailey*, for which she received a prime time Emmy Award.

In 2001, the National Medal of Arts, the highest arts honor in the United States, was presented to both Judith Jamison and Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation. This is the first time ever than an arts organization and its artistic director have been recognized independently and the first dance organization in the award's history.

The Ailey organization has grown to include: Ailey II (1974) a junior performing company of emerging young dancers and innovative choreographers; The Ailey School, (1969) one of the most extensive dance training programs in the world, including an Ailey/Fordham University B.F.A. program; Ailey Arts In Education & Community Programs which brings dance into the classrooms, communities and lives of people of all ages through programs such as AileyCamp, a summer day camp for underserved youth now operating in 9 sites nationwide; and The Ailey Extension (2005), dance and fitness classes for the general public.

In 2005, a permanent home for Ailey was opened at 55<sup>th</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue in New York City – the nation's largest building dedicated to dance. As the Company looks toward the next fifty years and beyond, Jamison's own remarkable vision lights the way for a 2008-2009 celebration of Ailey's legacy through special performances, projects and events nationwide. Beauty, spirit, hope and passion know no bounds. That is the power of Ailey.

## **Ballet Hispanico**

### ***Club Havana***

Choreography by **Pedro Ruiz**

Music by **Israel López, Rubén Gonzales, A.K. Salim,  
Perez Prado & Francisco Repilado**

June 5 to 7, 2009  
Ahmanson Theatre

Ballet Hispanico is widely recognized as one of the pre-eminent Latino cultural institutions. Their vibrant 13-member Company presents an evening of repertory work that fuses ballet, modern and Latin dance forms into a spirited representation of contemporary Latino culture. The program may include the music of the legendary Tito Puente plus the intoxicating rhythms of the Conga, Rumba, Mambo and Cha Cha in *Club Havana*.

Ballet Hispanico explores, preserves, and expands the passion and joyous theatricality of Latino dance through the work in its three core divisions: the Company, the School of Dance, and Primeros Pasos. Its mission is to celebrate and further interpret the moving and beautiful aesthetic of this dynamic culture and to share it with all people.

Ballet Hispanico has forged a reputation among the nation's most beloved and important cultural institutions. The acclaimed professional company has performed for more than two million people in the United States, Europe and South America with a repertory of over 75 works, each created especially for Ballet Hispanico that fuse ballet, modern and Latin dance forms into a spirited image of contemporary Latino culture.

Established by Artistic Director Tina Ramirez in 1970, the Ballet Hispanico School of Dance has forged a reputation among the nation's leading professional training programs, offering a balanced curriculum in classical ballet, modern and Spanish dance - a practice unique among America's dance training institutions. As a result, students receive not only a thorough grounding in the primary techniques required for a successful performing career but also specialized training in the rich and varied dance tradition which, for many, is their cultural heritage.

In addition to performing with Ballet Hispanico's own company, alumni of the School have gone on to careers in theater (Nancy Ticotin), film (Jennifer Lopez, Leelee Sobieski and Rachel Ticotin) and television (Michael DeLorenzo), as well as with other leading dance companies such as Alvin Ailey and Paul Taylor. Still others are applying the discipline and self-esteem acquired through their dance classes to demanding professions in other fields such as business, education, government, law and medicine.

**Nederlands Dans Theater I**

***Wings of Wax***

Choreography by **Jiří Kylián**,

Music by **John Cage, Philip Glass, Johann Sebastian Bach & Heinrich von Biber**

***The Second Person*** Choreography by **Crystal Pite**,

Music by **Owen Belton**

***Shoot the Moon*** Choreography by **Paul Lightfoot and Sol León**,

Music by **Philip Glass**

June 26-28, 2009

Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Nederlands Dans Theater, led by Artistic Director Anders Hellström, moves modern dance forward with its innovative choreography, unique staging, and athletic, technical dancers. Continually providing extraordinary contemporary dance experiences, Nederlands Dans Theater has inspired many of the world's most noted and celebrated modern choreographers and dance companies.

Always unpredictable and exciting, the company performs Jiří Kylián's *Wings of Wax*, a dramatic piece combining the use of lighting, music and movement creating a work of great beauty and expressiveness.

In *The Second Person*, Crystal Pite showcases the flexibility of the body and uses the physical capacity of the dancers to the maximum. The program also includes *Shoot the Moon* by Paul Lightfoot and Sol León.

Nederlands Dans Theater was established in 1959 – a group of 18 members of former Het Nederlands Ballet (Ballet of the Netherlands) broke away from the traditionally orientated company. Around Benjamin Harkarvy (ballet master and artistic director) and Carel Birnie (managing director) the new group was dedicated to the exploration of new forms of dance, using new techniques and open to new ideas and experimentation.

The first few years were hard, without any official financial support, without studios and, initially, without a regular audience. Even so, the company's persistence with programmes of artistic exploration soon won admiration for, and recognition of, its achievements. With Harkarvy and Hans van Manen as resident choreographers other distinguished choreographers – including Americans Anna Sokolow and Glen Tetley – created a challenging repertory for the company which, during the sixties, was accepted as the most innovative and exciting dance group in Europe.

Nederlands Dans Theater I is the main company of 30 dancers and Nederlands Dans Theater II, a group of 16 young dancers up to the age of 21 and with its own repertory. The two companies are also unique in not being based on a hierarchy: there are no echelons such as corps de ballet, coryphées, soloists and principals; all the dancers are of equal status. Finally, Nederlands Dans Theater is unique in having its own state-of-the-art theater [Rem Koolhaas] in The Hague, with a magnificent stage, five studios and every necessary facility, perhaps the only theatre in the world specifically created for dance.

Although Kylián has created more than fifty works for the company he has wisely extended the repertory with works by several of the world's most renowned choreographers.

All the dancers in the company are classically trained as only with the daily practice of this most elaborate and precise discipline can they maintain the flexibility and stamina demanded of them. Under Jiří Kylián's visionary direction the last twenty years of Nederlands Dans Theater have seen a continuous progression to a point of international pre-eminence, true to the original precepts propounded by Harkarvy, Birnie and their group in 1959 and, with its director still a relatively young man, there is every reason to believe that Nederlands Dans Theater will advance into the twenty-first century with the same questing exploration of the art which sustains it.

Nederlands Dans Theater is moving all over the world and is a regular guest for adding lustre to international events. The company regularly accompanied Queen Beatrix on a state visit, to Hungary (1985), France (1991), New-Zealand (1992), Sevilla (World Fair 1992), and more recently Moscow (1998) and Sofia (1999), to name a few. In 1996 Nederlands Dans Theater performed during the Olympic Games in Atlanta and in 1997 the Dutch Minister for Foreign Affairs sent the company to Moscow on the occasion of the Peter the Great-year. In the year 2000 Nederlands Dans Theater played an important role at the official program of the Foundation Holland-Japan 400 years.

When Harkarvy and van Manen had left the company at the beginning of the seventies Nederlands Dans Theater entered into a period of uncertainty and transition culminating, in 1975, with the appointment of Jiří Kylián - initially in co-direction with Hans Knill – as artistic director, an appointment that has proved, over nearly twenty years, one of exceptional prescience and progressive success.

Kylián was born in Prague in 1947 and his training included classical ballet, folk-dance and modern technique. When appointed artistic director of Nederlands Dans Theater he was only 28, an extraordinarily young age at which to shoulder such responsibilities. But his great abilities, not only as a choreographer but also as an artist able to engender enthusiasm and loyalty from everyone associated with the organisation, resulted in a company unique in its formation and accomplishments.

**American Ballet Theatre**  
***Romeo and Juliet***

Choreography by **Sir Kenneth MacMillan**, music by **Sergei Prokofiev**  
**All with Live Orchestra**

July 16 to 19, 2009  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

Sir Kenneth MacMillan's masterful interpretation of Shakespeare's enduring romantic tragedy entered American Ballet Theatre's repertoire in 1985 and has since become one of the Company's signature productions. Against the sumptuous setting of Renaissance Italy, MacMillan weaves a dance tapestry rich in character nuance and sensuality, and Sergei Prokofiev's stirring music underscores the lyric beauty and passion of this beloved ballet's star-crossed lovers.

American Ballet Theatre is recognized as one of the great dance companies in the world. Few ballet companies equal ABT for its combination of size, scope and outreach. Recognized as a living national treasure since its founding in 1940, ABT annually tours the United States, performing for more than 600,000 people, and is the only major cultural institution to do so. It has also made more than 15 international tours to 42 countries as perhaps the most representative American ballet company and has been sponsored by the State Department of the United States on many of these engagements.

In October 1992, former American Ballet Theatre Principal Dancer Kevin McKenzie was appointed Artistic Director. Mr. McKenzie, steadfast in his vision of ABT as "American," is committed to maintaining the Company's vast repertoire, and to bringing the art of dance theater to the great stages of the world.

When American Ballet Theatre was launched in 1939, the aim was to develop a repertoire of the best ballets from the past and to encourage the creation of new works by gifted young choreographers, wherever they might be found. Under the direction of Lucia Chase and Oliver Smith from 1940 to 1980, the Company more than fulfilled that aim. The repertoire, perhaps unmatched in the history of ballet, includes all of the great full-length ballets of the nineteenth century, such as *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Giselle*, the finest works from the early part of this century, such as *Apollo*, *Les Sylphides*, *Jardin aux Lilas* and *Rodeo*, and acclaimed contemporary masterpieces such as *Airs*, *Push Comes to Shove* and *Duets*. In acquiring such an extraordinary repertoire, ABT has commissioned works by all of the great choreographic geniuses of the 20th century: George Balanchine, Antony Tudor, Jerome Robbins, Agnes de Mille and Twyla Tharp, among others.

In keeping with the Company's long-standing commitment to bringing the finest in dance to the widest international audience, ABT has recently enjoyed triumphant successes with engagements in Tokyo, London, Paris, Mexico City and Seoul.

In the Fall of 2000, American Ballet Theatre made its first visit to China, appearing in both Shanghai and Hong Kong. The Company also appeared in Taipei and Singapore for the first time. Over its 65-year history, the Company has appeared in a total of 126 cities in 42 countries. ABT has also appeared in all 50 states of the United States. In 2006, American Ballet Theatre was recognized by the United States Congress as America's National Ballet Company®.