

Tuesday, October 14–Sunday, October 19, 2008
Zellerbach Hall

**Kirov Ballet & Orchestra
of the Mariinsky Theatre**
(St. Petersburg, Russia)

Valery Gergiev, *Artistic & General Director*

The Company

Diana Vishneva, Irma Nioradze, Viktoria Tereshkina
Alina Somova, Yulia Kasenkova, Tatiana Tkachenko

Andrian Fadeev, Leonid Sarafanov, Yevgeny Ivanchenko, Anton Korsakov

Elena Bazhenova, Olga Akmatova, Daria Vasnetsova, Evgenia Berdichevskaya, Vera Garbuz,
Tatiana Gorunova, Grigorieva Daria, Natalia Dzevulskaia, Nadezhda Demakova, Evgenia Emelianova,
Darina Zarubskaya, Lidia Karpukhina, Anastassia Kiru, Maria Lebedeva, Valeria Martynyuk,
Mariana Pavlova, Daria Pavlova, Irina Prokofieva, Oksana Skoryk, Yulia Smirnova, Diana Smirnova,
Yana Selina, Alisa Sokolova, Ksenia Tagunova, Yana Tikhonova, Lira Khuslamova, Elena Chmil,
Maria Chugay, Elizaveta Cheprasova, Maria Shirinkina, Elena Yushkovskaya

Vladimir Ponomarev, Mikhail Berdichevsky, Stanislav Burov, Andrey Ermakov,
Boris Zhurilov, Konstantin Zverev, Karen Ioanessian, Alexander Klimov,
Sergey Kononenko, Valery Konkov, Soslan Kulaev, Maxim Lynda, Anatoly Marchenko,
Nikolay Naumov, Alexander Neff, Sergey Popov, Dmitry Pykhachev, Sergey Salikov,
Egor Safin, Andrey Solovyov, Philip Stepin, Denis Firsov, Maxim Khrebtov,
Dmitry Sharapov, Vasily Sherbakov, Alexey Timofeev, Kamil Yangurazov

Kirov Ballet of the Mariinsky Theatre U.S. Management:
Ardani Artists Management, Inc.
Sergei Danilian, President & CEO

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Opening Night Patron Sponsors Wendy and Mason Willrich.

Cal Performances' 2008–2009 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank.

Tuesday, October 14, 2008, 8pm
 Wednesday, October 15, 2008, 8pm
 Zellerbach Hall

ACT I

Raymonda
 (Act 3)



Mariinsky Theatre

Ulyana Lopatkina in *Raymonda*

Music Alexander Glazunov
Libretto Lidia Pashkova and Marius Petipa,
 based on a medieval legend
Choreography Marius Petipa
Revised Version Konstantin Sergeev
Choreographic Fragments Fyodor Lopukhov, Pyotr Gusev, Lidia Tiuntina,
 Georgy Konishchev
Set and Costume Design Simon Virsaladze
Conductor Pavel Bubelnikov

CAST — TUESDAY

Raymonda Irma Nioradze
Jean de Brienne Yevgeny Ivanchenko
Rene de Brienne Vladimir Ponomarev

Mazurka Elena Bazhenova, Konstantin Zverev
Hungarian Dance Yulia Slivkina, Boris Zhurilov
Variation Yana Selina
Grand Pas Maria Shirinkina, Valeria Martynyuk,
 Elizaveta Cheprasova, Elena Yushkovskaya;
 Egor Safin, Philip Stepin, Maxim Khrebtov,
 Vasily Scherbakov; Yulia Bolshakova,
 Daria Vasnetsova, Marianna Pavlova;
 Sergey Popov, Andrey Solovyov, Denis Firsov

CAST — WEDNESDAY

Raymonda Irma Nioradze
Jean de Brienne Yevgeny Ivanchenko
Rene de Brienne Vladimir Ponomarev

Mazurka Elena Bazhenova, Konstantin Zverev
Hungarian Dance Alisa Sokolova, Karen Ioanessian
Variation Yana Selina
Grand Pas Maria Shirinkina, Valeria Martynyuk,
 Elizaveta Cheprasova, Elena Yushkovskaya;
 Egor Safin, Philip Stepin, Maxim Khrebtov,
 Vasily Scherbakov; Yulia Bolshakova,
 Daria Vasnetsova, Marianna Pavlova;
 Sergey Popov, Andrey Solovyov, Denis Firsov

World Premiere January 7, 1898, Mariinsky Theatre
Premiere of Konstantin Sergeev's Version April 30, 1948, Kirov Theatre, Leningrad

ACT II

La Bayadère
 ("The Kingdom of Shades")

Music Ludwig Minkus (1876)
Choreography Marius Petipa
Costume Design Yevgeny Ponomarev
Conductor Pavel Bubelnikov



Alina Somova in *La Bayadère*

CAST — TUESDAY

Nikiya Alina Somova
Solor Leonid Sarafanov
Shades Yulia Kasenkova, Tatiana Tkachenko,
 Daria Vasnetsova

CAST — WEDNESDAY

Nikiya Diana Vishneva
Solor Yevgeny Ivanchenko
Shades Yulia Kasenkova, Tatiana Tkachenko,
 Daria Vasnetsova

INTERMISSION

ACT III

Paquita
 (*Grand Pas*)

Music Ludwig Minkus
Choreography Marius Petipa (1881)
Revival Consultants Pyotr Gusev, Lidia Tiuntina, Georgy Konishchev
Set Design Gennady Sotnikov
Costume Design Irina Press
Conductor Pavel Bubelnikov

CAST — TUESDAY

Viktoria Tereshkina, Andrian Fadeev
 Yana Selina, Daria Vasnetsova, Valeria Martynyuk, Maria Shirinkina
 Alina Somova, Viktoria Tereshkina

CAST — WEDNESDAY

Alina Somova, Anton Korsakov
 Yana Selina, Daria Vasnetsova, Valeria Martynyuk, Maria Shirinkina
 Viktoria Tereshkina, Alina Somova

World Premiere (Act 3 from Paquita) January 27, 1881, Mariinsky Theatre
Premiere of the Revival June 29, 1978, Kirov Theatre, Leningrad

Raymonda

Raymonda is the jewel in the crown of Marius Petipa's long, creative career. It is also this classical choreographer's most modernistic work. The subject is mentioned *en passant*, giving way to pure dance ensembles, foretelling the triumph of the plotless ballets of the 20th century. Pure classical dancing is bravely mixed with Hungarian folk dancing: in the final *Grand Pas*, the ballerina dances *en pointe*, but her arms are flung wide open in the Hungarian style, now flying up behind her head, now resting by her sides. Even the series of purely classical point work—now on this leg, now on that—is reminiscent of elements from boisterous Magyar folk dance. Here, we see Countess Raymonda disdainfully rejecting the ardent Saracen, staying true to her betrothed knight, away on a crusade, before ultimately celebrating her wedding. Here, we see the prima ballerina observing the rules of classical dance amidst the energy of Eastern dances so she can then demonstrate her bravado nature through pseudo-Hungarian movements.

Everything that fascinates in Konstantin Sergeyev's version of *Raymonda* was created not by Sergeyev but by Petipa. Sergeyev did not improve the ballet by reworking it, though he did respond to the mood of the age. According to critics of the time, the return of the pompous Raymonda after the war meant as much for Leningrad residents as the famous statue of Samson from the Great Cascade at Petergoff being carried along Nevsky Prospect—it meant that peace had returned.

La Bayadère

The most celebrated and enduring passage of *La Bayadère* ("The Temple Maiden") is "The Kingdom of the Shades," in which Solor, the warrior-suitor of temple maiden Nikiya, smokes opium and envisions Nikiya's shade in a state of nirvana among the starlit mountain peaks of the Himalayas. Here, the lovers reconcile among the opulence and order of the shades of other *bayadères*. Petipa staged this scene as a strict *Grand pas classique*, entirely devoid of any dramatic action. His simple and academic choreography has become one of his most

celebrated compositions, with the *entrée*, known as the *Entrée de l'ombres* ("Entrance of the Shades"), perhaps his most celebrated of all. The *Entrée de l'ombres* was inspired by Doré's illustrations for Dante's "Paradiso" from *The Divine Comedy*, with each dancer in the *corps de ballet* clad in white tutus and veils stretched about their arms. Each of the dancers made her entrance, one by one, down a long, winding ramp from upstage right, with a simple *Arabesque cambré*, followed by an arching of the torso with arm in fifth position, followed by two steps forward. With the last two steps, she made room for her sister shade, and the combination would continue thus in a serpentine pattern until the entire *corps* had filled the stage. Simple movements *en adage* continued to the end, where the dancers split into two rows and lined opposite sides of the stage in preparation for the dances to follow. In 1903, "The Kingdom of the Shades" was performed independently for the first time, in a gala performance at Peterhof.

Paquita

In the dim and distant past, *Paquita* was a grand ballet with gypsies, smugglers, a bottle of poison, a hiding place in the fireplace, a kidnapped nobleman, a cherished locket, Spanish cloaks, daggers, weddings, diamonds and dances. The new sensation of Paris came to the St. Petersburg stage in 1847. In 1881, Petipa added an extra act to the ballet, consisting of one dramatic *Grand pas* from beginning to the end. After the Imperial Mariinsky Theatre become Soviet, and *Paquita* itself disappeared from the repertoire, the *Grand pas* appeared on theatre posters in capital letters and took on a life its own. There remain, however, even today, hints of former Imperial times. The *entrée* of the dancers reflects the official hierarchy of the company: *corps de ballet*, *coryphée*, soloists, then the prima ballerina. This hierarchy in turn mirrors the pomp of the Imperial Court. The brilliance of the dancers' *entrechats* rivaled that of the diamonds worn by ladies in the boxes. Balletomanes, just as they did over a hundred years ago, fervently observe the competitive sequence of the soloists, each, one after another, dancing a specially selected variation.

Friday, October 17, 2008, 8pm
 Saturday, October 18, 2008, 2pm & 8pm
 Sunday, October 19, 2008, 3pm
 Zellerbach Hall

Don Quixote

Grand ballet in three acts (six scenes) with a prologue
 Based on the novel by Miguel de Cervantes



Valentin Buravosky

Alina Somova in Don Quixote

Music Ludwig Minkus
Libretto Marius Petipa
Choreography Alexander Gorsky (1902) after Marius Petipa
Costume Design Konstantin Korovin
Conductor Pavel Bubelnikov

World Premiere December 14, 1869, Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow (choreography by Petipa)
Premiere of Alexander Gorsky's Version December 6, 1900, Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow
St. Petersburg Premiere of Gorsky's Version January 20, 1902, Mariinsky Theatre

Performance running time: two hours 55 minutes with two intermissions.

ORCHESTRAL SOLOISTS

Violin Lyudmila Chaikovskaya
Cello Alexander Ponomarev
Harp Odarka Voshak

CAST — FRIDAY

Don Quixote Vladimir Ponomarev
Sancho Panza Stanislav Burov
Lorenzo Nikolay Naumov
Kitri Alina Somova
Basilio Andrian Fadeev
Gamashe Soslan Kulaev
Espada Konstantin Zverev
Street Dancer Daria Vasnetsova
Flower-seller Yulia Kasenkova, Yana Selina
Lady Dryad Tatiana Tkachenko
Amur Valeria Martynuk
Mercedes Elena Bazhenova
Gypsy Dance Alisa Sokolova, Mikhail Berdichevsky
Oriental Dance Yulia Slivkina
Fandango Lira Khuslamova, Karen Ioanessian
Variation Tatiana Tkachenko

CAST — SATURDAY MATINÉE

Don Quixote Vladimir Ponomarev
Sancho Panza Stanislav Burov
Lorenzo Nikolay Naumov
Kitri Irma Nioradze
Basilio Anton Korsakov
Gamashe Soslan Kulaev
Espada Karen Ioanessian
Street Dancer Daria Vasnetsova
Flower-seller Yulia Kasenkova, Maria Chugay
Lady Dryad Tatiana Tkachenko
Amur Elizaveta Cheprasova
Mercedes Yulia Slivkina
Gypsy Dance Lira Khuslamova, Mikhail Berdichevsky
Oriental Dance Elena Bazhenova
Fandango Lira Khuslamova, Karen Ioanessian
Variation Yana Selina

CAST — SATURDAY EVENING

Don Quixote Vladimir Ponomarev
Sancho Panza Stanislav Burov
Lorenzo Nikolay Naumov
Kitri Viktoria Tereshkina
Basilio Leonid Sarafanov
Gamashe Soslan Kulaev
Espada Konstantin Zverev
Street Dancer Daria Vasnetsova
Flower-seller Yulia Kasenkova, Yana Selina
Lady Dryad Tatiana Tkachenko
Amur Elena Yushkovskaya
Mercedes Alisa Sokolova
Gypsy Dance Lira Khuslamova, Mikhail Berdichevsky
Oriental Dance Elena Bazhenova
Fandango Yulia Slivkina, Karen Ioanessian
Variation Alina Somova

CAST — SUNDAY

Don Quixote Vladimir Ponomarev
Sancho Panza Stanislav Burov
Lorenzo Nikolay Naumov
Kitri Diana Vishneva
Basilio Yevgeny Ivanchenko
Gamashe Soslan Kulaev
Espada Karen Ioanessian
Street Dancer Daria Vasnetsova
Flower-seller Yulia Kasenkova, Maria Chugay
Lady Dryad Tatiana Tkachenko
Amur Elena Yushkovskaya
Mercedes Elena Bazhenova
Gypsy Dance Lira Khuslamova, Mikhail Berdichevsky
Oriental Dance Yulia Slivkina
Fandango Lira Khuslamova, Karen Ioanessian
Variation Alina Somova

Don Quixote**Prologue**

A room in Don Quixote's house. Having read some tales of chivalry, Don Quixote decides to set out in search of adventures, defend virtue and punish those who violate the code of honor. It occurs to him to make his servant, Sancho Panza, his armor-bearer.

Act I

Scene 1. In front of Lorenzo's inn in Barcelona, a holiday crowd has gathered. Also there are Kitri, the flirtatious daughter of the innkeeper, and her lover, Basilio, the barber, who has come to tease her. Basilio is over-attentive to Kitri's friends.

Lorenzo catches his daughter kissing Basilio and forbids them ever to meet again—he won't have any penniless suitors. In vain, Kitri tells her father how much she loves Basilio, but Lorenzo is implacable and turns the barber out of the house.

Gamache, a rich and pompous nobleman, walks in, resplendent in his brocaded clothes. The crowd jeers at him. He has come to ask for the hand of the beautiful Kitri. Lorenzo would be delighted to have so highborn a gentleman for a son-in-law, but to Kitri the idea of marrying him is detestable. The innkeeper is shocked at his daughter's impertinent manner towards Gamache.

A street dancer enters, cheered heartily by the crowd. The girl is eagerly awaiting the arrival of Espada, the famous toreador. Espada appears, accompanied by other toreadors. They dance, flourishing their cloaks, enacting scenes from a bullfight.

At the appearance of an extraordinary looking horseman, the people struck again with astonishment. Sancho Panza blows a horn to announce the arrival of the knight-errant of La Mancha. Lorenzo welcomes the traveler courteously and invites him to partake of some refreshment. The girls seize the opportunity to have a bit of fun by playing tricks on the fat armor-bearer. They start a game of blind-man's bluff. Afterwards, the poor, harried Sancho

becomes sport for the men, who toss him in the air. Sancho screams for help. Don Quixote comes to his rescue, armed with a huge toasting-fork and a plate for a shield.

The knight sees Kitri and is struck by her beauty. He drops to one knee and asks her to dance a minuet with him. To annoy Basilio, Kitri graciously accepts the invitation, flirtatiously imitating the manners of a fine lady. While no one is looking, Sancho steals a fried fish from the kitchen, and the scullions catch the thief.

Amidst the general confusion, Kitri and Basilio slip away unobserved.

Act II

Scene 2. Fleeing from Lorenzo and Gamache, the two lovers, Kitri and Basilio, wander into a gypsy camp. The gypsies dance for their guests. A girl informs them of the approach of a strange-looking horseman—it is Don Quixote. Basilio and Kitri greet him like old friends.

The gypsies invite Don Quixote to attend a play they are about to perform. He takes what is happening on stage to be reality, and rushes, sword in hand, to rescue the unhappy heroine. The improvised theatre is destroyed, and frightened actors and spectators scatter in all directions.

The turning sails of a windmill then catch Don Quixote's eye. They are the arms of giants!

Don Quixote attacks the windmill. His clothes get caught on a sail and he is first swung up into the air, then hurled to the ground. Kitri and Basilio attend to his injuries. They spend the rest of the night resting by the gypsies' caravan.

Scene 3. Don Quixote is tormented by a nightmare. In his sleep, he sees a huge spider crawl out of a dark, dense forest. He boldly attacks the monster and overpowers it. At the same instant, the forest is transformed into beautiful Kingdom of the Dryads. Among them is Kitri, who has assumed the form of Dulchinea, the queen of his heart.

Cupid presents Don Quixote to the Queen of the Dryads. The nymphs are grateful to him for rescuing them from the monster, and dance for their deliverer.



Valentin Baranovsky

Don Quixote

Scene 4. Morning breaks. Kitri and Basilio wake up only just in time, for Lorenzo and Gamache are close upon them. The lovers flee. Don Quixote, their protector, sends Lorenzo and Gamache on a false trail, but Sancho Panza corrects his master's "mistake." The chase goes on.

Act III

Scene 5. People are gathering for a fiesta at an inn. Kitri and Basilio, having given Lorenzo and Gamache the slip, have also come here to take part in the merrymaking. The innkeeper warns Kitri of her father's approach; Kitri tries to escape, but her father overtakes her and drags her to Gamache to give them his parental blessing at their betrothal. Gamache kneels before Kitri.

Basilio, seeing this, stabs himself and falls to the ground. Kitri rushes to him. She guesses

at once that he is pretending, but slyly begs Don Quixote to go to Lorenzo and persuade him to grant Basilio's dying wish—to give their love his blessing. Basilio is sure to die. Why not ease his last moments?

Gamache protests, but is driven out unceremoniously. At Don Quixote's earnest entreaty, Lorenzo blesses the lovers. The very next moment, Basilio jumps to his feet and kisses the astounded Lorenzo. The merrymaking at the inn continues late into the night.

Scene 6. Lorenzo, assisted by the scullions, the maidservants and Kitri's friends, is putting the final touches to the wedding feast. Don Quixote is the guest of honor. The happy lovers dance for him. Wishing the newlyweds every happiness, the knight-errant departs in search of new adventures.

Mariinsky Orchestra

Artistic & General Director

Valery Gergiev

Conductor

Pavel Bublennikov

Violin I

Lyudmila Chaykovskaya
Alexander Shirokov
Leonid Kirichenko
Artur Dzhavadian
Ildar Gatov
Sergey Gavrikov
Vera Skripnik
Marina Serebro
Elena Luferova
Victor Zaytsev
Mikhail Zatin
Kirill Murashko

Violin II

Zhanna Abdulaeva
Alexander Vasiliev
Svetlana Zhuravkova
Lyubov Gavrikova
Erdan Ergaliev
Mark Kogan
Vladimir Kutepov

Viola

Olga Maximova
Viktor Zakharov
Svetlana Kozlova
Elena Solovyova
Khamit Aliev
Angelina Vayner
Ekaterina Stupnikova

Cello

Dmitry Kirillov
Boris Mezhvinsky
Sarkis Ginosian
Georgy Tleubayev
Alexander Ponomarenko
Nikolay Ogинets

Bass

Vasily Rakitsky
Alexander Belokon
Victor Alexeev
Vladimir Nefedov

Flute

Natalia Shlykova
Vasily Viland
Oleg Mikhailovsky

Oboe

Andrey Yankovsky
Alexander Trushkov
Alexander Sveshnikov

Clarinet

Yevgeny Kulygin
Sergey Khristofis
Mikhail Tolbukhin

Bassoon

Arseny Makarov
Konstantin Shevchuk

Horn

Igor Prokofiev
Dmitry Chepkov
Viktor Mitroshin
Andrey Antonov

Trumpet

Vasily Kan
Viacheslav Panasyuk
Gennady Kuteev
Igor Kravtsov

Trombone

Ilya Belyaev
Victor Shirokov
Nikolay Timofeev

Tuba

Nikolay Novikov

Percussion

Valery Zhavnerchik
Mikhail Peskov
Valery Kniga
Nikolay Volkov
Alexander Petrov

Harp

Odarka Voshak

Carpenter

Andrey Romanov

The **Kirov Ballet of the Mariinsky Theatre** is closely linked with the entire history of the development of Russian choreographic art which began some 250 years ago. Since 1783, the company performed at the stage of the St. Petersburg Bolshoi (Stone) Theatre, and from 1885 onwards the ballet productions have been staged at the Mariinsky Theatre.

The leading role in the establishment and evolution of the Russian ballet belonged to foreign masters. At the end of the 18th century, active in St. Petersburg were Franz Gilferding, Gasparo Angiolini, Giuseppe Canziani and Charles le Picqué. But already in the 1790s, the first Russian ballet teacher, Ivan Valberkh, became prominent. The main sphere of his activities was a small mime ballet company. He sought to make his productions rich in subject matter and to create recognizable, lifelike images. A special place in his work was occupied by ballet divertissements which reflected his responses to the events of the War against Napoleon. The history of the St. Petersburg ballet in the 19th century was associated with the activities of Charles Didelot, Jules Perrot and Arthur Saint-Léon. In 1869, the position of the principal ballet master was entrusted to Marius Petipa who markedly raised the professional standards of the company. The peak accomplishment of this famous master became ballets staged in the period of his collaboration with the composers Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and Alexander Glazunov—*The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake* and *Raymonda*. The talents of many generations of ballerinas have been revealed in them—from Yekaterina Vyazem, Marina Semenova and Galina Ulanova to younger dancers who are just fledging on the Mariinsky stage.

At the turn of the 20th century, the Mariinsky Ballet produced such great dancers as Anna Pavlova, Mathilde Kschessinska, Tamara Karsavina, Olga Preobrazhenskaya, Olga Spesivtseva, Vaslav Nijinsky, Nikolai and Sergei Legat. Many of them glorified the Russian ballet during the legendary *Saisons Russes* in Paris, which familiarized Europe with pioneering works by Michele Fokine. The years after the revolution were a difficult period for the Mariinsky Theatre. Almost all its leading artists abandoned the company. Nevertheless during these years the classical repertory was retained. And in

1922, when Fyodor Lopukhov, a daring innovator and a brilliant connoisseur of the past, was put at the head of the company, its repertory was enriched with new productions, in particular ballets dealing with contemporary life. It was during those years that Galina Ulanova, Alexei Yermolayev, Marina Semenova, Vakhtang Chibukiani, Alla Shelest and many other future celebrities of the St. Petersburg ballet came to the company.

After the Communist revolution, the name of the Mariinsky Theatre was changed to the Academic Theatre or the Academic State Theatre. Then, in 1935, the theatre was renamed the Kirov Theatre, after the Mayor of Leningrad (communist St. Petersburg), Sergei Kirov. (In recent years, the company has transitioned from the Kirov Ballet to its original name, the Mariinsky Ballet.)

The 1960s saw the staging of *Spartacus* and *Choreographic Miniatures* by Leonid Lavrovsky, the productions of *The Stone Flower* and *The Legend of Love* by Yury Grigorovich, as well as *The Coast of Hope* and *The Leningrad Symphony* by Igor Belsky—the ballets which revived the traditions of symphonic dances. The success of these productions would obviously be impossible without superb performers. During the period of the 1950s–1970s among the dancers of the company were Irina Kolpakova, Natalia Makarova, Alla Osipenko, Irina Gensler, Alla Sizova, Rydolph Nureyev, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Valery Panov, Yury Solovyev and Anatoly Sapogov.

Towards the end of the 1970s, in the repertory of the company appeared *La Sylphide* and *Naples* by Auguste Bournonville, fragments of ancient choreography by Perrot, Saint-Léon and Coralli. Roland Petit and Maurice Béjart came to work for some time with the company. The Tudor Foundation gave rights for the ballets *Lilac Garden* and *Leaves Are Fading*. Jerome Robbins staged the ballet *In the Night* at the Mariinsky.

It was in 1989 that the Mariinsky Theatre first staged ballets by outstanding choreographer George Balanchine, who had begun his career in St. Petersburg. The next decade saw the theatre's repertoire enriched with productions of the leading choreographers of the mid-20th century to the early 21st century: Kenneth MacMillan's *Manon* and John Neumeier's *Now and Then* and *Spring*

and *Fall*. Especially for the Mariinsky Theatre, Neumeier staged *Sounds of Empty Pages* to music by Alfred Schnittke.

These years also saw intense work to restore Marius Petipa's *The Sleeping Beauty* and *La Bayadère*, both highly acclaimed in the international press.

St. Petersburg premieres also include *Etudes* (choreography by Harald Lander), two ballets by Stravinsky—Bronislava Nijinska's *Les Noces* and Vaslav Nijinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*—and ballets by William Forsythe.

The number of world premieres has grown too, with Alexei Ratmansky's staging of *Cinderella*, *The Nutcracker* and *The Magic Nut* (music by Sergei Slonimsky, libretto, sets, costumes and production design by Mihail Chemiakin and choreography by Donvena Pandoursky), the latter two together comprising "Chemiakin's Hoffmann."

The Mariinsky's current U.S. tour marks the theatre's 225th anniversary year of 2008. No other Russian ballet company has toured so frequently and to such acclaim in the United States.

The Mariinsky Ballet Company's tours to the United States are managed by Sergei Danilian and Ardani Artists, which has collaborated closely with the theatre in recent years.

The **Kirov Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre** enjoys a long and distinguished history as one of the oldest musical institutions in Russia. Founded in the 18th century during the reign of Peter the Great, it was known before the revolution as the Russian Imperial Opera Orchestra. Housed in St. Petersburg's famed Mariinsky Theatre (named after Maria, the wife of Czar Alexander II) since 1860, the Orchestra entered its true "golden age" during the second half of the 19th century under the music direction of Eduard Napravnik (1839–1916). Napravnik single-handedly ruled the Imperial Theatre for more than half a century (from 1863–1916) and under his leadership, the Mariinsky Orchestra was recognized as one of the finest in Europe. He also trained a generation of outstanding conductors, developing what came to be known as "the Russian school of conducting."

The Mariinsky Theatre was also the birthplace of numerous operas and ballets which are

meanwhile regarded as masterpieces of the 19th and 20th century. World premiere performances include Glinka's *Life of a Tsar* and *Ruslan and Liudmila*, Borodin's *Prince Igor*, Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Maid of Pskov*, *The Snow Maiden* and *Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*, Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades*, *Iolanta*, *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker* and *The Sleeping Beauty*, Prokofiev's *The Duenna*, operas by Shostakovich and ballets by Khachaturian.

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky was closely associated with the Mariinsky Theatre, not only conducting the orchestra but also premiering his Fifth Symphony there, as well as the fantasy overture *Hamlet* and the Sixth Symphony. Serge Rachmaninoff conducted the Orchestra on numerous occasions, including the premieres of his *Spring Cantata* and the symphonic poem, *The Bells*. The Orchestra also premiered the music of the young Igor Stravinsky, such as his *Scherzo Fantastique* and the suite from the *Firebird* ballet.

Throughout its history, the Mariinsky Theatre has presented works by Europe's leading opera composers. In 1862, Verdi's *La Forza del Destino* was given its world premiere at the theatre in the presence of the composer. Wagner was a favorite at the Mariinsky Theatre, where his operas were frequently performed from the 19th through the beginning of the 20th century, including the first Russian performances of the complete *Ring* cycle, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger* and *Parsifal*. The *Ring* cycle was conducted by Hans Richter, who was the first to conduct the complete *Ring* in Bayreuth and at Covent Garden.

The Mariinsky Orchestra also gave the first Russian performances of Richard Strauss's *Elektra*, *Salome* and *Der Rosenkavalier*, and Berg's *Wozzeck*, in a production that took place two years after its world premiere in Berlin and 20 years before its premiere in Vienna.

By 1917, the orchestra's name had changed to the Royal Imperial Theatre Orchestra, and was regarded as St. Petersburg's leading symphony orchestra. Its repertoire—operatic and orchestral—has traditionally included not only music of Russian composers, but also of European composers. Numerous internationally famous musicians conducted the Orchestra, among them

Hans von Bülow, Felix Mottl, Felix Weingartner, Alexander von Zemlinsky, Otto Nikisch, Willem Mengelberg, Otto Klemperer, Bruno Walter and Erich Kleiber.

On two occasions, in 1847 and 1867, Hector Berlioz conducted performances of his own works, including *The Damnation of Faust*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Symphony Fantastique* and *Harold in Italy*. Berlioz wrote in his memoirs "Such an orchestra! Such precision! Such an ensemble!" And in a letter dated December 1867, he stated: "I don't think Beethoven ever had a better performance of his compositions!" In March and April 1863, Richard Wagner visited St. Petersburg and led the Royal Imperial Theatre Orchestra in six programs of Beethoven symphonies and his own compositions, including the world's first concert performance of *Prelude und Liebestod*. Gustav Mahler appeared with the Orchestra in both 1902 and 1907, conducting five concerts, including a performance of his Fifth Symphony. In 1912, Arnold Schoenberg conducted the premiere of his symphonic poem, *Pelleas and Melisande*.

Renamed the Kirov Opera during the Soviet era, the orchestra continued to maintain its high artistic standards under the leadership of Evgeny Mravinsky and Yuri Temirkanov. In 1988, Valery Gergiev was elected artistic director of the opera company and in 1996 the Russian Government appointed him as Artistic and General Director of the Mariinsky Theatre. Soon after the city of Leningrad was renamed St. Petersburg, the Kirov Theatre reverted to its original title of the Mariinsky Theatre, home to the Kirov Opera, the Kirov Ballet and the Kirov Orchestra.

Under the leadership of Maestro Gergiev, the Mariinsky Theatre has forged important

relationships with the world's greatest opera houses, among them the Metropolitan Opera House, London's Royal Opera House, the San Francisco Opera, the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris and La Scala in Milan, just to name a few. Besides extensive touring of the opera and the ballet company, the Kirov Orchestra has performed throughout world and has become one of the outstanding orchestras. The success of the orchestra's continual travelling has led to the reputation of, what a journalist called, "the world's first global orchestra."

In 1998, the Orchestra made its debut tour of China, an historic first, with a performance in the Great Hall in Beijing, broadcast to 50 million people, in the presence of President Jiang Zemin. It was the first time in 40 years that a Russian orchestra had been in China.

Under the baton of Maestro Gergiev, the orchestra has recorded exclusively for Philips Classics since 1989. Releases include the complete operas *Khovanshchina*, *War and Peace*, *Sadko*, *Prince Igor*, *The Queen of Spades*, *Ruslan and Liudmila*, *Iolanta*, *Fiery Angel* (winner of the 1996 *Gramophone* "Opera of the Year" award), *La Forza del Destino*, *Boris Godunov* (1869 and 1872 version), *Mazeppa*, *Betrothal in the Monastery*, *Love for Three Oranges* and *Semyon Kotko*. In addition the orchestra recorded the complete ballets *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*.

In July 2000, the Orchestra and Chorus of the Mariinsky Theatre recorded Verdi's *Requiem*, and their other releases of orchestral music include Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 8*, Rachmaninoff's *Symphony No. 2*, Stravinsky's *The Firebird* and *The Rite of Spring*, Skriabin's *Poem of Ecstasy* and *Prometheus*, and the complete piano concerti of Prokofiev.

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