

**LES BALLETS TROCKADERO DE MONTE CARLO LEAPS INTO ZELLERBACH HALL WITH AN INSPIRED BLEND OF OUTRAGEOUS COMEDY AND CLASSICAL BALLET, THURSDAY–SATURDAY, MAY 5–7 AT 8:00 P.M.**

**SIGHTLINES: PRE-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION WITH ARTISTIC DIRECTOR TORY DOBRIN, MAY 5 - 7 AT 7:00 P.M.**

BERKELEY, March 28, 2005 – Cal Performances welcomes the beloved all-male ballet company, **Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo** dancing *en travesti* at Zellerbach Hall **Thursday – Saturday, May 5–7 at 8:00 p.m.** The “Trocks,” as they are affectionately known, blend a loving knowledge of dance with a distinctive comic approach, and in the process prove that hairy men in tutus and makeup can, indeed, dance *en pointe* without falling on their faces. Their Berkeley performances begin with the company’s signature work, Act II of *Swan Lake*, as staged by **Trutti Gasparinetti** after **Lev Ivanov** and set to the magical music of **Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**. Also on the program are a *pas de deux* or solo, to be announced; *La Vivandiere*, the ballet that introduced the Polka of Bohemia to 19<sup>th</sup>-century London, as staged by **Elena Kunikova** after **Arthur Saint Leon**, danced to the music of **Cesar Pugni**; and a solo work, the Trocks’ own singular interpretation of **Anna Pavlova**’s signature dance, *Dying Swan*, with choreography after **Michael Fokine** set to music from **Camille Saint-Saens**’ *Carnaval des Animaux* suite. The Trocks close the performance with *Raymonda’s Wedding*, with choreography after the famed 19th-century choreographer **Marius Petipa**, danced to the music of **Alexander Glazunov**; the troupe describes this ballet as “a traditionally confusing *divertissement* in two scenes.”

A free *Sightlines* talk with artistic director **Tory Dobrin** will be held before each performance in Zellerbach Hall, at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Dobrin will give an introduction and history of the company and will answer audience questions.

Founded in 1974 in New York City by dancers who wanted to present playful, entertaining performances of traditional, classic ballet, **Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo** began performing in late-late shows in off-off Broadway lofts. They quickly became known

beyond New York, and in the 1975–76 season the Trocks became a professional troupe, with full-time management, dance training, a tour of the United States and Canada, and bulk purchases of very large toe shoes. *The New York Times* has described a Trocks’ performance as a “combination of classical technique and outré humor in a repertory of Russian and French warhorses, like ‘Swan Lake’ and ‘Les Sylphides,’ with the occasional American avant-gardist thrown into the fray.” In 1999, the Trocks performed in New York’s Damrosch Park as part of Lincoln Center’s “Out of Doors” Festival to the largest single audience for a dance performance in the history of Lincoln Center.

Dancers in Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo adopt outrageous stage names, such as **Ida Nevasayneva**, **Velour Pilleaux** and **Colette Adae** and create outsized back stories and alter egos to match. But a performance by the Trocks is not merely broad humor. “The comedy works because the dancers’ technical prowess goes far beyond what the conceit of guys-in-tutus might initially suggest,” says the *Minneapolis Star Ledger*. “These are artists who can toss off a dozen rapid-fire *fouettés* in their size-13 pointe shoes without turning a hair on their bun-headed wigs.”

In the last three decades, the Trocks have toured internationally dozens of times, dancing at festivals in Holland, Madrid, New York, Paris, Spoleto, Turin, and Vienna. They have appeared in over 500 cities worldwide on five tours to Australia and New Zealand, 19 tours to Japan (where they have a nationwide cult following and fan club), eight tours to South America, three tours to South Africa, and 39 tours of Europe. In the UK, the *Newcastle Journal* said, “*En pointe* for much of the show, the dancing is so graceful and often feather-light you forget it is male dancers. But it is also high camp. Slapstick, almost like a pantomime, and, in parts, very funny.”

The Trocks have appeared in 48 of 50 states in the U.S. and are a staple of the college and university circuit. Their appeal is based both on the quality of their dancing and the depth of their humor: “Ballet enthusiasts love the Trocks because the troupe performs real ballet, with a little something extra,” said the *Seattle Times*. “It doesn’t take much to push classical ballet over the edge. [A] tossed-back head or a flailed wrist—or even an absurdly coquettish grin—is

enough to inspire helpless laughter. (If that's not enough, the chest hair curling out of tutu bodices ought to do it.)”

The Trocks appear regularly in benefits for international AIDS organizations, including DRA (Dancers Responding to AIDS) and Classical Action in New York City; the Life Ball in Vienna, Austria; Dancers for Life in Toronto; and the Stonewall Gala in London. Individual members of the Trocks regularly participate in DRA activities as well. Other Trocks performances have benefited the Rochester City Ballet, the Connecticut Ballet Theater and the Gay and Lesbian Community Center in New York City.

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo have made many television appearances in the United States, ranging from *On-Stage America* to *Muppet Babies*, and have had solo specials on national networks in Japan and Germany and a French television special with Julia Migenes. The acclaimed British arts program, *The South Bank Show*, filmed a documentary about the Trocks in 1998, and in 1999 the company was featured in the PBS program *The Egg*, about arts in America. Television director and producer Christopher Noey won an Emmy award for the segment.

### TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo** on **Thursday–Saturday, May 5–7** at **8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$26.00**, **\$36.00**, and **\$48.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu); and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens and other students receive a \$2 discount, and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$3 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu).

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**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Thursday–Saturday, May 5–7 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**SIGHTLINES**

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus**  
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

Pre-performance discussion with artistic director Tory Dobrin. *Sightlines* is a continuing program of pre- and post performance discussions with Cal Performances' guest artists and scholars, designed to enrich the audience's experience. These events are free to ticketholders.

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**Thursday–Saturday, May 5–7 at 8:00 p.m.**

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus**  
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

*Dance*

**Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo**  
**Tory Dobrin**, artistic director

**Program**

*Swan Lake* (Act II): music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky; choreography after Lev Ivanov, staged by Trutti Gasparineti

*Pas de deux* or solo, to be announced

*La Vivandiere*: music by Cesar Pugni; choreography after Arthur Saint Leon, staged by Elena Kunikova

*Dying Swan*: music by Camille Saint-Saens; choreography after Michael Fokine

*Raymonda's Wedding*: music by Alexander Glazunov; choreography after Marius Petipa

**Tickets:** \$26.00, \$36.00, and \$48.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperfs.berkeley.edu](http://www.calperfs.berkeley.edu); and at the door.

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