

Cal Performances Presents

Wednesday, March 7, 2007, 8pm
Thursday, March 8, 2007, 8pm
Saturday, March 10, 2007, 2pm & 8pm
Sunday, March 11, 2007, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

Eifman Ballet of St. Petersburg

Boris Eifman, *Artistic Director*



Celebrating Eifman Ballet's 30th Anniversary

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Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation.*

Cal Performances' 2006–2007 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Eifman Ballet of St. Petersburg

Boris Eifman
Artistic Director

Soloists

Maria Abashova, Elena Kuzmina, Natalia Povorozniuk,
Anastassia Sitnikova, Nina Zmievets

Yuri Ananyan, Dmitry Fisher, Oleg Gabyshev, Andrey Kasyanenko,
Ivan Kozlov, Oleg Markov, Yuri Smekalov

Corps de Ballet

Marina Burtseva, Diana Danchenko, Sofia Elistratova, Anastassia Filipcheva,
Elena Gorshunova, Olga Grigorieva, Liana Madysheva, Marianna Marina,
Natalia Pozdniakova, Victoria Silantieva, Natalia Smirnova, Agata Smorodina,
Oxana Tverdokhlebova, Valentina Vassilieva, Valeriya Volobueva,
Victoria Zaripova, Evgenia Zodbaeva, Ekaterina Zhigalova

Sergei Barabanov, Vasil Dautov, Kirill Efremov Pavel Gorbachev,
Mikhail Ivankov, Andrei Ivanov, Stanislav Kultin, Anton Labunskas,
Alexander Melkaev, Batyr Niyazov, Ilia Osipov, Igor Polyakov,
Roman Solovyov, Sergei Volobuev, Sergei Zimin, Maxim Zubarev

North American Management
Ardani Artists Management, Inc.
130 West 56th Street, Floor 5M
New York, New York 10019

Cast

Staff

<i>Artistic and General Director</i>	Boris Eifman
<i>Executive Director</i>	Boris Illarionov
<i>Director of the Ballet</i>	Gennady Albert
<i>Coaches and Balletmasters</i>	Olga Kalmykova, Valentina Morozova, Tatiana Sevostianova, Natalia Sazonova, Igor Kuzmin, Oleg Paradnik
<i>Production and Stage Manager</i>	Alexey Donde
<i>Deputy Director</i>	Vladimir Bondarenko
<i>Assistant to Artistic Director</i>	Olga Mikhaylovtseva
<i>Assistant to Executive Director</i>	Polina Mikhaylova
<i>Head of Foreign Affairs Department</i>	Victoria Bykova
<i>Financial Department</i>	Elena Oleynik, Tatiana Alexandrova, Irina Enikeeva
<i>Production Staff</i>	Vadim Shemarov, Alexey Petrov
<i>Head Electrician</i>	Yuri Timofeev
<i>Electricians</i>	Vladimir Vasilevski, Dmitri Russkih
<i>Sound Engineers</i>	Leonid Eremin, Elena Kurinova, Marina Mikhailukova
<i>Carpenters</i>	Yuri Eliseenkov, Sergey Kulikov, Alexander Yaroslavtsev, Sergey Grigoriev
<i>Wardrobe</i>	Elvira Sheikina, Tatiana Smirnova, Elena Niyazova
<i>Makeup Artist</i>	Natalia Karavaev
<i>Masseur and Therapist</i>	Alexander Meshcherin
<i>Ardani Artists Management, Inc.</i>	
<i>President and CEO</i>	Sergei Danilian
<i>Vice-President and General Manager</i>	Gaiane Danilian
<i>Production Manager</i>	Michael Vool
<i>Tour Manager</i>	Armen Danilian

Program A

Wednesday, March 7, 2007, 8pm
Thursday, March 8, 2007, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

The Seagull

Ballet version by Boris Eifman

Based on the play by Anton Chekhov

Music by Sergei Rachmaninoff and Alexander Skryabin



Set Design Zinovy Margolin
Lighting Design Gleb Filshinsky
Costumes Natalia Zuzkevich, Olga Kulizhnova,
Daria Prokhorova
Consultants Slyde (Sylvain Le Hesran), Maxim Shakhov

Cast

Arkadina Nina Zmievets, Natalia Povorozniuk
Treplev Dmitri Fisher, Oleg Gabyshev
Zarechnaya Maria Abashova, Anastassia Sitnikova
Trigorin Oleg Markov, Yuri Smelakov

There will be one intermission for 20 minutes.

Program A Notes

On *The Seagull*

RETAINING the main philosophical ideas on art that imbue Chekhov's *The Seagull*, we moved the action from a country estate to a ballet hall, where the fashionable choreographer Trigorin clashes with the daring innovator Treplev, and the young dancer Zarechnaya competes with prima ballerina Arkadina. The issues of the development of art, the search for new forms, true and deceptive values, love and career are expressed with particular sharpness in our production.

At first glance, the ballet version of *The Seagull* differs from the external action of the literary work, but a closer look reveals the imperishable ties between the ballet's protagonists and the Chekhov play.

The four leads and their uncommon fates—creative and personal—have taken on an emotional embodiment in movement that expresses our view of the Chekhov work.

Boris Eifman

Program B

Saturday, March 10, 2007, 2pm & 8pm
Sunday, March 11, 2007, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

Anna Karenina

Ballet in Two Acts by Boris Eifman

Music by Pyotr Tchaikovsky



Set Zinovy Margolin
Costumes Slava Okunev
Lighting Gleb Filshinsky

Cast

Anna Maria Abashova, Nina Zmievets,
Natalia Povoroziuk
Karenin Oleg Markov, Ivan Kozlov, Yuri Ananyan
Vronsky Yuri Smekalov, Oleg Gabyshev,
Andrey Kasyanenko
Kiti Anastassia Sitnikova, Natalia Povoroziuk

There will be one intermission for 20 minutes.

Program B Notes

On *Anna Karenina*

BALLET is a very special art form that gives us an opportunity to permeate into the subconscious and dive into the heart of psychological drama. Each new ballet is an expedition into the unknown.

Tolstoy's novel *Anna Karenina* has always captured my interest. When reading Tolstoy, one can viscerally feel the author's acute understanding of his characters' psyche and revel in his astonishing sensitivity and incredible detail in portraying life in Russia. *Anna Karenina* allows us not only to submerge deep into the psyche of the heroine, but also to fully understand her psychoerotic essence. Even today's literature does not offer such passion, metamorphoses, and phantasmagorias. All this stood at the core of my choreographic investigation.

The Karenin family's steady rhythm of life—the government service of the head of the family, the family's strict adherence to the societal norms—created an illusion of harmony and peace. But Anna's passion for Vronsky crushed the familiar. The sincerity of the feelings between the two lovers was reviled and openly criticized. Karenin's hypocrisy was acceptable for everyone but Anna. She preferred the sweeping passion for the man she loved to the duty of a mother to her son—and thus condemned herself to the life of an outcast.

She did not find happiness in travels, her husband's rich estate, or the habitual amusements of the society in which she lived. Instead, she fell captive to a woman's tragic enslavement to her sensuality. I understand a woman who becomes dependent on a man. This dependence, however, like any other disease, brings only suffering.

Eventually, Anna is driven to commit suicide in order to break free and put an end to her unbearable and torturous life. Like in a werewolf, two people lived in Anna: one was the outwardly known lady of high society, who was familiar to Karenin, her son, and everyone around her. The other was a woman drowning in a sea of passion.

What is more important—to preserve the widely accepted illusion of harmony between duty and emotion, or to allow sincere passion to take over? Do we have the right to destroy our family and to rid a child of a mother for the sake of carnal pleasure? These questions beleaguered Tolstoy in the past, and they are still inescapable today. Yet there are no answers. There is just the unquenchable thirst for understanding—either in life or in death.

Boris Eifman

Boris Eifman

Having created over 40 ballets, Boris Eifman is one of the few Russian choreographers to have sustained such a prolific creative life in recent decades. His ballet, *Tchaikovsky* (as well as the leading cast members of *Tchaikovsky* and *The Karamazovs*), has received the prestigious Russian Golden Mask award, and the choreographer himself has received the Golden Mask award for his lifetime achievement in contemporary choreography. Eifman is also a four-time recipient of the St. Petersburg theater award, the Golden Sofit. His other awards and distinctions include the Triumph award, the Russian state award for his contribution to the development of the performing arts, induction into France's Order of Arts and Letters, the distinguished title of People's Artist of Russia and a professorship at the Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet.

The 60-year-old choreographer was born in Siberia. He received his education at the choreographic department of the Leningrad Conservatory. In 1977, he founded the New Ballet of Leningrad (now known as the St. Petersburg State Academic Ballet Theater, or Eifman Ballet)—Russia's first and only ballet theater dedicated to performing works by a single choreographer. With his new ballet troupe, he created an original choreographic style based on classical ballet and infused with the spirit of contemporary choreography. He has also brought up a group of like-minded artists for whom nothing seems impossible.

Eifman's artistic philosophy is rooted in contemporary issues. He is fascinated by the creative mystery and the magic of genius, which is revealed in his interpretations of the lives of Tchaikovsky, Spessivtseva and Molière. Immersing himself in the dark and daunting realm of the human psyche (*The Idiot*, *The Murderers*, *Don Quixote*, *Red Giselle* and *Russian Hamlet*), Eifman creates classic examples of psychoanalysis on stage. He wants to show an extreme state of being, seeing the madness of his characters not as a mental illness, but as a unique ability to access other worlds and dimensions.

The choreographer pushes the limits of his own imagination through the imagination of his heroes, plunging into the depths of today's most relevant philosophical and spiritual questions—which were the basis for his latest ballets, *Russian Hamlet* and *Don Juan and Molière*. In 2004, Boris Eifman choreographed a one-act ballet, *Musagete*, for New York City Ballet as part of Balanchine Centennial Celebration Program.

In creating his style, Eifman worked through many paradigms and styles of movement, turning his theater into a creative lab for exploration and discovery. Concerned above all with the theatrical impact of his productions, the choreographer does not restrict himself to the conventions of pure classical ballet. His works are each a complex, all-encompassing spectacle, constantly revealing new forms and principles of dancemaking. Using the language of movement and expressive dance steps, dynamic and riveting mass action scenes, unexpected moments of stillness where movement becomes a metaphor, and innovative partnering, Boris Eifman creates his own type of theater—a theater ruled by emotion.

Eifman Ballet of St. Petersburg

Thirty years ago, a ballet troupe with the intriguing name of "the New Ballet" presented its first performance—which completely justified its name. In the stagnant creative atmosphere of Russia in the 1970s, works by Boris Eifman—founder and artistic director of the New Ballet—were like a breath of fresh air. Eifman's combination of relevant themes and deep psychological perception, philosophical ideas and fiery passions, audacity of movement vocabulary and clarity of dramatic intent were highly unusual for that time. Even more remarkable was the artists' level of commitment. The creation of a ballet troupe dedicated to performing works by one choreographer only was a unique phenomenon in itself. This groundbreaking troupe is now known as the St. Petersburg State Academic Ballet Theater, or Eifman Ballet.

About the Artists



Eifman's ballet theater was geared towards a continuous creative process and each year produced new titles for its repertoire. After *Boomerang*, which was set to rock music, came *The Idiot*, which became a phenomenon in the Russian theater and clearly defined the aesthetic goals of Eifman's ballet troupe: the dramatization of the art of dance, deep penetration into the human psyche, daring interpretation of the most relevant, or "taboo," themes of the time, and the creation of meaningful metaphors through movement. Eifman also became known for the elegance and powerful impact of the mass action scenes impeccably executed by the troupe's captivating corps de ballet.

Eifman's repertoire helped create a special type of artist, one who combines dancing, acting, brilliant technique and a gift for transformation.

Eifman's ballet theater presented 27 productions in its first decade. Seeking to create a diverse repertoire, Eifman experimented with various genres, which ranged from choreographic miniatures to full-evening ballets. This period produced *The Metamorphoses*, *Autographs*, *The Legend*, *A Crazy Day*, *The Twelfth Night* and *Love's Intrigues*.

It was also during that time that the poignant *Sublieutenant Romashov* and the innovative *Master and Margarita* broke through the barriers of censorship. These ballets saw an entire generation of audiences to whom Eifman's works have given an unusual feeling of freedom and on whom they have made an astounding emotional and spiritual impact.

Eifman's production of *The Murderers* signaled a new period in the life of Eifman Ballet characterized by a special emphasis on seeking new forms of dance expression, psychoanalysis through movement, and a new, previously unexplored, energy in dance.

Eifman Ballet's latest and best-known productions include *Tchaikovsky*, *Don Quixote*, *The Karamazovs*, *Red Giselle*, *My Jerusalem*, *Russian Hamlet*, *Don Juan and Molière* and *Anna Karenina*. These ballets have brought worldwide recognition to such already well-known and versatile artists of the Eifman Ballet as Albert Galichanin, Elena Kuzmina, Vera Arbuzova, Yuri Ananyan, Alexander Rachinsky and Sergei Zimin. Today, a young generation of artists is realizing its talent alongside these masters. They include Dmitry Fisher, Yuri Smekalov, Oleg Gabyshev, Natalia Povorozniuk, Anastassia Sitnikova, Maria Abashova and Oleg Markov.

Besides the talent of its soloists, Eifman Ballet also owes its success in large part to the incredibly disciplined and professional *corps de ballet*. Collaborating on *Tchaikovsky* laid the foundation for a creative union between two extraordinary artists—Boris Eifman and set designer Vyacheslav Okunev—both of whom are now responsible for what is described as the "amazing visual impact" of Eifman Ballet productions. Boris Eifman's last two premieres, *Anna Karenina* and *The Seagull*, were created in collaboration with set designer Zinovy Margolin and lighting designer Gleb Filshtinsky. Young Moscow choreographer Nikita Dmitrievsky became the first choreographer to create a new ballet for Eifman Ballet as part of its 30th anniversary program in New York. His one-act story ballet *Cassandra* will receive its first performance at the opening night gala.