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CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS
THE BAY AREA PREMIERE OF THE SUZANNE FARRELL BALLET
FRIDAY & SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14 & 15 AT 8:00 P.M. IN ZELLERBACH HALL

All-Balanchine program includes *Divertimento No. 15*; “Tempo di Valse” from *Nutcracker*; *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*; and *Serenade*

BERKELEY, October 10, 2003 – **The Suzanne Farrell Ballet**, “where the lessons of Balanchine are still alive” (*The New Yorker*), comes to Zellerbach Hall **Friday & Saturday, November 14 & 15 at 8:00 p.m.** Just three years old, this vibrant ensemble of dancers, hand-picked by former New York City Ballet prima ballerina and George Balanchine muse **Suzanne Farrell**, performs an all-Balanchine program for their Bay Area debut. Since its inception, the company has presented an East Coast tour and two full seasons at the Kennedy Center; the fall of 2003 marks the first national tour. “Majestic and luminous,” wrote the *Wall Street Journal* of the Suzanne Farrell Ballet, and the *Los Angeles Times* named the company one of the ten best dance achievements of 2000, praising it for “renewing the Balanchine legacy with maximum luster.” Just months away from the 100th anniversary of the famed choreographer’s birth, the November program at Cal Performances features *Divertimento No. 15*, set to Mozart’s Divertimento in B-flat major; and *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*, set to excerpts from *Swan Lake*, the “Tempo di Valse” (“Waltz of the Flowers”) section from the *Nutcracker* ballet, and *Serenade*, all set to the music of Tchaikovsky.

PROGRAM

Choreographed in five movements to Mozart’s Divertimento in B-flat major, KV 287, Balanchine’s New York City Ballet first performed *Divertimento No. 15* in 1956. At the Kennedy Center’s Balanchine Celebration in 2001, the Suzanne Farrell Ballet premiered a *Divertimento No. 15* that was “rapt, lyric, gloriously unified in tone” and “extraordinarily and musically attuned” (*The Washington Post*), and the piece opens the program in Berkeley. Featured next is *Serenade*, the first ballet Balanchine choreographed in the United States for his newly created School of American Ballet in 1934. Set to Tchaikovsky’s Serenade for Strings in

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C, Op. 48 in four sections, the work conjures the atmosphere of a ballet class through its use of familiar steps and dancers positioned in orderly rows. “It was simplicity itself,” Martha Graham once said of *Serenade*. “But the simplicity of a very great master—one who, we know, will later on be just as intricate as he pleases” (Bernard Taper, *Balanchine: A Biography*). The program also includes *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*, set to excerpts from *Swan Lake*, and “Tempo di Valse” (“Waltz of the Flowers”) from *Nutcracker*. Balanchine choreographed versions of these story ballets in 1960 and 1954, respectively, during his tenure at the helm of New York City Ballet.

SUZANNE FARRELL

The world-renowned ballerina **Suzanne Farrell** was born in Cincinnati, and received her early training at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Farrell joined George Balanchine’s New York City Ballet in 1961 after a year as a Ford Foundation scholarship student at the School of American Ballet. By the mid-1960s, she was Balanchine’s most prominent ballerina. During her 28 years on the stage, she danced a repertory of more than 100 ballets, nearly a third of which were composed expressly for her by Balanchine and other choreographers, including Jerome Robbins and Maurice Béjart. Her numerous performances with Balanchine’s New York City Ballet (over 2,000), world tours, television and film appearances have made Farrell one of the most esteemed artists of her generation.

Farrell retired from the stage in 1989, and in 1993 began her association with the Kennedy Center as a teacher of an intensive summer program for advance-level ballet students, ages 13 to 17. In the fall of 1999, due to her unique place in the ballet world and her acclaimed skills as a teacher, Farrell was given the opportunity to present *Suzanne Farrell Stages the Masters of the 20th Century* for the Kennedy Center’s millenium season. The works of Balanchine, Robbins, and Béjart took on a new life with Farrell and her ensemble of selected dancers, and the group went on a five-week East Coast tour. The Suzanne Farrell Ballet became a full-fledged company and on-going project of the Kennedy Center in 2000.

Farrell is a *repetiteur* (rehearsal director) for the George Balanchine Trust, the independent organization founded after the choreographer’s death to oversee the worldwide licensing and production of his ballets. She has held this honored position since 1988, and has staged Balanchine’s works for nearly every major ballet company in the world. In addition to her work

for the Balanchine Trust and several philanthropic organizations, Farrell is a full-time professor of dance at Florida State. Summit Books published her autobiography *Holding On to the Air* in 1990, and the documentary film *Suzanne Farrell—Elusive Muse* was an Academy Award nominee for Best Documentary in 1997.

THE SUZANNE FARRELL BALLE

The 16-city nationwide tour will take the Washington, D.C.-based **Suzanne Farrell Ballet** to all corners of the country in four programs of all-Balanchine repertory. Following the tour the company will open the Kennedy Center's ballet season with a full week of performances in the Eisenhower Theater. Principal dancers with the company are **Jennifer Fournier, Chan Hon Goh, Natalia Magnicaballi, Peter Boal, and Runqiao Du** . Soloists **April Ball, Frances Katzen, Shannon Parsley, Bonnie Pickard, Momchil Mladenov, Jared Redick,** and 19 corps de ballet members and three apprentices round out the roster. **Ron Matson** is the Musical Director; **Holly Hynes** is the Costume Designer; and **Russell Sandifer** is the Lighting Designer.

GEORGE BALANCHINE

Widely regarded as one of ballet's foremost choreographers and one of the great artists of the 20th century, **George Balanchine** had an immense influence on the world of dance. Born in St. Petersburg in 1904, as a young child he danced several roles in the Mariinsky Theatre's productions of *Nutcracker* , making his debut as the Nutcracker Prince at age 15. In 1924, Balanchine left St. Petersburg for Paris, where he was soon appointed ballet master of Serge Diaghilev's legendary Ballets Russes. Following Diaghilev's death, which marked the end of the company, Balanchine traveled around Europe, serving as guest ballet master at the Royal Danish Ballet for a time, until he arrived in America in 1933, at the invitation of arts enthusiast Lincoln Kirstein. Kirstein's dream was to create an American ballet company that rivaled those of Europe, and felt that Balanchine was the one to do it. The two opened the School of American Ballet in January 1934, and went on to establish the New York City Ballet in 1948.

From the time the school was established until his death in 1983, Balanchine led NYCB to international acclaim, while creating a vast ballet repertory that is for the most part unparalleled in the history of dance. A catalogue of Balanchine's creative output lists 425 works created from

1920 to 1982, many of which are recognized as masterpieces of 20th-century artistic achievement and are performed today by ballet companies around the world.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **The Suzanne Farrell Ballet** on **Friday & Saturday, November 14 & 15** at **8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall are priced at **\$26.00, \$36.00, and \$46.00**. Performance 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; 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).

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All Cal Performances programs are supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday & Saturday, Nov. 14 & 15 at 8:00 p.m

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way at Telegraph, Berkeley

Dance

The Suzanne Farrell Ballet

Program:

Divertimento No. 15 (premiere 1956; Suzanne Farrell Ballet premiere 2000): music by Mozart,
Divertimento in B-flat major, KV 287; choreography by George Balanchine

“Tempo di Valse” (from *Nutcracker*) (premiere 1954; Suzanne Farrell Ballet premiere 2003):
music by Tchaikovsky; choreography by George Balanchine

Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux (premiere 1960; Suzanne Farrell Ballet premiere 2003): music by
Tchaikovsky (excerpts from *Swan Lake*); choreography by George Balanchine

Serenade (premiere 1935; Suzanne Farrell Ballet premiere 2003): music by Tchaikovsky,
Serenade for Strings in C, Op. 48; choreography by George Balanchine

Tickets: \$26.00, \$36.00, and \$46.00, available through the Cal Performance Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at Tickets.com; and at the door.

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