



For Immediate Release

CELEBRATING 30
NEW YORK PREMIERE OF BORIS EIFMAN'S
"THE SEAGULL," PLUS THREE SIGNATURE BALLETS MARK
RETURN OF EIFMAN BALLET OF ST. PETERSBURG
TO NEW YORK CITY CENTER, APRIL 13-29
Documentary on Eifman to screen at Director's Guild Theatre, April 3 & 6

The Eifman Ballet of St. Petersburg will present a season of surprises at New York City Center, April 13–29. The engagement, part of the company's world-wide 30th anniversary celebration, features the New York premiere of Boris Eifman's "The Seagull," based on the classic Chekhov play of the same name, and performances of some of the choreographer's most beloved ballets. Highlights of the opening night gala include a world premiere by 28-year-old Russian choreographer Nikita Dmitrievsky and short takes from six signature Eifman ballets.

The season showcases four full-length ballets—three inspired by literary classics. "The Seagull" (2007), set to music by Sergei Rachmaninoff and Alexander Scriabin, was inspired by Chekhov's classic story of unrequited love. Eifman, however, tells the story through the righteous eyes of a revolutionary, young choreographer compelled to challenge the conventions of classical tradition. Combining the tale of a passionate love triangle with a story of artistic rebellion, the ballet, which incorporates elements of contemporary dance, includes a section of, yes!, hip hop.

Suggesting the glittering court of Catherine the Great, Eifman's "Russian Hamlet" (2000) creates a parallel between the dramatic tale of the tortuous life of Paul, Catherine the Great's only child, and Shakespeare's self-doomed Danish prince. In his desire to both parallel and distinguish between Shakespeare's Hamlet and Catherine's tragic son, Eifman does not hold to absolute fact, but rather recreates aspects of the tumultuous

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history. Paul's desire for his mother's death is revealed in vivid, phantasmagoric episodes in the ballet. Eifman chose scores by two German composers—Ludwig von Beethoven and Gustav Mahler—to express the different personalities, but shared heritage of Paul and Catherine.

Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina" has been an ongoing fascination for Eifman. His interpretation of the Russian classic, which premiered in 2005, examines the love triangle between Anna, her husband Karenin, and her lover Vronsky. Boldly dramatic, and at times, erotic choreography is used to examine the psyche of Tolstoy's characters as well as moral issues raised by their behavior. Many psychological, social and political questions are provoked by the ballet as it unfolds scene by scene to its accompanying Pyotr Tchaikovsky score: What are the consequences of a mother placing her romantic love above the interests of her children? Is it more important to maintain the illusion of harmony than to yield to passion?

"Red Giselle" (1997) is a fantasy based on the life of Russian ballerina Olga Spessivtseva and her identification with the tragic heroine of the 19th century ballet. Eifman examines Spessivtseva's life, imagining her flight from Russia in 1923, her betrayal by her French lover, her exquisite brilliance as a dancer, and her ultimate tragic descent into madness. The music for the ballet is by Tchaikovsky, Alfred Schnittke and Georges Bizet.

The opening night gala on April 13 features Dmitrievsky's "Cassandra"—the company's first performance of a work by an outside artist. The music for "Cassandra" is by Gustav Holst. The evening will also include performances of sections from "Karamazovs" (1995), "Don Juan & Molière" (2001), "Don Quixote" (2002), "Who's Who" (2003), "Anna Karenina," and the first American performance of "Double Voice" (2006), set to music by Pink Floyd.

The company's City Center performances follow on the heels of a month-long American tour that includes stops at Cal Performances/Zellerbach Hall, Berkeley, CA (March 7 & 8, 10 & 11); Orange County Performing Arts Center's Segerstrom Hall, Costa Mesa, CA (March 14–18); Northrop Memorial Auditorium, Minneapolis, MN (March 20 & 21); Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, Chicago, IL (March 23–25); and Cutler

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Majestic Theatre, Boston, MA (March 28–April 1).

Part of a new generation of independent Russian choreographers who sought personal expression, Boris Eifman was born in Siberia in 1947 and studied dance at the Leningrad Conservatory. He founded the Eifman Ballet of St. Petersburg in 1977. Since then, the choreographer has created over 40 ballets, whose bold originality and emotional depth has been recognized worldwide. Eifman is a four-time recipient of The Golden Sofit, St. Petersburg's prestigious theater award. Other awards and distinctions include the State Award for his contribution to the development of the performing arts and the People's Artist of Russia Award. Additionally, several of Eifman's ballets have received the prestigious Russian Golden Mask Award (the Russian equivalent of the Tony). The choreographer himself was the recipient of the Golden Mask Award for his lifetime achievement in contemporary choreography. He is a professor at the Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet and received a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres from the French government for his achievement in dance.

The evening curtains for Eifman Ballet's City Center season, Wednesdays through Saturdays, are at 8pm. Sunday evening curtains are at 7pm. Saturday and Sunday matinees begin at 2pm. New York City Center is located at 131 West 55th Street. Tickets, which range between \$35 and \$100, may be purchased at the City Center box office, through CityTix at 212-581-1212 or online at www.nycitycenter.org.

Eifman Ballet's City Center engagement is presented by Ardani Artists and producer Sergei Danilian.

FILM SCREENING: An unusually revealing portrait of Eifman, "Boris Eifman: A Work in Progress," will be screened at the Director's Guild Theatre on April 3 & 6 at 7pm. The film, produced, written and directed by Alexander Gutman, will be followed by a conversation between Eifman and Gutman. Tickets are \$20 each and are available by calling 212-399-0002. The Director's Guild is located at 110 West 57th Street.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE.

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