

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Building Bridges through Ballet –

Open World Dance Foundation's Collaboration with Mikhailovsky Theatre

New York, New York - October 8, 2014 – An exciting collaboration of Open World Dance Foundation and The Mikhailovsky Theatre breaks down walls to preserve and promote the art of ballet. Ekaterina Shchelkanova of Open World Dance Foundation has made it possible for The George Balanchine Trust and The Mikhailovsky Theatre to bring the choreography of George Balanchine to the school where he was trained. In this historic event, students of the well known Vaganova Ballet Academy will perform “Raymonda-Variations” at The Mikhailovsky Theatre on November 29, 2014.

George Balanchine, the father of American Ballet, graduated from the Imperial Ballet School now named Vaganova Ballet Academy as Georgi Balanchivadze. Until now, his works have never been performed by students of his alma mater.

Open World Dance Foundation preserves and promotes Russian ballet traditions while uniting nations and generations through dance. Ms. Shchelkanova working with The George Balanchine Trust's Director Ellen Sorrin selected one of the best pieces from Balanchine's extensive works for this historic event. The performance of “Raymonda-Variations” will be staged at the Vaganova Academy by Balanchine Trust repetiteur, Darla Hoover. Open World Dance Foundation produces this event with support of The Mikhailovsky Theatre and BBR Bank.

While the Mikhailovsky Theatre's ballet company is older than the oldest of American ballet companies it is considered young by Russian standards, and the Theatre has enthusiastically taken on this exciting project. The theater is 180 years old and the ballet company alone is just over 80 years old. Before the ballet company was founded, the young Georgi Balanchivadze staged dances in Rimsky-Korsakov's opera, “The Golden Cockerel” at the theater.

The Vaganova Ballet Academy, more than 276 years old and one of the greatest international ballet schools, has produced many of the world's most famous dancers – Pavlova, Nureyev, Baryshnikov, and Balanchine to name very few. Director, Nikolai Tsiskaridze, said “As the director of the oldest Russian ballet school, I am very pleased our students will receive the priceless experience of dancing the brilliant choreography of Vaganova Academy graduate, Georgi Balanchivadze. As an artist endlessly bowing to Balanchine's genius, I am delighted that today's audiences will have a chance to see this magnificent ballet. And of course as a Georgian, I am extremely proud that the masterpieces of Balanchine who is Georgian by birth, Russian by culture and the greatest of all American choreographers are being performed by a new generation and continue to hold a grand place in the world of ballet.”

In another landmark event, the ballet company of The Mikhailovsky Theatre will perform at the David H. Koch Theater (Lincoln Center) on November 11-23, 2014 in their first tour to the United States.

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