

PRESS RELEASE / COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE

Hamburg, January 22, 2009

Ballets Russes – The Centennial

Extraordinary highlights fill the Hamburg Ballet's program from January to June 2009

The Hamburg Ballets starts the year 2009 with a range of performances of John Neumeier's signature ballets, including »**The Seagull**« and »**Death in Venice**« at the Hamburg State Opera. »Death in Venice« will not only be shown in Hamburg, but also at the Theater an der Wien on the company's tour to Vienna from Jan. 30 to 31. More touring will await the Hamburg Ballet in February when the company will embark on a tour of Japan with »**The Little Mermaid**« and »**The Lady of the Camellias**«. The company will perform in Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima and Fukuoka.

On March 26, the Hamburg Ballet returns to Hamburg with »**Nijinsky**« to fully dedicate itself to the season's motto, »Ballets Russes – the centennial!«. Since its world premiere in Hamburg in 2000, Neumeier's ballet has held audiences in thrall the world over. From March to May, five performances will celebrate the dance star of the Ballets Russes, Vaslav Nijinsky, providing audiences with glimpses into his life and soul. A gala performance is scheduled for May 19, the very day of the 100th anniversary of the Russian company's first performance in Paris, marking the occasion of the centennial of the Ballets Russes.

Also on May 19, an exhibit entitled »**Tanz der Farben. Das Auge Nijinsky und die Abstraktion**« will be opened ceremoniously at the Hamburger Kunsthalle. On display until August 16, it is the first museum show to focus on Nijinsky's works on paper and place them in the context of his abstract contemporaries in fine art.

Another season highlight is the revival of »**Sylvia**« on April 25, which also takes place in the context of the Ballets Russes. Artistic controversy surrounding Sergei Diaghilev's ultimately unfinished production of this ballet led to his break with the Moscow establishment in 1901. Turning his back on traditional dance led him to found the decidedly modern company, whose impresario he was to become. John Neumeier choreographed »Three Choreographic Poems on a Mythical Theme«, set to the music by Léo Delibes, which had their world premiere in 1997 in Paris and were last seen in Hamburg in 2000. Partly poetic, partly narrative, he tells the story of the nymph Sylvia, a companion of the pugnacious Diana, who falls in love with the shepherd Aminta, thus arousing the anger of the hunting goddess.

The final highlight of the season will be the Ballet Festival »**Ballett-Tage**« from June 28 to July 12, now a popular tradition – which will feature the second premiere of the season, »**Hommage aux Ballets Russes**« as well as the 35th »**Nijinsky-Gala**«, where the season's motto will take on particular meaning.

Other ballets on the program until the beginning of »**Ballett-Tage**« include a supreme and diverse selection of choreographies by John Neumeier including classics of the repertoire as well as more recent audience hits such as »**The Little Mermaid**«: The extraordinary religious choreography »**Saint Matthew Passion**«, based on Bach's oratorio, will be performed on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. »**The Lady of the Camellias**« will be show with a partially new cast for the first time in Hamburg after the tour of Japan, starting on May 23. Silvia Azzoni makes her role debut this season as Marguerite. The Hamburg Ballet's school will be on focus with »**Des Knaben Wunderhorn / Fourth Symphony by Gustav Mahler**«. Further highlights are three editions of the popular »**Ballett-Werkstatt**« (Ballet Workshop) , where John Neumeier speaks about dance-related topics and his personal choreographic creative process.

Nijinsky

Ballet by John Neumeier
Music: Frédéric Chopin, Robert Schumann,
Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Dmitri Shostakovich
March 26 and 27, April 1 and 3, 7:30 pm

Gala Performance commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Ballets Russes

»Nijinsky«

Ballet by John Neumeier
May 19, 8:00 pm (**Please note the change in time!**)

Exhibit »Tanz der Farben. Das Auge Nijinsky und die Abstraktion«

Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hubertus-Wald-Forum
May 20 to August 16, 2009
Please also see www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de

Saint Matthew Passion

Ballet by John Neumeier
Music: Johann Sebastian Bach
April 9, 6:30 pm, April 12, 6:00 pm

The Little Mermaid

Ballet by John Neumeier
adapted from the tale by Hans Christian Andersen
Music: Lera Auerbach
April 18, May 28, June 10 and 11, 7:30 pm

Sylvia

Three Choreographic Poems on a Mythic Theme
by John Neumeier
Music: Léo Delibes
Set and Costume Design: Yannis Kokkos
April 25, 7:30 pm (revival)
April 28 and 30, May 6 and 7, 7:30 pm

Des Knaben Wunderhorn/Fourth Symphony by Gustav Mahler

Two Ballets by John Neumeier
Ballet School and Dancers of the Hamburg Ballet
Music: Gustav Mahler
Set Design (Fourth Symphony): Marco Arturo Marelli
May 4, 7:30 pm

The Lady of the Camellias

Ballet by John Neumeier

based on the novel by Alexandre Dumas the Younger

Music: Frédéric Chopin

Set and Costume Design: Jürgen Rose

May 23, June 3 and 4, 7:30 pm (on May 23 also at 3:00 pm)

Ballet Workshop

Moderation: John Neumeier

March 29, April 26, June 7, 11.00 am (public training from 10.30 am)

All performances: Hamburgische Staatsoper, Großes Haus – tickets: €4,- to 83,-
Tickets may be purchased by calling +49 – 40 – 35 68 68, in person at the box office of the Hamburgische Staatsoper (Große Theaterstraße 25, 20354 Hamburg), at ticket sales agencies or by visiting www.staatsoper-hamburg.de. (For the Ballet Workshops and the Gala Performance *Nijinsky* on May 19, 2009, special prices apply; tickets for these may only be ordered by phone or in person at the box office, and the number of tickets that may be purchased is limited.)

Further Information and Contact: Press Office of the Hamburg Ballet, Anna Schwan

Caspar-Voght-Straße 54 | D-20535 Hamburg

Tel. +49 (0)40 21 11 88 16 | Fax +49 (0)40 21 11 88 17 | presse@hamburgballett.de | www.hamburgballett.de