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**Two-Part Special Celebrating New York City Ballet in Paris
Comes to THIRTEEN's *Great Performances*
Friday, February 17 and 24 at 9 p.m. on PBS**

Classic Balanchine ballets to the music of Gounod, Ravel, and Bizet shine in the City of Light

During the summer of 2016, New York City Ballet made a triumphant return to Paris for a three-week season at the historic Théâtre du Châtelet. The engagement's closing night performance, featuring four ballets by NYCB co-founder George Balanchine to the music of French composers, will now air as a special two-part Great Performances broadcast on consecutive Fridays, February 17 and February 24 at 9 p.m. on PBS. (Check local listings.).

The first program, ***New York City Ballet in Paris*** opens with *Walpurgisnacht Ballet*, set to music by Charles Gounod, and originally choreographed for a Paris Opera Ballet production of the opera *Faust* in 1975. First performed as an independent work by NYCB in 1980, *Walpurgisnacht Ballet* is a joyful embodiment of classical choreography, ending with a

surging finale that sends 24 ballerinas soaring across the stage. The cast for *Walpurgisnacht Ballet* includes Sara Mearns, Adrian Danchig-Waring, and Lauren Lovette.

The first program culminates with *La Valse*, set to the music of Maurice Ravel, and created in 1951. A neo-Romantic, narrative work, *La Valse* depicts a young woman at a ball who is simultaneously horrified and fascinated by her own vanity, and finds herself strangely drawn to a figure of Death. The cast for *La Valse* features Sterling Hyltin, Jared Angle, and Amar Ramasar

The second program, *New York City Ballet Symphony in C*, opens with *Sonatine*, a pas de deux of polished simplicity and emotional interplay to the music of Maurice Ravel. Created in 1975 for the French-born dancers Violette Verdy and Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux, it is danced here by Megan Fairchild and Joaquin De Luz, with solo pianist Elaine Chelton. The finale of the two-part Great Performances special is Balanchine's *Symphony in C*, a signature work of the New York City Ballet to a score by Georges Bizet. This landmark ballet in four movements is performed by more than 50 dancers, including Tiler Peck, Andrew Veyette, Teresa Reichlen, Tyler Angle, Alston Macgill, Anthony Huxley, Brittany Pollack, and Taylor Stanley.

The program will also feature music performed by l'Orchestre Prométhée led by NYCB Resident Conductor Daniel Capps.

Both programs are hosted by NYCB Ballet Master in Chief **Peter Martins**, who began his association with New York City Ballet as a guest dancer in 1967 and was a Principal Dancer with NYCB from 1970 to 1983, working closely with Balanchine, NYCB co-founding choreographer Jerome Robbins, and NYCB co-founder Lincoln Kirstein. Selected to be the artistic leader of NYCB following Balanchine's death in 1983, Martins is one of the longest serving artistic directors of any American arts institution. In addition, Martins is also the Artistic Director and Chairman of the Faculty of the School of American Ballet, which was also co-founded by Balanchine, as well as the co-Founder and Artistic Director of the New York Choreographic Institute

New York City Ballet's 2016 Paris season marked the 12th edition of Les Étés de la Danse, the annual summer dance festival that since 2005 has presented international dance companies for three weeks of performances in the French capital. For NYCB's first-ever appearance at the festival, the Company presented 20 different ballets, including 14 works by NYCB's Co-Founder George Balanchine. The season took place at the Théâtre du Châtelet, which is under the direction of Jean-Luc Choplin, and was NYCB's tenth engagement in Paris, following previous engagements in the French capital in 1952, 1955, 1956, 1965, 1980, 1983, 1989, 1995, and 2008

New York City Ballet was the largest company, with the most extensive repertory, ever presented by Les Étés de la Danse. Leadership support of NYCB's Paris tour was provided by the

Paulson Family Foundation, with generous corporate support from Bank of America Merrill Lynch. The Travelers Companies, Inc. is the Global Sponsor of New York City Ballet.

Great Performances is produced by THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC for WNET, one of America's most prolific and respected public media providers. Throughout its more than 40 years on public television, **Great Performances** has provided viewers across the country with an unparalleled showcase of the best in all genres of the performing arts, serving as America's most prestigious and enduring broadcaster of cultural programming.

The two broadcasts were produced for Bel Air Media by Francois Duplat, and directed by Vincent Bataillon, and are a production of ARTE France, BEL AIR MEDIA, and THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC for WNET.

For **Great Performances, New York City Ballet in Paris** and **New York City Ballet Symphony in C** are produced by John Walker and Joan Hershey. Bill O'Donnell is series producer; David Horn is executive producer.

Major support for **New York City Ballet in Paris** and **New York City Ballet Symphony in C** is provided by Centre National du Cinéma et de L'Image Animée. The **Great Performances** presentation is funded by The Joseph & Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation, the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Arts Fund, Irene Diamond Fund, The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust, Rosalind P. Walter, The Agnes Varis Trust, The Starr Foundation, the Kate W. Cassidy Foundation, Ellen and James S. Marcus, the Philip and Janice Levin Foundation, the Lenore Hecht Foundation, Prentice Jody and John Arnhold, The Lewis "Sonny" Turner Fund for Dance, and PBS.

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About WNET

WNET is America's flagship PBS station and parent company of [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#). WNET also operates [NJTV](#), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its broadcast channels, three cable services (KidsThirteen, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), [Charlie Rose](#) and a range of documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings. WNET's groundbreaking series for children and young adults include [Get the Math](#), [Oh Noah!](#) and [Cyberchase](#) as well as [Mission US](#), the award-winning interactive history game. WNET highlights the tri-state's unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](#), [Reel 13](#), [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](#) and [MetroFocus](#), the daily multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. In addition, WNET produces online-only programming including the award-winning series about gender identity, [First Person](#), and an intergenerational look at tech and pop culture, [The Chatterbox with Kevin and Grandma Lill](#). In 2015, THIRTEEN launched Passport, an online streaming service which allows members to see new and archival THIRTEEN and PBS programming anytime, anywhere: www.thirteen.org/passport.

New York City Ballet

New York City Ballet is one of the foremost dance companies in the world, with an unparalleled repertory of ballets—most of them created for NYCB—many of which are considered modern masterpieces. The Company was founded in 1948 by arts patron Lincoln Kirstein and the legendary choreographer George Balanchine, who served as Ballet Master of NYCB from its inception until his death, in 1983, and created a company of dancers known for their speed and musicality. In 1949, Jerome Robbins joined the Company as associate artistic director. NYCB moved to its current home at Lincoln Center's New York State Theater (now the David H. Koch Theater), built especially for Balanchine and the Company, in 1964. Now under the direction of Ballet Master in Chief Peter Martins and Executive Director Katherine Brown, the company has more than 90 dancers, a 62-member orchestra, an official school (the School of American Ballet), an institute for choreography (the New York Choreographic Institute), and an annual 21-week season in New York City. Widely acknowledged for its enduring contributions to dance, NYCB is committed to promoting creative excellence and nurturing a new generation of dancers and choreographers. For more information visit www.nycballet.com.