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## **Los Angeles Ballet Announces *La Sylphide* plus George Balanchine's *Serenade***

### **Performances to include:**

- **The full-length romantic story ballet *La Sylphide*, choreographed by Thordal Christensen after August Bournonville**
- **George Balanchine's *Serenade***

Los Angeles Ballet co-artistic directors Thordal Christensen and Colleen Neary are excited to be reviving their production of *La Sylphide*, choreographed by Christensen after the original 19<sup>th</sup> century ballet by Danish choreographer August Bournonville. Having debuted *La Sylphide* in 2009, this will be the second time Los Angeles Ballet has brought the production to Los Angeles audiences. "Los Angeles Ballet's performances in 2009 were exemplary, among the finest achievements in the company's history," said Lewis Segal in his recent LA Times article, 'Faces to Watch 2014.'

Continuing LAB's mission to offer world-class professional ballet to greater LA, the program will be performed at four of LAB's home venues: UCLA's Royce Hall, The Alex Theatre in Glendale, Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, and Valley Performing Arts Center in Northridge. Los Angeles Ballet is also excited to announce that it will be touring out of California for the first time, presenting *La Sylphide* and *Serenade* to Seattle, Washington audiences June 27, 2014, at McCaw Hall at Seattle Center.

Beginning May 31<sup>st</sup>, with performances through June 21<sup>st</sup> in Los Angeles, the two-act story ballet *La Sylphide* will be paired with George Balanchine's romantic *Serenade*. *La Sylphide*, recounts the tale of a Scotsman enamored of an entrancing woodland sprite (a sylph) and the poisonous interference of a witch, with tragic results. *Serenade* is unquestionably one of

Balanchine's most popular and beloved ballets. Set to Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings*, the ballet evokes a moonlit world of romantic attraction and betrayal.

Colleen Neary says, "*La Sylphide* and *Serenade* are two of the most romantic and, some say, most tragic ballets choreographed – the former with a story and the other without a literal one. There is a deep spiritualism to both."

### **About Los Angeles Ballet**

Founded in 2004 by Artistic Directors Thordal Christensen and Colleen Neary, and Executive Director Julie Whittaker, Los Angeles Ballet is known for its superb stagings of the Balanchine repertory, stylistically meticulous classical ballets, and its commitment to new works. LAB has become recognized as a world-class ballet company, in eight seasons presenting 24 productions encompassing 50 works, including 15 commissioned world premieres. Los Angeles Ballet 'tours' throughout LA County, regularly appearing at four venues. This past summer the Los Angeles Music Center presented Los Angeles Ballet at Grand Park, with more than 3,000 attending the outdoor performance. Since its inception in 2006, LAB's *Power of Performance (POP!)* program has provided thousands of free tickets to underserved or disadvantaged children, seniors, veterans, and their families. LAB's *A Chance to Dance* Community Days outreach program was launched in October 2012.

### **About Thordal Christensen**

Among Thordal Christensen's many credentials are an impressive performing career, successful leadership of one of the world's major ballet companies, critically applauded original choreography, and a proven commitment to dance education. Born in Copenhagen, Denmark, Christensen received his ballet training at The Royal Danish Ballet School and at the School of American Ballet in New York City before a performance career that included the Royal Danish Ballet, New York City Ballet, and Pacific Northwest Ballet. Christensen then returned to Denmark where he was Artistic Director of the Royal Danish Ballet. This blend of Bournonville and Balanchine tradition is one of the defining themes of his career, and has shaped the unique artistic vision that Christensen, along with his wife Colleen Neary, bring to Los Angeles Ballet. In 2002, he was made Knight of the Dannebrog by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark.

### **About Colleen Neary**

Colleen Neary brings to Los Angeles Ballet the benefits of her vast experience as one of George Balanchine's quintessential ballerinas. In her experience as a dancer, teacher, and ballet mistress, she also worked closely with other luminaries of 20th century dance, including Rudolf Nureyev, Maurice Béjart, and Jiří Kylián. Born in Miami, Florida and trained at The School of American Ballet, Neary danced in New York City Ballet under the direction of George Balanchine, then for Maurice Béjart's *Ballet du XXIème Siècle*, and Pacific Northwest Ballet. Neary was personally selected by Balanchine to teach his choreography to major companies all over the world as a répétiteur for The George Balanchine Trust.

**Calendar Listing for Los Angeles Ballet *La Sylphide* plus *Serenade***

*La Sylphide* plus George Balanchine's *Serenade*

Venue: Valley Performing Arts Center Date: Sat., May 31, 7:30 p.m.

Venue: Alex Theater Date: Sat., June 7, 7:30 p.m.

Venue: Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center Date: Sat., June 14, 7:30 p.m.

Venue: UCLA Royce Hall Date: Sat., June 21, 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$30.00 - \$95.00, students, children and seniors \$24-\$76  
310-998-7782; <http://www.losangelesballet.org>