

LOS ANGELES BALLET

Thordal Christensen & Colleen Neary *Artistic Directors*

2013/2014 Season



For Interviews and Photos
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Los Angeles Ballet Announces its 2013-2014 Season

- *The Nutcracker* set in 1913 Los Angeles
- World premieres from Sonya Tayeh and Christopher Stowell
- LAB premiere of Jiří Kylián's *Return to a Strange Land*
- LAB premiere of George Balanchine's *Stars and Stripes*
- The full-length *La Sylphide*
- George Balanchine's *Serenade*

Los Angeles Ballet co-artistic directors Thordal Christensen and Colleen Neary are excited to unveil the ballets selected for LAB's eighth season, including classics from the 19th and 20th centuries, new works from 21st century choreographers, and Southern California's holiday tradition, *The Nutcracker*. Continuing LAB's mission to bring professional ballet to greater LA, each program will be performed at LAB's four home theaters: UCLA's Royce Hall, The Alex Theatre in Glendale, Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, and Valley Performing Arts Center in Northridge.

The season opens with Los Angeles Ballet's full-length *The Nutcracker*, set in 1913 California in a classic Spanish style home with Mexican, Spanish, and European influences. The story unfolds with a warm and inviting sense of being inside a children's book, and follows Clara and her beloved Nutcracker as they travel to the Land of Snow and the Palace of the Dolls.

In March 2014, *Quartet* combines masterworks from George Balanchine and Jiří Kylián with new works from rising choreographers Sonya Tayeh and Christopher Stowell. Known for her work on television's *So You Think You Can Dance*, this will mark Tayeh's fourth commissioned work for Los Angeles Ballet. Her ferocious jazz style blended with ballet has brought audiences and critics to their feet. Former Artistic Director of Oregon Ballet Theater and noted choreographer Christopher Stowell will be working with LAB dancers for the first time. *Quartet* will also include the company premiere of *Return to a Strange Land*, from master choreographer Jiří Kylián to music by Leoš Janáček, and *Stars and Stripes* by George Balanchine set to the rousing marches of John Philip Sousa.

“The dancers always look forward to working with Sonya. And having seen Christopher’s work on a variety of companies across the nation, we are excited to see what he will be creating on our dancers,” Mr. Christensen explained. “We think works from these two young dancemakers will fit well with Jiří Kylián’s beautiful, elegiac ballet and Balanchine’s stirring valentine to his adopted country.”

May/June 2014 pairs the rapturous two-act story ballet *La Sylphide* with Balanchine’s romantic *Serenade*. Sometimes described as the Danish *Giselle*, *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. The program also includes *Serenade*, 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, presenting 21 productions encompassing 43 works, including 13 commissioned world premieres. Los Angeles Ballet ‘tours’ throughout LA County, regularly appearing at five venues. This past summer the Los Angeles Music Center presented Los Angeles Ballet at Grand Park, with 4,000 attending the outdoor performance on the July 4th weekend. 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 Siecle, and Pacific Northwest Ballet. Neary was personally selected by Balanchine to teach his choreography to major companies all over the world as a repetiteur for The George Balanchine Trust.

Calendar Listing for Los Angeles Ballet 2013-2014 Season

The Nutcracker

Venue: The Alex Theater
216 Brand Blvd., Glendale, CA 91203

Dates: Sat., Dec. 7, 7:30 p.m.
Sun., Dec. 8, 2 p.m.

Venue: Valley Performing Arts Center
18111 Nordhoff Ave., Northridge, CA 91330

Dates: Sat., Dec. 14, 1 p.m. & 5 p.m.
Dec. 15, 1 p.m.

Venue: UCLA Royce Hall
340 Royce Dr., Westwood, CA 90095

Dates: Sat., Dec. 21, 1 p.m. & 5 p.m.
Sun., Dec. 22, 1 p.m. & 5 p.m.

Venue: Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center
1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd. Redondo Beach, CA 90278

Dates: Sat., Dec. 28, 1 p.m. & 5 p.m.
Sun., Dec. 29, 2 p.m.

Quartet

Venue: Valley Performing Arts Center

Date: Sat., March 1, 7:30 p.m.

Venue: Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center

Date: Sat., March 8, 7:30 p.m.

Venue: Alex Theater

Date: Sat., March 15, 7:30 p.m.

Venue: UCLA Royce Hall

Date: Sat., March 22, 7:30 p.m.

La Sylphide* and *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

www.losangelesballet.org

