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**LOS ANGELES BALLET
ANNOUNCES THE PROMOTION OF FIVE DANCERS
FEATURED IN THE THREE-MONTH BALANCHINE FESTIVAL
BEGINNING MARCH 9, 2013**

Los Angeles Ballet artistic directors Thordal Christensen and Colleen Neary announced the promotion of Zheng Hua Li to Principal Dancer and the promotion of Bianca Bulle, Alexander Castillo, Julia Cinquemani, and Chelsea Paige Johnston to Soloists. All five dancers will be featured in **Balanchine Festival GOLD**, opening Sat., March 9, 2013, and Balanchine Festival RED, opening Sat., May 11, 2013. Each program will be performed at Los Angeles Ballet's five home theaters: Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, Royce Hall/UCLA, Valley Performing Arts Center, Alex Theatre, and Carpenter Performing Arts Center.

Zheng Hua Li was born and trained in Shen Yang, China. He danced with Guangzhou Ballet before joining Los Angeles Ballet. This is his fourth season with Los Angeles Ballet. During the upcoming Balanchine Festival GOLD, Mr. Li will dance the Poet in *La Sonnambula* and the lead in *Phlegmatic* in *The Four Temperaments*. Since joining LAB, Mr. Li has danced featured roles including the Cavalier in *The Nutcracker*, the Pas de Trois in *Swan Lake* and danced in LAB's world premiere programs NewWaveLA and NextWaveLA in choreography by Sonya Tayeh, Mandy Moore, Travis Wall, and Stacy Tookey. Li joins current principal dancers Allyssa Bross, Allynne Noelle, Christopher Revels and Kenta Shimizu.

Bianca Bulle was born in Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia where she trained at Ransley Ballet and Dance Centre before training at New York's School of American Ballet. This is her second season with Los Angeles Ballet. During Balanchine Festival GOLD Ms. Bulle will dance the second lead (2nd Violin) in *Concerto Barocco*, and Second Theme in *The Four Temperaments*. Ms. Bulle has danced featured roles in *The Nutcracker* including Rose in Waltz of the Flowers and Marie (Sugar Plum Fairy), as well as in LAB's world premiere program NextWaveLA in choreography by Kitty McNamee and Josie Walsh.

Alexander Castillo was born in Bayside, New York and trained at Ballet Academy East, Boston Ballet, and School of American Ballet. This is Mr. Castillo's third season with Los Angeles Ballet. During Balanchine Festival GOLD Mr. Castillo will dance the male lead in *Concerto Barocco* and Third Theme in *The Four Temperaments*. He has been featured in the Arabian dance in *The Nutcracker*, and the Pas de

Trois in *Swan Lake*, as well in LAB's world premiere program NextWaveLA in choreography by Sonya Tayeh and Stacey Tookey.

Julia Cinquemani was born in Dallas, Texas and trained at the Dallas Ballet Center, Pacific Northwest Ballet and School of American Ballet. This is her third season with Los Angeles Ballet. During Balanchine Festival GOLD, Ms. Cinquemani will dance Third Theme in *The Four Temperaments* and the lead (1st Violin) in *Concerto Barocco*. Ms. Cinquemani has been featured in the Pas de Trois and the Russian dance in *Swan Lake*, as the Arabian and Marie (Sugar Plum) in *The Nutcracker*, as well as in LAB's world premieres program NextWaveLA in choreography by Sonya Tayeh and Josie Walsh.

Chelsea Paige Johnston was born in Carlsbad, California and trained with San Elijo Dance and Music Academy, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School and UC Irvine. She danced with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and Milwaukee Ballet II before joining Los Angeles Ballet. This is her fourth season with Los Angeles Ballet. During Balanchine Festival GOLD, Ms. Johnston will dance The Sleepwalker in *La Sonnambula*. Since joining Los Angeles Ballet she has danced the title role in *Giselle*, the Russian dance in *Swan Lake*, Marie (Sugar Plum) in *The Nutcracker*, and was featured in LAB's world premiere programs NewWaveLA and NextWaveLA in choreography by Mandy Moore, Travis Wall, Kitty McNamee, and Josie Walsh.

About the Balanchine Festival

Los Angeles Ballet

(Thordal Christensen and Colleen Neary, Artistic Directors)

presents its

Balanchine Festival –

Balanchine GOLD (March/April 2013)

and **Balanchine RED** (May/June 2013)

A celebration of George Balanchine's life, choreography and his time working in Hollywood with performances of seven of his greatest ballets and discussions with noted dance critics, historians and repetiteurs of The George Balanchine Trust at:

Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center

Royce Hall – UCLA

Valley Performing Arts Center – CSU Northridge

Alex Theatre – Glendale

Carpenter Performing Arts Center – CSU Long Beach

Los Angeles Ballet presents its **Balanchine Festival**, celebrating the genius of the most important and influential choreographer of the 20th century. Extending over three months, the Festival centers on seven of Balanchine's greatest ballets performed in two programs (GOLD and RED), presented at each of LAB's five home theaters. Special Festival events will include discussions and interviews with those who worked with Balanchine, and an examination of Balanchine's Hollywood years with screenings of his film choreography.

Los Angeles Ballet co-artistic directors Thordal Christensen and Colleen Neary assembled the program to represent Balanchine in his many styles and eras. Both Christensen and Neary danced with Balanchine's

New York City Ballet. Balanchine personally selected Neary to stage his ballets, and to become a repetiteur for The George Balanchine Trust. She has staged his ballets for major companies in America and internationally, including the Paris Opera Ballet, the Bolshoi Ballet, the Mariinsky (formerly Kirov Ballet) and American Ballet Theater, to name a few, as well as for Los Angeles Ballet.

“Selecting only seven ballets from the rich trove Balanchine created over the decades was not easy”, Christensen said. Neary added, “Each of these ballets has a specific mood and reflects a distinct musical and choreographic composition and style. Each ballet also has stories surrounding its creation, the music, and those who dance it, which will be part of the conversations that ticket holders can also experience as part of the performances.” The **Balanchine GOLD** program includes *La Sonnambula*, a one-act story ballet with love, jealousy, murder and a mysterious sleepwalker; *Concerto Barocco*, one of Balanchine’s signature works set to Bach’s *Concerto in D-minor for Two Violins*; *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*, a bravura duet set to what was the original music for the *Black Swan pas de deux*; and *Four Temperaments*, with music Paul Hindemith composed at Balanchine’s request and wherein the choreographer fused classical and contemporary movement to explore the medieval “humors” attributed to the human body.

Balanchine RED opens with another one-act story ballet, *La Valse*, where Maurice Ravel’s music is the backdrop for a young woman’s fascination with a sinister figure at a ball. *Agon* employs Igor Stravinsky’s score for a series of contests among the dancers, and Balanchine collaborates with Stravinsky once again in *Rubies*, the jazzy, exuberant center section of his full length ballet, *Jewels*.

George Balanchine, (or Mr. B as he was called by those who knew and worked with him), began his career in Russia, built his reputation as a choreographer at Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballet Russes de Monte Carlo, then came to the United States where he established the School of American Ballet and built what became the New York City Ballet. But Balanchine also spent time in Hollywood, often choreographing for his then wife Vera Zorina. Balanchine’s time in Hollywood is one of the aspects of his career that will be explored by a rotating roster of guest commentators that include Los Angeles Times dance critics Lewis Segal and Victoria Looseleaf, dance historian Sasha Anawalt, and Balanchine repetiteurs including Colleen Neary, her sister Patricia Neary, Kent Stowell and Francia Russell. During his life Balanchine selected repetiteurs authorized to stage his ballets. Since his death in 1983, The Balanchine Trust and its repetiteurs have continued to ensure the integrity of the staging of Balanchine’s ballets while introducing new generations to Balanchine’s legacy. (*The George Balanchine Trust, established in 1987 with the mission of preserving and protecting Balanchine’s creative works, is the center from which the business operations relating to the licensing of George Balanchine’s creative output emanate. The Trust has the responsibility of disseminating and protecting the integrity and the copyrights of George Balanchine’s work in the present and for the future, and assigns repetiteurs to teach and coach Balanchine ballets around the world.*)

“April 30, 2013 marks the 30th anniversary of Mr. B’s death,” Christensen noted. “We had added two more theaters for a total of five home venues, and as Los Angeles Ballet was entering its seventh season in 2012-2013, it seemed the appropriate time for a festival to celebrate Balanchine’s genius and life. It was a happy coincidence when the Music Center announced its festival celebrating the 100th anniversary of Igor

Stravinsky’s Rite of Spring - **L.A.’s Rite: Stravinsky, Innovation, and Dance**

“Our Balanchine Festival fit like a glove with the Stravinsky Festival,” Neary said. “Balanchine and Stravinsky were great friends and loved to collaborate together. With *Agon* and *Rubies* already part of Los Angeles Ballet’s Balanchine Festival, we were very pleased with the invitation to perform those ballets this summer as part of the Stravinsky festival to honor both Balanchine and Stravinsky at the same time.”

Calendar Listing: Los Angeles Ballet—Balanchine Festival

Balanchine Festival GOLD

Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center
1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Redondo Beach
Mar. 9, 7:30pm

Royce Hall
340 Royce Dr, UCLA
Mar. 23, 7:30pm

Valley Performing Arts Center
18111 Nordhoff St, Northridge
Mar. 30, 7:30pm

Alex Theatre
216 Brand Blvd, Glendale
Mar. 31, 2:00pm*
*(*Please note that this date is Easter Sunday)*

Carpenter Performing Arts Center
6200 Atherton St., Long Beach
Apr. 6, 7:30pm

Balanchine Festival RED

Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center
1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd, Redondo Beach
May 11, 7:30pm

Carpenter Performing Arts Center
6200 Atherton St, Long Beach
May 18, 7:30pm

Valley Performing Arts Center
18111 Nordhoff St, Northridge
May 25, 7:30pm

Alex Theatre
216 Brand Blvd, Glendale
May 26, 2:00pm

Royce Hall
340 Royce Dr, UCLA
June 9, 2 pm

Tickets: \$24-\$95 (310) 998-7782 or www.losangelesballet.org