

Karen Kain
Artistic Director

Media Release

#8/58

The National Ballet of Canada Engages and Renews Audiences

On Stage
Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts

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September 24, 2008... The National Ballet of Canada is dedicated to making ballet accessible to people of all ages, engaging and renewing audiences through education and outreach programmes. In 2007/08, over 60,000 young people participated in **YOU dance**, **DanceBreak** and **Dance About** as well as many other programmes designed to encourage imagination, provoke thought and keep ballet vital to the community.

“Just as a company must continually renew itself artistically, it must also renew its audience, bringing in younger people and allowing them to experience and understand what an extraordinary world of expression, physical exuberance and creativity awaits them,” says **Karen Kain**, Artistic Director.

The National Ballet’s education and outreach programmes make ballet accessible and immediate for as many people as possible. On September 29, 2008, **YOU dance** will launch its second year and **Dance About** will begin on October 14, 2008.

YOU dance

YOU dance, a joint outreach initiative between our company and Canada’s National Ballet School, brings hands on experience of dance and ballet to school children in grades four to six. In its inaugural year, over 7,000 students and teachers participated in YOU dance performances and workshops. Now in its second year, YOU dance, under Artistic Director **Lindsay Fischer**, will be performing 46 shows at the Betty Oliphant Theatre and engaging students in over 50 workshops. YOU dance artists from the National Ballet will also be performing at Toronto’s Hospital for Sick Children and the Royal Ontario Museum in its efforts to bring ballet to an ever wider audience. For more information, visit YOUdancecanada.ca.

DanceBreak

DanceBreak is a programme that allows young people from the ages of 16 to 29 to purchase \$20 tickets to National Ballet performances. Each member is permitted up to two tickets per performance. To date, nearly 7,700 young people have become DanceBreak members and taken advantage of the wonderful opportunity that this highly successful programme affords. For more information, visit DanceBreak.ca.

Dance About

For over 40 years the company has performed shows in schools throughout Ontario, sharing the art of ballet with children from varied socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds who might not otherwise get the chance to experience the beauty and excitement of live ballet. The most recent incarnation of this ongoing

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effort is Dance About, a programme that this year will perform 22 shows in schools. In each show, a group of four dancers, with a piano accompanist and a narrator, will take students through a day in the life of a ballet dancer, from the daily ritual of ballet class to a performance. Dance About begins October 14, 2008. For more information, visit national.ballet.ca.

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For additional information on these or any of our many programmes, please contact Sharon Vanderlinde at 416 345 9686 ext 359 or visit national.ballet.ca.

The 2008/09 season is presented by CTV and The Globe and Mail.

YOU dance gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Ministry of Health Promotions' Communities in Action Fund, the RBC Foundation, Telus and The Catherine and Maxwell Meighen Foundation.

Dance About performances are sponsored by Scotiabank.

The National Ballet of Canada gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the Canada Council for the Arts; the Ontario Arts Council; the City of Toronto through the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Department; The Government of Canada through the Honourable Josée Verner, Minister, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Government of Ontario; the Ontario Arts Foundation; the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

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