

The Erik Bruhn Prize Competitors Announced Shino Mori and Naoya Ebe Represent the National Ballet Robert Stephen Creates New Work for Choreographic Prize New! Audience Choice Award

On Stage
Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts

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January 18, 2011... **Karen Kain**, Artistic Director of The National Ballet of Canada, today announced that Corps de Ballet members **Shino Mori** and **Naoya Ebe** will represent the company at The Ninth International Competition for The Erik Bruhn Prize on Saturday, March 5, 2011 at 7:30 pm at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts. Second Soloist **Robert Stephen** will compete for the Choreographic Prize, creating a new contemporary work commissioned by the National Ballet.

New this year is the Audience Choice Award where audience members will have the opportunity to vote for their favourite male and female dancer as well as their favourite new contemporary work.

The companies participating in this year's competition are American Ballet Theatre, Royal Danish Ballet and The National Ballet of Canada. As The Royal Ballet is unable to compete this year, Stuttgart Ballet and, for the first time ever, Hamburg Ballet will each send two young dancers and one choreographer to the competition.

The competitors for The Erik Bruhn Prize include **Christine Shevchenko** and **Joseph Gorak** from American Ballet Theatre, **Maria Baranova** and **Alexandr Trusch** from Hamburg Ballet, **Shelby Elsbree** and **Jón Axel Fransson** from the Royal Danish Ballet and **Elisa Badenes** and **Daniel Camargo** from Stuttgart Ballet.

The repertoire will be announced shortly along with the choreographers competing for the Choreographic Prize.

Judging the competition will be Artistic Directors **Karen Kain**, **Kevin McKenzie** (American Ballet Theatre), **John Neumeier** (Hamburg Ballet), **Reid Anderson** (Stuttgart Ballet) and Artistic Coordinator **Silja Schandorff** (Royal Danish Ballet).

The evening will be hosted by Principal Dancer **Greta Hodgkinson** and will feature George Balanchine's *Theme and Variations* performed by The National Ballet of Canada.

One of the most acclaimed and revered male dancers of the 20th century, **Erik Bruhn** personified the *danseur noble* tradition in all its classical, regal glory. His affiliation with The National Ballet of Canada was a lengthy and fruitful one, culminating in his Artistic Directorship of the company from 1983 until his untimely death in 1986. Mr. Bruhn was always keenly interested in the development of younger dancers and in a codicil to his will,

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Jiří Jelínek, Heather Ogden, Piotr Stanczyk, Sonia Rodriguez, Aleksandar Antonijevic, Bridgett Zehr, Guillaume Côté, Xiao Nan Yu, Zdenek Konvalina, Greta Hodgkinson. Photos by Sian Richards.



Mr. Bruhn left part of his estate for the establishment of The Erik Bruhn Prize, which was to be awarded to one male and one female dancer who “reflect such technical ability, artistic achievement and dedication as I endeavoured to bring to dance.”

Since it began in 1988, the competition has showcased the talents of many of the finest young dancers from the companies with whom Mr. Bruhn was most closely associated: American Ballet Theatre, The Royal Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet and The National Ballet of Canada. Competitors for the prize must be between 18 and 23 years old and are selected by the Artistic Directors of their respective companies. Each pair performs a classical pas de deux and variation and a contemporary pas de deux or solo work.

Each participant receives a medal and the winners each receive a prize of \$7,500 and a sculpture by Canadian artist **Jack Culiner** generously donated by Artcast. The winner of the Choreographic Prize, established in 2009, will also receive a Jack Culiner sculpture in addition to the \$2,000 cash prize.

Many of the past winners have gone on to become Principal Dancers, enjoying international careers, making the competition a glimpse of the future stars of the ballet world in one exhilarating evening of dance.

[Full list of past winners of The Erik Bruhn Prize >](#)

[Full biography of Shino Mori >](#)

[Full biography of Naoya Ebe >](#)

The National Ballet of Canada’s Winter Season will open in Toronto at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts with *Don Quixote*, March 9 – 13, 2011, and continues with John Cranko’s *Olegin*, back by popular demand for 5 performances only from March 17 – 20, 2011, followed by a mixed programme featuring the company premiere of Alexei Ratmansky’s *Russian Seasons* and George Balanchine’s *Theme and Variations* and *Apollo*.

The 2010/11 season is presented by CTV and The Globe and Mail.

The Ninth International Competition for The Erik Bruhn Prize is presented by John & Claudine Bailey.

Don Quixote, *Theme and Variations* and *Apollo* are gifts from THE VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE, THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA.

Olegin is generously supported by an anonymous friend of the National Ballet.

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Russian Seasons is made possible in part by a grant from the New Creations Fund of The National Ballet of Canada, Endowment Foundation.

Robert Stephen is sponsored through *Dancers First* by Mr. Thor Eaton & The Honourable Nicole Eaton, Senator.

Shino Mori is sponsored through *Dancers First* by Catherine and Ian Delaney.

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 Department; the Government of Canada through the Honourable James Moore, Minister, the Department of Canadian Heritage; the Government of Ontario; the Ontario Arts Foundation; the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

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