

Karen Kain
Artistic Director

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Jillian Vanstone Promoted to Principal Dancer Elena Lobsanova, McGee Maddox, Robert Stephen and Brett van Sickle Promoted to First Soloist

Naoya Ebe and Chelsy Meiss Promoted to Second Soloist

Winners of the David Tory Award and the Patron Award of Merit Announced

On Stage
Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts

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June 13, 2011... **Karen Kain**, Artistic Director of The National Ballet of Canada, today announced promotions for the 2011/12 season. **Jillian Vanstone** has been promoted from First Soloist to Principal Dancer.

Jillian Vanstone joined the company in 1999 after graduating from Canada's National Ballet School. She recently made her debut in the title role in the hugely successful North American premiere of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by **Christopher Wheeldon**. Critics hailed her performance as Alice: "First Soloist Jillian Vanstone has just the right measure of naturalness and spontaneity to capture Alice's feisty character" wrote the Toronto Star; the National Post described Ms. Vanstone as "magical"; and the Globe and Mail stated "Vanstone is an absolute charmer". Ms. Vanstone has also danced the title role in *Giselle*, Princess Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Olga in *Onegin*, Katherina and Bianca in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Valencienne in *The Merry Widow* and the Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*.

Elena Lobsanova, McGee Maddox, Robert Stephen and **Brett van Sickle** have been promoted to First Soloist. This season, Ms. Lobsanova, winner of The Erik Bruhn Prize in 2009, made her debut as Polyhymnia in *Apollo*, in principal roles in *Serenade* and *Theme and Variations* and danced in the company premieres of Wayne McGregor's *Chroma* and Alexei Ratmansky's *Russian Seasons*. Other roles include Princess Florine in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Nina in *The Seagull*, the Snow Queen in *The Nutcracker* and Maria in *West Side Story Suite*. "Russian-born Second Soloist Elena Lobsanova was radiantly ravishing Sunday as Princess Florine; definitely another young ballerina to watch", wrote the Toronto Star.

Mr. Maddox made his debut this season in the role of Jack / The Knave of Hearts in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Prince Charming in *Cinderella* and Basilio in *Don Quixote* and he also performed in the company premieres of Wayne McGregor's *Chroma* and Alexei Ratmansky's *Russian Seasons*. Last season, Mr. Maddox debuted in the title role in *Onegin*, of which Dance Magazine wrote "a stunningly impressive debut. Maddox perfectly captured the character's conflicting aloofness and emotional vulnerability."

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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.



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This season, Mr. Stephen made his debut in the tap dancing role of the Magician / The Mad Hatter in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The Hamilton Spectator described his debut as "charismatic". Mr. Stephen's roles include Uncle Nikolai in *The Nutcracker* and Garcia in *Carmen*. He also appeared in the company premieres of Wayne McGregor's *Chroma* and Alexei Ratmansky's *Russian Seasons*. In 2010, Mr. Stephen was awarded the Clifford E. Lee Choreography Award and will be creating a new work at The Banff Centre in the summer of 2011.

Mr. van Sickle debuted in the role of the Rajah / The Caterpillar in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. His roles include Benno in *Swan Lake*, Lensky in *Onegin* and Paris in *Romeo and Juliet* as well as lead roles in *Opus 19/The Dreamer*, *Serenade*, *The Four Temperaments* and *Glass Pieces*. Of his debut as Lensky, Classical 96.3 FM said "Brett van Sickle as Lensky showed the qualities of a prince". He also performed featured roles in *Polyphonia*, *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker* and *The Sleeping Beauty*, as well as the company premieres of Wayne McGregor's *Chroma* and Alexei Ratmansky's *Russian Seasons*.

Naoya Ebe has been promoted to Second Soloist from the Corps de Ballet. Mr. Ebe represented the company at The Ninth International Competition for The Erik Bruhn Prize in March 2011. His roles include Bluebird in *The Sleeping Beauty*, A Fox and the Mouse Tsar in *The Nutcracker* and The Fool in *Swan Lake*, as well as roles in the company premieres of Wayne McGregor's *Chroma* and Alexei Ratmansky's *Russian Seasons*.

Chelsy Meiss has been promoted to Second Soloist from the Corps de Ballet. Ms. Meiss danced the role of Alice's Sister Lorina in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Spring in *The Four Seasons* and A Bee in *The Nutcracker* and soloist roles in *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Glass Pieces* and the company premiere of Alexei Ratmansky's *Russian Seasons*.

Skylar Campbell, **Shaila D'Onofrio** and **Jackson Dwyer**, who were members of The National Ballet of Canada's RBC Apprentice Programme and YOU dance, will join the company as members of the Corps de Ballet.

Senior Ballet Master **Peter Ottmann** is the winner of the 2011 David Tory Award, named for David Tory, former Vice-Chairman of The National Ballet of Canada's Board of Directors, who passed away in 2006. Mr. Ottmann is recognized for exemplifying all the qualities the award acknowledges: mentorship, humility, optimism, compassion, leadership, honesty, integrity, enthusiasm and generosity of spirit. Mr. Ottmann receives an award of \$2,500.

Corps de Ballet members **Sarah Elena Wolff** and **Dylan Tedaldi** have been awarded the Patron Award of Merit by the Patrons' Council Committee of The National Ballet of Canada. The award is given to one male and one female Corps de Ballet member or Apprentice at the end of each season for their incredible progress. They each receive \$1000 and an additional donation of \$1000 is made in their names to the Dancer Fund of The National Ballet of Canada, Endowment Foundation.

The 2011/12 season marks an important milestone for Principal Dancer **Aleksandar Antonijevic** who celebrates his 20th anniversary with the company.



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

Thomson Reuters presents *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Lead philanthropic support for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* provided by an anonymous friend of the National Ballet with additional support generously provided by The Catherine & Maxwell Meighen Foundation, Richard M. Ivey, C.C., Rosamond Ivey, Robert & Judith Lawrie and Wallace & Margaret McCain.

Generously supported by The Monument Trust in memory of Simon Sainsbury.

Generous philanthropic support from Sir Simon and Lady Robertson, Sarah and Lloyd Dorfman, Robert and Kathleen Wallace, Celia Blakey, Sue Butcher, Marina Hobson MBE, Peter Lloyd, Kristina Rogge and Richard and Victoria Sharp.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is presented as part of Luminato, Toronto Festival of Arts and Creativity.

YOU dance is funded by The RBC Foundation and The Canada Council for The Arts.

Elena Lobsanova is sponsored through *Dancers First* by Sandra Faire & Ivan Fecan.

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

Sarah Elena Wolff is sponsored through *Dancers First* by Lynda & Jonas Prince.

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; and the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund.

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