

ROYAL WINNIPEG BALLET

Monday Evening, November 19, 1990, at 8:00
 Power Center for the Performing Arts
 Ann Arbor, Michigan

Betty Farrally and Gweneth Lloyd, Founders
 Arnold Spohr, Artistic Director Emeritus

John Meehan, Artistic Director William Riske, General Manager
 Earl Stafford, Music Director and Conductor
 Mark Godden, Resident Choreographer
 André Lewis, Associate Artistic Director David Moroni, School Director

Dancers

| | | |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Laura Graham | Evelyn Hart* | Elizabeth Olds |
| Stephen Hyde | John Kaminski | Runsheng Ying |
| Caroline Gruber | Suzanne Rubio | Deborah Washington |
| | Mark Godden | |

Diane Buck Tamara Hoffmann

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| Mardyne Davey | Gino Di Marco | Jorden Morris |
| Amy Brogan | Tracy Koga | Sara Mau |
| Nina Menon | Gisele Plourde | Kerrie Souster |
| | Gail Stefanek | |
| Richard Dagenais | Michel Faigaux | Eric Hounsell |
| David Lucas | Andrew Robertson | Eric Wolfram |

Apprentices: Cindy Winsor, Ingrid Lee-Kwen, Dominic de Wolfe

*On leave of absence

Arnold Spohr, Artistic Advisor

Nicholas Cernovitch, Resident Lighting Designer

Catherine Taylor, Assistant to the Artistic Director

Alla Savchenko, Senior Ballet Mistress Patti Caplette, Ballet Mistress

Galina Yordanova, Guest Teacher Kerry McShane, Principal Pianist

All lighting supervised by Jon Stettner.

All costumes executed in the RWB wardrobe under the supervision of Anne Armit.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet appears by arrangement with Harold Shaw Concerts, New York, with the assistance of the Government of Canada.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet is under the distinguished Patronage of His Excellency, The Right Honorable Ramon John Hnatyshyn, P.C., C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Q.C., Governor General of Canada.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council, the Touring Office of the Canada Council, the Government of Canada, Arts Promotion Division, Department of External Affairs and International Trade, the Province of Manitoba, Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, the Manitoba Arts Council, the City of Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Foundation, private and corporate philanthropy.

PROGRAM

GRAND PAS CLASSIQUE

from
RAYMONDA

Choreography: Marius Petipa, *arranged by* John Meehan

Music: Alexander Glazunov

Costumes: Anne Armit

Lighting: John Stettner

Elizabeth Olds Runsheng Ying

Deborah Washington, Kerrie Souster, Tamara Hoffman, Suzanne Rubio

Caroline Gruber, Nina Menon, Sara Mau, Amy Brogan

Mardyne Davey, Shawn Hounsell, Gino Di Marco, David Lucas

Mark Godden, Jorden Morris, Andrew Robertson, Eric Wolfram

Variation I

Amy Brogan

Pas de quatre

Eric Wolfram, Mark Godden, Andrew Robertson, Jorden Morris

Variation II

Nina Menon

Variation III

Runsheng Ying

Variation IV

Elizabeth Olds

Finale

The Company

INTERMISSION

NUAGES

Choreography: Jiri Kylian

Music: Claude Debussy (from *Nocturnes*)

Staged by Arlette van Boven

Lighting: Joop Caboort

Elizabeth Olds Mark Godden

SYMPHONY NO. 1

Choreography: Mark Godden

Music: Christopher Rouse

Costumes: Paul Daigle

Lighting: Nicholas Cernovitch

Set Design: Paul Daigle/Mark Godden

Amy Brogan, Suzanne Rubio, Tamara Hoffman
Deborah Washington, Gail Stefanek, Sara Mau

Andrew Robertson, Jorden Morris, John Kaminski
Shawn Hounsell, Gino Di Marco, Richard Dagenais
Mardyne Davey

Special thanks to ASV and AB.

Symphony No. 1 is a co-production of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and the National Arts Centre of Ottawa, Canada.

The production sponsor of *Symphony No. 1* is Canadian Airlines International.

The Piano was engineered by Ken Hart-Swain; set properties were built by Karyn MacPhee.

INTERMISSION

ANNE OF GREEN GABLES

Choreography: Jacques Lemay

Music: Norman Campbell

Orchestration: Robert Farnon/Earl Stafford

Story Adaption: Janis Dunning

Decor and Costumes: Mary Kerr

Lighting: Michael J. Whitfield

Deborah Washington as *Anne Shirley*

Richard Dagenais as *Gilbert Blythe*

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| <i>Marilla Cuthbert</i> | Elizabeth Olds |
| <i>Matthew Cuthbert</i> | John Kaminski |
| <i>Rachel Lynde</i> | Gisele Plourde |
| <i>Mrs. Blewett/Mrs. Barry</i> | Gail Stefanek |
| <i>Miss Stacy</i> | Caroline Gruber |
| <i>Matron/Prissy Andrews</i> | Amy Brogan |
| <i>Reverend Allen</i> | Andrew Robertson |
| <i>Mr. Phillips</i> | Eric Wolfram |
| <i>Diana Barry</i> | Tarcy Koga |
| <i>Josie Pye</i> | Cindy Winsor |
| <i>Ruby Gillis</i> | Kerrie Souster |
| <i>Moody Spurgeon MacPherson</i> | Gino Di Marco |
| <i>Charlie Sloane</i> | Shawn Hounsell |
| <i>Malcolm Andrews</i> | David Lucas |
| <i>Tommy Sloane</i> | Michel Faigaux |

SYNOPSIS

Scene 1: Anne of Imagination

Inside an orphans' asylum, a young and precocious Anne Shirley dreams of growing up to be elegantly dressed and admired by all.

Scene 2: Anne the Orphan

The ragamuffin orphans tease Anne for fantasizing, but are abruptly brought into line when the matron enters to deliver adoption papers to Anne.

Scene 3: Matthew Meets the Orphan

At the Carmody train station, Matthew Cuthbert is surprised to find that the boy he planned to adopt turns out to be a red-headed imaginative girl.

Scene 4: Anne meets Marilla Cuthbert and Rachel Lynde

When Matthew presents the predicament to his sister, Marilla, she staunchly refuses to accept a girl. The Cuthbert's neighbor, Mrs. Rachel Lynde, also known as the town gossip, arrives and shrieks at the sight of Anne.

Scene 5: Anne Gets a Home

The rather witchlike and craggy Mrs. Blewett plans to take Anne for a scullery maid, and Anne retaliates. When Marilla sees the girl's heart nearly broken, she softens and intervenes.

Scene 6: The First Day at Avonlea School

When teased for her red hair and orphan's attire she strikes out at Gilbert Blythe and smashes her slate over his head.

Scene 7: Dreaming of Puffed Sleeves

Anne dreams of being beautiful to the handsome young Gilbert Blythe. In desperation, she sheers off her red braids.

Scene 8: The Tea Party

Anne and her bosom friend, Diana Barry, have a tea party and mistakenly substitute wine for fruit cordial!

Scene 9: The Picnic

Everyone gathers for the annual church picnic, and Diana offers Anne her very first taste of ice cream!

Scene 10: New Teacher, New Horizons

Miss Stacy takes over from Mr. Phillips at the school. The students mature with Miss Stacy's sensitive approach to the wonders of learning, and Anne and Gilbert are challenged to try for a scholarship to college.

Scene 11: The College Competition

Anne and Gilbert vow to compete with one another, each determined to be the top student.

Scene 12: Matthew Makes a Dream Come True

When Matthew surprises Anne with the dress of her dreams, Anne fantasizes a romance with Gilbert.

Scene 13: Anne the Scholar

The proudest moment of her life is when Anne is proclaimed the winner of the scholarship to college. But the excitement is too much for Matthew's failing heart.

Scene 14: Anne of Green Gables

Back at home, Marilla and Anne despair their loss of Matthew, and Anne resolves to give up college and stay to help on the farm. But when Gilbert enters to offer his condolences and resolve his differences with Anne, Marilla foresees a promising future for her wonderful Anne of Green Gables.

Anne of Green Gables is made possible through the generosity of Digital Equipment of Canada Limited.

Anne of Green Gables — The Ballet was commissioned by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and first performed on October 11, 1989, at the Manitoba Centennial Concert Hall, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Jacques Lemay, choreographer of *Anne of Green Gables*, is in constant demand as a director, choreographer, performer, and creator of new works. His vast experience and many talents have been sought after for musicals, variety shows, ballets, operas, cultural productions, and for stage and television shows across the country.

As a performer, Lemay has appeared in over 125 television shows and made guest appearances with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, and the Winnipeg and Edmonton Symphony Orchestras. He was also a member of the renowned dance troupe Les Feux Follets for over four years.

As a director and choreographer, Jacques Lemay has worked in most of the major theatres across Canada. His choreography has been by audiences around the world — throughout Canada and the United States to Europe and the Soviet Union. He has served as artistic director for events across Canada, including six Royal Visits, the Canadian Heritage Festival at Expo '86, and the Opening Ceremonies of the XV Winter Olympics in Calgary, 1988.

The highly successful *The Big Top — A Circus Ballet* was created by Lemay for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and was televised by CBC on Christmas Day, 1988. Lemay has been affiliated with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet as the company's director of jazz for the RWB School, General Division, for the past twelve years. October 1989 marked the première of Lemay's recent work *Anne of Green Gables*, the delightful, one-act story ballet created especially for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's 50th Anniversary Season.



Throughout its history, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet has been an innovative force in the world of dance. Founded 51 years ago, in 1939 by dance pioneers Gweneth Lloyd and Betty Farrally, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet was Canada's first professional ballet company. It developed the concept of regional ballet festivals in the 1940s and was the first Canadian company to tour the United States. In 1953, the Company received its Royal Title, the first granted under the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. In 1958, Arnold Spohr, an RWB principal dancer and choreographer, was appointed artistic director. Under his leadership, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet took its place among the world's internationally renowned companies. In June of 1988, Mr. Spohr retired and appointed Henny Jurriens as his successor. With exceptional vision, the Dutch-born Jurriens planned an exciting future for the RWB. Undaunted by the tragic and untimely death of Jurriens in April 1989, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet continued in the spirit of that vision and carried out Jurriens' carefully designed plans for the 1989-90/50th anniversary season of the Company. Earlier this year, in February 1990, John Meehan was appointed to the position of artistic director.

The repertoire of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet is an eclectic sampling of dance styles and choreography. The Company performs the full-length classics *Giselle*, *Swan Lake*, *Nutcracker*, and *Romeo and Juliet* and an intriguing collection of ensemble ballets. Their roster of international choreographers includes Sir Frederick Ashton, Oscar Araiz, George Balanchine, Nils Christie, John Cranko, Jiri Kylian, Agnes de Mille, Vicente Nebrada, John Neumeier, Hans van Manen, Rudi van Dantzig, and Peter Wright. Canadian choreographers include Brian Macdonald, Norbert Vesak, Paddy Stone, Jacques Lemay, and Judith Marcuse. Always on the leading edge, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet was the first dance company to commission a full-length ballet by a Canadian choreographer, the first to create a full-length ballet filmed in color for the CBC, and the first to add a rock ballet to its repertoire.

As a touring company, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet is a compact ensemble of 26

dancers, three artistic staff, a touring orchestra of 14 musicians and a conductor, a production and administrative crew of ten, and a semi-trailer with 50,000 pounds of equipment. Full-length productions require an expanded complement of dancers and musicians and an additional semi-trailer of sets and costumes. Abroad, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet has toured in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Jamaica, the Caribbean, Australia, Latin America, Israel, Cyprus, Greece, Egypt, and Cuba, and, in 1988, one of its most ambitious tours — to the Asia-Pacific region. Over the years, the Company has performed in nearly 500 cities and towns in 37 countries, spending 20 to 30 weeks on the road each season.

The 1989-90 season was a major milestone in the history of the RWB. Celebrations began with a special Gala night featuring the dancers of the Company, together with some of the most electrifying stars of the dance world, including Peter Schaufuss, Katherine Healy, Kimberley Glasco, and Fernando Bujones. The celebrations continued with the first-ever joint performance by the RWB and the National Ballet of Canada, performing together Balanchine's expansive *Symphony in C*. The Company also presented the world première of *Anne of Green Gables*, a one-act story choreographed by Jacques Lemay, and a new work by RWB soloist/choreographer Mark Godden on the same program. Throughout its 50th season, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet undertook six tours, culminating in a tour to the Soviet Union, Hungary, Germany, and Holland in May and June of 1990.

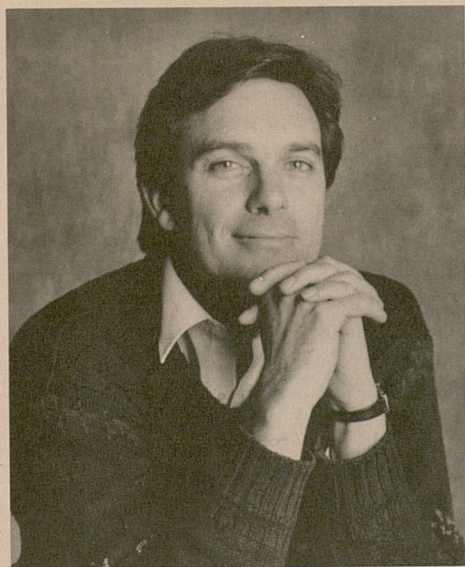
The Royal Winnipeg Ballet School, one of the foremost training institutions in Canada for students of dance, operates the General and Professional Divisions in Winnipeg and in Brandon, Manitoba's second largest city. The General Division provides programs for children and teens, the curriculum including Creative Movement, Ballet, Jazz, Tap, and Musical Theatre, as well as a dance and fitness program for adults at all ages and levels. The Professional Division provides comprehensive training for students who aspire to become professional dancers or teachers, offering a well-balanced curriculum that integrates many dance disciplines. Its

classical instruction is based on the Volkova development of the Vaganova method, as currently taught by Galina Yordanova. Instruction and examination in the Cecchetti method is also an integral part of the program. Over ninety percent of current Company members are graduates of the School's Professional Division.

Over the years, the artists of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet have received many awards and accolades, including gold medals at the International Ballet Festival in Paris and the International Ballet Competitions in Varna, Bulgaria. Several artists have been made Officers of the Order of Canada for their accomplishments and have received honorary doctorates from many Canadian universities. The Company has been recognized time and time again for its outstanding contributions to the world of dance and cultural life in Canada.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet now returns for its eighth concert in Ann Arbor.

The Artists



John Meehan assumed his position as artistic director of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in February 1990. Born in Brisbane, Australia, Meehan joined the Australian Ballet in 1970 and was promoted to principal dancer four years later. He joined the American Ballet Theatre in 1977, and, in 1980, left ABT in order to broaden his career as an

actor, singer, and choreographer. He remained active in the ballet world and has since appeared as guest artist with companies including ABT, New York City Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, Australian Ballet, and major symphony orchestras.

One of John Meehan's greatest artistic triumphs was his interpretation of the role of Count Danilo in Ronald Hynd's production of *The Merry Widow*, performed by the Australian Ballet in 1975. He made his Canadian debut in that role with the National Ballet of Canada in 1986. In the summer of 1985, Mr. Meehan first danced with New York City Ballet star Merrill Ashley, beginning an exciting professional association that has continued to the present. Recently, they performed as guest artists with two of America's finest orchestras, The Philadelphia Orchestra and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. This year, he made a dance film with Marianna Tcherkassky, choreographed by Lynn Taylor-Corbett for Expo '90 in Osaka.

Mark Godden, who has been dancing with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet since 1984, has just been appointed resident choreographer of the RWB. A native of Dallas, Texas, he moved to Winnipeg in 1981 to continue ballet training in the Professional Division of the RWB Ballet School, graduated in 1984 and immediately joined the Company. He performs a variety of feature roles and is seen by tonight's audience as partner to Elizabeth Olds in *Nuages*.

Godden began to distinguish himself as a choreographer in 1988 with his ballet *Forms of Distinction*, which won the Clifford E. Lee Choreographic Award. In 1989, his work *Sequoia* received its world première at the Banff Festival of the Arts and was performed at home and on tour throughout the RWB's 50th Anniversary Season.

This evening brings his most recent creation — *Symphony No. 1*, just premiered in Winnipeg last month. A Winnipeg dance critic writes: "What makes *Symphony No. 1* such a marvelous ballet is its striking use of body imagery, its rich musicality, its willingness to take risks, and its intoxicating blend of drama, suspense, and mystery. On one hand, the ballet is a stark exercise in modern design; on the other, a romantic landscape full of nervous hills and valleys." The ballet is set on Christopher Rouse's original score, the *Symphony No. 1*.



Elizabeth Olds, born in Minneapolis, began her dance training in Ann Arbor, studying with Nancy Abbey and Marjorie Randazzo. She completed her ballet training at the RWB School and joined the Company in 1982. Promoted to soloist in 1985 and then principal dancer in 1989, she has appeared in many leading roles in the company repertoire, both at home and on tour. Ms. Olds has made guest appearances in Delaware, performing the *Nutcracker* pas de deux with Stephen Hyde and was featured in *Adagio Hammerklavier* with the RWB and the Dutch National Ballet at a special Gala for Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands in Ottawa. She was one of three RWB dancers to perform the world première of Patti Caplette's *Triad*.

Stephen Hyde was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and began performing in Florida at the Barn Theatre in productions of *West Side Story*, *Cabaret*, and *The King and I*. In 1982, he continued dance studies at the RWB Ballet School and joined the Company in 1983. As a principal dancer since 1987, he has performed many leading roles with the RWB, his recent achievements including *Adagio Hammerklavier* with the Dutch National Ballet and RWB at the Gala in honor of Queen Beatrix. A frequent partner of RWB principal dancer Evelyn Hart, he made his debut at the World Ballet Festival in Japan in August 1988, partnering Ms. Hart in *Moments Shared* and *Belong Pas de Deux*.

John Kaminski, principal dancer, is known for his exhilarating style and powerful leaps. He began his dance training in Edmonton at the age of five and later became a National Champion Ballroom Dancer. After studying at the Banff School of Fine Arts and the Alberta School of Ballet, he was a member of the Alberta Ballet Company prior to joining the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1985. He has appeared as a guest artist on numerous occasions, including performances at the Shaw Festival and at Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow with Evelyn Hart. After a serious knee injury in 1987 sidelined him for 18 months, he returned to the RWB in 1989 and has since performed regularly at home and on tour.

Runsheng Ying, principal dancer, was born in China and is a former principal dancer with the Beijing Central Ballet of China and the New York City Ballet. He trained at the Dance Academy of Beijing, the Paris Opera Ballet School, and the School of American Ballet (official school of the New York City Ballet) before joining that company in 1984. With the New York City Ballet, he performed numerous roles in ballets choreographed by Balanchine, Robbins, and Martins, as well as roles created for him by Peter Martins. He was a member of the original cast in Jerome Robbins' *Ives, Songs*. Runsheng Ying joined the Royal Winnipeg Ballet as a principal dancer in August 1990.

Laura Graham, soloist, is a native of Pennsylvania and studied at the Mount Laurel Regional Ballet School and the Joffrey Ballet School in New York. After performing with the Joffrey Concert Group for three years, she completed her training at the RWB Ballet School and made her debut with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1985. Promoted to soloist in 1989, she performs an ever-growing variety of repertoire and last season danced the lead role in *Anne of Green Gables* during the Company's North American tour. She recently trained and performed with the Ballet Nacional de Cuba, dancing the Odette/Odile role in *Swan Lake* on tour in Cuba.

Caroline Gruber joined the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1988 and was promoted to soloist in 1989. Born in New York City and raised in England, she was accepted at the Royal Ballet School in London, where she pursued both academic and ballet train-

ing. Her professional debut came in September 1980 with the Dutch National Ballet, which enabled her to dance the classics, many works by Balanchine, as well as works by the Dutch choreographers Rudi van Dantzig and Toer van Schayk. Her RWB repertoire includes feature roles in *Concerto Barocco*, *Les Sylphides*, *Four Last Songs*, *Gaite Parisienne*, *Adagio Hammerklavier* and *Five Tangos*.

Deborah Washington, from Barrie, Ontario, joins the Royal Winnipeg Ballet this season as a soloist, and tonight's audience will see her dance the lead role in *Anne of Green Gables*. She graduated from the National Ballet of Canada School, with subsequent studies at the Banff School of Fine Arts, at Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, and intermittent dance studies in New York and England. While in Banff, she performed leading roles in Massine's *Gaite Parisienne*, Balanchine's *Concerto Barocco*, several works by Brian Macdonald, and in Mark Godden's world premiere of *Sequoia*. Prior to joining the RWB, Ms. Washington spent three years with the Ballet British Columbia.

Suzanne Rubio, a Montreal native, trained at Les Grands Ballets Canadiens School and the National Ballet School before joining the Professional Division of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School in 1983. She first

entered the RWB roster as an apprentice in 1985, a year later became a corps member, and this year was promoted to the rank of soloist. She has already danced various soloist and principal roles for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, including Jacques Lemay's *Anne of Green Gables* throughout the 50th Anniversary Season. This season, she performs soloist and principal roles in *Ballo Della Regina*, *Symphony No. 1*, *Fall River Legend*, and others.

Royal Winnipeg Ballet Touring Orchestra

Shirlee Mays, *Concertmaster*
Aarne Tammisaar, *First Violin*
David McFadden, *Second Violin*
Anna Barycz-Wojciechowska, *Viola*
Alex Pack, *Cello*
Robert Mills, *Bass*
Virginia Spicer, *Flute/Piccolo*
Jennifer Short, *Oboe/English Horn*
Patti Goodwin, *Clarinet*
Guy Edrington, *French Horn*
David Dando, *Trumpet*
Ian Cowie, *Trombone*
Lorne Grossman, *Percussion/Timpani*
Kerry McShane, *Pianist*
Robert Mills, *Personnel Manager*

Creating a New Ballet

An Interview With Mark Godden and Paul Daigle
by Jordan Burgess

You can talk about music or you can move to it," quips award-winning choreographer Mark Godden. "Choreography is simply another way of hearing the music." But Godden's air of nonchalance is a smoke screen, an attempt to conceal the rising excitement and anticipation that is evident in the grin that flashes across his face from time to time as he speaks about his new ballet, *Symphony No. 1*.

"Music comes first. My ideas originate with the music. I hear the music and have an emotional and intellectual response that sparks certain visual ideas." Two years ago, Godden listened to Christopher Rouse's *Symphony No. 1* and knew that this was a piece of music to be considered "at a later date" for translation to dance. Yet, the limitations of

time and financial resources make it nearly impossible for a professional dancer to choreograph for the sheer love of it. When artistic director John Meehan commissioned him to create a new work for the RWB's 1990-91 season, Godden was given the opportunity he needed to retrieve those original ideas from his creative back-burner.

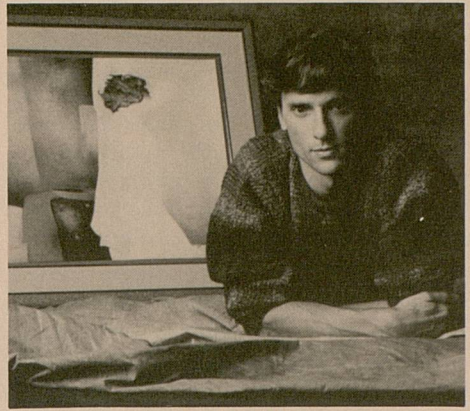
The first step in Godden's creative process, however, occurs before he brings his ideas into the rehearsal studio. "Because time is precious, I try to spend as much time as I can at home. When you come into the studio, you have to know what you want to do. Therefore, I listen to the music over and over again to figure out its structure and to develop a story or plot-line. This story is my interpretation of the music based on my emotional response to it."

Godden admits that there may be a number of reasons why he arrives at the artistic statement that is expressed in his plot-line. His reasons may be personal or psychological ones, or he may be influenced by a desire to experiment with movement. He also believes that just as the music is open to his personal choreographic interpretation, the artistic statement in his ballets is also open to the interpretation of the audience. "I don't try to translate my ideas literally on stage. People are, therefore, free to take what I do, whether it is abstract or surreal, and relate it back to themselves to interpret what it means. I want people to be curious about the music and to make their own discoveries about it."

Godden feels that there are certain elements in music that people may not notice without movement to set them in relief. "Movement sometimes can enhance or fulfill another dimension of the music."

The second step, after Godden has a clear definition of the music's structure as it relates to his plot-line, is in isolating certain sections of the music. He chooses three or four different sections that he considers to be the essential roots of the piece. They may correspond to the separate motifs found in the music or may relate more to action that occurs in his imagined plot-line. Once he has found these essential roots, he focuses his attention on them one at a time. "I inject myself right into those essential musical elements and start to realize my ideas for movement in relation to them. I then let the movements grow from the root, or the choreographic motif, pulling back from it from time to time to see how the section relates to the rest. I might see one dancer in relation to three; I might see some other configuration of dancers. Here is where you act intuitively, doing what feels right."

Godden realizes that this part of the process sounds somewhat esoteric. In fact, the mystical quality characteristic of all artistic creativity can never be precisely articulated. Yet, he also realizes that once his ideas venture from his imagination to the living stage, sometimes he must adjust his imaginative vision in the light of what will actually work on stage. "I'll bring an idea in to see it live, and it will either work or it won't. Sometimes the way the dancers are doing it



Mark Godden

shows me that it's not going to work. Sometimes the movement simply needs to be modified. You can always change different aspects of it." Godden shares the frustration that all choreographers have during this third stage in the process. Hours can be devoted to a particular section, ending with an unsatisfactory result that has to be scrapped.

At some point, when he has defined the plot-line of the ballet, Godden begins to relate the music and movement to ideas on costumes, lighting, and set design. He tries to communicate to the designer his personal reasons for choreographing the piece, as well as the plot and the overall effect he wishes to convey. He tries not to overload his costume and set designer, Paul Daigle, with too many of his own ideas for design, believing that Daigle, an artist in his own right, must create his own elements within the context of the ballet — just as Godden creates within the context of Rouse's music. "It's important to have a good rapport with your designer. I feel comfortable with Paul, knowing that he enables me to stay true to my ideas. I rely on Paul's expertise to help me realize those ideas."

Daigle explains his role in the creative process, stating that "when a choreographer is creating a ballet, anything can pull him off track or interrupt the creative process. My role is to be his sounding board or tool . . . to help him stay on track with the use of my drawings that provide a reference point."

For Daigle, the first step in the process begins with intense discussion with Godden centered on the music and the choreographer's ideas for movement, mood, light,

color, effect, and the artistic statement — all that Godden wishes to express in the ballet. Daigle then returns to the source — the music — and like Godden, allows his imagination to flow. Immersed in the music and the mood that the music inspires, he begins to draw. To clarify certain ideas, Daigle will ask basic questions, such as: “What are the dancers wearing on their feet? Are the women “on pointe”? Do they wear skirts or dresses? Then he returns to his drawings and lets inspiration guide him to create the designs.

“Mood is very important to me. I tend to be a very dramatic person, and I want what is on stage to be dramatic, theatrical, and exciting.” Daigle explains that music suggests color, and that color will suggest a mood or atmosphere. Often Godden will make suggestions about color. Together they collaborate to establish the “look” of the costumes and set, and the final visual impression that the ballet will make. “He wanted the ballet to look chic,” confides Daigle. “There’s also a dramatic intensity in this ballet, and I wanted to add an icy edge . . . that’s why there’s so much sparkle in the costumes and coolness in their overall design.” Daigle’s design also combines classical with contemporary concepts, evidenced in the classically jeweled bodices of the women’s costumes, combined with contemporary earrings and black tights.

Godden’s ballet does not focus on individuals, but rather expresses its ideas through the collective movements of individuals within the group. Daigle’s costume designs reflect this style of choreography. “All of the costumes are designed to go together like a puzzle so that as individuals the dancers are anonymous, but together they create a living whole. Mark’s choreography is like a sculpture of movement where all of the dancers move together to form one piece.”

The next step is to select the appropriate fabrics and place them in the cutter’s expert hands. “Margaret Lamb cut these costumes. She’s amazing!” Daigle goes on to explain: “The cutter must read my drawings and translate them into real life. It’s magic . . . phenomenal! The most exciting time for a designer is when you go to that first fitting and you see that the cutter has taken your drawing and has brought it to life.”

At this stage, modifications are made with regard to proportion, practicality on

stage, and comfort for the dancers. For instance, the jewels on the women’s costumes had to be modified, since glass beading can irritate the skin and also snag the fabric of the men’s costumes, causing the dancers to get “stuck together.” For this reason, much of the beading had to be changed to sequins. Durability of the costumes was another important consideration for Daigle. Since the ballet will be taken on the road during the RWB’s extensive touring season, it is imperative that the costumes survive the rigors to which the portable dance company is accustomed.

The set design for *Symphony No. 1*, Daigle explains, is Godden’s concept and represents a true collaborative effort between choreographer and designer. “The piano is for mood rather than function,” says Daigle. “Although the piano creates an incident in the ballet, it remains essential to the mood of the piece. Of course, the piano challenges the curiosity of the audience and is open to interpretation.” Since the concept of the piano posed some technical problems that were beyond Daigle’s scope of expertise, Ken Hart-Swain, RWB’s assistant carpenter, was enlisted as design engineer to assist in realizing this unique set property.

The lighting design is another component of the ballet that required outside assistance. Nicholas Cernovitch, the RWB’s resident lighting designer, worked with Godden during rehearsals to set the lighting cues for the ballet. “We first spoke over the phone about my ideas for lighting, and then he sat in the studio to watch a few run-throughs. Nick designs lighting for ballet companies all over the world . . . so he was able to understand what I was looking for almost immediately.”

In the last stage of creating a ballet, the elements of music, movement, and design must be pulled together during rehearsal on the stage. Once accomplished, the choreographer and designers step aside, making way for the final players in the process — the dancers. It is the dancers, who with every step by marvelous step, will give life to Godden’s creative vision and will interpret with their own special artistry what the ballet says to them. With the help of these dancers, Mark Godden can then share with his audience another way of hearing the music.

Reprinted from “*Bally-Hoo*,”
a Royal Winnipeg Ballet publication.

METROPOLITAN OPERA
ORCHESTRA

JAMES LEVINE

JESSYE NORMAN

A BENEFIT CONCERT FOR
THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

30 APRIL 1991

EIGHT O'CLOCK

HILL AUDITORIUM

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