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PRESS CONTACT

Gulya Hartwick

gulya@gorskaya-hartwick.com

347.901.3042

WORLD BALLET SERIES: CINDERELLA 2023 U.S. NATIONAL TOUR

Gorskaya-Hartwick Productions proudly presents the U.S. National Tour of World Ballet Series' *Cinderella*. The 130-city tour of *Cinderella* brings the magic of this family-friendly fairytale to audiences in cities big and small across the country.

One of the oldest and most beloved folktales, the story of Cinderella dates to sometime between 7 BC and AD 23 with the Greek tale of Rhodopis. Since then, there have been over 1,500 versions of it including the most widely known by French author Charles Perrault that most ballet productions are derived from. Set to a passionate score by composer Sergei Prokofiev, the ballet tells of young Cinderella who is a victim of cruel circumstance but whose unwavering kindness is rewarded with her dreams of a better life coming true.

World Ballet Series' classically styled production of *Cinderella*, with original choreography by Estonia's Marina Kesler is designed for a modern viewer. It is overflowing with humor, charm, and adroit dancing by a multinational cast of 40 top-flight professional dancers from ten countries including Italy, France, Poland, Japan, Belarus, and the United Kingdom. It also features over 150 radiant costumes that were hand-sewn in Ukraine and hand-crafted and richly detailed stage sets.

Says Kesler of the ballet, "The choreographic language is classical using the most complex elements of Vaganova ballet technique. The idea was to evoke a cinematic feeling in the viewer where every gesture and scene is made clear."

Dancing the lead role of Cinderella (in select cities) is World Ballet Series principal dancer Ekaterina Malkovich. The former Ural Opera Ballet star and two-time nominee for the coveted Golden Mask Award says of the role: "If we talk about my own character and worldview, I think some features are similar to my approach to portraying Cinderella. Despite her circumstances, she looks at the world with kindness and never allows anger or grief to get the better of her."

A company member since 2019, Malkovich says touring life with World Ballet Series is like being with a big family.

"We spend almost all day, every day together. I like to travel, see new cities, and meet interesting people. The people in America are very friendly," she says.

For the ballet's other lead role of Prince Charming, Kesler wanted the character to be more romantic, mischievous, and a little naive. "He is a dreamer who enjoys stargazing rather than performing court duties," says Kesler. "This idea is modern



in terms of how generations differ. Each new generation moves towards freedom of expression differently and are more open in the manifestation of love.”

Performing as Prince Charming will be World Ballet Series principal dancer Leonardo Celegato. The Italian dancer will alternate in the role with Honored Artist of Belarus, Konstantin Geronik, who will dance as the Prince in select cities. Celegato, who is also a demi-soloist with Estonian National Ballet, says of his portrayal of the Prince, “My Cinderella Prince is young, energetic, and fresh. He has so much love to give and is looking for the right person to give it to.”

The production will also showcase World Ballet Series’ new generation of dancers, including critics’ favorite Angelina Zgurskaya in the role of Cinderella’s stepmother along with Ekaterina Lukianova and Ayzhamal Abdrakhmanova dancing as her hilarious stepsisters.

Based in Los Angeles, World Ballet Series tour co-producers Sasha Gorskaya and Gulya Hartwick say of *Cinderella*, “We always aim to exceed expectations. We create each production’s choreography, scenic design, and cast our dancers with the goal of bringing the highest quality to the stage. We want that for our audiences across the country, for many of whom it might be the first time seeing a ballet like *Cinderella*. We want their experience to be a memorable one full of the indescribable beauty that is ballet.”

To request interviews with World Ballet Series dancers, producers, or choreographer Marina Kesler, and for photos and reviewer tickets, please contact Gwen Toline at gwen@gorskaya-hartwick.com or 917.204.5551.

For a complete tour schedule, dancer bios, ticket pricing, venue information, and more visit worldballetseries.com.

MARINA KESLER (Choreographer) graduated from the Tallinn School of Choreography in 1988 (class of Tiit Randviir’s) before joining the ballet troupe of the Estonian National Opera that same year. In 1992–2010 she worked as a teacher at the Tallinn Ballet School. In 1997, she earned a master’s degree from the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts (GITIS, Moscow). Since 2010, she has worked as a répétiteur at the Estonian National Ballet. As a choreographer, she has created works for Bel-Etage and Endla theatres, as well as opera and operetta productions for Estonian National Opera. She earned top three honors at the 2005 X-International Moscow Choreographers’ Competition receiving an award for her dance work “Danse sacrée” (I. Stravinsky) and for “Ne me quitte pas” (J. Brel). Additionally, Kesler received the Annual Estonian Theatre award in 2007 for “Werewolf” (Estonian National Opera), and in 2021 for her production of “Anna Karenina” (Estonian National Opera). In 2011 and 2021, she was awarded the Colleague Prize of the Estonian Professional Dancers’ Union, and in 2021 the Ida Urbel grant by the Estonian Ballet Union.

EKATERINA MALKOVICH (Cinderella – select cities) graduated from Novosibirsk State Choreographic College, formerly Perm State Ballet School (class of the Honored Artist of Russia Galina Vedenina). She joined Yekaterinburg Opera and Bal-



let Theater's Ural Opera Ballet in 2013. Malkovich has danced numerous soloist and principal roles including Giselle in *Giselle*, Gamzatti in *La Bayadere*, Kitri in *Don Quixote*, and Paquita in Yuri Krasavin's *Paquita* (2019) for Ural Opera Ballet (available on Blu-ray at amazon.es). She has garnered numerous honors including Laureate of the International Competition of Choreographic Educational Institutions "Orleu" (Kazakhstan, 2010), Diploma of the International Competition of Ballet Dancers "Arabesque" (Perm, 2016), and earned nominations as best artist for the prestigious Golden Mask Award in 2017 for as Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* and in 2018 as Giannina in *Naiad and the Fisherman*.

LEO CELEGATO (Prince Charming - select cities) was born in Padova, Italy. Leo began his dance training at the age of seven at Stuttgart, Germany's John Cranko Schule (School) and continued at Ballettschule Theater Basel and the Vienna State Opera Ballet Academy before attending the famed Vaganova Ballet Academy in Saint Petersburg, Russia. After completing his education, Leo was a member of the Joffrey Ballet Studio Company in Chicago and joined Estonian National Ballet in 2021 where he is now a Demi-Soloist. His favorite role with the company so far was as the White Rabbit in choreographer Gianluca Schiavoni's production of *Alice in Wonderland* because he had such a fun time exploring the quirky and entertaining character. Leo finds joy in movement and expressing emotions onstage. His dream is to dance the role of Basilio in his favorite ballet *Don Quixote*.

KONSTANTIN GERONIK (Prince Charming - select cities) an Honored Artist of Belarus, Geronik was born in Kyiv and graduated from the Belarusian State Choreographic College in 2010 with distinction. He joined the ballet company of the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of the Republic of Belarus. He has danced numerous leading roles including Basilio in *Don Quixote*, Ali in *Le Corsaire*, and The Bronze Idol in *La Bayadère*. Geronik has toured Germany, France, Spain, China, Japan, the Netherlands and more as a principal dancer. He has received several awards including 1st Prize at the Young Ballet of the World competition in Sochi (2010), 1st Prize at the Tanzolymp competition in Berlin (2011), and the 2017 National Theatre Award as the best male dancer for his lead role in *Le Petit Prince*.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

World Ballet Series brings the world's beloved ballets to theatrical stages across the United States. In cities big and small the series presents the breathtaking beauty of ballet to audiences, whether first time ballet goers or balletomanes. The company attracts many international artists and is comprised of renowned professional dancers representing over ten countries who are united by a passion for entertaining audiences and enriching classical ballet traditions through brilliant, critically-acclaimed new productions of timeless ballet classics.

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Cinderella