

Home > The Company > Repertory Index  
**Quartet for Strings**

- The Company
- Mission Statement
- Ballet Master in Chief
- Dancers
- Orchestra
- Personnel
- Volunteers
- NYCB Alumni
- Repertory Index
- The Viewing Room
- Brief History
- NYCB Lyre
- Annual Reports
- Job Postings



Photo © Paul Kolnik

**Music**

String Quartet in e minor (1873) by Giuseppe Verdi, arranged for string orchestra (2001) by Yuli Turovsky



[Credit >](#)

**Choreography**

Peter Martins

**Premiere**

September 8, 2001, New York City Ballet, Parma Teatro Regio

**Original Cast**

Margaret Tracey, Yvonne Borree, Benjamin Millepied, Sébastien Marcovici, Jennie Somogyi

In the winter of 1873, Giuseppe Verdi was in Naples to direct and conduct a production of Aida. The illnesses of two leading cast members led to a break in rehearsals and Verdi spent some of his free time composing a quartet. Verdi did not claim much for this new work, telling a friend, "Yes, in Naples I composed a quartet, in the hours when I had nothing to do." He also commented after the first performance, "I don't know whether it is beautiful or ugly. I only know that it is a quartet." Entitled, String Quartet in E Minor, the composition had its debut on April 1, 1873, in a private recital held at the hotel where Verdi was staying in Naples. The quartet so delighted the audience that they demanded an encore. Verdi wrote the piece, which is one of only three instrumental pieces in his musical canon, for his own pleasure and did not intend to have it published. However in 1877, after two more performances of the work, Verdi changed his mind and so contemporary audiences can enjoy another facet of the great composer's musical genius. Peter Martins selected the quartet for one of the two ballets that the company presented at the 2001 Verdi Festival held in Parma, Italy, which was part of a year long celebration of the composer's death. Yuli Turovsky, a Russian born cellist, who currently lives in Canada and is the artistic director of I Musici de Montréal, a chamber orchestra, arranged the music for the New York City Ballet orchestra. The ballet features two couples who are joined by a third female dancer and is distinguished by its delicate footwork and sweeping lifts. Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) did not have a formal music

"THE DANCE IS THE MOTHER OF ALL LANGUAGES."

— R.G. Collingwood

**Find Tickets**

Event Calendar

Performance Search

**2008 Season**

Rep Seating & Pricing

Special Events

Sponsors

Group Tickets

Snow Policy

Accessibility

education, studying privately for the most part with local musicians. He completely changed the course of Italian opera with such masterpieces as Rigoletto, La Traviata, Aida, Otello and Falstaff, popularizing the art form like no other composer before or since. Verdi was also a fervent supporter of the movement for Italian independence, which led to his nomination for a seat in the Italian Parliament.

---

**NEW YORK CHOREOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE  
SCHOOL OF AMERICAN BALLET**

Copyright © 1998 - 2008 New York City Ballet

The choreographies depicted at this Web site are copyrighted by the individual choreographers.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Credits](#) | [Site Map](#) | Developed by [Interactive Media Associates](#).