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Musagète



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Music Concerto No. 2 in E major for Violin, Strings, and Basso Continuo BWV 1024 (Second Movement); Fugue à la Gigue in G major BWV 577, arranged by Gustav Holst; Concerto for Oboe, Violin and Orchestra in C minor BWV 1060 (Second Movement); Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major BWV 1048 (Third Movement); Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 5 BWV 1056 (Second and Third Movements); Concerto No. 1 in A minor for Violin, String and Basso Continuo BWV 1041 (Second Movement, andante); Fugue in C minor BWV 537, orchestrated by Edward Elgar; Sarabande from Violin partita in B minor BWV 1002, orchestrated by Leopold Stokowski in C Minor by Johann Sebastian Bach; and Symphony No. 4 in F minor (Finale) by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Choreography Boris Eifman

Premiere June 18, 2004, New York State Theater

Original Cast Robert Tewsley, Alexandra Ansanelli, Maria Kowroski, Wendy Whelan, Stephen Hanna, Nilas Martins, Benjamin Millepied

Average Length 47 min.

This ballet is dedicated to George Balanchine. It is an expression of the choreographer's admiration for him. From a Russian perspective, it is also an appreciation for a man who so brilliantly developed and transformed the traditions of Russian ballet and made possible the evolution of dance form the 19th to 21st century. It is not a biographical ballet, but there is the personality of the choreographer. Since Mr. Eifman was asked to create a ballet for New York City Ballet in the year of the Balanchine Centennial, he became absorbed in the world of Balanchine's ballets and fascinated by the personality of the choreographer. The result is *Musagète*. Boris Eifman pays tribute to the schooling, choreography, teaching, and genius of George Balanchine in this work. He interprets the choreographer's personal and artistic life by shifting scale, moving back and forth from intimate pas de deux to large-scale sections for the corps. Mr. Eifman is assisted visually by a changing architectural

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— Wendy Wasserstein

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background, costumes that are predominantly black and white, and dramatic lighting. There are frequent choreographic references from signature Balanchine works, and many moments showing the inspiration Balanchine derived from teaching his dancers. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was born into a family of musicians successful for over two centuries. Although later in his career he became most noted for his choral and other church-related compositions, he also left a large body of instrumental music for solo instruments and ensembles. While his popular reputation was eclipsed by the fame of his sons, musicians and composers revered him. Finally, in the 19th Century, Mendelssohn brought his music to public attention, and he became recognized as one of the greatest of all composers. Peter Ilyitch Tschaikovsky (1840-1893) studied at the Conservatory in St. Petersburg, where Balanchine later studied piano in addition to dance. Tschaikovsky is one of the most popular and influential of all Romantic composers. His work is expressive, melodic, and grand in scale, with rich orchestrations. His output was prodigious and included chamber works, symphonies, concerti for various instruments, operas, and works for the piano. His creations for the ballet, composed in close partnership with Marius Petipa, are Swan Lake, The Nutcracker, and The Sleeping Beauty.
