

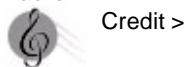
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Ballade (Balanchine)



Photo © Paul Kolnik

Music Ballade for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19 (1881) by Gabriel Fauré



Choreography George Balanchine © The George Balanchine Trust

Premiere May 8, 1980, New York City Ballet, New York State Theater

Original Cast Merrill Ashley, Ib Andersen

Average Length 14 min.

Set to a one-movement score with three underlying sections, Ballade is a series of pas de deux and solos for a ballerina and her cavalier, accompanied at times by a corps of 10 women. Merrill Ashley, on whom the ballet was choreographed, has written: "My [the ballerina's] partner appears, disappears and reappears, our fleeting encounters seeming to suggest both strong desires and vague yearnings.... At the end, we face each other, clasping hands, and then withdraw in an exact reversal of our first entrance, each returning to his own private world." Gabriel Urbain Fauré (1845-1924), was Maurice Ravel's teacher, and his life and work bridged the eras of Romanticism and Impressionism. He wrote piano and chamber music as well as incidental music for plays such as Pelléas et Mélisande and Shylock; he composed operas and many songs set to the words of French poets of the late nineteenth century, especially Verlaine.

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IN NEW YORK."

— Wendy Wasserstein

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