

Three More Babies at the National Ballet

On Stage
Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts

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October 22, 2008... The National Ballet of Canada announced today that three more ballerinas are pregnant and all are expecting their first child. First Soloist **Tanya Howard** and husband Robert Eichvald are expecting in February 2009, First Soloist **Rebekah Rimsay** and husband Stan Zalewski in January 2009 and Second Soloist **Lisa Robinson** and husband Gayan Fernando in April 2009.

Last season saw the arrival of four babies at the National Ballet to Principal Dancer **Sonia Rodriguez**, former Principal Dancer **Jennifer Fournier**, First Soloist **Stephanie Hutchison** and to First Soloist **Patrick Lavoie** and Corps de Ballet member **Andreea Olteanu**.

Ms. Howard and Ms. Rimsay will return to the National Ballet in 2009 for the Summer Season. Currently, Ms. Howard is narrating **Dance About**, one-hour performances that the National Ballet has been staging in schools throughout Ontario for the past 40 years. Ms. Robinson will appear in the North American premiere of *The Seagull* November 14 – 23, 2008 before her maternity leave and will return for the 2009/10 season.

Ms. Howard joined The National Ballet of Canada in 1999 and became a First Soloist in 2007. Her repertoire with the National Ballet includes featured roles in *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, *La Ronde*, *Giselle*, *Les Sylphides*, *Elite Syncopations* and *Balanchine's Don Quixote*. Ms. Howard created the featured role of Twig in *Cinderella*, the female lead in *Monument* and a featured role in *Wolf's Court*. Most recently, she danced in the company premieres of Marie Chouinard's *24 Preludes by Chopin* and Jerome Robbins' *Glass Pieces*, *In the Night* and *West Side Story Suite*.

Ms. Rimsay joined the National Ballet in 1990 and was promoted to First Soloist in 1998. Ms. Rimsay's repertoire with the company includes lead roles in *La Fille mal gardée*, *The Nutcracker*, *Giselle*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Washington Square*, *Don Quixote*, *The Merry Widow*, *Onegin* and *Madame Butterfly*. Ms. Rimsay has created a number of key roles in James Kudelka's ballets, including Virginia in *An Italian Straw Hat*, the Other Stepsister in *Cinderella* and Dot in *The Contract (The Pied Piper)*. Ms. Rimsay has danced in numerous company premieres, most recently Matjash Mrozewski's *Wolf's Court*, Jerome Robbins' *West Side Story Suite* and *In the Night* and Christopher Bruce's *Rooster*.

Ms. Robinson joined the National Ballet in 1999 and became a Second Soloist in 2003. Ms. Robinson has danced featured roles in *There, below*, *The Four Temperaments*, *the second detail* and performed in the world premieres of *An Italian Straw Hat*, *Cinderella* and *The Contract (The Pied Piper)*. She has also performed in the company premieres of George Balanchine's *Stravinsky Violin*

Karen Kain
Artistic Director

Media Release

Concerto, Balanchine's Don Quixote, Fokine's Petrouchka, Jerome Robbins' Opus 19/The Dreamer and West Side Story Suite.

The National Ballet of Canada's 2008/09 season opens with a mixed programme of *Symphony in C & Polyphonia & In The Upper Room* on November 5, 2008.

The 2008/09 season is presented by CTV and The Globe and Mail.

Symphony in C & Polyphonia & In The Upper Room are presented by Jamieson Laboratories.

Polyphonia is made possible by generous gifts from Sandra Simpson and Gretchen & Donald Ross.

Symphony in C is a gift from THE VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE, THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA.

In The Upper Room is a gift from Walter Carsen, O.C.

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