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THIRTEEN'S *Great Performances: Dance in America* to spotlight Edward Villella's **Miami City Ballet**

*Program to be taped in mid-September will showcase the company's acclaimed performances of the works of **George Balanchine** and **Twyla Tharp***

**(New York, NY, August 30, 2010)** – THIRTEEN'S *Great Performances: Dance in America* puts the spotlight on one of America's finest dance companies, Edward Villella's **Miami City Ballet**, in a program to be taped mid-September in Miami. The program will air later this season on a date to be announced.

*Great Performances: Dance in America* is a production of THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG, one of America's most prolific and respected public media providers.

This program – a trio of signature works by **George Balanchine** and **Twyla Tharp** respectively -- will showcase the company's critically acclaimed performances of Balanchine's "Square Dance" and "Western Symphony" and Tharp's "The Golden Section."

From their home base in Miami Beach (and utilizing four performing venues in South Florida), Miami City Ballet celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season in 2010-11. More than 88 ballets are featured in its repertory, works created by a roster of world-class choreographers including George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Paul Taylor, Twyla Tharp, Frederick Ashton, Anthony Tudor and John Cranko (whose "Romeo and Juliet" they are staging this season) as well as such 19<sup>th</sup> century classics as "Giselle," "Coppelia" and "Don Quixote."

Company Director Edward Villella is America's most celebrated male ballet dancer. The artistry and versatility he exhibited during his long career with New York City Ballet (1957 to 1975), and in concert appearances across the United States and Europe and on television, did much to popularize the role of the male in dance. He is associated with many of the greatest roles in the New York City Ballet repertory and has been a leading advocate for the arts in America. In 1985, Villella became the founding artistic director of the Miami City Ballet, which has won worldwide acclaim under his direction.

In January 2009, Villella brought the Company to Manhattan's City Center for its New York City debut, resulting in standing ovations and rave reviews.

"Miami City Ballet made its Manhattan debut on Wednesday night at City Center. To watch it dance Balanchine is to see aspects of his choreography more clearly than with any other company today. Energy; crispness; stretch; dance as a demonstration of music rather than as a response to it; the multidimensionality of the body in space: these basic ingredients of the ballet master's style shine bright here," enthused Alastair Macaulay in *The New York Times*.

In a follow-up review, Macaulay opined, "No company today performs 'Square Dance' as well as Miami."

***Dance in America: Miami City Ballet Dances Balanchine & Tharp*** (w.t.) will be directed by *Dance in America* veteran Matthew Diamond (***Balanchine Celebration, The Wrecker's Ball*** with the Paul Taylor Dance Company, ***The Sleeping Beauty*** with American Ballet Theatre), and produced by Joan Hershey and Mitch Owgang; for ***Great Performances***, Bill O'Donnell is series producer and David Horn is executive producer.

***Great Performances*** is funded by the Irene Diamond Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, Vivian Milstein, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, public television viewers and PBS. Major series funding is also provided by The Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Arts Fund and the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust.

Visit Great Performances Online at [www.pbs.org/gperf](http://www.pbs.org/gperf) for additional information about this and other programs.

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