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NEW PRODUCTION OF GEORGE BALANCHINE'S *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* IS CENTERPIECE OF MIAMI CITY BALLET'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. – (February 17, 2016) – Miami City Ballet's landmark 30th Anniversary Season culminates with an unprecedented reimagining of George Balanchine's magical full-evening ballet, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Balanchine's classic choreography is the vehicle for **Shakespeare's** timeless tale of love, magic and illusion, with ravishing music by **Felix Mendelssohn** (including the famous "Wedding March"). This reimagining includes all-new sets and costumes by artist **Michele Oka Doner**, and dramatic direction by playwright **Tarell Alvin McCraney**.

With a fairytale cast that includes 24 children and six vocalists, magical new sets and costumes, the **music of the Opus One Orchestra** and the breathtaking Miami City Ballet dancers, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a dazzling spectacle for families and audiences of all ages.

"With the importance of the water to our region and lives, the ocean makes an inspired backdrop for Balanchine's reimagined ballet. Miami City Ballet is the ideal company to bring it all together for South Florida's audiences," says Victoria Rogers, VP/Arts of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, a major underwriter of the new production.

This unique reimagining of George Balanchine's 1962 full-evening ballet is visually different and irresistible. Michele Oka Doner's original new sets and costumes are inspired by local marine life, her designs referring to its forms and palette as a metaphor for Shakespeare's and Balanchine's magical forest. **MCB Artistic Director Lourdes Lopez** also brought Tarell Alvin McCraney on board to bring his unique expertise on the work of William Shakespeare into the dance studio, inspiring MCB dancers as dramatic coach. The music, Balanchine's choreography, and Shakespeare's story of course remain unchanged.

With permission from The George Balanchine Trust, this new production and unique artistic collaboration is a dream project for Lopez, who says, "I am overjoyed to bring Mr. Balanchine's 1962 magical masterpiece, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to dancers and audiences. It is perhaps the most brilliant narrative ballet of the 20th century. An additional gratification for us is that the central role of Oberon was created on our Founding Artistic Director, **Edward Villella**. Presenting a reframing of this magnificent work is in perfect keeping with the goals of Miami City Ballet, a company steeped in tradition with its eyes on the future."

The production is made possible by the tremendous generosity of philanthropists and community leaders, including the **Title Sponsors** of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* **Claudia and Steven Perles**, who made an extraordinary gift of \$1 million for the new production. **Lead Sponsors** of the production are MCB supporters **Margarita and Armando Codina, and Ophelia and Juan Js. Roca**; underwriters include **Deborah and Charles Adelman; Sarah Arison; Ana and Robert Barlick; Stuart H. Coleman and Meryl Rosofsky; Swanee and Paul DiMare; Michele and Larry Herbert; Kristi and Dean Jernigan; Susan D. Kronick and Edward Manno Shumsky; Lewis Rainieri; and Mary Spencer**. A Knight Arts Challenge grant from **the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation** supports the creation and presentation of this work. The original children's costumes have been made possible by **Kinga and Edward Lampert**. **Bank of America** is Miami City Ballet's 30th Anniversary South Florida Corporate Leader and partners with MCB on this historic production.

MCB's 30th Anniversary Season is presented in loving memory of **R. Kirk Landon**, a remarkable philanthropist, leader and beloved friend to Miami City Ballet.

Tickets start at just \$20 and are on sale now. To purchase tickets or to learn more, visit miamicityballet.org or call the MCB Box Office at 305.929.7010 or toll free at 877.929.7010.

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When & Where:

Venue: Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, Ziff Ballet Opera House

Address: 1300 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami, FL 33132

Dates: **Friday, March 18**, 8:00pm

Saturday, March 19, 8:00pm

Sunday, March 20, 2:00pm

Venue: Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, Alexander W. Dreyfoos, Jr. Concert Hall

Address: 701 Okeechobee Boulevard, West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Dates: **Friday, April 1**, 8:00pm

Saturday, April 2, 2:00pm & 8:00pm

Sunday, April 3, 1:00pm

Venue: Broward Center for the Performing Arts, Au-Rene Theater

Address: 201 S.W. Fifth Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

Dates: **Saturday, April 9**, 8:00pm

Sunday, April 10, 2:00pm

About Miami City Ballet:

Hailed by *The New York Times* as "one of America's most beloved dance companies," Miami City Ballet is led by Artistic Director Lourdes Lopez. The Company has 51 dancers and a repertoire of nearly 100 ballets. The Company performs for nearly 100,000 patrons annually during its South Florida home season in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach and Naples, and tours to top theaters domestically and internationally. Among the Company's notable achievements have been critically acclaimed seasons in Paris and New York City and the nationally televised PBS THIRTEEN special: *Great Performances - Dance In America: Miami City Ballet Dances Balanchine and Tharp*.

Miami City Ballet School, the official school of Miami City Ballet, is a competitive pre-professional ballet training academy, including a vibrant community division, serving nearly 1,200 students and granting \$500,000 in scholarships annually.

Miami City Ballet is headquartered in Miami Beach, Fla., at the Ophelia & Juan Js. Roca Center, a facility designed by renowned architectural firm Arquitectonica.

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The Company is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. Miami-Dade County support is provided by Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners with additional support provided by the City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs program, and the Cultural Arts Council. Palm Beach County support is provided in part by the Board of County Commissioners, the Tourist Development Council and the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County. Broward County funding is provided in part by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council.

Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. The foundation believes that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged. For more, visit knightfoundation.org. Media Contact: Marika Lynch, lynch@knightfoundation.org.

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