

## ***Celebration: The Art of the Pas de Deux* tributes choreographer Jerome Robbins**

### **Celebrate**

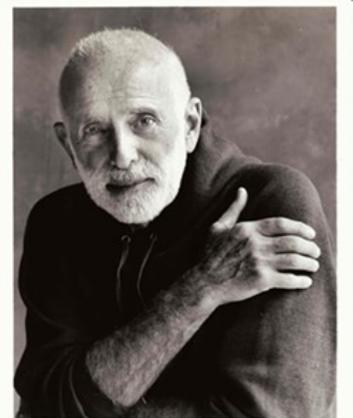
Posted by Stephanie Hunt on Wed, May 23, 2018 at 1:00 PM

Jerome Robbins may be the Aaron Copeland of the dance world — the choreographer whose work is twirlingly familiar to many who otherwise know nothing of ballet. That's because for decades, Robbins was the king of Broadway, the director–choreographer behind well-known shows like *The King and I* (1951), *West Side Story* (1957), *Gypsy* (1959) and *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964). But his first and last love was ballet, and after 1969, he concentrated his considerable creative powers solely on this form. And there's no better way to appreciate and celebrate Robbins' sublime perfection of physical lyricism than in the pas de deux.

As part of this year's centennial of Robbins' birth, Spoleto Festival USA will open with a one-night only performance of *Celebration: The Art of the Pas De Deux*. The program harkens back to Robbins' 1973 Festival of Two World's commission of the same title, however this production, moderated by the Miami City Ballet Artistic Director Lourdez Lopez, will include discussion and film in addition to exquisite performances, making it a Spoleto-exclusive, don't-miss event celebrating Robbins' remarkable life and work.

Guest artists from New York City Ballet, Chase Finlay and Unity Phelan, will join Miami City Ballet dancers to perform Robbins' masterpiece *Afternoon of a Faun* (1953), set to the Claude Debussy score, as well as the second pas de deux from *In the Night* (1970). Set to three of Frédéric Chopin's nocturnes, *In the Night* will also feature duets from Emily Bromberg and Jovani Furlan, and Katia Carranza and Reyneris Reyes, also of the Miami City Ballet. Their colleagues Simone Messmer and Renan Cerdeiro will perform *Other Dances* (1976), danced to solo piano by Chopin.

Robbins, who in 1958 was a resident artist of the inaugural Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy, started his career as both a dancer and a choreographer with American Ballet Theater, but after seeing the New York City Ballet dance George Balanchine's "Symphony in C," he left to dance with and work with Balanchine. Like his mentor, Robbins knew when to minimize and when to let loose. He edited out artifice and celebrated naturalism and classicism — ever mindful of the power of the theatrical. The pared down pas de deux offers the perfect opportunity to witness his mastery of understatement and subtlety, of the body in motion as fluid artistic glory. And it should be a glorious way to open a festival that benefited from Robbins' prodigious talents.



Provided

Robbins

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