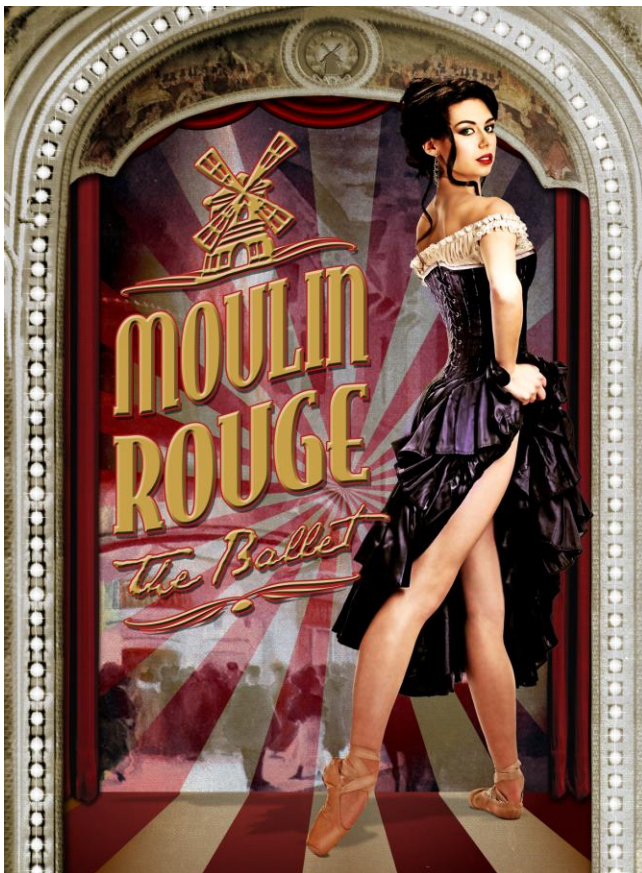


PRESS KIT

MOULIN ROUGE® – THE BALLET



RWB | Serena Sandford in *Moulin Rouge® - The Ballet*
photo: Nardella Photography Inc.

Images & Press Kit available at
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For more information, interviews with artistic staff or dancers
and/or access to high resolution images and videos please contact:

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Moulin Rouge – The Ballet

Choreographer **Jorden Morris**
Music **Various Composers**
Costume Design **Anne Armit & Shannon Lovelace**
Set & Properties Design **Andrew Beck**
Lighting Design **Pierre Lavoie**
Dramaturge **Rick Skene**
Make-Up Design..... **Melissa Gibson**

Length 2 Hours, 10 Minutes

“I am willing to bet that this show, which played to sold-out houses in Ottawa, will continue to wow audiences wherever it tours.”

- Le Droit, 2010

“Moulin Rouge – The Ballet is a triumph ... stunningly beautiful ... it’s moments like this that make ballet fans out of people who think they don’t like ballet.”

- Atlanta InTown, 2010 (Atlanta Ballet)



RWB | Eric Nipp in *Moulin Rouge® - The Ballet*
photo: David Cooper

Moulin Rouge® – The Ballet has been seen by close to 60,000 people across North America and has elicited cheers and ovations wherever it tours. Along with a rousing French soundtrack, the ballet features high-kicking choreography and a passionate story of love, ambition and heartbreak.

Turn of the century Paris ... a city of exquisite contradiction. The heady elixir of personal freedom bred lifestyles both reckless and addictive. Drawn to Paris by the city’s passion, a flame fuelled by the hearts of lovers and the souls of poets, Matthew and Nathalie tempt fate as they seek love and destiny at the infamous cabaret – The Moulin Rouge®.

World Premiere (Royal Winnipeg Ballet): October 17, 2009

In the spirit of the Moulin Rouge of Paris, Moulin Rouge® is a registered trademark of Moulin Rouge S.A.

MOULIN ROUGE® – THE BALLET | Synopsis

ACT 1

As Paris awakes for another day, Matthew enters and is immediately robbed of his belongings by Gypsies. Nathalie is waiting for the other laundrettes to arrive when she sees Matthew for the first time. As the couple dance together, the spark of love ignites. Zidler, the owner of the Moulin Rouge enters and everyone knows that he is the man who can take you from the streets to the spotlight, so the women dance for him, hoping to attract his attention. Nathalie outshines all the other girls so Zidler offers her a position at the Moulin Rouge! Nathalie says goodbye to her friends and Matthew, then leaves with Zidler. Toulouse-Lautrec arrives and sees Matthew sketching. Intrigued, he asks to see Matthew's work and critiques it rather harshly. Matthew, not knowing who Toulouse is, gets quite upset. Toulouse offers a paintbrush to Matthew and the dueling paint off scene begins.



RWB | Vanessa Lawson & Gael Lambiotte in *Moulin Rouge® - The Ballet*
photo: David Cooper

Zidler brings Nathalie into a cold, dark and somewhat frightening rehearsal space, where she is told to wait before rehearsal begins. The other dancers are not impressed that Nathalie is there and try to intimidate her. La Goulue challenges Nathalie to a Cancan competition and at the end Nathalie is victorious. She wins Zidler's approval and the tower dressing room.

Toulouse and Matthew are in front of the Moulin Rouge cabaret with their paintings. Toulouse invites Matthew to the cabaret for the evening but Matthew is broke and underdressed. Toulouse brings in tailors who transform Matthew into a gentleman in a tuxedo. After the first Moulin Rouge show, Nathalie sees Matthew and the two of them rekindle the spark from their first meeting. Nathalie takes Matthew away from the Moulin Rouge so they can be alone. Zidler notices that Nathalie is gone and becomes suspicious; after searching the Moulin Rouge he closes it down and leaves to find her.

As people are leaving the cabaret, Nathalie and Matthew are on their way to a bridge by the Eiffel Tower. Zidler comes searching for her, but Toulouse distracts him to help the couple escape to the bridge where they dance a romantic pas de deux.

- More -

ACT 2

Toulouse is painting while drinking absinthe, and as the painting continues we see a green fairy appear. She dances with Toulouse and inspires him to finish the painting.

Meanwhile, Nathalie is getting ready to meet Matthew at the Tango Café. She is happy and in love. Zidler has now become obsessed with Nathalie and does not want her to go out. He tries to seduce Nathalie and only Toulouse entering saves her. Zidler has no idea she is meeting Matthew at the Tango Café but follows and finds the couple together. Zidler threatens to kill Matthew so Nathalie leaves with him in an attempt to appease the tyrant and save Matthew from harm. But Matthew is left heartbroken and confused. He drinks absinthe with Toulouse and encounters the green fairies. After he wakes up, Toulouse creates a plan for Matthew to disguise himself as a waiter and get back into the cabaret.

At the show that evening, Matthew finds Nathalie and they try to escape through the mayhem of the Cancan. Zidler discovers them together and becomes enraged, stopping the show. He intends to kill Matthew, but Nathalie is mortally wounded instead. Matthew holds Nathalie as she takes her last breath.



MOULIN ROUGE® – THE BALLET | Music

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(Piaf / Louiguy)

Arranged by Shelly Berger

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Jorden Morris | Choreographer



After retiring from the stage as a principal dancer, Jorden began to study and explore choreography. He spent a summer at New York University studying dance and theatre arts under the direction of Dr. Gregory Scott. During this time Jorden also worked with Claude Bessy and Serge Golovine from the Paris Opera, studying early French choreography.

In 1999 Jorden premiered his first work, *The Three Musketeers* for RWBS School Director David Moroni. A one act ballet depicting the classic Alexandre Dumas novel, the work was a major success and since has been remounted for RWB performances of Ballet in the Park.

In 2000, Jorden choreographed a short work for the Alabama School of Fine Arts in Birmingham, Alabama. *Elle est Quatre*, set to the music of Aaron Copland was taken to the Birmingham Arts Festival after its premiere at ASFA. Jorden then set the work on RWB Aspirants for performances in Winnipeg.

Jorden was commissioned by Royal Winnipeg Ballet Artistic Director André Lewis to choreograph two works for the visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth in 2000. *Faure*, a pas de deux and *Pas Espagnol*, a classical group piece for the RWB Professional Division, were performed for Her Majesty and broadcast nationally on CBC Television.

In 2002 Jorden took on the concept, direction and choreography of Head Start/Feet First. This project was collaboration between the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School and four intercity junior/high schools. Jorden choreographed the popular work *Free zone* for this project as well as the finale, which incorporated 160 dancers on stage.

In 2003, Jorden took the popular children's television show *The Toy Castle* and transformed it into an interactive live dance performance. Directed and choreographed by Jorden, the production incorporated a live host with live interactive dance for pre-school children. Since then, Jorden has re-staged the work for Atlanta Ballet in 2005. Jorden starred in the television series and was nominated for a Genie award in 2003. During the production of *The Toy Castle*, Jorden was also creating a classical work for the RWBS to celebrate the career of David Moroni, founding director of the RWB Professional Division. Jorden incorporated every student of the school in a 45 minute classical spectacle known as a *Defilé*. Sections of this work were also re-staged for Ballet in the Park.

In 2005, Jorden choreographed the Celtic themed ballet *Deverell*, which became his most popular and well known work. A favourite of critics and audiences, the piece was taken on tour throughout Manitoba and Ontario with Concert Hour Ballet.

Jorden has also choreographed the Salute to Vienna Concert series in 2005 and 2006. After the success of Jorden's work on the Winnipeg 2005 series, his choreography was taken to Hamilton and Kitchener performances as well as Winnipeg in 2006.

In December of 2006, RWB presented the world premiere of Jorden's full length classical ballet *Peter Pan*. The critically acclaimed work played to sold out houses over the Christmas season, making it the biggest box office success for the company to that point.

Jorden's latest creation, *Moulin Rouge® – The Ballet* had its world premiere in October 2009. Additional performances were added in Winnipeg and on tour due to box office demand for this one-of-a-kind production. *Moulin Rouge® – The Ballet* ticket sales surpassed *Peter Pan* and it is now the company's biggest box office success to date.

In the fall of 2010 Jorden re-staged *Moulin Rouge® – The Ballet* for Atlanta Ballet and in 2011 Pittsburgh Ballet will present *Peter Pan*.

Anne Armit | Costume Designer

Anne Armit was born in St. Andrews, Scotland and moved to Ottawa at age four. She attended Seneca College in 1972, was named Student Designer of the Year in 1975 and was awarded a scholarship to the Ontario College of Art.

After graduation, she worked for one year in the fashion industry before obtaining work as a seamstress at the St. Lawrence Centre. Armit also freelanced for organizations such as The National Ballet of Canada, Shaw Festival, Stratford Festival, Charlottetown Festival, the National Arts Centre and the Canadian Opera Company. A promotion to Junior Cutter at the St. Lawrence Centre was followed by an offer of employment from The National Ballet of Canada.



From 1979 to 1989, Armit ran her own business creating costumes for film, television and theatre, including the contract for *Cats*. She joined Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1989 as Director of Wardrobe and this position has given her the opportunity to travel and design productions such as *L.I.F.E.*, *La Bayadère*, *Raymonda*, *Creaturehood*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Peter Pan*, *Moulin Rouge® – The Ballet*, *Quantz by Quanz*, *In Tandem* (commissioned by the Works & Process Series of the Guggenheim Museum in New York City) and more. Anne has also designed costumes for several Ballet Jörgen productions in Toronto.

Shannon Lovelace | Costume Designer



Winnipeg visual artist and costume designer Shannon Lovelace received her training at the University of Manitoba and Concordia University in Montreal. In 1980 she graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts.

Since returning to Winnipeg in 1981 Shannon has exhibited her paintings extensively in North America and abroad. Her paintings are currently represented by Art Mode Gallery in Ottawa.

In 1993 she began her association with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, working as milliner, decorator, dyer and designer. *Moulin Rouge*® – *The Ballet* is the third full length ballet she has designed for the RWB. In 2001, she designed David Nixon's *Butterfly*, followed by co-designing *The Sleeping Beauty* with Anne Armit. Her other works include designs for RWB's *Fast Forward*, numerous pieces for the Anchorage Classical Ballet Academy, designs for Koba family entertainment group and others.

Shannon has worked in the film industry as sketch artist, illustrator and costumer, but her real love remains in the world of dance.

Her life studies and portraits can be found in private and corporate collections including Wood Gundy, KPMG LLP, Government offices and CP Calgary, Alberta. She is a longtime member of Mentoring Artists for Women's Art.

Andrew Beck | Set & Properties Design

Andrew Beck was born in Staffordshire, England in 1961 and was brought to Winnipeg as a child in 1967. He was educated in the Fine Arts Department at the University of Manitoba and completed a thesis of painted steel sculptures in 1983. Since that time he has worked on landscape painting and steel sculptures, which have been exhibited in parallel and commercial galleries across Canada. His work is included in private and public collections at Great-West Life, Power Corporation, Manitoba Legislature and Manitoba Arts Council Art Bank.



In addition to his own work, Andrew has worked as a scenic artist and designer for more than fifteen years. In this capacity he has worked for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre and Rainbow Stage. Other credits include the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards and the TV series *Falcon Beach*.

Pierre Lavoie | Lighting Design



Pierre has been active in dance since 1982, first in Toronto as stage manager for most of the city's modern dance companies, then in Montreal for Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. There he had the great opportunity to work closely with his mentor, lighting designer Nick Cernovitch. Pierre started designing lights in the 90's for Margie Gillis and has since designed every new work in her repertoire. He also creates lights for many independent modern dance artists in Montreal. Pierre's versatility is seen in how easily he can sustain both modern and classical vocabulary.

He has designed to rave reviews at Alberta Ballet where he is resident lighting designer, and for Christopher Wheeldon's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Val Caniparoli's *Lady of the Camellias* and Jean Grand-Maitre's *Carmen, Cinderella, Romeo and Juliette* and just this past February the acclaimed *Fiddle and the Drum* with Joni Mitchell. Other ballet credits include *Don Quixote, Swan Lake, Taming of the Shrew* and *Nutcracker* at Boston Ballet, *Cinderella* at Milwaukee Ballet and a mixed jazz program at Ballet Memphis.

Pierre has also ventured into the world of music where he has designed the lighting for the last three creations of tango music septet Ensemble Romulo Larréa; *Homage to Astor Piazzola, Tango for La Milonga* and *Tango for a Century*. For opera he designed the world premiere of *Facing South* in Toronto, *Norma* and *Rigoletto* at Pacific Opera in Victoria and *Romeo and Juliette* for the Opéra de Québec.

Pierre has previously designed for three Royal Winnipeg Ballet productions; Mark Godden's *As Above, So Below* and *The Magic Flute* and André Prokovsky's *Anna Karenina*.

Rick Skene | Dramaturge



As dramaturge for the RWB's production of *Moulin Rouge® – The Ballet*, Rick Skene draws upon his extensive experience as a theatre and film professional. Rick is a highly respected playwright, director and physical theatre specialist (MTC, Theatre Projects, Rainbow Stage, PTE, MTYP, SIR, Manitoba Opera, RWB) having worked in professional theatre for over 30 years. He is also considered to be the leading stage fight choreographer and film stunt coordinator/2nd unit director in Manitoba with over 140 film and television credits. Rick has also taught at the University of Winnipeg Department of Theatre & Film since 1986 where he specializes in physical theatre, acting, stage combat and film.

Melissa Gibson | Makeup Designer



After graduating from high school, Melissa Gibson went into fashion retail in her hometown of Toronto while she figured out what she really wanted to do with her life. Since she had always loved make-up, a photographer friend of hers asked her to do the make-up for a fashion test. When she saw the photo blown up to life-size in front of the store she realized that she could make this a career and she began a make-up course.

Later, one of her teachers suggested that she work with MAC. That first encounter with MAC was 16 years ago. Within a year she had moved up from the make-up counter to Creative Artist and went from store to store doing make-up, which was great training.

There have been many memorable moments in her career including working with Cher and Tilda Swinton.

She loves making people feel good and look beautiful. *“What I do is disposable art,”* she says, *“even though there are photos that last. There is something really interesting to putting something on the face or on the body and knowing that it is a one-time deal. I love the fact that it can be washed away. It’s make-up, it’s fleeting.”*

- 30 -



Moulin Rouge, 120 ans et toujours dans le vent !

The Moulin Rouge has been throwing a wild party for Paris and the whole world since 6 October 1889 and is celebrating this year its 120th anniversary !

Since its beginnings, the Moulin Rouge, the most famous Parisian cabaret, known throughout the world thanks to its saucy French Cancan immortalized by the painter Toulouse-Lautrec, has provided spectators the world round with sumptuous shows, full of feathers, rhinestones and sequins, fabulous settings, original music and...the most beautiful girls in the world! A formula which never goes out of style.

How far we have come since the founding on 6 October 1889 by the emblematic partners Joseph Oller and Charles Zidler, an ace duo who wanted this establishment on the Place Blanche to become “the foremost shrine to women and the grandest of temples to the dance.” It turned out to be a winning proposition: the Moulin Rouge has become synonymous with beauty, glamour and festivity throughout the world.

- More -

A large number of French stars have been sheltered over the years under the “wings of the Moulin,” as it is affectionately known by the people of Montmartre - from the Goulue’s Quadrille and Valentin-le-Désossé to the Redoutes and Operettas, from Colette and music hall shows to the grand stage shows of Mistinguett, not to mention such internationally known artists as Maurice Chevalier, Frank Sinatra, Charles Trenet, Charles Aznavour, Line Renaud, Bourvil, Lisa Minelli, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Elton John, and many others. All these artists form an integral part of the big Moulin Rouge family.

Following a policy of success through renewal, the Moulin Rouge has constantly reinvented itself over the years, beginning with Mistinguett and Jacques Charles who, in 1907, took charge of the staging at the Moulin Rouge and created the concept of “La Revue” - feathers, rhinestones and sequins, chorus girls and boys, the grand stairway, stage effects, and more. Thus, the artists themselves sparked a new style for the greater delight of Music-Hall spectators.

Féerie, the current revue, follows the rule since it begins with the letter 'F', a tradition specific to the Moulin Rouge, where all the shows start with this letter as a token of luck. It's also a reference and a homage to women - glamorous women, refined women and seductive women with a touch of impertinence!

An 8-million Euro budget went into creating this revue, which includes more than 1000 costumes, 800 pairs of custom made shoes, dozens of handmade settings, a giant aquarium, five pythons, six dwarf horses, and much more.

All of this comes together to form a sort of magic matrix which also brings luck to the artists that make up the troupe of 80 dancers of 14 different nationalities who appear every evening on the stage of this famous establishment.

The Doriss Girls dancers have always been recruited from all over the world. Janet Pharaoh, the ballet mistress auditions from Las Vegas to London and from Sydney to Paris to recruit dancers of both sexes who are able to join the show and perform on the Moulin Rouge stage. Some criteria are compulsory: a good base of classical ballet training for all of them, the girls have to measure at least 1.75 m (5'8") and have astounding figures that will leave the spectators spellbound. The boys must be more than 1.85 m (6'3").

Thanks to the professionalism of its artistic team who provides an in-house training, the Moulin Rouge opens opportunities for dancers for their future!

Nearly 600,000 spectators come to enjoy the festivities every year at this mythic venue, making the Moulin Rouge number one amongst the world's cabarets.

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