



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 22, 2012

- WHAT:** Suzanne Farrell Ballet Company
WHEN: Wednesday, February 22, 7:30pm, 2012
WHERE: Fine Arts Center Concert Hall
University of Massachusetts Amherst
TICKETS: Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or go online to <http://www.fineartscenter.com/>
IMAGES: To download images relating to this press release please go online to <http://www.fineartscenter.com/pressphotos>

BALANCHINE'S MUSE BRINGS HER BALLETT COMPANY TO UMASS FINE ARTS CENTER

The Suzanne Farrell Ballet makes its Fine Arts Center debut with an all-Balanchine program, Wednesday, February 22nd at 7:30pm. The engagement will feature some of Balanchine's most acclaimed and cherished works – *Haieff Divertimento*, *Meditation*, *Diamonds pas de deux*, from *Jewels*, and *Agon*. There will be a free Fireside Chat at the University Club prior to the performance at 6:30pm with Smith College dance faculty member Lester Tomé. Park in Lot 62 for easy access to the Club and the Concert Hall.

The Suzanne Farrell Ballet (SFB) is led by the legendary New York City Ballet principal who, since founding the company over ten years ago, has established its prominence in the ballet world. One of George Balanchine's most celebrated muses, Farrell devotes much of the company's repertory to the works of this master choreographer. For its Joyce debut, the engagement presents an all-Balanchine program that features some of his most cherished works.

First performed by New York City Ballet in 1947, *Haieff Divertimento* had not been seen for over 15 years until The SFB Company revived it in 2010. SFB has the distinction of being one of only three ever to recreate the work. The program also

includes *Meditation*, the first ballet Balanchine created on Farrell and the first to which he gave her ownership; *Diamonds pas de deux* from *Jewels*, considered one of Balanchine's most beautiful pieces and acclaimed for its classical style that juxtaposes a grand scale with sweetness and vulnerability; and *Agon*, an intimate, athletic work, premiering in 1957 and considered groundbreaking at that time. Featuring an Igor Stravinsky score commissioned by Balanchine, *Agon* was created during a three-year period between 1953-1956 when the two artists worked very closely together to combine Stravinsky's innovative and complex meter changes with Balanchine's vision of 17th-century court dance.

Suzanne Farrell, one of George Balanchine's most celebrated muses, is a legendary figure in the ballet world. Born in Cincinnati, Ms. Farrell moved to New York City in 1960 after winning a Ford Foundation scholarship at the School of American Ballet. One year later, she joined Balanchine's New York City Ballet. Her unique combination of musical, physical, and dramatic gifts quickly ignited Balanchine's imagination. By the mid 1960s, she was Balanchine's most renowned ballerina. When she retired from the stage in 1989, Ms. Farrell had achieved a performance career that is without precedent or parallel in the history of ballet. During her twenty-eight years performing on stage, she danced a repertory of more than one hundred ballets, nearly a third of which were composed expressly for her by Balanchine and other choreographers, including Jerome Robbins and Maurice Béjart.

To insure the preservation of Mr. Balanchine's legacy, she founded The Suzanne Farrell Ballet in 2001. Ms. Farrell is a répétiteur for the George Balanchine Trust, the independent organization founded after the choreographer's death by the heirs to his ballets to oversee their worldwide licensing and production. Since the fall of 2000, Ms. Farrell has been a tenured professor at Florida State University. In addition to her work for the Balanchine Trust, she serves in a variety of cultural and philanthropic organizations. Her best-selling autobiography, *Holding On to the Air* was published in 1990, and the documentary *Suzanne Farrell – Elusive Muse* was an Academy Award nominee in 1997.

Tickets for the Suzanne Farrell Ballet Company are \$15-\$40 (\$10 for Five College, GCC, STCC students and youth 17 and under and are available online at www.fineartscenter.com or by calling 545-2511 or 800-999-UMAS. Sponsored by Loomis Village, Finck & Perris Insurance and Preview Magazine.

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