

## FALL 2014

Dear Friends,

Thanks to your support and passion, this year has been filled with extraordinary programs: AFPOB has been able to underwrite a new creation by Benjamin Millepied; a new production by Bob Wilson; the production and educational program around Handel's "Alcina;" and the recording of extracts from Wagner's "Ring" cycle conducted by Paris Opera musical director Maestro Philippe Jordan. AFPOB also renewed its commitment to the Paris Opera Ballet School summer intensive program and awarded scholarship to 9 American Students. Looking ahead, 2015 highlights include a dinner in honor of Stephane Lissner at the French Consulate in New York, an evening with Christopher Wheeldon around "An American in Paris" and a trip to Paris on the occasion of a grand gala night that will open the dance season.

I look forward to an exciting new year together.  
With warm wishes-  
Olivia Flatto, Chairman

## 2015 SAVE THESE DATES

### February 19 - New York

Dinner in honor of **Stephane Lissner**, Director of the Paris Opera, at the French Consulate.

### April 1 - New York

"An American in Paris" on Broadway and Private Dinner with **Christopher Wheeldon**.

### Fall - Paris

Patrons trip to Paris on the occasion of the 2015/2016 **ballet season opening night gala**.



2014 scholarship recipients at the Paris Opera Ballet School

### Our Mission

The purpose of the American Friends of the Paris Opera & Ballet is to share the many treasures of the Opéra National de Paris directly with the American public and to foster artistic cooperation between this vital international cultural institution and the creative community in the United States. Since its inception in 1984, AFPOB has become a leading promoter of French-American cultural exchange and has organized or funded hundreds of tours, guest appearances, productions, exhibitions, trips and special events

## Recent News and Happening

### Company Tour in Montreal – October 16-20



*Brigitte Lefevre, before the presentation of "Paquita"*

Montreal had long awaited the Paris Opera Ballet, as its last visit dated from 1967. It was also the first time that *Paquita* was presented in Quebec and this engagement in Montreal marked the last tour of Brigitte Lefèvre, director of dance of the Paris Opera Ballet, who is retiring in November. *Paquita*, with set and costumes by Luisa Spinatelli, was choreographed by Pierre Lacotte in 2001 at the request of Brigitte Lefevre after a 150 year lapse since the ballet's last Parisian performances in 1851.

*"Paquita" was a visual feast for spectators. The dancers were well rehearsed and synchronized to perfection. [...] Spectators in the theatre were bewitched, warmly applauding on multiple occasions throughout the presentation. The almost flawless performance received a standing ovation."* –Karen Massey, Editor for the Concordian

The tour involved an overseas trip for 130 people (including 83 dancers and 4 *Etoiles*), 353 costumes and 400 pointe shoes. The star dancers were Amandine Albisson, Alice Renavand, Josua Hoffalt and Karl Paquette. Guest conductor Faycal Karoui directed music with the Grands Ballets Canadiens orchestra.



*"Paquita" by the Paris Opera Ballet in Montreal October 16, 2014*

### "Dance and Fashion" at FIT

On September 14, AFPOB and Lalique hosted a lunch to celebrate the exhibit "Dance and Fashion" at the Museum at FIT. Guided by curator Dr. Valerie Steel, guests were shown many dazzling pieces including two exceptional costumes from the Paris Opera Ballet: an "Esmeralda" from the ballet "Notre Dame de Paris" by Yves St Laurent and a "Bolero" designed by Riccardo Tisci of Givenchy. The luncheon took place in the Lalique Interiors Showroom, among crystal chandeliers and unique art pieces.



*Maz Zouhairi greeting AFPOB patrons*

### Luncheon with Sophie Delattre

On October 3, 2014 a luncheon was given in honor of Sophie Lhélia Delattre to welcome her back to New York. Sophie is a corporate governance expert and the wife of Francois Delattre who was recently appointed French Ambassador to the UN after four years as French Ambassador to the US in Washington, DC. The reception gathered 40 women, French and American, in the beautiful sunroom of the Cosmopolitan Club and included an incredible roster of patrons of the performing and visual arts, scientists, actors and officials.



*Olivia Flatto and Sophie Lhélia Delattre*

## Summer Intensive 2014 at the Paris Opera Ballet School

The Paris Opera Ballet School held its second Summer Intensive Program following the successful launch in 2013. This year, 24 American students were selected by the School's director Elisabeth Platel to participate and AFPOB awarded full scholarships to nine of them.

Like last year, we asked each of the students to reflect on their experience and the feedback continue to be extremely positive. The training in Paris is opening their minds and bodies to new movements, techniques and ideas. We will be closely following the careers of these students and cannot wait to see them on stage.



Emma Wahl, Caitlin Rogers, Benji Pearson, Lauren Ostrander, Ethan Fuller, Alexandra Huffman, Mark Pecar, Natasha Sheehan and Shelby Mann

### *Excerpts of the students letter after they returned*

*"When I walked through the giant glass doors to the school for the first time, I thought I was dreaming. I remember thinking to myself -wow, I actually get to live and dance here."*

**Natasha Sheehan**

*"My ten days at the school surpassed all expectations. The training was unbelievably amazing, the year round teachers were excited and encouraging towards my class."*

**Lauren Ostrander**

*"I understand why they are the best ballet company in the world. My partnering, my variations, my whole technique in general, completely changed within those 10 days."*

**Ethan Fuller**

*"When I danced there I felt like I could do anything and I felt free to express myself."*

**Shelby Mann**

*"I met many wonderful dancers from all around the world. Despite the language barrier we were able to connect through our shared passion and love for ballet."*

**Emma Wahl**

*"The teachers at the school are legendary, and I learned so much from them. Each correction and advice that I received is recorded in my journal so I won't forget."*

**Caitlin Rogers**

### **Katherine Higgins, 2013 alumna, at the Paris Opera Ballet!**



We are extremely happy to share the wonderful news that Katherine Higgins has signed a contract with the Paris Opera, which began August 2014. We are very proud of Katherine and wish her the best in her career!

*"It has been a joy coming back to Paris after my time at the school's summer program. I was very happy to have had an experience with the style and technique of the French school, and I am doing my best to soak up all I can here now. The atmosphere is very special here; the Opera is an amazing place to dance and work in everyday! It's a true honor to be a small part of the tradition and history of this incredible institution."*

**Katherine Higgins**

## Upcoming events

### **New York – February 19, 2015** **Dinner in honor of Stephane Lissner**

Together with the Consulate of France in NY, AFPOB will honor Stephane Lissner, new Director of the Opera National de Paris, with cocktails, a seated dinner and musical interlude. The evening will be the first opportunity for Mr. Lissner to present the 2015/2016 lyric season at the Paris Opera and to share his vision for the years to come with artists and patrons.\*

*\* Invitation only, for members at the Patrons level and up.*

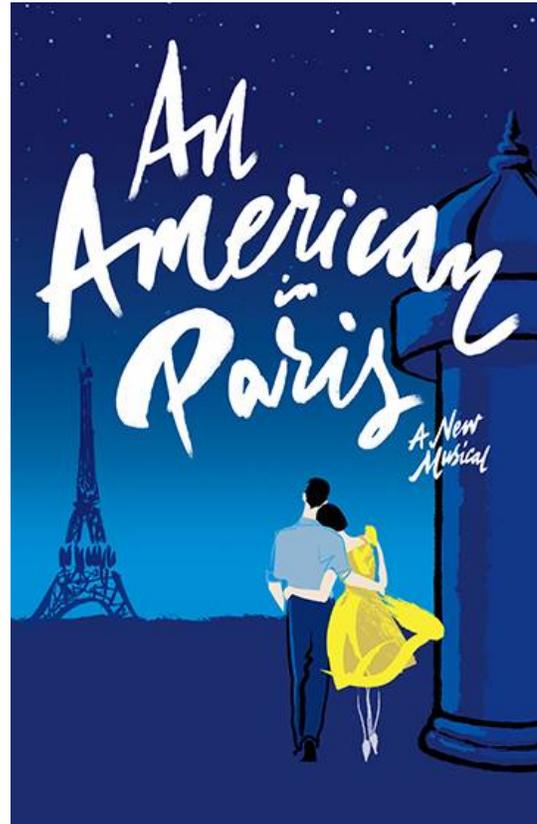


### **Paris – Fall 2015** **Ballet Season Opening Night Gala** **& Patrons Trip to Paris**

At the occasion of the opening of the ballet season, and for the first time at the Paris Opera, a special gala will feature unique program, supper with the artists in the *Grands Foyers* of the Palais Garnier, and dancing at an after-party.

AFPOB members will have the opportunity to participate in this very special event as a patrons trip will be organized around it. Private visits of unbelievable collections, official receptions, fashion shows, opera and ballet performances will be on the agenda of this incredible journey.

### **New York– April 1, 2015** **Broadway Show and Private Dinner** **with Christopher Wheeldon**



Preview of the new musical “An American in Paris” at the Palace Theatre on Broadway followed by supper in a French restaurant with Christopher Wheeldon.

“An American in Paris” premiered at Le Châtelet in Paris this fall. It was directed and choreographed by Mr. Wheeldon and stars New York City Ballet principal dancer Robert Fairchild.

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