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Tschaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2

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Music

Piano Concerto No. 2 in G, Op. 44 (1879-80) by Peter Ilyitch Tschaikovsky



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Choreography

George Balanchine © The George Balanchine Trust

Premiere

May 29, 1941, as Ballet Imperial by American Ballet Caravan, Teatro Municipal, Rio de Janeiro

Original Cast

Marie-Jeanne, Gisella Caccialanza, William Dollar, Fred Danieli, Nicholas Magallanes

Staged

For New York City Ballet by Frederic Franklin, October 15, 1964, as Ballet Imperial, New York State Theater

Rechoreographed for NYCB

By Balanchine as Tschaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2, January 12, 1973, New York City Ballet, New York State Theater

This work was originally choreographed for American Ballet Caravan, which toured South America at the outset of World War II. Since then, it has entered the repertory of many companies, including the Ballet Russe, the Royal Ballet, and American Ballet Theatre. Balanchine described the ballet as "a contemporary tribute to Petipa, 'the father of the classical ballet,' and to Tschaikovsky, his greatest composer." It has no story, but conveys the spirit and grandeur of imperial St. Petersburg. The 1964 New York City Ballet revival employed classical ballet's traditionally elaborate tutus and scenery reminiscent of the grand Russian style. In 1973, Balanchine staged the work without scenery and replaced the more formal tutus with simplified chiffon skirts designed by Karinska. Peter Ilyitch Tschaikovsky

"WHAT ATTRACTS ME VERY MUCH TO THE COMPANY IS THAT THERE ARE REALLY NO SET RULES."

— Peter Martins

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(1840-1893) studied at the Conservatory in St. Petersburg, where Balanchine later studied piano in addition to his studies in dance. Tschaikovsky is one of the most popular and influential of all romantic composers. His work is expressive, melodic, grand in scale, with rich orchestrations. His output was prodigious and included chamber works, symphonies, concerti for various instruments, operas and works for the piano. His creations for the ballet, composed in close partnership with Marius Petipa, include Swan Lake, The Nutcracker and The Sleeping Beauty.

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