

Ann Arbor Summer '85 Festival

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

presents

Ballet Eddy Toussaint de Montréal

EDDY TOUSSAINT

Founder and Artistic Director

Jean-Marc Lebeau, *Assistant Artistic Director*

Camilla Malashenko, *Ballet Mistress* Kathryn Greenaway, *Rehearsal Mistress*
Eléonora Matilevskaya, *Piano Accompanist*

Principal Dancers

| | |
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| Anik Bissonnette | Louis Robitaille |
| Susan Bennet | Jean-Hugues Rochette |
| Brigitte Valette | Denis Dulude |

Soloists

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Sophie Bissonnette | Kathryn Greenaway |
| | Mario Thibodeau |

The Company

| | | |
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| Yvon Brault | Nathalie Grosshenny | Miguel Rodrigue |
| France Deslauriers | Natasha Herman | Alexandre Seillier |
| Dominique Dulude | Gaétan Laroche | Michel Sigouin |
| Marc Forest | Sylvie Oleachea | Anne Sprincis |

Renée Hébert, *Administrative Director* Josée Kleinbaum, *General Stage Manager*
Christian Thibault, *Director of Operations* Guy Savard, *Tour Director*
Suzanne Dugas, *Administrative Assistant* Peter Georgiev, *Technical Director*

Tuesday Evening, July 9, 1985, at 8:00
Power Center for the Performing Arts
Ann Arbor, Michigan

The Ballet Eddy Toussaint de Montréal wishes to acknowledge The Quebec Ministry of Cultural Affairs for its constant support, the Quebec Ministries of Communications and International Affairs, and The Montreal Urban Community Arts Council.

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Barry Douglas

Pianist

Tuesday Evening, July 9, 1985, at 8:00
Rackham Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

P R O G R A M

Sonata in A-flat major, Op. 110 Beethoven
Moderato cantabile molto espressivo
Allegro molto
Adagio ma non troppo—arioso dolente
Fuga: allegro ma non troppo

Scherzo No. 3 in C-sharp minor, Op. 39 Chopin

Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp major, Op. 30 Scriabin

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Pictures at an Exhibition Mussorgsky
Promenade
The Gnome
Promenade
The Old Castle
Promenade
Tuilleries
Bydlo: The Polish Ox-cart
Promenade
Ballet of Chicks in Their Shells
Rich and Poor: Samuel Goldberg and Schmuyle
The Market Place at Limoges
Catacombs
The Hut on Fowls' Legs: The Witches' Revelry
The Great Gate of Kiev

ALEXIS LE TROTTEUR
(1978)

Choreography: Eddy Toussaint
Set: Germain Perron

Music: Dominique Tremblay
Costumes: Sylvain Labelle

Alexis Louis Robitaille
The young girl and the woman of Alexis' dream Brigitte Valette
and The Company

Alexis le Trotteur actually existed. Born in the beginning of this century in a remote part of Quebec, his physical prowess has not been equaled as yet. Alexis could run faster than horses and often suffered from the delusion of being one. Inspired by this nearly legendary figure, Eddy Toussaint choreographed this ballet in two "tableaux": the first one shows Alexis as a carefree spirit dancing and flirting at a country dance; in the second tableau, Alexis is overtaken by his madness and imagines himself ridden by a beautiful woman who liberates his tormented soul.

Dominique Tremblay wrote an original score for *Alexis*, using the mournful and haunting sound of the steel violin, a unique instrument invented by his late and dear friend, the fiddler Philippe Gagnon. Gagnon's special participation in this recording was one of his last. Alexis' solo is played by Alain Lamontagne on the harmonica.

I N T E R M I S S I O N

SOUVENANCE
(1982)

Choreography: Eddy Toussaint *Music:* Diane Juster
Costumes: Sylvain Labelle

Sophie Bissonnette Denis Dulude Mario Thibodeau

This past de trois was created by Eddy Toussaint on the original score of the Quebec composer Diane Juster.

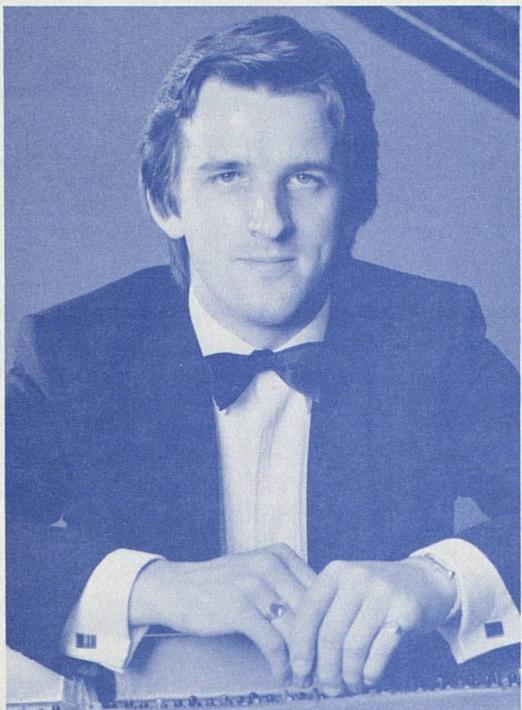
Pause

Photo: Melodie Garbird



Jean-Hugues Rochette and Company in *Cantates*

About the Artist



Barry Douglas is the winner of the bronze medal at the Seventh Van Cliburn International Piano Competition held recently in Fort Worth, Texas, from May 18 through June 2. The 25-year-old pianist from the United Kingdom made his formal debut in 1981 in London's Wigmore Hall. He has played recitals throughout Ireland and has performed with the London Symphony and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic with Sir Charles Groves.

Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and now residing in London, Mr. Douglas studied at the Belfast School of Music before attending London's Royal College of Music. His teachers have included Bertram Jones, John Barstow, and Maria Curcio. In 1981 Mr. Douglas received First Classification in the Paloma O'Shea International Piano Competition, and in 1981 he won the Jury Discretionary Award in the Sixth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. In 1983 he was the Silver Medalist in the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition. As winner of the bronze medal in the recent Van Cliburn Competition,

Mr. Douglas will receive a cash award of \$6,000 and concert tours for the next thirty months. In addition to the bronze medal, Mr. Douglas won "Best Performance of *Fantasia on an Ostinato*" by John Corigliano, a piece commissioned by the Competition that the semifinalists were required to include on their recital programs.

Barry Douglas' performance this evening is the second of three in Ann Arbor by the top winners of the 1985 Van Cliburn Competition. On Sunday, July 21, Gold Medalist Jose Feghali of Brazil will perform Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto with Interlochen's World Youth Orchestra in the Power Center for the Performing Arts. Silver Medalist Philippe Bianconi, who presented a recital last week, was the first of the three to appear in Ann Arbor's 1985 Summer Festival.

The Van Cliburn International Piano Competition was established to launch the careers of outstandingly gifted young pianists. Named after the Texas pianist who, in 1958, won a famous victory in the Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition in Moscow, the first competition was held in Fort Worth in 1962, and further competitions took place in 1966, 1969, 1973, 1977 and 1981. Mr. Cliburn continues to play a very active role in this quadrennial event, considered to be one of the five most important piano competitions in the world.

The first round of the 1985 Competition began May 18 with 36 competitors from around the world, chosen from videotaped auditions in which the contestants performed two half-hour programs. Twelve semifinalists were selected May 22. Each semifinalist then performed a one-hour solo recital and a piano quintet with the Tokyo String Quartet, and from this phase of the competition six finalists were named on Tuesday, May 28. The six finalists each performed two concertos with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, and from these were announced the three winners on Sunday, June 2. The awards ceremony was hosted by F. Murray Abraham, a native of El Paso and the recent recipient of the Academy Award for Best Actor for his portrayal of composer Antonio Salieri in the film *Amadeus*. After the announcement of the prizes, each of the medalists played a movement from the piano concerto he had played in the final phase of the competition. A television special about the Seventh Annual Van Cliburn Piano Competition, which included portions of the awards ceremony, was broadcast coast-to-coast during the following week on the PBS network.

CANTATES

(1978)

Choreography: Eddy Toussaint *Music:* J. S. Bach
Costumes: Sylvain Labelle

Jean-Hugues Rochette

Denis Dulude

Yvon Brault
Miguel Rodrigue

Marc Forest
Michel Sigouin

Gaétan Laroche
Mario Thibodeau

"I have always been fascinated by the religious music of Bach. His cantatas are masterpieces. Motivated by this marvelous music and by the modern movement that it inspired in me, I wanted to bring them together. . ."

Eddy Toussaint

INTERMISSION

FACADES

(1982)

Choreography: Eddy Toussaint *Music:* Astor Piazzola
Set: Lise Bernier, Pierre Bourgie *Costumes:* Sylvain Labelle

Facades I — Overture

The Company

Facades II — Refusal

Brigitte Valette

and The Company

Facades III — Love and Society

Anik Bissonnette Denis Dulude Anne Sprincis
and The Company

Facades IV — The perfectly carefree

Louis Robitaille

Facades V — Women's cries

Kathryn Greenaway Anik Bissonnette
Anne Sprincis
and The Company

Facades VI — Men's presence

Louis Robitaille Jean-Hugues Rochette Denis Dulude
and The Company

Facades VII — Finale

The Company

About the Artists

Eddy Toussaint, founder and artistic director of the company which bears his name, was born in Haiti thirty-nine years ago. He started his classical training at the age of six at the Academie de Ballet of Port-au-Prince with Lavinia Williams, a black American dancer who was associated with dancers such as Catherine Dunham and Alvin Ailey. Through these classes, which he and his siblings had been obliged to study as part of their early education, Toussaint acquired his great love of dance. After arriving in Montreal with his family, he found, much to his surprise, that ballet was considered to be a woman's art, without a place in it for men. After taking a few classes with Les Grands Ballets, he put dance aside until he was at Montreal's University of Quebec, where he specialized in physical education. By this time he had gathered a little group of university students into an informal amateur company. With rekindled enthusiasm, Toussaint joined a group headed by Eva von Genscy, which expanded in 1972 to become Les Ballets Jazz. In 1974 he formed his own company, Ballet Eddy Toussaint de Montréal, with the aim of developing dancers who would be very versatile, technically strong, capable of acting and performing in jazz rhythms — in short, artists geared to a new form of expression which he called the "danse."

To achieve his aims, Eddy Toussaint founded his own dance school as well, offering training in classical, jazz, and modern ballet. Most of his company's dancers are products of this school, which now has over 400 students and provides an important financial base for the company. Like Louis Robitaille, a product of the school and now the company's leading male dancer, many agree that "dancing for Eddy" is like no other experience.

In 1983 Toussaint was honored as a Great Montrealer, one of a small group of notables singled out for their personal contributions to the city. Another honor came from last summer's First International Ballet Competition in Helsinki, when Anik Bissonnette and Louis Robitaille returned to Canada with a gold medal for best contemporary choreography, performing Toussaint's *A Simple Moment* to music by Albinoni. He has created a diversified seventy-piece repertoire for his dancers, which includes works by Oscar Araiz, Salvatore Aiello, Domy Reiter-Soffer, and, most recently Vassili Sulich, but two-thirds of the ballets are by Toussaint. Although he seems to prefer making pas de deux, which are often sandwiched into dramatic pieces of social comment, Toussaint has also made comic ballets, has celebrated his Haitian heritage with *Missa Creole*, and incorporated French-Canadian folk legends such as *Alexis le trotteur* into his creations. Several of his ballets, including *Alexis le trotteur*, have been filmed for television. With his reputation now soundly established, Toussaint has his ballets appearing in the repertoires of other companies on the American continent and in Europe.

In Montreal, the heart of French-speaking Quebec, Ballet Eddy Toussaint de Montréal is unofficially known as the province's cultural ambassador. Like other Canadian dance companies that use French as a primary language, its ties have been more trans-Atlantic than trans-American. The company has often appeared abroad, representing Quebec itself as much as Canada. The company is, however, gaining an expanded international reputation. The Ballet has performed for more than two million spectators, encompassing twelve regular seasons at Place des Arts in Montreal, ten Quebec tours, four tours across Canada, four tours in Central and South America, and one European tour. The Ballet has made many guest performances for French opera houses and festivals, made numerous national and internationally televised performances, and performed at several official theater inaugurations throughout the western world. Toussaint and his dancers have recently completed a feature-length film, *Night Magic*, written by Canadian poet Leonard Cohen, with composer Lewis Furey.

In 1985, the company has performed at the prestigious Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, the Theatre de Paris in France, and very recently had its first major United States engagement at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina. Next fall the Ballet launches its 1985-86 season with a two-month tour through the United States, culminating in a week of performances in New York City. Beyond that, tours of Europe, Asia, and South America are planned for upcoming seasons. Eddy Toussaint, with his dauntless "Latin" spirit and his belief in his dancers and works, will be bringing his "new fresh air of dance" to dance aficionados around the world.