

L'ÉCOLE
SUPÉRIEURE DE
BALLET
DU QUÉBEC

Press release
For immediate distribution

The École supérieure de ballet du Québec celebrates the 100th anniversary of the birth of Ludmilla Chiriaeff

Montreal, January 10, 2024 – Today would have been the 100th birthday of the late Ludmilla Chiriaeff, the founder of the École supérieure de ballet du Québec and of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. On this special day, the École supérieure is proud to announce a series of activities organized in tribute to a towering figure in the history of dance in Quebec. The coming year will also offer numerous opportunities to discover the fascinating life and career of a great pioneer of professional dance in Quebec and to honour her significant impact on the arts and culture.

CELEBRATIONS

January 10: Festive day at the École supérieure

A full day of special activities for students at the École supérieure in honour of the memory of Madame Chiriaeff. This centennial day will feature a rich array of discussions, gatherings and dance activities.

February 11: Ballet class for former students

Former students of the École supérieure and its affiliated schools are invited to a commemorative ballet class – a joyful reunion with old friends in the unique atmosphere of our dance studio.

February 23-24: Prix Ludmilla – 8th edition

Our marquee winter event, this annual competition allows students to perform a variation of their choosing for a jury of professionals. The day after the competition, a gala is presented where parents can enjoy the variations crowned by the jury.

April 29: Round table discussion on Ludmilla Chiriaeff

On the occasion of International Dance Day, the École supérieure joins Les Grands Ballets and the Bibliothèque de la danse Vincent-Warren in hosting a discussion moderated by Judith Ouimet, with prominent guests who knew *Madame* personally, including: **Jean Grand-Maître**, choreographer and former artistic director of the Alberta Ballet; **Katia Mead**, daughter of Madame Chiriaeff; and, of course, **Anik Bissonnette**, current artistic director of the ESBQ and former principal dancer with Les Grands Ballets.

May 24-25: Corps de ballet, a show in tribute to Ludmilla Chiriaeff

The École supérieure's annual show will offer a sensitive and poetic tribute to the great visionary, who continues to inspire current and future generations of dancers. Choreographies by **Fernand Nault**, **Jean Grand-Maître**, **Anne Plamondon** and **Ludmilla Chiriaeff** will be performed alongside excerpts from iconic works such as *Swan Lake* and *Carmina Burana*. A hundred dancers from ages 10 to 20 will perform, fulfilling *Madame's* dream of giving Quebec a thriving next generation of dancers.

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The École supérieure invites you to join it in celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Ludmilla Chiriaeff, a woman who shaped the history of dance in Quebec and whose legacy continues to shine. Other surprises will be announced later to round out a memorable series of celebrations of her centennial.

LUDMILLA CHIRIAEFF: A GREAT VISIONARY

The story of Ludmilla Chiriaeff, the founder of the École supérieure de ballet du Québec and of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, is the story of the incredible journey of an immigrant who settled in Quebec in the 1950s with an ambitious dream: to make the art of dance accessible to all. A true pioneer of professional dance in the province, the woman everyone called “Madame” succeeded in opening new territories and shattering multiple glass ceilings, allowing dance to earn its rightful place among the arts. She was the recipient of numerous honours, and in 2022 the government of Quebec added another by designating her a significant historical figure (Personnage Historique).

- [Learn about her life and see iconic photographs](#)

ABOUT THE ÉCOLE SUPÉRIEURE DE BALLET DU QUÉBEC

The mission of the École supérieure de ballet du Québec is to train dancers and creators to the highest standards maintained by professional dance institutions and, in the process, to promote the recognition, success and advancement of dance. Founded in 1966 by Ludmilla Chiriaeff at the request of Quebec’s ministry of cultural affairs, the school is Quebec’s flagship institution in professional classical dance training and education.

- [View the École supérieure’s press kit](#)

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Source

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