

DANCE *st.* NEWS

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DANCE ST. LOUIS PRESENTS CLASSICAL FAVORITES BY STARS of MOSCOW FESTIVAL BALLET AT TOUHILL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, APRIL 23 & 24, 2010

ST. LOUIS, October 1, 2009.....Dance St. Louis presents the star dancers of Moscow Festival Ballet in a glittering array of highlights from the rich Russian tradition, including not only showpieces that are popular and familiar in the U.S., but also European favorites rarely performed here, at the Touhill Performing Arts Center at 8 p.m. on Friday, April 23, and 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. on Saturday, April 24.

Stars of Moscow Festival Ballet features solos, duets and ensembles from 19th-century Russian classics such as *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Le Corsaire*, *The Little Hump-backed Horse*, *Don Quixote*, *Paquita* and more. All showcase the classical beauty and athletic fireworks for which Russian ballet has been renowned for nearly three centuries. "These are works that dance aficionados love and that will fascinate newcomers with their physicality and artistry," says Michael Uthoff, Dance St. Louis artistic & executive director.

Stars of Moscow Festival Ballet is sponsored by Centene Corporation. Tickets start at \$30 and are available at the Dance St. Louis box office at 3547 Olive St. in the Centene Center for Arts and Education in Grand Center, by calling 314-534-6622, and via dancestlouis.org.

Michael Uthoff will host a free program, *Speaking of Dance*, in the Touhill's Terrace Lobby at 7:15 p.m. prior to the 8 p.m. performances and at 1:15 p.m. prior to the Saturday 2 p.m. performance.

Moscow Festival Ballet was founded in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall came down, by Sergei Radchenko, a principal dancer of Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet for 25 years before he decided to retire at age 45 and start his own company. Moscow Festival Ballet has blossomed under post-Soviet freedoms to become one of the best-known of Russia's new touring companies. This is the company's first appearance in St. Louis.

The core of the program is works by three choreographers who set the world standard for dance excellence when they were the ballet masters of the Imperial Ballet in St. Petersburg during the 19th century: Jules Perrot (1851-1858), Arthur Saint-León (1859-1869), and Marius Petipa (1869-1903). All three were French but were attracted to Russia by the czars' lavish support and the unmatched quality of the dancers. Moscow Festival Ballet also shows off the ongoing development of the classical tradition with more recent dances, including the sultry final duet from *Carmen* by Cuban choreographer Alberto Alonso, which he created in 1967 for the Bolshoi Ballet.