



News

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**PATRICIA WILDE TO TAPE VIDEO SERIES FOR  
GEORGE BALANCHINE FOUNDATION**

**Session To Be Recorded With Leading Dancers of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre**

**NEW YORK CITY**—Patricia Wilde, one of choreographer George Balanchine's most virtuosic ballerinas of the 1950s and 1960s, will discuss and coach roles he created for her for the Interpreters Archive of The George Balanchine Foundation. Videotaping will commence May 23, 1996, at the studios of the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, where Ms. Wilde is Artistic Director.

The upcoming session will focus on two ballets that feature particularly brilliant displays of dancing: Square Dance (1957) and Raymonda Variations (1961). Ms. Wilde will work with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre company members Laura Desiree, Principal Dancer; Stanko Milov, Soloist; Alexander Nagiba, Soloist; and Blythe Turner, who will join the company as an apprentice next year.

Coordinated by Nancy Reynolds, the Foundation's Director of Research, the project is part of an ongoing series of archival videotapes that documents Balanchine's teaching and philosophy. Ms. Reynolds commented, "I will never forget the thrill of watching Patricia Wilde move like lightning while executing some of Balanchine's most toe-twisting combinations. We look forward to capturing the essence of her electrifying technique as she coaches dancers she has trained and developed. "

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## BALANCHINE FOUNDATION/PATRICIA WILDE - page two

Dance critic Nancy Goldner, who will conduct interview segments with Ms. Wilde, said, "I'm proud to contribute to this archival project, which promises to be a crucial guide to the choreography and mind of George Balanchine, and to be talking with Patricia Wilde, who not only was an outstanding technician but also a sensitive interpreter of the many Balanchine roles she performed."

Square Dance, one of several ballets George Balanchine created on American themes, combines classical dance technique with references to hoedowns, star formations, and sashaying to the bar. The earliest production of the ballet featured a caller on stage, tailoring authentic square-dance patter to the dance steps being performed.

Balanchine clearly intended the ballet to be a showcase for Patricia Wilde's extraordinary allegro dancing. As Doris Hering wrote in Dance Magazine: "In [Ms.] Wilde's solos, the batterie was so fiercely fast, the gargouillades so numerous, the turns so profuse, that she was completely absorbed."

By contrast, Raymonda Variations recalls the dance tradition of the famed Maryinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, where Balanchine performed briefly before immigrating to the West. The ballet is a cascade of sparkling dance invention, not only for the ballerina and her cavalier, but also for several members of the corps de ballet who have their own gem-like solos. Dance critic Clive Barnes praised it as "...dancing of indescribable happiness." Of Ms. Wilde's performance, John Martin of the *New York Times* wrote, "[She] is a glorious dancer, and she performs...with a command and a beauty that are completely superb."

While planning the May session, Ms. Wilde reflected, "It is always a pleasure to restudy Balanchine's choreography, so full of challenges and so richly rewarding to dance."

In 1994, Nancy Reynolds established a \$1.5 million endowment to help fund projects dedicated to the preservation of Balanchine's aesthetic. The video archive is a primary element of the effort and includes legendary English ballerina Dame Alicia Markova recreating her solo from Balanchine's Le Chant du Rossignol (1925), taped in London in February, 1995. The Foundation recently completed the second

**BALANCHINE FOUNDATION/PATRICIA WILDE - page three**

of two sessions with Maria Tallchief, early star of the New York City Ballet, which feature her solos and pas de deux; future plans call for Marie-Jeanne, original ballerina of Concerto Barocco, to explicate that seminal work, as well as Ballet Imperial and Serenade. The Foundation looks forward to a cooperative effort with the Dance Heritage Coalition, an association actively involved in the identification, preservation, cataloging and dissemination of dance materials to create the widest possible distribution of the videotapes in archives around the world.

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**Editor's Note: photographs available upon request**