

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***ON POINTE:
The Rise of the Ballet Shoe***

~ Bata Shoe Museum & Canada's National Ballet School Partner on Exhibit ~

TORONTO, ON, February 7, 2008 – The Bata Shoe Museum and Canada's National Ballet School are ecstatic to announce their collaboration on an upcoming exhibition entitled ***On Pointe: The Rise of the Ballet Shoe***. Opening to the public beginning April 16, 2008, the exhibition will feature approximately 50 artifacts drawn from the Museum's private collection as well as historical and contemporary examples on loan from The Shoe Room, the principal supplier of pointe shoes in Canada.



“There is a certain myth or illusion surrounding ballet,” said Emanuele Lepri, Director of the Bata Shoe Museum. “As non-dancers, this movement and magic is perfection in our eyes yet this apparent effortless is far from the truth. We hope that Museum visitors gain a better understanding of the ballet shoe and how as a vehicle it has allowed only a few to accomplish flawless and precise performances.”



“Canada's National Ballet School is thrilled to be working in conjunction with the Bata Shoe Museum on this exhibit,” said Mavis Staines, NBS Artistic Director. “This is an invaluable opportunity for our two organizations to engage with the community and tell the story of the evolution of ballet and the ballet slipper over time.”

Museum Curator Elizabeth Semmelhack adds, “The exhibition will juxtapose the brute athleticism of the discipline with the illusion of effortless grace created through performance and it will explore how the *pointe* shoe has been pivotal to these aspects of ballet.” Focusing on the origin of ballet and the technological advances in the development of the ballet slipper and pointe shoe, the influence of fashion on ballet and ballet's influence on fashion will also be considered.



On Pointe highlights include:

- beautiful contemporary and historical imagery
- video footage illustrating gruelling practice and glittering performance
- ballet shoes worn by the famous, including Karen Kain, Margot Fonteyn, Carla Fracci and Rudolf Nureyev
- an interactive area where visitors can try ballet positions, as well as a children's dress up corner.

On Pointe will be on view at the Bata Shoe Museum located at 327 Bloor Street West at St. George until February 2009. Exciting programming activities are currently being developed and will be available on partner websites in April.

-30-

About Canada's National Ballet School

Canada's National Ballet School is a world leader in the training of professional dancers and teachers. Dedicated to advancing the art of ballet, NBS develops dance professionals in a student-centred environment by weaving innovation and evolving practice with the finest teaching traditions. NBS graduates can be found as dancers, choreographers, artistic directors, teachers, and administrators in over 65 dance companies world-wide and even more schools around the globe. NBS will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2009/10. Further information is available at www.nbs-enb.ca.

About the Bata Shoe Museum

The Bata Shoe Museum is dedicated to uncovering the role of footwear in the social and cultural life of humanity. The Museum's growing international collection of over 13,000 objects touches on 4,500 years of history. A varied programme of events and exhibitions lets visitors discover the stories behind footwear from many lands and cultures. Further information is available at www.batashoemuseum.ca.

For more information, interviews or visuals please contact:

Rosmarie Gadzovski
Marketing & Public Relations Manager
Bata Shoe Museum
416.979.7799 x225
rosmarie.gadzovski@batashoemuseum.ca

Laura Cartledge
Media Relations and Communications Officer
Canada's National Ballet School
416.964.3780 x2117
lcartledge@nbs-enb

Photo credits: Page 1 – top right: Ron Wood; Page 1 bottom left: Cylla von Tiedemann; Page 2: Joël Bénard