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The Yoko Nagae Ceschina Chair

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**SARA MEARNS, NEW YORK CITY BALLET PRINCIPAL DANCER,
TO STAR IN 2012–13 SEASON FINALE
CONCLUDING JUNE JOURNEY: GILBERT’S PLAYLIST**

**Theatrical Reimagining of Stravinsky’s
PETRUSHKA and *THE FAIRY’S KISS***

**DOUG FITCH, DIRECTOR/DESIGNER
A Production by Giants Are Small; Edouard Getaz, Producer**

Karole Armitage To Choreograph Ms. Mearns For the First Time

June 27–29, 2013

Sara Mearns, New York City Ballet Principal Dancer, will star in the New York Philharmonic 2012–13 season finale event that concludes *June Journey: Gilbert’s Playlist*, a variety of programs that showcase themes and ideas Alan Gilbert has introduced since becoming Music Director. The collaboration between Alan Gilbert and director/designer Doug Fitch will present a multidisciplinary, theatrical reimagining of *Petrushka* and *The Fairy’s Kiss* at Avery Fisher Hall, June 27–29, 2013. Karole Armitage will choreograph the evening, in her first collaboration with Ms. Mearns. The performances will be produced by Edouard Getaz and created by Giants Are Small.

Combining music with animation, video, puppets, and dance, the production will blur the lines between audience and performer, between reality and imagination. Ms. Mearns will portray Columbine in *Petrushka*, the fairy in *The Fairy’s Kiss*, and herself, among other roles, as choreographed by Ms. Armitage and directed by Mr. Fitch. Further details about the production will be announced at a later date.

“Sara Mearns is just the sort of artist with whom I love to collaborate because of her talent, intelligence, and curiosity,” said Music Director Alan Gilbert. “I am so glad that she is crossing Lincoln Center Plaza to join us. I am pleased that we will bring even more genres together at Avery Fisher Hall and create something entirely new from Stravinsky’s masterful, vivid ballets. I know that Sara’s presence will make this an event to remember.”

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“I have always loved live classical music, and I have been particularly fascinated and excited by what Alan Gilbert and the New York Philharmonic have presented these last few years,” Sara Mearns said. “I am unbelievably thrilled and honored to be invited to join this production, which reflects the creativity and exploration that have infused so many of their performances, and to work with Doug Fitch and Karol Armitage to reveal new insights into these great ballets by Stravinsky.”

The Philharmonic and Alan Gilbert last collaborated with Doug Fitch, Edouard Getaz, *Giants Are Small*, and Karole Armitage in June 2011 for the acclaimed production of Janáček’s *The Cunning Little Vixen*. In June 2010, the New York Philharmonic, Doug Fitch, Edouard Getaz, and *Giants Are Small* staged Ligeti’s *Le Grand Macabre*, a critical success that was named the number one cultural event of the year by several news outlets.

“I have loved working with Alan Gilbert and the Philharmonic to bring operas to life on the Avery Fisher Hall stage,” Doug Fitch said. “I am thrilled by this new project, in which we go a step further and craft a world from two pieces that Stravinsky composed for ballet, but approach them totally differently from their original intents. Sara Mearns’s presence will inspire this melding of fantasy and narrative; she and I are discussing the project, and I am finding her insights fascinating. I like the idea of mixing up the extraordinary resources that Lincoln Center offers — bringing one of ballet’s living treasures onto a stage populated by the extraordinary musicians of the New York Philharmonic — who in turn will also be involved in the creation of the visual world.”

“Working with Alan and Doug on *The Cunning Little Vixen* was a marvelous experience in fusing great music performed by a spectacular orchestra with evocative visuals and the delight of working with children on movement,” Karole Armitage said. “This Stravinsky evening takes the dance element much further, and I am honored to finally work with Sara Mearns, whom I’ve long admired, on such an innovative production.”

Sara Mearns was born in Columbia, South Carolina, and began her dance training at the age of three with Ann Brodie at the Calvert-Brodie School of Dance in Columbia. Following study with Patricia McBride at Dance Place, School of North Carolina Dance Theatre, South Carolina Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities, and the School of American Ballet (the official school of New York City Ballet), she became an apprentice with New York City Ballet in 2003 and danced a featured role in Michel Fokine’s *Chopiniana* in 2004. Ms. Mearns joined the Company as a member of the corps de ballet in 2004, was promoted to the rank of soloist in 2006, and was promoted to principal dancer in 2008.

At the age of 19, while still a member of the corps de ballet, Ms. Mearns performed her first featured role as Odette/Odile in Peter Martins’s *Swan Lake*. She has since appeared in featured roles in works choreographed by George Balanchine (including *Apollo*, *Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet*, *Concerto Barocco*, *Jewels*, *George Balanchine’s The Nutcracker™*, *Serenade*, *Stars and Stripes*, *Symphony in C*, and *Walpurgisnacht Ballet*), Jerome Robbins (such as *Dances at a Gathering*, *The Goldberg Variations*, and *In the Night*), Jerome Robbins and Twyla Tharp

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(*Brahms/Handel*), Peter Martins (*Barber Violin Concerto, Beethoven Romance, Chichester Psalms, Fearful Symmetries*, among others), Christopher Wheeldon (including *DGV: Danse à Grande Vitesse, Les Carillons* and *Polyphonia*), Alexei Ratmansky (*Concerto DSGH, Namouna, A Grand Divertissement*, and *Russian Seasons*); Susan Stroman (*Double Feature* and *Frankie and Johnny...and Rose*); and Richard Tanner (*Sonatas and Interludes*).

In 2011 Sara Mearns originated the role of Honorata in Paul McCartney's *Ocean's Kingdom* with choreography by Peter Martins, and she was nominated for a Benois de la Danse award for her performance. In 2003 she was a recipient of the Mae L. Wien Award and a nominee for the Princess Grace Award.

Karole Armitage, director of the New York-based Armitage Gone! Dance Company, was rigorously trained in classical ballet. As a professional dancer she performed in Balanchine's Grand Théâtre de Genève Company and in the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Ms. Armitage is renowned for pushing the boundaries to create works that blend dance, music, and art, drawing upon her technical knowledge of dance to blend virtuosity with conceptual ideas from the frontiers of movement research. She directed the Ballet of Florence Italy (1995–98) and the Biennale of Contemporary Dance in Venice (2004), served as resident choreographer for the Ballet de Lorraine in France (1999–2004), and created works for many companies, including The Bolshoi Ballet, Ballet Nacional de Cuba, Les Ballets de Monte Carlo, Paris Opéra Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, and Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. Ms. Armitage collaborates frequently with composers and artists, including Jeff Koons, Brice Marden, David Salle, and Phillip Taaffe. She choreographed two Broadway productions (*Passing Strange* and *Hair*, the latter earning her a Tony nomination), videos for Madonna and Michael Jackson, and several films for Merchant Ivory productions. Known for directing opera, she choreographed Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* for the New York Philharmonic (2011) as well as the Cirque du Soleil production *Amaluna* (2012). Ms. Armitage was awarded Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, France's most prestigious award, in 2009, and she is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Director/designer **Doug Fitch** has worked in media ranging from architecture and food to opera and puppetry. He has directed the acclaimed New York Philharmonic productions, conducted by Music Director Alan Gilbert, of Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* (2011), named the top classical music event of the year by *New York* magazine, and Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre* (2010), hailed as "Best Classical Performance of the Year" by *The New York Times*. The Ligeti production utilized the "live animation" technique he and producer Edouard Getaz originated with the Philharmonic at Avery Fisher Hall in 2005 for a production of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du soldat*; the technique involves filming and projecting a miniature theater of moving images while a live performance is underway.

Mr. Fitch has designed and staged productions of Puccini's *Turandot* for Santa Fe Opera; Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* for Los Angeles Opera; Wagner's *Das Rheingold* for the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra; Weill's *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*; *What Next?*, Elliott Carter's only opera, conducted by James Levine at Tanglewood; and several productions for the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) at the

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Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Mr. Fitch designed and directed a double-bill of Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts* and the world premiere of David Bruce's *A Bird in Your Ear* at Bard College with Dawn Upshaw. For the NSO at Wolf Trap he staged a version of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* featuring light, shadow, a single dancer, and a child narrator.

Mr. Fitch made his directorial debut with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France (at Paris's Salle Pleyel) using projected images painted with water on a calligraphy board to tell the story of *Pelleas et Melisande*, with Schoenberg's score conducted by Alan Gilbert. He also designed and directed Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, the inaugural production of Chile's new Teatro del Lago.

Edouard Getaz was born in Lausanne, Switzerland, and now lives in New York, where he works as a producer and a director with his company Incopix. For the last two years his primary focus has been the development of *Giants Are Small*, both as a company and a brand. With the New York Philharmonic he produced Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* in May 2011 and Ligeti's opera *Le Grand Macabre* in May 2010, both conducted by Alan Gilbert. He also produced Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* with the New York Philharmonic in 2005 and, under the umbrella of *Giants Are Small*, Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 2008.

Mr. Getaz has produced public events worldwide, ranging from major fashion shows to giant projections on large historical buildings. He is currently co-producing and directing a new version of *Giants Are Small's Peter and the Wolf*, scheduled to tour throughout North America in a giant tent in 2012. His first directorial endeavor was the short film *Virgin Red* (2005), which was screened at several major international film festivals. His second short, *Freud's Magic Powder*, premiered at the Locarno Film Festival in 2009. He is now developing his first full-length feature film.

For almost 15 years Mr. Getaz contributed to the programming of the Cully Jazz Festival, which became one of the most prominent jazz festivals in Switzerland. He subsequently worked with Claude Nobs, Montreux Jazz Festival's legendary producer and founder. In 1998 he co-founded the event communications agency Creatives, where he was the artistic director for five years. He earned a master's degree in law and has studied film direction and production at New York University.

Giants Are Small is a company founded by visual artist and opera director Doug Fitch, filmmaker and producer Edouard Getaz, and multimedia entrepreneur Frederic Gummy. Officially formed in 2007 and following years of experimental developments, the company has become one of the world leaders in live animation, with critically acclaimed productions and several projects in development.

The company's mission is to transform the way audiences listen to symphonic music by turning classical concerts into fully visual experiences. *Giants Are Small* combines low-tech, handmade puppetry with high-tech video capabilities (including the most advanced 3-D projection

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technology and other special effects, applied in real time) to create a unique kind of theatrical production that is synced with live music. Its first production, Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du soldat* with the New York Philharmonic, was the first time "live animation" was brought to a wide audience; the technique involves puppeteering miniature elements in front of a camera to create moving images that are projected in real time, in sync with the orchestra's performance. In 2008 the company presented a new version of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in a production that merged live classical music, live animation, and video effects together in real time. In 2010 Giants Are Small created a production of Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre* with the New York Philharmonic, conducted by Alan Gilbert, and collaborated with the Orchestra again on the acclaimed 2011 production of Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*.

Giants Are Small is currently in co-production with Big Heart Theatrical, a production company headed by former Disney executive Annie Hamburger, and And-Entertainment, the company of Andrew Lloyd Webber's former CFO Robert Butters, to present an innovative version of *Peter and the Wolf*, scheduled to tour through the U.S. in a giant tent in 2012.

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SEASON FINALE

Avery Fisher Hall

Thursday, June 27, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, June 28, 2013, 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, June 29, 2013, 8:00 p.m.

Alan Gilbert, conductor

Sara Mearns, dancer*

A Production by Giants Are Small

Doug Fitch, director/designer

Edouard Getaz, producer

Karole Armitage, choreographer

STRAVINSKY *The Fairy's Kiss*

STRAVINSKY *Petrushka*

* denotes New York Philharmonic debut

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