

# MINNESOTA BALLET

May 2012

## SUZANNE KRITZBERG RETIRES IN A SHOWER OF FLOWERS FROM GRATEFUL FANS

Standing, applauding fans tossed bouquets at the feet of Prima Ballerina Suzanne Kritzberg after her final appearance in a Minnesota Ballet performance, ending her remarkable 22-year career with her portrayal of the spunky heroine Swanilda, the *Coppélia* role demanding both physical stamina and dramatic artistry.

This was March 16, 2012. She began with the Ballet in fall 1990, one of her first roles in the *Sylvia* Pas de Deux with guest artist Elie Lazar in the Fall Performance that year. The Northland has never had another ballerina of Suzanne Kritzberg's artistic excellence and performing longevity. A consummate, versatile artist, she has performed in more than sixty works, mastering an array of dance styles including the classical roles of Odette, Giselle, Sugar Plum Fairy, Cinderella, and Princess Rose. She has also danced such diverse dramatic roles as the Muse Terpsichore in George Balanchine's *Apollo*, the Lustful One in Agnes de Mille's *Three Virgins and a Devil*, a soignée flapper in Ginger Thatcher's *Five O'Clock Fox Trot*, the embodiment of Greed in Allen Fields' *Passions*, and the vulnerable Lucy-turned-vampire in Robert Gardner's *Dracula*.



Suzanne Kritzberg takes her final bow in a Minnesota Ballet performance.  
Photo by Jeff Frey and Associates.



Left: Suzanne Kritzberg and Nik Wourms. Right: Reinhard von Rabenau and Megan Wolfson. Photos by Jeff Frey and Associates.

In the two *Coppélia* performances following Suzanne's farewell, a young ballerina stepped into the Swanilda role: Megan Wolfson, last year an apprentice dancer with the Ballet and this season a new company member. Suzanne, who has mentored company members and trained many aspiring dancers in the School of the Minnesota Ballet, praised Megan in a Duluth News Tribune article as "the complete package" of technique, stamina, and acting ability. For her part, Megan praised Suzanne as "a great role model" whose classes and performing have inspired her.

Megan also performed as Swanilda when the Ballet performed Act I—the toy workshop scene—of *Coppélia* for Duluth fifth-graders March 15 at Symphony Hall, a presentation made possible in part by Dentists Kathrynne Dryke, Nathan Halstead, Brian Landrigan, William Schuldt, Thomas Seidemann, and Thomas Zbaracki.



Students from Carol Holm's 5<sup>th</sup> grade class at Homecroft School dressed in their best at the public school performance of Act II of *Coppelia*.

*This performance of Coppélia was supported by US Bank.*

*The creation of Coppélia was made possible in part by a grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.*

OUTREACH



In early October 2011, the Ballet presented a mini performance to Superior Elementary students at Superior High School. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders got a chance to experience what it means to be a professional dancer. The Ballet received an overwhelming number of “thank you” notes from the children, complete with their own drawings of the performance. **This wonderful opportunity was funded by M & I Bank, Enbridge Energy, Superior Rotary Club, and the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.**

During the week of March 19–23, the Ballet visited Homcroft, Lakewood, Lester Park, Lowell, Macarthur, and Stowe Elementary Schools, introducing more than 1,700 children to live dance.

The Ballet offered a choice of outreach programs. Outreach Coordinator Elyse Snider led the appealing “How You Move Is How You Dance” sessions that showed students how dance steps build on

ordinary moves such as walking and sports moves such as jumping. Students relished dribbling an imaginary basketball, passing it, and dunking it into an imaginary hoop. Teachers reported that their students loved the hands-on introduction, one observing, “Once you pulled the basketball routine, you had them all!!!”

In the other option, “Ballet—More Than Meets the Eye,” Artistic Director Robert Gardner led a lively demonstration of ballet, followed by a costumed mini performance. Students experienced styles of dance in works such as in the classically beautiful “The Swan,” the jazzy “Straighten up and Fly Right,” and “Thou Swell” from *Route 66*, with students’ rapt attention all the while focused on the joy dancers feel in performing.



*Student Outreach at Lester Park Elementary photos by Vicki Surges.*

**The March Outreach Week was made possible by a grant from the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation.**

WINE & CHEE’S FUNDRAISER PROVES A FIVE-STAR ATTRACTION

The Ballet’s Wine & Chee’s fundraiser April 26 in the Depot Great Hall provided LOTS to do. The crowd tasted wines and micro-brewed beers supplied by Keyport Liquor, relished food catered by seven fine Duluth restaurants, thrilled to an aerialist act by Alex Loch, showed their mime and guessing skills in a lively heads-or-tails competition, and bid on all sorts of items in the silent and live auctions, featuring first-time giclée prints by watercolorist Cheng-Khee Chee with printing by CPL Imaging.

two, a party on the North Shore Scenic Railroad train, and a spot in the Ballet’s Seventh Annual Celebrity Dance Challenge. The happy winner of the heads or tails competition carried off the Wall of Wine.



*Catherine Wootten and Caitlin O’Riordan. Photo by Vicki Surges.*

In the live auction, emcee Ken Buehler walked among the crowd, stoking spirited bidding for twelve items, including three Chee prints, a life-size cutout of Ballerina Suzanne Kritzberg, two tickets to the upcoming Madonna concert, a Sonoma VIP Wine Experience for



*Alex Loch during his aerial performance, Charles Gilbert Kapsner with his winning auction item. Photos by Vicki Surges.*

Truly an arts experience, the evening’s aerialist act also featured Tenor Marcus McConico singing Andrea Bocelli’s “Con Te Partiro” while Alex performed balletic moves up and down the red silk, twisting, dangling, and plunging in a controlled free fall. All proceeds from this well-rounded fundraiser benefited the Ballet.

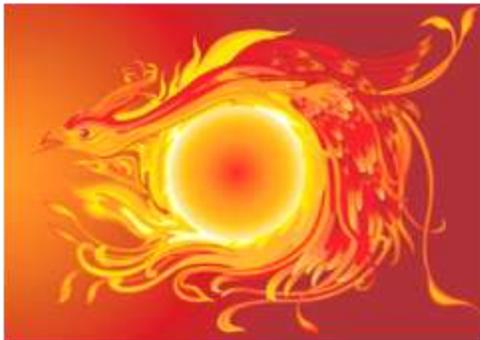
**The Wine & Chee’s was sponsored by Keyport Liquor, Cheng Khee-Chee, the Depot, and CPL Imaging. Food for the event was provided by Bellisio’s Italian Restaurant, Clyde Iron Works Restaurant, The Exchange, Lake Avenue Restaurant, New Scenic Café, Nokomis Restaurant, and Zeitgeist Arts Café. Special thanks to all others who donated items, services or time.**

### BECOME A PART OF THE CREATION OF *THE FIREBIRD*

The Minnesota Ballet is in the process of bringing another new production to the Duluth Community. Soon we will be releasing a list of characters, costumes, props and set pieces we hope to build for a new production of *The Firebird*, a Russian folktale of a mythical creature who helps Prince Ivan save a beautiful princess from an evil sorcerer.

**You have the opportunity to choose what part of this exciting process you would like to be a part of:** contribute funds towards creating a back drop, building the Firebird's tutu, finding Prince Ivan's sword, and much more!

Help us bring *Firebird* to life!



### OLD TURTLE DELIGHTS ONCE AGAIN

Last performed in 2007, *Old Turtle* returned March 29 at DECC Symphony Hall, a collaboration of the Duluth-Superior Symphony Orchestra and the Minnesota Ballet, depicting the much-loved story with its universal themes of peace and stewardship of the earth.

The production required attention to detail on the part of all the participants. Preparing for the collaboration, Ballet Artistic Director Robert Gardner met with the narrator, John Munson, the Northern Regional Manager for Wisconsin Public Radio, showing him how to move as part of the choreography and to narrate in the proper cadence in order to cue the choreography.

Robert also met with Conductor Dirk Meyer to work out the tempo needed for each part of the music.

Working with company dancers and upper-level students from the School of the Minnesota Ballet, Robert set the choreography, by Allen Fields, Artistic Director Emeritus, assisted by company member Suzie Baer in placing dancers so that they would avoid running into the moving bows of the string instruments. All the carefully prepared elements blended to make a memorable performance, one honored with a standing ovation. Robert, who made his third appearance as Old Turtle, afterward drew a crowd backstage and smiled as many parents snapped photos of their children sitting on his shell.



*Thank you!*

### Season Sponsor



### Performance Sponsors

#### *Dracula*

Presenting sponsor: Essentia Health.

This production was made possible by a grant from Minnesota Power Foundation and by gifts from John and Betsy Holcomb and Art and Mary Aufderheide.

#### *The Nutcracker*

ICO – Inter City Oil: Proud to underwrite the creation of Minnesota Ballet's Manhattan *Nutcracker*.

The creation of this production also made possible by major funding from Essentia Health, and the Depot Foundation. This production also funded in part by the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, Minnesota Power Foundation, and especially generous contributors.

#### *Coppélia*

This performance was supported by US Bank.

The creation of *Coppélia* was made possible in part by a grant from the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation.

### Event Sponsors

#### **Black and White Ball**

Sponsored by National Bank of Commerce, with contributions by The Pickwick, George's Liquor, Peter Provost & His Trio, Dan Hanger, Doug Odlevak, Arthur's Men's Formal Wear, Take 2 Consignments & Ken Sorvari, Arlette DeGrio, Vicki Surges, Proctor Journal, and all others who donated items to auction.

#### **Celebrity Dance Challenge**

Sponsored by Waters of Superior.

#### **Wine & Chee's**

Sponsored by Keyport Liquor, CPL Imaging, Cheng-Khee Chee, and the Depot. Catering thanks to Bellisio's Italian Restaurant, Clyde Iron Works Restaurant, The Exchange, Lake Avenue Restaurant, New Scenic Café, Nokomis Restaurant & Bar, and Zeitgeist Arts Café.

### Media Sponsors

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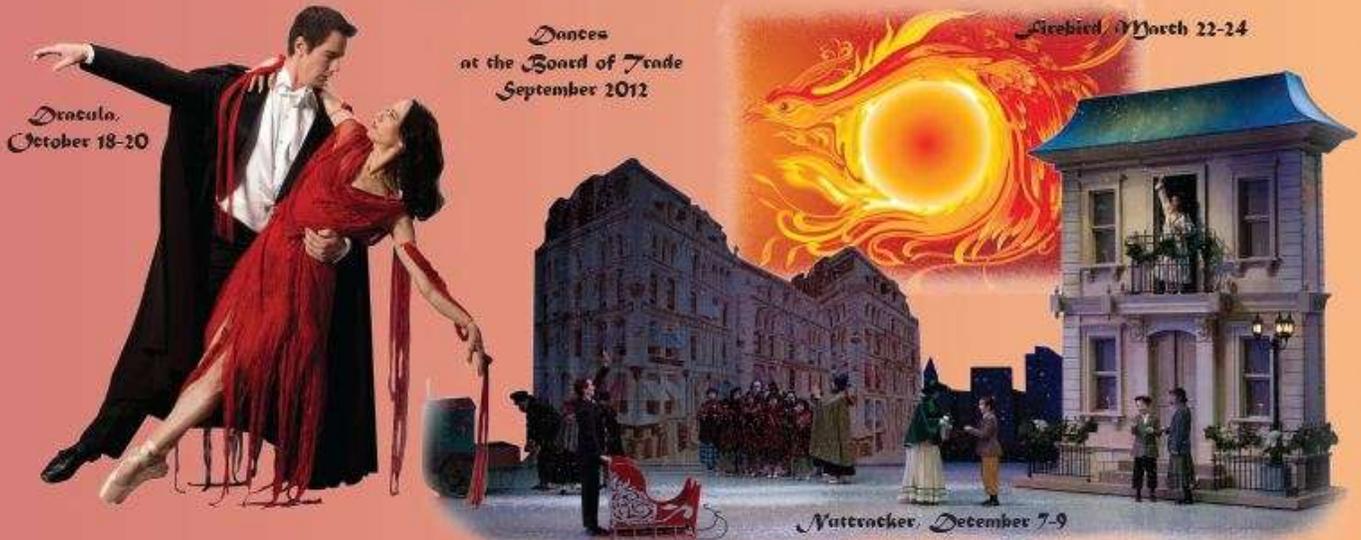
# MINNESOTA BALLET

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: ROBERT GARDNER

*'A Season of Magic and Mystery'*

*A sneak peek at the 2012-2013 performance season*

From an atmospheric gothic thriller to a Russian folk tale with a mythical creature who lulls monsters to sleep, the Minnesota Ballet's 2012-2013 Season of Magic and Mystery promises to be an exciting year of outstanding entertainment and special events. You won't want to miss *Dracula*, just in time for Halloween; the gorgeous holiday treat, the *Nutcracker*; and the world premiere of *Firebird*, a magical story set to the music of Igor Stravinsky.

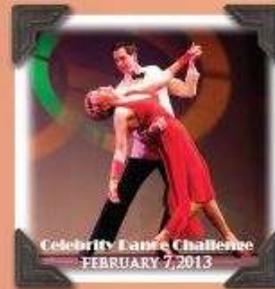
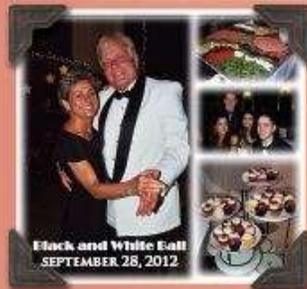


## MINNESOTA BALLET'S SPECIAL FUNDRAISING EVENTS:

**Black and White Ball**

**Celebrity Dance Challenge**

**Wine & Cheese Auction**



Become a member, get season tickets, and be a part of the state's finest professional classical dance company, proudly calling the Twin Ports home. The Arts—making a great community greater

301 W 1st Street; Suite 800; Duluth, MN 55802 • (218) 529-3742

**Robert Gardner, Artistic Director**

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Design by Cheryl VH • Production by Custom Printing

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