

# **A GREAT ART ORGANIZATION IN İSTANBUL**

## **EXCITING COUNTDOWN HAS STARTED FOR 1ST İSTANBUL INTERNATIONAL BALLET CONTEST**

**First project will be conducted between 8- 13 September 2008 at Cemil Reşit Rey Concert Hall with the contributions of İstanbul Governorship and İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality as İstanbul 2010 European Culture Capital Agency project, through the organization of the General Directorate of State Opera and Ballet. Exciting countdown has started for the contest where semi-finalists have been elected.**

## **ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT MEETINGS OF BALLET WORLD IN TURKEY FOR THE FIRST TIME**

Organized as İstanbul 2010 European Culture Capital project, guest of honors of 1st İstanbul International Ballet Contest will be legendary Vladimir Vasilliev who is considered as the greatest ballet artist of the century , who is also previous director of Bolshoi Ballet, and Ekaterina Maximova; his wife and the primary dancer of Bolshoi Ballet. Vasilliev and Maximova will share their experience and knowledge with the dancers.

In addition to the jury panel that consists of 11 persons who are world known in the international arena, Cuba National Ballet's primary dancers Viengsay Valdes Herrera and Romel Frometa who play an important role in global ballet world, as well as etoile dancers of Bordeaux National Ballet Vanessa Feuillate and Roman Mikhalev that are among major representatives of French ecole will take the stage on gala night. Besides, this elite community will meet Turkish art lovers in Turkey for the first time with this organization, where major editors and critics of the international dance media will also appear.

Following DVD elections conducted in Ankara, 36 dancers were selected to involve in the contest as semi-finalists among 54 applications. 19 contestants from 'Children's Category' from Turkey, America, Japan, Kazakhstan,

Bulgaria, Switzerland and Italy, and 17 dancers from 'Adults' Category' from Turkey, South Korea, Kazakhstan, Russia, Moldova, Poland, Japan and Serbia will come to our country to experience this excitement.

**The organization has been launched by General Manager of the State Opera and Ballet Prof Rengim Gökmen, and Art Director of the contest Nilay Yeşiltepe Güngör. The contest coincides with 60th anniversary celebrations of Turkish Ballet. Semi Final of the contest which will be held on 9-10 September 2008, and the Final contest that will be held on 12 September will be conducted at CRR Concert Hall at 20:00. Entry of the public to the contest is free.**

Being the first of its kind in Turkey, the organization will end with a great gala night and award ceremony on 13 September 2008. The gala night will be conducted with contributions of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism Mr Ertuğrul Günay. General manager of State Opera and Ballet Prof. Rengim Gökmen, and Chairman of the Execution Committee of İstanbul 2010 European Culture Capital Agency Mr Nuri Çolakoğlu will give a speech. Following the cinevision show which will be displayed in remembrance of the 60th anniversary of Turkish ballet, elite dancers of the international dance arena, as well as 'Turkish Ballet Stars' who won medals in international contests will take the stage and present an unforgettable show at the night.

Arzu Kıran, Serhat Güdül, Emre Güler, Burak Kayıhan, Bahri Gürcan and Ayşem Sunal from Ankara State Opera and Ballet, Selim Borak and Deniz Zirek from İstanbul State Opera and Ballet, Kıvanç Ekin and Aslı Çilek from İzmir State Opera and Ballet, and Tolga Burçak and Selin İnan from Antalya State Opera and Ballet will also take the stage at gala night. Tan Sağtürk will be the emcee of the gala night. Dancers who will become entitled to receive award will take stage with a song individually. Tickets can be obtained from CRR counters and at [www.dobgm.gov.tr](http://www.dobgm.gov.tr).

Jury panel of the contest will include 11 juries, 3 of whom are Turkish. Turkish jury members of the contest are national artist Meriç Sümen Kanan who is previous General Manager of State Opera and Ballet and who assumed the jury membership of many international contests, Mehmet Balkan who is the previous director of Portugal National Ballet and who was assigned as the best artistic director of Europe in the recent years and who is the first dancer of Turkey to win a medal, and finally Evinç Sunal, who is one of the first ballet artists of our country that worked as ballet director for long years.

International jury members of 1st İstanbul International Ballet Contest are: Charles Jude (Jury chairman), Prof Konstanze Vernon (Artistic Director of

Bordeaux National Ballet, Evelyn Teri (Director of the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts of Munich University), Robert Denvers (previous chief instructor at Vienna National Ballet), Sakiko Arai (previous artistic director of Belgium Royalty Ballet), Celi Barbier (Member of the Board of Directors of Star Dancers Ballet Foundation), Mihaela Vieru (Dance Critics), György Szakaly (Publisher and editor of Dance for You magazine), and Artistic director of Hungarian Dance Academy.

Within scope of the contest, young dancers will share know-how with jury members, utilizing their knowledge, contact with other contestants from other countries and contest under the roof of a common platform with them.

### **BIG PRIZE IS 6.000 EURO**

Dancers between the ages of 15-19 will contest within 'Children's Category', while dancers between 20-26 ages will contest within 'Adults' Category'. Several prizes will be given within scope of different categories. Yet, the biggest prize of the organization is 6000 euro and the İstanbul Grand Prix. Jury's Special Award will be offered in the name of Dame Ninette de Valois- founder of Turkish Ballet. In addition, Dance Europe Magazine editor Emma Menning will offer Rising Dancer award to a dancer.

**Sustaining program of 1st İstanbul International Ballet Contest which will be broadcasted on NTV for 3 days will be as follows:**

**Semi-final contests that will be held on 9-10 September will be recorded broadcasting on 11 September, while final contest that will be held on 12 September, as well as the gala night (13 September) and award ceremony will be broadcasted live. Broadcasts will start at 20.00.**

It is quite important for İstanbul to host such an organization every two years, both with regard to the city and the art of dance. The organization will offer international opportunities for young dancers, in addition to encouraging Turkish artists, and it will also contribute to the development of competition environment, which is a necessity for art.

For detailed information, please visit [www.dobgm.gov.tr](http://www.dobgm.gov.tr) and [www.istanbulballetcompetition.org](http://www.istanbulballetcompetition.org).