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SILJA SCHANDORFF TO DANCE '*RED SHOES* or *Legs of Fire*'

Royal Danish Ballet Principal Dancer to Perform American Premiere of Dramatic New Work by Choreographer Flemming Flindt

Dennis Nahat, Artistic Director of Ballet San Jose Silicon Valley, announced today that he has engaged **Silja Schandorff**, Principal Dancer for the Royal Danish Ballet, as guest artist. Miss Schandorff will dance the starring role of Ella in the American premiere of Flemming Flindt's ***RED SHOES* or *Legs of Fire***, October 18-21, 2001 at San Jose Center for the Performing Arts. "I was pleased to secure a perfect fit for this demanding role," said Nahat. "Because of her years of experience with the Royal Danish Ballet and Flemming Flindt, Silja brings a unique understanding to this distinctly Danish heroine."

Miss Schandorff last performed in North America as Odette/Odille in New York City Ballet's production of ***Swan Lake***. She has also appeared as Juliet in ***Romeo and Juliet*** with Boston Ballet, and Elite Syncopation with the National Ballet of Canada. ***RED SHOES* or *Legs of Fire*** will be her first appearance with Ballet San Jose Silicon Valley. Miss Schandorff trained at the Ballet School of the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, became an apprentice in 1985 and was engaged as a member of the Royal Danish Ballet in 1987. In 1991 she was promoted to soloist with the company and was named a principal dancer in 1992. Her soloist roles with the company include Odette/Odile in ***Swan Lake***, Aurora in ***The Sleeping Beauty***, Kitri and the Dryad Queen in ***Don Quixote***, Hippolyta/Titania in ***A Midsummer Night's Dream***, the title role in ***La Sylphide***, the Ballerina in ***Etudes***, Hilda in ***A Folk Tale***, and the title roles in ***Caroline Mathilde*** and ***Giselle***. She performed the role of Lady W. in the 1998 World premiere of ***RED SHOES* or *Legs of Fire***.

Miss Schandorff has performed in numerous galas and festivals including: **Nijinsky Gala** in Hamburg, **Spoleto Festival** in Italy, United We Dance with **San Francisco Ballet**, **The Bournonville Group** in Genzano/Italy, **Nina Ananiashvili and International Stars** in Moscow, as well as galas in Riga, Canada, Brazil, Island, Norway, Spain and more. She won The **Gold Medal** at the 1989 **Erik Bruhn** Competition. In September 2000 she received the **European Prince Henrik of Denmark Award**. In 1998 Queen Margrethe of Denmark made Silja Schandorff a **Knight of The Order of Dannebrog**. Miss Schandorff's repertoire includes; A. Bournonville, G. Balanchine. J. Robbins, M. Petipa, R. Nureyev, J. Neumeier, S. Lifar, K. MacMillan, M. Bejart, H. Lander, F. Flindt, W. Forsythe, P. Martins, J. Kylian, H. v. Manen, A. Ailey, P. Schaufuss, R. Hynd, A. Lærkesen, and H. Thomasson.

RED SHOES* or *Legs of Fire is a full-evening work that blends elements of the Hans Christian Andersen tale "The Red Shoes" (1845) and the 1948 Michael Powell and Emeric Pressurger film of the same name with a portrayal of the short and dramatic life of Danish ballerina Elna Lassen. Lassen was one of the most talented dancers of the 1920s in Europe and a beloved principal of the Royal Danish Ballet until she took her own life on September 19, 1930 at the age of twenty-nine.

RED SHOES or Legs of Fire is presented October 18 through 21 at Center for the Performing Arts, 255 Almaden Boulevard in downtown San Jose. Single tickets (which go on sale September 17th) are \$20 to \$68 with discounts available for seniors, students, and groups. Subscriptions for the full ballet season including ***RED SHOES or Legs of Fire*** are available now. For tickets and additional information call the Ballet Box Office, (408) 288-2800.

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Note: Electronic transmissions of Miss Schandorff's headshot are available. Call Lee Kopp at publicity (408) 288-2820 x 210 or email, lkopp@balletsanjose.org.