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## ***Great Performances* Spotlights Rudolf Nureyev's Iconic 1964 Production of "Swan Lake" April 11 on PBS**

*Featuring new interviews with Nureyev's fellow dancers and today's dance contemporaries including Michael Birkmeyer, Polina Semionova and others*

### **Synopsis:**

On October 15, 1964, Russian dancer Rudolf Nureyev's "Swan Lake" took the stage at the Vienna State Opera. In his novel interpretation of this iconic ballet favorite, Nureyev revolutionized the role of the male dancer in the ballet with his choreography, seeking to be the prima ballerina's counterpart. With great British ballerina Margot Fonteyn as his partner, ***Great Performances: The Magic of Nureyev*** features extensive excerpts from the production that was captured for posterity two years after its 1964 stage premiere. In new interviews, dancers **Michael Birkmeyer** and **Gisela Cech**, who danced alongside Nureyev at the premiere of "Swan Lake," share personal insights on Nureyev's peerless virtuosity as well as his mercurial off-stage personality. In addition, contemporary experts look back at Nureyev groundbreaking technique from a modern-day perspective. ***Great Performances: The Magic of Nureyev*** premieres Friday, April 11 at 10 p.m. ET on PBS ([check local listings](#)), [pbs.org/gperf](http://pbs.org/gperf) and the [PBS App](#). This broadcast follows previous programs that explore the stories behind other performing arts legends such as ***Great Performances: The Magic of Callas***, ***Great Performances: The Magic of Horowitz*** and ***Great Performances: The Magic of Spirituals***.

### **Notable Talent:**

- Charles Jude – Dancer; Nureyev's friend
- Marie-Claude Pietragalla – Dance and choreographer

- Julie Kavanagh – Author, “Nureyev: A Life”
- Eric Gauthier – Dancer and choreographer; Artistic Director of Gauthier Dance
- Gisela Cech – Dancer in 1964 “Swan Lake;” Nureyev’s dance partner
- Michael Birkmeyer - Dancer in 1964 “Swan Lake;” Nureyev’s friend
- Polina Semionova – Principal dance artist, Staatsballet Berlin
- Kirill Serbrennikov – director, ballet entitled “Nureyev”

### **Short TV Listing:**

Experience Rudolf Nureyev’s legendary production of “Swan Lake” co-starring Margot Fonteyn.

### **Long TV Listing:**

Experience Rudolf Nureyev’s revolutionary 1964 production of “Swan Lake” with ballerina Margot Fonteyn through extensive excerpts and interviews with their fellow dancers Michael Birkmeyer, Gisela Cech and others as they analyze Nureyev’s virtuosity.

### **Series Overview:**

For more than 50 years on PBS, **Great Performances** has provided an unparalleled showcase of the best in all genres of the performing arts, serving as America’s most prestigious and enduring broadcaster of cultural programming. Showcasing a diverse range of artists from around the world, the series has earned 67 Emmy Awards and six Peabody Awards. The [Great Performances website](#) hosts exclusive videos, interviews, photos, full episodes and more. The series is produced by The WNET Group. **Great Performances** is available for streaming concurrent with broadcast on [PBS.org](#) and the [PBS App](#), available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO.

### **Production Credits:**

A production of Sounding Images in cooperation with Unitel and co-production with ZDF and ARTE, **The Magic of Nureyev** is a film by Anne-Kathrin Peitz and produced by Claus Wischmann and Maximilian Geschke. For **Great Performances**, Stephanie Dawson is producer, Bill O’Donnell is series producer and David Horn is executive producer.

### **Funding:**

Major funding for **The Magic of Nureyev** is provided by the Lewis “Sonny” Turner Fund for Dance, The Charles & Lucille King Family Foundation and the S. Irving and Annie Nevard Sherr Foundation. Series funding for **Great Performances** is provided by The Joseph & Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation, the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust, the Thea Petschek Iervolino Foundation, the Abra Prentice Foundation, LLC, Jody and John Arnhold, The Starr Foundation, The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation, Leni and Peter May, Seton J. Melvin, the Kate W. Cassidy Foundation, the Blanche and Hayward Cirker Charitable Lead Annuity Trust, the Estate of Worthington Mayo-Smith, and Ellen and James S. Marcus.

**Websites:** <http://pbs.org/gperf>, <http://facebook.com/GreatPerformances>, [@GPerfPBS](https://twitter.com/GPerfPBS),  
<http://youtube.com/greatperformancespbs>, [giphy.com/great-performances](https://giphy.com/great-performances)  
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#### **About The WNET Group**

[The WNET Group](#) creates inspiring media content and meaningful experiences for diverse audiences nationwide. It is the community-supported home of New York's [THIRTEEN](#) – America's flagship PBS station – [WLIW](#), THIRTEEN PBS KIDS, WLIW World and Create; [NJ PBS](#), New Jersey's statewide public television network; Long Island's only NPR station WLIW-FM; [ALL ARTS](#), the arts and culture media provider; newsroom [NJ Spotlight News](#); and FAST channel PBS Nature. Through these channels and streaming platforms, The WNET Group brings arts, culture, education, news, documentary, entertainment, and DIY programming to more than five million viewers each month. The WNET Group's award-winning productions include signature PBS series ***Nature***, ***Great Performances***, ***American Masters***, and ***Amanpour and Company*** and trusted local news programs like ***NJ Spotlight News with Briana Vannozzi***. Inspiring curiosity and nurturing dreams, The WNET Group's award-winning Kids' Media and Education team produces the PBS KIDS series ***Cyberchase***, interactive ***Mission US*** history games, and resources for families, teachers and caregivers. A leading nonprofit public media producer for more than 60 years, The WNET Group presents and distributes content that fosters lifelong learning, including initiatives addressing poverty, jobs, economic opportunity, social justice, understanding, and the environment. Through Passport, station members can stream new and archival programming anytime, anywhere. The WNET Group represents the best in public media. Join us.

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