

January 3, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Bengt Jörgen appointed to the Order of Canada**

**Toronto:** Canada's Ballet Jörgen is pleased to announce that **Artistic Director & CEO Bengt Jörgen** has been appointed a **Member (C.M.) of the Order of Canada** by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada, for his commitment to promoting ballet in Canada as a choreographer and artistic director.



*"I am truly humbled by my appointment to the Order of Canada and to be recognized for the incredible work being done by Canada's Ballet Jörgen. For 31 years, the Company has lived by the motto of the Order of Canada – a desire for a better country. I am grateful for the countless artists, crew, staff, Board Members, volunteers, presenting partners and supporters who have shared our vision to make classical ballet accessible to all Canadians."*

– Artistic Director Bengt Jörgen

As a choreographer, Mr. Jörgen has created more than 30 full-length ballets for numerous ballet and opera companies including the National Ballet of Canada, The Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the American Ballet Studio Company, and the Hong Kong Ballet. His re-creation of major classical works such as *The Nutcracker: A Canadian Tradition*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty* are celebrated for re-energizing and bringing dramatic clarity to traditional ballet.

Bengt Jörgen is a winner of the prestigious Clifford E. Lee Choreography Award presented by the Banff Centre to recognize new works by Canadian choreographers. He is also the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his significant contribution to Canada by bringing professional dance to communities across the country.

Mr. Jörgen co-founded Canada's Ballet Jörgen in 1987 with a mission to support the development and dissemination of Canadian choreography. Since its inception, CBJ has exclusively danced works created for the company by Canadian and Canada-based choreographers and has produced a total of 229 original creations by 92

choreographers. This includes eight full-length ballets and five works created especially for children.

Over the past 31 years, CBJ has grown to become Canada's most active touring organization. Every season, the company performs coast to coast, travelling over 50,000 km to reach underserved communities across every Canadian province and into the United States. To date, CBJ has reached 253 communities in Canada and 60 in the United States.

Canada's Ballet Jörgen focuses on delivering dance to underserved communities across Canada and the company reaches over 60,000 people every year. 30% of the Company's audiences are of diverse origin with an annual household income of less than \$35,000. Additionally, one third of our audiences for public performances are under the age of 18.

-30-

Ongoing support is provided by the Ontario Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Toronto Arts Council.

Canada's Ballet Jörgen would also like to acknowledge the sustained support of National Presenting Partner, Bank of Montreal.

### **About the Order of Canada**

Created in 1967, the Order of Canada is one of our country's highest honours. Presented by the governor general, the Order honours people whose service shapes our society; whose innovations ignite our imaginations; and whose compassion unites our communities.

Close to 7 000 people from all sectors of society have been invested into the Order of Canada. Their contributions are varied, yet they have all enriched the lives of others and have taken to heart the motto of the Order: DESIDERANTES MELIOREM PATRIAM ("They desire a better country"). The striking six-point white enamel insignia they wear symbolizes our northern heritage and our diversity, because no two snowflakes are alike.

Appointments are made by the governor general on the recommendation of the Advisory Council for the Order of Canada. For more information about the Order of Canada or to nominate someone, visit [www.gg.ca/en/honours](http://www.gg.ca/en/honours).

### **About Canada's Ballet Jörgen**

Canada's Ballet Jörgen is one of Canada's largest dance companies and the country's leading touring company. Currently Celebrating its 31<sup>th</sup> season, Canada's Ballet Jörgen enriches our lives by bringing professional ballet to communities – large and small, urban and rural – across Canada. Known for the warmth and beauty of its productions, CBJ reaches every province, delivering more than 1,500 performances, ballet classes and community engagement events involving over 60,000 participants

annually. To date, CBJ has reached 253 different communities in Canada and 60 in the US.

The company specializes in reaching underserved communities, and effectively reaches households with income of under \$35,000. Canada's Ballet Jörgen is the 2011 winner of The National Arts Centre Award for Distinguished Contribution to Touring – the first Ontario Performing Arts Organization to win this award.

[canadasballetjorgen.ca](http://canadasballetjorgen.ca)

For more information, photos, and/or to request an interview, contact:  
Stephen Word, [stephen@balletjorgen.ca](mailto:stephen@balletjorgen.ca) 416-961-4725