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## Celebrated Dancers, Acclaimed Pianist Return to Ford Center

International artists to perform Sept. 20 at UM Honors Convocation

SEPTEMBER 11, 2018 BY JONATHAN SCOTT



Alessandra Ferri (left) and Herman Comejo dance during their previous appearance with Bruce Levingston at the Ford Center. Photo by Thomas Graning/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

OXFORD, Miss. – Legendary dancer Alessandra Ferri and Herman Comejo, star principal of American Ballet Theater, return to the **Gertrude C. Ford Center for the Performing Arts** for the Fall Convocation of the University of Mississippi’s **Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College**.

They will be joined by longtime friend and musical partner Bruce Levingston, acclaimed concert pianist and holder of the prestigious Fant Chair and Chancellor’s Honors College Artist-in-Residence at the university. The performance will reunite three renowned artists for an evening of dance and music.

The performance, open to the public, is set for 7:30 p.m. Sept. 20. Tickets, priced from \$25 to \$35, can be purchased at the **Ole Miss Box Office**. Box office hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday.

“Ferri and Comejo are two of the most amazing and gifted artists on the planet,” Levingston said. “They each bring a depth of communication and artistry to the stage that is extraordinarily rare. It is a distinct honor and joy to perform with them here once more.”

Ferri, one of the world’s most celebrated dancers, holds the rare title of prima ballerina assoluta. She was recently awarded the coveted

Olivier Award for a second time in London.

Comejo, an Argentinian ballet star who, at 16, was the youngest winner of Moscow International Ballet Competition, is a virtuoso dancer in the American Ballet Theatre.

Levingston, who recently performed a sold-out concert at Carnegie Hall, has been hailed by The New Yorker as “a force for new music” and The New York Times for his “mastery of colors and nuance.”

Ferri, Comejo and Levingston will present a night of choreographed works, and Levingston will perform the music of Chopin, Debussy, Glass, Mozart, Rachmaninoff and Satie. Levingston also will be joined by other musicians from Ole Miss to create a musical ambiance that will highlight these illustrious dancers’ magical art.

The three performers have performed to critical acclaim throughout the world. One critic wrote of their New York City premiere performance together: “The combination of these three great artists is more than the sum of its parts. The Ferri-Comejo partnership is as full of rapture and poetry as that legendary pairing of Fonteyn and Nureyev.

“For his part, pianist Bruce Levingston was the perfect third to bring in and elevate this into a true concert and dance performance. Levingston’s playing was sublime throughout.”

Ferri, Comejo and Levingston will perform works together that have been created especially for them by such distinguished choreographers as Russell Maliphant and Wayne McGregor. Comejo also will perform a tango that he choreographed, and Levingston will play a number of solo works from his most recent recording.

“We are excited and humbled to welcome back to our university Italy’s famed prima ballerina assoluta, Alessandra Ferri, and the great dancer Herman Comejo, who will perform with our own renowned Honors College Artist-in-Residence, Bruce Levingston,” said Douglass Sullivan-Gonzalez, Honors College dean.

“These splendid artists will engage our students and the Oxford community with their graceful dance and music. Their performance three years ago was breathtaking and kicked off their world tour to famed

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OXFORD, Miss. – Peer recognition is a rewarding experience for anyone, but University of Mississippi researcher Amir Mehrara Molan was elated when an article he co-authored recently received the Most Cited Paper Award at the 102nd Transportation Research Board meeting in the nation’s capital. The International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology presented the civil engineering

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OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy’s new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying “thank you.” “It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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#### Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to

venues. I expect their return will be a historic performance that will be the talk of the town for years to come.”

Ferri, born in Milan, trained at the school of the Teatro alla Scala opera house and attended the Royal Ballet School in London. Winner of the prestigious Prix de Lausanne in 1980, she joined the Royal Ballet that year and was soon made a principal dancer with the company.

In 1985, she was invited by Mikhail Baryshnikov to join American Ballet Theatre, where she danced as a principal until 2007. She has received numerous international awards, including the Sir Lawrence Oliver Award, the Dance Magazine Award and the Benois de la Danse Prix. She was presented the Cavaliere della Republica Honoris by Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, then-president of the Italian Republic, and holds the title of prima ballerina assoluta.

“We are so pleased to return to Mississippi and the beautiful town of Oxford,” Ferri said. “Performing with Bruce Levingston and Herman Comejo is always a very special and moving occasion, and we look forward to once again sharing our art with the wonderful audience at the University of Mississippi’s Ford Center.”

Comejo, a native of Argentina, began his training at Teatro Colon’s Instituto Superior de Arte in Buenos Aires and continued his studies at the School of American Ballet in New York. He performed as a guest artist with numerous ballet companies around the world and in 1997 won the Gold Medal at the VIII International Dance Competition in Moscow.

He joined the American Ballet Theater in 1999 and was promoted to principal dancer in 2003. Considered among the world’s greatest dancers, he has received many awards and distinctions, including the Benois del la Danse Prize and Dancer of the Year by The New York Times.

“Mississippi gave birth to our first magical trio performance,” Comejo said. “I am so happy to return there and share this magic again with Bruce Levingston and Alessandra Ferri.”

For tickets or more information about the performance, call the Ford Center Box Office at 662-915-7411 or visit <http://fordcenter.org/event/ferri-comejo-levingston-an-evening-of-dance-and-music/>.

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