

## Veronica Tennant, C.C. Narrator Bio

During her illustrious career as Prima Ballerina with The National Ballet of Canada, Veronica Tennant won a devoted following on the international stage as a dancer of extraordinary versatility and dramatic power. She danced for 25 years across North and South America, Europe and Japan, with the greatest male dancers of our time, including Rudolf Nureyev, and Mikhail Baryshnikov. Tennant gave her farewell performances in *Romeo and Juliet* and in a subsequent gala – *A Passion For Dance – Celebrating the Tennant Magic* in 1989.

Particularly celebrated as a gifted musical dancer and as an actor, Veronica Tennant has appeared extensively as narrator/creator on the concert stage. She has performed with all the major orchestras across Canada, including; The Toronto Symphony and The National Arts Centre Orchestra, and debuted her own musical narrative of *The Nutcracker* with The Vancouver Symphony. Her highly successful *The Little Match Girl*, combines narration, an original music score by Christopher Donison, and choreography for her and a young child dancer. Premiering at Harbourfront, Toronto December 1995, it was invited again in 1996 as well as with The Edmonton Symphony. Warmly received, *The Little Match Girl* has been presented in 1997, with The Victoria Symphony and The Vancouver Symphony, and in 1998 with The Calgary Philharmonic.

Veronica Tennant has been a frequent guest with The Festival of the Sound in a number of collaborations. She performed Patrick Cardy's *The Snow Queen*, with The St. Lawrence Quartet; and Godfrey Ridout's *Exile* – drawn from the journals of Susanna Moodie. She devised and performed with pianist Marc Andre Hamelin, a drama/dance piece, *Maud*, drawn from the journals of Lucy Maud Montgomery. She co-wrote and performed *Choice and Chance Encounters* with clarinetist, James Campbell, and jazz pianist, Gene DiNovi. A specially commissioned work *Green Steps in Sunshine*, was created for James Campbell and Veronica Tennant, by composer, Andrew MacDonald, and was performed and broadcast on CBC Stereo. Also at "The Sound" and on its United States tour, Miss Tennant narrated Igor Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*. She has narrated Patrick Cardy's *The Little Mermaid* for *Collaborations*, at The DuMaurier Centre at Harbourfront. In 1997, she played *The Piano Man's Daughter*, in a 22 performance national tour with Timothy Findley, Sylvia Tyson and Joe Sealy, directed by Paul Thompson. Her collaborations of music and spoken word have also brought her together with Denis Brott's Festival de Musique de Chambre de Montreal – in English and French readings of Janacek's and Tchaikovsky's letters with Jean Louis Roux. Veronica Tennant narrated the premiere performance of *The Weaving Maiden* by Chan Ka Nin for Soundstreams and CBC Radio in 2006.

Having earlier in her career collaborated extensively with conductor and Music Director, Boris Brott, creating several new dance concert works such as *Bolero* choreographed by Constantin Patsalas, and *Botticelli Pictures & Khatchaturian* by David Allan; in May 2009, Veronica Tennant joined forces again with Boris Brott in hosting the NACO Family Youth Concert, *Dance with the NAC Orchestra*. And in the Fall of 2009 she and James Campbell reprised *Green Steps in Sunshine* which was composed for, dedicated to them by Andrew Macdonald. They were guest performers at the Prince Edward County Music Festival, Artistic Director, Stephane Lemelin.

In her career in film and television as producer/director and writer; Miss Tennant's dance special for CBC Television – *Karen Kain: Dancing In The Moment* garnered her the coveted International EMMY Award for Performing Arts in 1999. Always meshing musical influences together in her work, she has conceived such films as *TRIO*, with the Rolston trio playing the Adagio movement of Beethoven's Trio opus 11, and *Shadow Pleasures* which was scored by contemporary Canadian composers; John Gzowski, Rick Hyslop, and Anne Bourne. Her *Finding Body & Soul* commissioned a score from David Fleury, and her most recent film, *Vida y Danza, Cuba* – shot in Havana and Toronto boasted the best of Cuban musicians and composers as well as a piece by Jane Bunnett. It aired on CTV/Bravo in 2008/0 and was screened at Luminato and at the Havana Film Festival. A recipient of the Governor General's Performing Arts Award and the Walter Carsen Award for Excellence in the Performing Arts, Veronica Tennant was an inductee into Canada's Walk of Fame in 2001. She has written two books for young people published by McClelland and Stewart and is National Ambassador for UNICEF. Veronica Tennant was the first dancer to be honored as an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1975, and was promoted in 2003, to Companion the country's highest honour.