



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Honorary Degree Citations The degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, conferred on Dr. Veronica Tennant June 1992

It is my great honour, Madam Chancellor, to present to you Veronica Tennant, Canadian Prima Ballerina, whose stunning mastery of dance for twenty-five years moved audiences the world over. Through her movement's dialogue and unconfined joy in performing, she has been praised as the most dramatically effective and musically sensitive artist ever to develop in the Canadian ballet world. Enriched by her reflected radiance, the force and beauty of her art recalls the truth revealed by Yeats: "How can we know the dancer from the dance?"

London born, Veronica Tennant has called Canada home since age nine. With five years' dance training in England already completed, she began the intense focus on ballet that was rewarded, at age 18, by becoming the only artist to join the National Ballet of Canada as Principal Dancer directly upon leaving school. From her 1965 leading role debut in *Romeo and Juliet*, Veronica Tennant's career has included brilliant partnerships with the great male dancers of her generation, including Erik Bruhn, Rudolf Nureyev and Mikhail Baryshnikov. Overcoming severe injuries with perseverance born from pride and a profound technical assurance, she perfected a flowing gentleness that graced her dramatic presence on the premier stages around the world. In 1989, she danced for the last time her debut role as Juliet in a stunning final performance, retiring in triumph.

The disciplined virtuosity that set Veronica Tennant apart in the world of ballet continues