

Ekaterina Kondourova
and Islom Baimuradov

EKATERINA KONDAUROVA

Sleek and slinky, Ekaterina Kondourova thrilled audiences at City Center's Fall for Dance festival last September. The Kirov Ballet beauty rocked Alexei Ratmansky's hauntingly repetitive *Middle Duet*. Each flick of her leg or whip of her head towards partner, Islom Baimuradov, had people gasping. The lithe limbs of this 24-year-old with fiery red hair and a penetrating gaze surge into the movements with an earthy yet powerful fervor.

Born in Moscow and trained at the Vaganova Academy, Kondourova joined the Kirov in 2000 and became a soloist in 2006. Though she's been cast in plenty of classical roles (*Lilac Fairy* in *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Medora* in *Le Corsaire*), she thrives on contemporary works. When she returns to City Center this April with the Kirov Ballet and Orchestra, she will be dancing in *Steptext*, by her favorite choreographer—William Forsythe. "I feel freedom in his dancing. You get so much energy from Forsythe's movement. After performing the ballet, you are still excited." —Emily Macel

Top: Stephanie Berger, Courtesy Fall for Dance. Bottom: Tamit Sakakini, Courtesy Sharna Fabiano



SHARNA FABIANO Sharna Fabiano is a thinking-person's tango dancer. Balancing atop tall pencil-thin heels, she traces rococo patterns as she swivels and snakes a leg around partner Isaac Oboka. A modern dancer by training, Fabiano immersed herself in the Argentine tango community a decade ago. Trained by tango revivalist Daniel Trenner and by teachers in Buenos Aires, she is among a new wave of tangueras (female tango dancers) who assert their power to lead on dance floors and concert stages. "She takes tango movements and brings them to greater artistic expression," notes Boston-based dancer and artistic advisor Michael Silverman. In March at Washington, DC's Dance Place, her Sharna Fabiano Tango Company offers a premiere fusing her two worlds: contemporary and tango. A former member of the women's tango collective TangoMujer Company, Fabiano, 31, still teaches social tango around the U.S. and Europe. "Dancing with someone so closely activates your creative energy," she says. "It transforms you in subtle ways." —Lisa Traiger