Be brilliant
Boston Ballet bedazzles in George Balanchine's Jewels

By Angelique Nehmzow

As if opening a treasure chest to discover a trove of precious stones, the audience soiled and ached every time the curtains were raised to reveal dancers in glittering costumes, posed in front of sparkling backdrops of enormous crowds. Boston Ballet’s 50th season concluded this year with George Balanchine’s Jewels.

It was a fitting tribute to the famed neoclassical choreographer on whose recommendation the Founders Foundation helped establish the Boston Ballet company in 1960. Premiered at the New York City Ballet in 1967, Jewels was inspired by the jewelry of Claude Arpels of Van Cleef & Arpels, and is divided into four sections: Emeralds, Rubies, and Diamonds.

Music by Gabriel Fauré. Emeralds references the origins of ballet in 19th-century France and evokes the luxury and romance of that time. The female dancers wore long pale-green tulle skirts with bejeweled necklaces and headpieces, and the male dancers were dark-green velvet waistcoats.

The dancing was graceful, calming, and utterly absorbing — a wonderful prescription for stress relief. Following Balanchine’s skillful and creative choreography, two couples and a trio interweave their bodies in complex routines. The couple ending was emotionally intense, as three male dancers hanged low to the ground, heads thrown back with one arm reaching to the sky.

Rubies, set to the dramatic Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra by Balanchine’s close collaborator Igor Stravinsky, provides a stark contrast. The female dancers were red lustrous with decorated flags like miniskirts, which created “click clack” noises when they skipped playfully or did the occasional balletic booby shake.

The male dancers were “in the chase,” running comically across the stage. At one point four feet arched them over a long-legged female dancer, holding each of her arms and releasing her male partner in a graceful pirouette.

The final piece, Diamonds, displays the splendor of classical ballet in the Russian Imperial style and is set to Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 3 in D Major, Op. 29. The dancers were shimmering foun-

To dissemble the legality of Snowden’s actions, criminalizing investigative journalists as “conspirators” along the way. Measurable evidence of a mountain of government crimes — including government officials like James Clapper lying to Congress — sits in front of them.

In other instances, the press has been hyperbolic and overblown, and personal attacks as well. For example, when given a first TV interview with Snowden, Brian Williams asked, “Are you a patriot?” and focused on the baseless hypothetical that Snowden might leak secrets to Russia. The press’s disregard for official doctrine, and their manufactured symmetry between the government’s position and reality, simply diverts our attention from the magnitude and unfathomable implications of the situation.

Jewels is a showcase of the neoclassical style, an impressionistic history of ballet, and a Balanchine classic. Boston Ballet’s production is an admirable feat — its dancers are, like perfect gems, bound to put a sparkle in your eyes.

Two performances of Jewels will be staged at the Boston Opera House May 22 – June 1.