

newsletter

July/August 2017

WHILST THE ROYAL Ballet Companies are on holiday, we hope you are having an enjoyable Summer watching the Maryinsky at the Royal Opera House and English National Ballet at the Royal Festival Hall.

As you will see from our letterhead, we are very pleased to announce that Christopher Powney, Director of The Royal Ballet School, has agreed to join the Association as one of our Presidents. Chris wrote that he was very honoured to be asked and delighted to accept.

Meetings

At our last meeting of the Royal Ballet's season, we were delighted to welcome Soloist **Tierney Heap** as our guest, shortly before the Company went on its tour to Brisbane, Australia. A graduate of the Royal Ballet School, who had also attended Elmhurst School for Dance when younger, Tierney gave us an interesting account of her training, before talking about her career in the Company. Coached by Dame Monica Mason as Myrthe and the Lilac Fairy, by Patricia Neary in *Rubies* and chosen by Carlos Acosta to dance the role of Carmen in his production, Tierney has had an exciting start to her career. She was promoted to First Artist in 2016 and to Soloist at the end of the same season. Tierney gave us a very entertaining evening.

A summary report is available on our website once the report has been checked by the guest speaker/s. If you do not have access to the internet and would like a copy of a report, please send an A5 stamped, addressed envelope to Roger Handley, 12 Pinewood, Willow Grove, Chislehurst, Kent, BR7 5BT.

Members are reminded that interviews should not be recorded or filmed and that photographs should only be taken at the end of the meeting. We welcome dancers speaking freely when they come to meetings. Sometimes they say things they do not wish to see in print and edit this out of the official reports. Therefore, please do not post your own reports of meetings on social media.

Future meetings

At our first meeting of next season on Thursday 24 August we are very pleased to welcome Principal

Alexander Campbell as our guest. Alexander last spoke to us four and a half years ago, fairly soon after his move from Birmingham Royal Ballet. Born in Australia, he trained at Academy Ballet before joining the Royal Ballet School. In 2003, he won Silver at the Genée competition and was a Prix de Lausanne Finalist. In 2005, he joined Birmingham Royal Ballet and was promoted to First Soloist in 2009. He joined The Royal Ballet in 2011 as a Soloist, was promoted to First Soloist the following year and to Principal in 2016. Most recently seen as Oberon in *The Dream*, Alexander's roles have included the Prince in both *Sleeping Beauty* and *Nutcracker*, Colas, Basilio, The Mad Hatter and White Rabbit, the Young Man in *Two Pigeons*, Jack in *Sweet Violets* and, most recently, Bratfisch and the man in *Tarantella*. He created the role of Henry Clerval in *Frankenstein*. We can expect Alexander to give us an interesting start to the season.

On Wednesday 6 September we welcome newly promoted Principal Character Artist **Bennet Gartside** as our guest. Bennet was originally scheduled to talk in June, but an evening stage call prevented this. However, it is very timely that we can welcome him after his recent promotion. Bennet last spoke to the Association in 2010, before he danced a number of principal roles. Most noticeably these have included Prince Rudolf in *Mayerling*, Leontes in *The Winter's Tale*, the Husband in *The Concert* and Widow Simone in *La Fille mal gardée*. His role creations include Walter Sickert in *Sweet Violets*, the Father in *Hansel and Gretel*, Alphonse in *Frankenstein* and Antigonus in *The Winter's Tale*. Bennet joined The Royal Ballet in 1995, after dancing in the School performance of *Two Pigeons*. He was promoted to First Soloist in 2007. He is also a film-maker and ballet teacher and maintains The Royal Ballet's video archive. We can expect a fascinating evening.

On Thursday 21 September we are delighted to welcome Royal Ballet Principal **Sarah Lamb** as our guest. Sarah last spoke to the Association in 2012. She joined the Company in 2004 from Boston Ballet, where she had danced since 1998, and was promoted to Principal in 2006. As well as dancing lead roles in the classical and heritage repertoire, Sarah has created roles in many of Wayne McGregor's ballets,

including the title role in *Raven Girl*. Other creations have included Perdita in Christopher Wheeldon's *The Winter's Tale* and a role in David Dawson's *The Human Seasons*. Most recently Sarah danced both Mary Vetsera and Countess Marie Larisch in *Mayerling* to critical acclaim and roles in both *Rubies* and *Diamonds in Jewels*. Injured at the end of last season, Sarah will start the new season as Alice and in *Elite Syncopations*, before creating a lead role in Twyla Tharp's new work *The Illustrated 'Farewell'*. We can expect a very interesting evening.

Provisional dates for meetings next season are: Thursday 12 October, Wednesday 25 October, Thursday 2 November, Wednesday 15 November, Friday 24 November, Friday 8 December, Wednesday 13 December, Thursday 4 January, Thursday 18 January, Wednesday 25 January, Wednesday 14 February, Thursday 22 February, Thursday 8 March, Thursday 22 March, Thursday 12 April, Friday 20 April, Thursday 10 May, Thursday 24 May, Thursday 7 June. Please note that the meeting scheduled for 5 October has been cancelled.

Meetings begin at 7.30 p.m. and are at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church which is at the eastern end of Shaftesbury Avenue, opposite the Shaftesbury Theatre. From Covent Garden, walk up Endell Street, cross over Shaftesbury Avenue and walk past the opticians. Doors open at 6.45 p.m. unless otherwise stated. Entrance is £4 for members, £3 for concessions, £8 for guests.

Twyla Tharp's *The Illustrated 'Farewell'*

The Association donated £5000 towards the production of *Rhapsody* for the 2015-16 season, enabling the revival of original designs, with some minor alterations. When presenting the cheque to our Patron, Kevin O'Hare, at our 2015 Annual Dinner, our Chairman indicated that we would like to make such a donation every couple of years. To enable this to happen, we have asked members to make small donations alongside their membership renewal and those attending our annual Open Rehearsal to make a further donation.

It was, therefore, with great pleasure that our Chairman presented another cheque to Kevin at the Annual Dinner last March. We are delighted to announce that this £5000 will go towards Twyla Tharp's *The Illustrated 'Farewell'*. Twyla takes her classic ballet *As Time Goes By* and expands it into a new work specially created for The Royal Ballet to Haydn's 'Farewell' Symphony no. 45. Twyla started work on the ballet with Sarah Lamb and Steven McRae during last season, so we can hope to hear something about it at Sarah's talk.

News

Members will have been saddened to hear that Dame Beryl Grey has been in hospital for an operation, following a diagnosis of bowel cancer. Her consultant has stipulated that she accept no engagements until she has fully recuperated from the surgery. We wish her a speedy recovery and look forward to welcoming her to a meeting in the near future. We also congratulate her on being made a Companion of Honour in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

We are reminded by our first Chairman and co-founder Shane Tyler that October 2017 is the Association's 44th Anniversary. Some members may wish to mark this by visiting the grave of his wife and co-founder Sylvia Ann Tyler, our former membership secretary. Her grave is in Edgwarebury Cemetery, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 8QP. Details of transport, etc. can be obtained from Emma Durkin, Customer Services Administrator on 020 8958 0090 or emma@ejbb-jbc.org.uk or at their website www.edgwareburycemetery.org.uk.

Members will be delighted to hear that ABT Artist and former Royal Ballet dancer Gemma Bond is a Princess Grace Awards winner for her Choreography Fellowship with The Washington Ballet. As well as winning this award, Gemma presented an evening of her choreography for two nights at the end of July at the Joyce Theatre in New York.

The Royal Ballet

Our Patron, Royal Ballet Director Kevin O'Hare has announced the following promotions and changes to the Company. London born Yasmine Naghdi has been promoted to Principal and will partner Hull born Xander Parish, First Soloist with the Mariinsky Ballet, in The Royal Ballet's Opening the New in September as part of the Hull City of Culture celebrations. Christina Arestis, Bennet Gartside, Kristen McNally and Thomas Whitehead are promoted to Principal Character Artist; Matthew Ball and Marcelino Sambé are promoted to First Soloist; Reece Clarke, Benjamin Ella and Anna Rose O'Sullivan are promoted to Soloist and William Bracewell joins the Company as a Soloist from Birmingham Royal Ballet; and, Hannah Grennell, Calvin Richardson, Gina Storm-Jensen and David Yudes are promoted to First Artist. Giacomo Rovero, Francisco Serrano and Charlotte Tonkinson become Artists, following a season as Aud Jepsen Young Dancers. We have send cards congratulating them all

For the 2017/18 Season, the Company welcomes six graduates from The Royal Ballet School as Aud Jepsen Young Dancers: Joonhyuk Jun, Joshua Junker, Sae Maeda, Nadia Mullova-Barley, Aiden O'Brien and

Amelia Palmeiro. Joshua was a RBS Ballet Association Award Winner in 2015. Stanilsaw Węgrzyn joins the Company as Prix de Lausanne dancer for the Season. First Soloist Melissa Hamilton returns to the Company after a two year leave of absence performing with Semperoper Dresden.

Leaving the Company, are Principals Zenaida Yanowsky and Matthew Golding after 23 and 3 years in the Company respectively; First Soloist Valeri Hristov, who joins the artistic teaching faculty of The Royal Ballet School, after 15 years with the Company; First Soloist Johannes Stepanek who retires after 17 years to progress to a new career with opera and dance; First Artist Hayley Forskitt who retires from dance and Artist Solomon Golding who joins San Francisco Ballet. We marked the departure of Zenaida and Johannes at our Annual Dinner and will do so for the others at an appropriate time next season.

Birmingham Royal Ballet

Artistic Director David Bintley has announced the following changes at Birmingham Royal Ballet: Tzu-Chao Chou and Delia Matthews are promoted to Principal; Arancha Baselga and Yasao Atsuji to First Soloist; Miki Mitzutani to Soloist; and Laura Day and Alys Shee to First Artist. The following dancers join the Company as Artists: Elisabetta Formento from Estonian National Ballet; Lynsey Sutherland from Polish National Ballet; Haoliang Feng, Augustus Payne and Harry Wright from the Royal Ballet School; and Brogan McKelvey and Hamish Scott from Elmhurst Ballet School. Claudia Nicholson from the Royal Ballet School and Jade Wallace from Elmhurst Ballet School join as Apprentices. Haoliang was an Association Award Winner in 2016.

Principal Joseph Caley leaves after 12 years to join English National Ballet as a Principal; Principal Jamie Bond leaves after 14 years to pursue a career in performance enhancement training for professional athletes; Soloist William Bracewell leaves after 7 years to join the Royal Ballet as a Soloist; First Artist Lewis Turner leaves after 7 years and Artist Alexander Bird after three years, both to join the corps de ballet of Staatsballett Berlin; and Artists Emily Smith and Johanne Monfret leave after six years and a one year apprenticeship respectively to pursue opportunities elsewhere.

We send our best wishes to them all and to Principals Jenna Roberts and Joseph Caley who got married this summer, as did Principal Delia Matthews to her fiancé Josh.

The Royal Ballet School

Members will have enjoyed the impressive Royal Ballet School performances both in Holland Park and

at the Royal Opera House. Two of our former award recipients graduated. As announced above, 2015 winner Joshua Junker from the Netherlands is joining The Royal Ballet as an Apprentice and 2016 winner Haoliang Feng from China joins Birmingham Royal Ballet. As previously announced, though only in her second year at the School, 2016 winner Julia Conway from America joined English National Ballet part way through the season. We wish them every success in the future. Yuki Suguira, who was a 2015 winner when in her First Year, was injured for much of last season. Although she danced in the School performances, she is repeating her graduate year to enable her to attend auditions in the Spring. Harrison Lee, the other award winner in 2016, moves into his graduate year in September.



A few days before graduation, our Chairman attended the students' final assembly of the year to present the Ballet Association's 2017 Royal Ballet School Awards. This year's recipients were First Years Victoria Norris from Australia and Davi Ramos from Brazil and Second Year Gearoid Solan from Ireland. As was agreed last year, our awards, of £600 each, are no longer be used to sponsor the students. Instead, each student is able to choose how to spend their award, as long as it is "arts related" in some way. Many members will have seen Victoria dance one of the principal roles in *Les Sylphides*, as well as a Yellow Girl in *Concerto* and in Jonathan Watkins' *Onwards*. Davi also danced in *Concerto* and *Onwards*, whilst Gearoid performed in Ohad Naharin's *Echad Mi Yodea* and *Concerto*. Members will have the opportunity to meet the students after Christmas when they will attend our annual meeting with one of their teachers.

Visit to BRB and Elmhurst Ballet School

Forty members of the Association attended another successful annual trip to Birmingham at the end of June. Most of the group met for a late lunch at the Milano Restaurant, before attending an entertaining talk from Ruth Brill about her career and her new

ballet *Arcadia* which was being performed in the programme of three short story ballets, which we watched that evening. The other two ballets performed were Michael Corder's *Le Baiser de la fée* and John Cranko's *Pineapple Poll*.

After breakfast the next morning, the group moved to Elmhurst Ballet School, where once again we received an enthusiastic welcome from our President Robert Parker. At the end of coffee, our Chairman presented the Association's Award to sixth form student Brittany Green, who is using the award to help cover the costs of entering the Genée Competition this September in Portugal. We then watched a sixth form girls class taught by former SWRB/ BRB soloist Susan Lucas. Following lunch, we were privileged to watch a rehearsal for the upcoming school performance of a ballet choreographed by teacher and former English National Ballet dancer Lee Robinson. Following a brief question and answer session, we presented Robert with the proceeds of a collection taken during lunch.

Membership

It is the time of year when we ask you to renew your membership. Please return the attached renewal form to Liz Atkins, Membership Secretary, no later than the end of October. If you joined the Association, as a new member, after the start of April 2016, your membership covers this coming season. Your membership card will have indicated this. To save on costs your committee has decided to only issue membership cards to new members on joining. If you have lost your card and need a replacement, please indicate this on your form, enclose a stamped addressed envelope and Liz will send you a new one. If you have a friend who you think might be interested in joining the Association, please give them a copy of the form marking it as an application. If you have an email address, please consider receiving the newsletter by email in future given the rising cost of postage. If you would prefer to pay by electronic transfer, our bank details are given on the form. Please do not process the electronic transfer until after 1 September. If you are paying electronically, please send a copy of the form to Liz as indicated on the renewal form along with proof of your bank transfer.

As mentioned above, the Association has made a second donation to the Royal Ballet towards a partial revival. For the 2015-16 season, we donated £5000 towards the revival of the original sets and costumes, with some minor alterations, for the Company's

production of *Rhapsody*. For the 2017-18 season, we have made a similar donation towards Twyla Tharp's *The Illustrated 'Farewell'*, a new ballet which expands her classic *As Time Goes By*. We presented the cheque to our Patron Kevin O'Hare at our Annual Dinner in March.

We hope that this will become a regular donation to the Company, possibly every two years. To enable us to do this, we ask that all members consider adding a small donation to their renewal fee. Those of you who have attended the Open Rehearsals over the last four years have experienced a wonderful opportunity to observe the Company at work. Making a donation to the Association enables members to contribute in a small way towards future revivals and new work. We are very grateful to those members who have made donations over the last year.

Ivan Putrov & Svetlana Zhakarova

Once again, former Royal Ballet Principal Ivan Putrov presents *Men in Motion* at the London Coliseum on November 22nd and 23rd. Since the first sold-out London run, Ivan has continued to develop an exploration of the role of the male dancer over the past century, presenting ballet by choreographers such as Mikhail Fokine, Russell Maliphant, Vaslav Nijinsky and Arthur Pita. Dancers will once again include Daniel Proietto and the Royal's Edward Watson. Amongst others, they will be joined by Matthew Ball and former Royal Principal Irek Mukhamedov. Irek will perform a new work created for him by Arthur Pita, whilst Edward will reprise Arthur's *Volver, Volver* and Daniel will dance Russell's exquisite *Afterlight*.

In the same week, on 20, 21, 24 and 25 November, Bolshoi Prima Ballerina Svetlana Zakharova brings her critically acclaimed *Amore* to the London Coliseum after sold out performances in Moscow, Parma, Modena, Ravenna, Genoa, Riga and Monte Carlo. Joined by leading dancers from the Bolshoi including principals Mikhail Lobukhin, Denis Rodkin and Denis Savin, she has collaborated with choreographers Yuri Possokhov, Patrick de Bana and Marguerite Donlon.

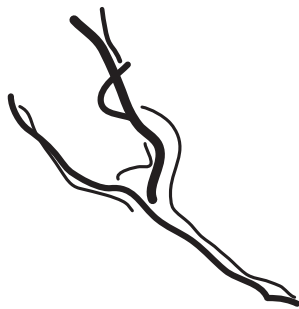
As previously, we hope to arrange access to rehearsals of *Men in Motion* and, possibly, *Amore*. Details of this will be in the next newsletter.

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theballetassociation

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RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP – 2017-2018 SEASON

Please renew my membership of The Ballet Association for the 2017-18 season as...

an ordinary member (£15) *joint members (£22.50) **a concessionary member (£10)

Previous membership no(s)

Title(s) First name(s)

Surname(s)

Address

Phone Home Work Mobile

Email (please write clearly and indicate if this is a change of address.)

I/we would like to receive the newsletter by email post (please use email if at all possible)

I enclose my cheque / P.O. made payable to *The Ballet Association* for £ including £ optional donation
or...

I would like to pay by electronic transfer

Please pay to The Ballet Association, sort code 30-93-92, account no. 00186483

(If paying by electronic transfer, please do not make the transfer until September. Please complete a renewal form and send it to Liz Atkins at the address below, along with proof of transfer.)

Please return this form to:

Liz Atkins, Membership Secretary, The Ballet Association, 3 Batchwood Drive, St Albans, Herts AL3 5RZ.

If you require a new membership card please enclose a stamped and addressed envelope. Please note that all renewal applications should be received by the end of October. Please give a copy of this form to any friend who you feel may be interested in joining the Association.

*two ordinary members living at the same address

**please indicate the type of your concession below

under 16 over 60 student registered unemployed registered disabled