



P R E S E N T S

Ballet Icons Gala



9 March 2025

LONDON
COLISEUM

Ballet Icons is the proud organiser of the Ballet Icons Gala



Ballet Icons Gala is one of the most recognised ballet projects with a star-studded cast from around the world.



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Ballet Icons Gala

Programme

The Sleeping Beauty

Marianela Núñez OBE and William Bracewell
 Music: Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
 Choreography: Marius Petipa (1818-1910)

Delibes Suite

Iana Salenko and David Motta Soares
 Music: Leo Delibes (1836-1891)
 Choreography: Jose Martín (b. 1969)

Once I had a Love

UK Première
 Maria Kochetkova and Sebastian Kloborg
 Music: Blondie and Philip Glass (b. 1937)
 Choreography: Sebastian Kloborg (b. 1986)

Swan Lake (Black Swan pas de deux)

Madison Young and Victor Caixeta
 Music: Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
 Choreography: Marius Petipa (1818-1910)

Toujours

UK Première
 Mara Galeazzi and Jason Kittelberger
 Music: Domenico Clapasson (b. 1965)
 Choreography: Mara Galeazzi (b. 1973)

Le Corsaire

Inès McIntosh and Shale Wagman
 Music: Adolphe Adam (1803-1856) /
 Riccardo Drigo (1846-1930) / Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917)
 Choreography: Marius Petipa (1818-1910) /
 Joseph Mazilier (1797-1868)

A Stranding

World Première
 Marie-Agnès Gillot, Travis Clausen-Knight and
 James Pett
 Music: Max Richter (b. 1966)
 Choreography: Travis Clausen-Knight (b. 1990) and
 James Pett (b. 1990)

Laurencia

Mayara Magri and Giorgi Potskhishvili
 Music: Alexander Krein (1883-1951)
 Choreography: Vakhtang Chabukiani (1910-1992) and
 Mikhail Messerer (b. 1948)

INTERVAL 25 min

Fordlândia

UK Première
 Lucía Lacarra and Matthew Golding
 Music: Jóhann Jóhannsson (1969-2018)
 Choreography: Juanjo Arqués (b. 1977)

Grand Pas Classique

Nicoletta Manni and Timofej Andrijashenko
 Music: Daniel François Esprit Auber (1782-1871)
 Choreography: Victor Gsovsky (1902-1974)

Rubies (from Jewels)

Maria Kochetkova and Osiel Gouneo
 Music: Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)
 Choreography: George Balanchine (1904-1983)

Diana and Acteon

Margarita Fernandes and António Casalinho
 Music: Cesare Pugni (1802-1870)
 Choreography: Agrippina Vaganova (1879-1951) and
 Vakhtang Chabukiani (1910-1992)

To & Fro

Mayara Magri and Matthew Ball
 Music: Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)
 Choreography: Matthew Ball (b. 1993)

Giselle

Chloe Misseldine and Reece Clarke
 Music: Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)
 Choreography: Marius Petipa (1818-1910) after Jean Coralli
 (1779-1854) and Jules Perrot (1810-1892)

Thando

UK Première
 Anna Tsygankova and Giorgi Potskhishvili
 Music: Mthuthuzeli November (b. 1993)
 Choreography: Mthuthuzeli November (b. 1993)

Don Quixote

Maia Makhateli and Timothy van Poucke
 Music: Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917)
 Choreography: Alexander Gorsky (1871-1924)
 after Marius Petipa (1818-1910)

Welcome letters



It is with enormous pride and happiness that we present this special project for the 19th time in London. Since its establishment in 2006, the Ballet Icons Gala has not only become a recognized and highly respected brand in the ballet world but also one of the most anticipated cultural and social events globally. Our reach has extended beyond London to various destinations, and our aspirations continue to grow. I am delighted to announce that this year we have launched our much-anticipated membership scheme.

This initiative provides the Ballet Icons family globally with special privileges and benefits, making it a truly unique experience for our members.

Over the years, it has been a great pleasure to showcase the finest ballet talent from around the world, featuring stars and principals from leading companies. We are also dedicated to discovering and presenting the young stars of the future. The Ballet Icons Gala brings you beloved classical masterpieces, each performed by different dancers whose unique interpretations allow you to appreciate these works from new perspectives.

Showcasing the creations of the most prominent contemporary choreographers, including world premieres, is another key mission of the Ballet Icons Gala. We are also committed to offering our star dancers the opportunity to explore their choreographic talents. It is vital to engage the audience's emotions through the art of ballet, but even more importantly, we aim to address global issues, such as climate change, harnessing the power of art and dance to do so.

The Ballet Icons Gala is now on a path to making a powerful impact on humanity and climate change, in partnership with [vildwerk](#), and its Founder Chiara Gorodesky, whose work are truly remarkable. I would like to sincerely thank all our amazing dancers performing tonight, the Ballet Philharmonic under the exceptional Maria Seletskaja, our entire team working tirelessly for the project's success, all our partners, and you - our dedicated audience - for your trust.

Enjoy the magic of tonight, and we look forward to seeing you at the 20th Anniversary Ballet Icons Gala next year!

Olga Balakleets
 Founder, CEO, and Artistic Director
 Ballet Icons Gala



It is a great pleasure to welcome you once again to the Ballet Icons Gala at the London Coliseum. The Gala provides a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the performance of some of the greatest dancers from across the world and it is now well-established as one of the highlights of the cultural year. Huge thanks are due to Olga Balakleets and all those involved in organising what I know will be a magical evening.

Rt Hon Sir John Whittingdale OBE MP
 Former Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
 Member of Parliament for Maldon



How wonderful it always is to see such a talented collection of artists from across the world performing on the Coliseum stage – not only for entertaining and exciting the London ballet audience but also for making such a special opportunity for the dancers to meet up with colleagues from so many different companies around the globe. Wishing Olga and all those involved in Ballet Icons every success – as ever, it will certainly be a night to remember!

Kevin O'Hare
Director, The Royal Ballet



It is always an immense pleasure to welcome the Ballet Icons Gala to the London Coliseum. These annual events have become one of the highlights in London's dance calendar during this century.

Once again, Olga Balakleets and her excellent team, have curated a remarkable programme of dance, which will be experienced only on this one evening, leaving memories that will be cherished long into the future.

Quality and variety are always the hallmark of every Ballet Icons Gala and this evening promises to be no exception with ground-breaking new work sitting alongside excerpts of the great 19th and 20th century ballets; and contemporary dance intermingling with classical ballet; not to mention the music of Blondie and Mick Ronson sitting alongside that of Tchaikovsky and Delibes!

I wish everyone a wonderful evening of ballet with the hope that these exceptional evenings will continue for many more years to come.

Graham Watts OBE
Dance Writer and Critic
Chair, Dance Section of the Critics' Circle and the National Dance Awards



Bringing this gala to life alongside Olga Balakleets is both a privilege and a labour of love. We work tirelessly to curate an evening of extraordinary ballet, ensuring each dancer performs at their absolute best, creating memories that linger long after the curtain falls. What makes Ballet Icons so special is not just the incredible talent it gathers, but the attention to detail — from the selection of world-class artists to the choreography and music that make this night unforgettable. We honour both the stars of today and the rising talents of tomorrow, celebrating ballet's rich past, present, and future. I am honoured to be part of this family and what has become London's most anticipated ballet event of the year. May this evening inspire you as much as it inspires us.

Mariana Gomes
Global Artist Manager, Ballet Icons Gala



For seven years, I have had the privilege of contributing to the different aspects of the Ballet Icons Gala, this extraordinary celebration of artistry. Witnessing its evolution into one of London's most prestigious cultural events has been a profound honour. At the heart of this brilliance stands Olga Balakleets, whose vision and dedication have transformed a single evening into a breathtaking spectacle of world-class ballet. Her genius unites talent, passion, and elegance, offering audiences an unforgettable night of artistic excellence.

May this evening inspire, enchant, and remind us all of the timeless beauty of dance.

Rebeca Riofrio
Chairwoman for the UK Parliamentary Society of Arts



Both Wayne Sleep and I wish the Ballet Icons Gala another superbly successful evening with this hugely worthwhile occasion. Presenting an outstanding international cast of contemporary and classical performances artistically merged. Always a thoroughly enjoyable and memorable occasion.

Liz Brewer
Wayne Sleep OBE



It's March at the London Coliseum - so it's 'Ballet Icons' time! It will be exciting to see Olga Balakleets compendium of great dancers for the 2025 edition, always an exciting combination of the known and loved and those yet to be discovered and embraced by London audiences.

Maina Geldgud AO
Dancer and a veteran ballet administrator



It is with immense gratitude that I welcome you to this very special night of dance. Though I regret not being able to be there in person, my heart is very much with you in London – a city so dear to me and where I spent many wonderful and happy years. The Ballet Icons Gala has long been a highlight in London's cultural calendar, and its impact on me has been profound over the years. The sheer amount of talent gracing the stage in a single evening is overwhelming, and I cherish the memory of each and every performance I have witnessed. To now have the opportunity to collaborate with this iconic event is truly a dream come true. I am in awe of Olga Balakleets, whose vision and dedication have made this gala an unparalleled celebration of ballet at an international level. Olga is not only an inspiration but a true role model, bringing together the finest artists from around the world in a dazzling tribute to this exquisite art form.

It is also brings me sheer joy that the gorgeous Mara Galeazzi and Jason Kittleberger performed *Toujours* tonight, a work presented at the vildwerk inaugural season *Time to Protect Our Planet* in New York City last October. *Toujours* examines the emotions of loss and extinction of being. It relates to the daily number of species lost on our planet and the deep feeling of realizing that we are responsible for our actions on earth.

vildwerk helps to protect and preserve this beautiful planet by inspiring and educating through the performin arts to save, rewild and restore biodiversity locally and globally and I am excited to collaborate with the treasure that is Ballet Icons Gala in future.

Chiara Gorodesky
Founder, vildwerk.

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The sensual and narrative legacies of Romantic Ballet

Today, ballet is a slave to popular opinion perhaps more than ever before. State funding for the arts continues to diminish around the world and although some of this income has been replaced by private philanthropy, no company can survive by regularly presenting ballets that fail to meet box office targets.

The inevitable outcome of this economic reality has been to rely upon the staple classical repertoire, albeit augmented from time to time by the obligation to make something new, the reality being that it is the vintage ballets that rake it in at the box office. In companies all around the world, the most popular ballets stem from the same original source that was nurtured over just five years in late 19th century St. Petersburg where the fusion of many great talents – led by Tchaikovsky and Petipa – created three works that still remain the world's most popular representations of the art. These are, of course, *The Sleeping Beauty* (1890), represented at this evening's gala, *The Nutcracker* (1892) and *Swan Lake* (reworked by Petipa and Ivanov in 1894).

The earlier decades of the 19th century had been dominated by another ripe period of creativity, enriched by the social and cultural influences that defined the Romantic period, with its fascinations for the supernatural, the mystical and the exotic. Romanticism spread through society and culture, in painting, architecture, literature and music. But, whereas in every other branch of the arts, the output of the Romantic era is still widely accessible today, the ephemeral nature of dance means that almost everything from that period has been lost. Even the most ardent connoisseur of ballet is likely to have only experienced the rich heritage of the Romantic epoch through its two great survivors: *La Sylphide* (1832) and *Giselle* (1841), also represented in tonight's programme; remnants of a golden age that transformed the art of ballet, which have come down to us through history by retaining a worldwide performance appeal.

© Courtesy of Galina Ulanova Foundation



Galina Ulanova in *Giselle*



Anna Pavlova in *La Fille mal gardée*

© Courtesy of Dancing Times

The beginning of the Romantic era introduced a period of dramatic change in artistic perspective, in which people's ideas about themselves and the world around them were radically altered. The earlier years of the Romantic period (the decades that bridged the 18th and 19th centuries) were more concerned with material issues in the real world rather than the supernatural. This is perhaps best seen, today, in the matters of landowning inheritance and marriage that dominate that other great surviving narrative of *La Fille mal gardée* (dating from 1789). This grounding in reality can also be seen in the first act of *Giselle* with its focus on a day in the life of fieldworkers and hunters, centred upon the village folk rather than the aristocracy; all bound up in the age-old tale of a romance that crosses this impenetrable social divide (even if it does so unknown to the deceived and innocent village girl).

By the late 18th century, the almighty power of the church in Rome and of the divine rights of monarchies had been challenged. This tumultuous era led to the rise of constitutional rather than "God-ordained" power and many countries became defined by issues of national identity rather than by their ruling families. Also, the growing vitality of business and trade created a bourgeoisie that needed to be entertained. These factors led to a change in the way that ballet was presented: as public entertainment in theatres rather than for the private pleasure of the aristocracy.

Audiences for ballet had therefore diversified to include a much broader range of society – led by the rapidly changing social strata in post-revolutionary France – and so it was essential for theatrical productions to achieve a new level of communication with their audiences by developing a greater association with popular culture. This can best be seen in dance leaving the elegance of a formal indoor setting of codified structures and steps, moving "outdoors" with a focus on popular rustic dances of celebration, such as can be seen in the first act of *Giselle*.

An increasingly essential aspect of this period was to establish new national identities for ballets and the characters portrayed within them, thus reflecting the wider changes taking place across Europe. In ballet, this cross-pollination of influences was carried by the proliferation of nomadic guest dancers and ballet masters, helping to establish an international phenomenon that had stretched across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas by the early 19th century. This is well illustrated by a lampooning cartoon of the great ballerina, Fanny Elssler, drawn en pointe, standing on a map of the world, with one set of toes balanced upon Paris and the other on New York, while holding a sack of money in each hand, the left-hand loot clearly marked as *dollars*.

Identifying a character's nationality became a shorthand reference that helped define to the audience aspects of her personality. In essence, national dance became the medium through which human characterisation on stage was made possible. This growing emphasis on nationalism was also bound up with an increasing fascination for the exoticism (even perhaps, the eroticism) of faraway cultures, which came to provide characters, themes and settings for theatrical works, including ballet.

The Romantic era shifted the focus from the architectural patterns of the dance in its use of the floor space to the development of character and narrative through movement, often linked to the individual performance qualities of particular dancers. The great artists of the Romantic era became known for particular signature dances that best reflected their individual qualities of technique and expressiveness.

Other issues that are central to an understanding of Romantic ballet are the creation of '*Couleur Locale*', which means establishing a sense of national location through stereotypical associations of design, costume and gesture, which were often more evocative than they were accurate! Expressiveness is considered through the more co-ordinated use of the upper body, illustrated through Albrecht's entrance on the way to Giselle's grave and the way in which his subsequent variation in the second act pas de deux is transformed from being pure dance by the character's awareness of both Giselle's grave and the ethereal presence of the Wilis.

It is also worth examining various aspects of transforming the ballerina's art during the Romantic era. The use of the veil, the arabesque and floor space are key examples. The Opfermann

family – dancers working in Germany and Austria in the mid-19th century – left a sketchbook of ideas for the use of veils in ballet, including many variations of the sculptural potential for swinging and folding the fabric, thus extending the dynamic range of the dancer's movements.

The Romantic period brought innovations around the concept of balance, which contrasted with the stately and erect carriage that had characterised movement in 18th century ballet. The Romantic period developed the dynamic possibilities of moving in and out of balance, as embodied by the use of the arabesque. In the era of Romanticism the arabesque was more an expression of the natural world – a spectacular transition to represent the bending of a flower stalk, for example – or as an expression of national dance identities (such as Arabian dance from where the term arabesque originates) than it was to describe the formal set position of ballet technique that it was to become later in the nineteenth century. The innovations of Romantic Ballet also included the notion of falling to the floor to create theatrical impact and emotional power, a device that is used to significant effect in *Giselle*.

Femininity is a crucial feature of Romanticism. The Romantic period was perhaps more than anything else the era of the ballerina. Choreography and costume design concentrated the impact of movement, certainly in more provocative terms than ever before, on the female form. Changes to the costuming of ballerinas during this period enabled them to raise their legs higher, thereby creating visual lines that would have been unacceptably risqué in an earlier era. The use of fabric became a key part of the developing sensuality of dance through the Romantic period, which is well illustrated through the Pas de *L'Abeille* from the ballet *La Péri* (1843). This dance depicts the Péri - a supernatural girl - disturbing a bee when plucking a rose, which then gets caught up in the fabric of her dress. The ballet critic, Théophile Gautier wrote the libretto for *La Péri* and his record of the dance describes how in trying to escape the bee she removes the fabric and accidentally reveals her body.

This focus on storytelling coupled with a new freedom in costuming, a new dynamic in movement and the use of the veil created a shift towards sensuality which made the woman dancer the central active force in ballet. But this renewed focus on the woman was not just a matter of erotic titillation since the Romantic period created a new dependency on the woman's execution of demanding and virtuosic material.

The Romantic period transformed the performance of dance forever. Two centuries later, ballet is still largely centred on the leading role of the ballerina. We can also trace this legacy beyond ballet into modern dance since developments in balance, weight, and dynamic transitions informed not only the development of ballet technique but also the new inventions of the early modern dance pioneers, such as the sculptured fabric of Loie Fuller, the diaphanous costumes of Isadora Duncan, and the floor work of Martha Graham.

© Graham Watts OBE

© Courtesy of Dancing Times



Ballet La Péri

Programme notes

The Sleeping Beauty

Marianela Núñez OBE and William Bracewell

Music: Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Choreography: Marius Petipa (1818-1910)

The ballet is based upon Perrault's familiar fairy tale, with the story distilled to that of a princess put to sleep - by the prick of an enchanted spindle - for 100 years and magically reawakened by the kiss of a handsome prince. The first performance of Petipa's ballet was as a public dress rehearsal on 15th January 1890 at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg with Carlotta Brianza as the Princess Aurora, Pavel Gerdt as the Prince and Enrico Cecchetti as Carabosse, the wicked fairy.

It is the ballet that is widely regarded as the zenith of 19th century classicism, and it was created through a detailed collaboration between the composer and the choreographer. After the Russian Revolution, the ballet master, Nicholas Sergeyev smuggled a notated text to the West and it was this version that Ninette de Valois used in 1939 to demonstrate the classical achievements of the embryonic company that was to become (in 1956) The Royal Ballet and with which The Royal Opera House was ceremonially re-opened after the Second World War. It has become The Royal Ballet's signature work. It is also the ballet in which Rudolf Nureyev commenced his career in the West, dancing the Prince in the production of *The Sleeping Beauty* by the Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas in 1961.



Marianela Núñez in *The Sleeping Beauty*

This pas de deux effectively closes the wedding celebrations of the final act; and it is danced by Marianela Núñez OBE and William Bracewell, Principal Dancers at The Royal Ballet.

Delibes Suite

Iana Salenko and David Motta Soares

Music: Leo Delibes (1836-1891)

Choreography: José Martínez (b. 1969)

Delibes Duet is a dazzling classical pas de deux, choreographed by José Martínez, a Spanish dancer who was a former *danseur étoile* with Paris Opera Ballet and artistic director of the Compañia Nacional de Danza (the Spanish National Dance Company). The full *Delibes Suite* is set to music from *Coppélia* and *La Source* by Léo Delibes.

The pas deux, which has no story, was choreographed by Martínez, and premiered in Roissy-en-France on 16th March 2003 (he had made his first choreography, *Mi Favorita*, just in the previous year). It uses the traditional structure of a classical pas de deux, with a duet, variations for each dancer and then a coda where they both come back together. The dance mixes Martínez' trademark vitality with a subtle lightness. Original costumes were designed by the POB *étoile*, Agnes Letestu. It was revived for the Palais Garnier's Young Dancers' event in 2006 and taken into the repertoire of the San Francisco ballet in the following year. It is now regularly performed by many companies (including English National Ballet) and in galas around the world.

This classical pas de deux will be danced at the gala by Iana Salenko and David Motta Soares, Principal Dancers at Berlin State Ballet.

Once I had a Love

UK Première

Maria Kochetkova and Sebastian Kloborg

Music: Blondie and Philip Glass (b. 1937)

Choreography: Sebastian Kloborg (b. 1986)

This duet premiered at the Nervi Music Ballet Festival in Genoa, in 2021. Since then it has been danced regularly by the choreographer (Sebastian Kloborg) and Maria Kochetkova at festivals and galas around the world, including the *Stand With Ukraine Ballet for Peace* gala in Naples, in 2022.

Kloborg's choreography is a perfect match with the mash-up of Blondie's *Heart of Glass* (written by Debbie Harry and Chris Stein) and the second movement of the Philip Glass *Violin Concerto*, created by Daft Beatles (mashup producer Jonas Crabtree), which has become known as the "Crabtree remix".

© Costin Raclu



Maria Kochetkova and Sebastian Kloborg in Once I had a Love

The music featured in the TV adaptation of *The Handmaid's Tale*. The duet's title comes from 'Once I had a love and it was a gas, soon turned out it had a heart of glass', the opening lines of Blondie's song.

Swan Lake (Black Swan pas de deux)

Madison Young and Victor Caixeta

Music: Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Choreography: Marius Petipa (1818-1910)

Although now the most famous of ballets, *Swan Lake* was not originally well received when it premiered at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow on 4th March 1877, with choreography by Julius Reisinger. Legend has it that when Tchaikovsky heard the score composed by Delibes for *Sylvia*, which had premiered in Paris a year earlier, he declared that his own score for *Swan Lake* was "poor stuff by comparison"!

Revised interpretations were made for the Bolshoi by Joseph Hansen in 1880 and 1882; but it was the production by Marius Petipa (Acts 1 and 3) and Lev Ivanov (Acts 2 and 4) for the Mariinsky Theatre, in St. Petersburg, which premiered on 27th January 1895 that became the definitive version.

The ballet tells the story of Princess Odette, who is turned into a swan by the sorcerer, Von Rothbart. She can only return permanently to human form if a man swears true love for her, which happens when she encounters Prince Siegfried by the lakeside (ironically out hunting for swans with his crossbow). Von Rothbart, however, fools Siegfried into believing that his daughter, Odile, is Odette (disguised as a black swan) and, enchanted by the sorcerer, Siegfried unwittingly breaks his bond to Odette by promising to marry Odile.

In most versions of the narrative, Siegfried and Odette are reunited by the lakeside and fling themselves into the water to

rise again, finding everlasting love in the spirit world; however, in some interpretation Siegfried fights and defeats von Rothbart to break his spell so that Odette is returned to human form, and they can live happily ever after. The dual role of Odette and Odile is usually performed by the same ballerina, thus providing one of the most difficult challenges in the classical repertory. The relationship between Siegfried and Odette/Odile is defined in two pas de deux: the White Swan adagio (with Odette) in Act 2 and the Black Swan grand pas de deux (with Odile) in Act 3, which is famous for the rigorous challenge of 32 consecutive fouettés performed by the ballerina in her variation (or solo). The Black Swan pas de deux is performed tonight by Madison Young, Principal at the Bavarian State Ballet and Victor Caixeta, Guest Principal Dancer at the Dutch National Ballet.

Toujours

UK Première

Mara Galeazzi and Jason Kittelberger

Music: Domenico Clapasson (b. 1965)

Choreography: Mara Galeazzi (b. 1973)

Toujours, a compelling work that addresses the pressing issue of the global environmental crisis, was choreographed by former Royal Ballet Principal Mara Galeazzi, with funding support from the Dicky Buckle Fund (named in memory of ballet critic Richard Buckle). Galeazzi developed the piece over a two-year period, ultimately performing it alongside renowned international artist Jason Kittelberger. This deeply personal work was initiated just before the pandemic and is dedicated to her late father, who passed away early in the pandemic; the numerous lifts in the choreography symbolize the support he provided throughout her life.

At the Ballet Icons Gala, *Toujours* is presented in collaboration with the vildwerk., an organization committed to making the planet a sustainable home for all. The piece aims not only to showcase the exquisite artistry of ballet but also to inspire



Maia Makhately and Victor Caixeta in Swan Lake

© Altin Kafira

© Hisae Aihara



Mara Galeazzi and Jason Kittelberger in *Toujours*

awareness and action regarding environmental issues. Galeazzi and Kittelberger's beautiful performance is set to music composed by Galeazzi's friend, Domenico Clapasson.

Le Corsaire

Inès McIntosh and Shale Wagman

Music: Adolphe Adam (1803-1856) /
Riccardo Drigo (1846-1930) / Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917)
Choreography: Marius Petipa (1818-1910) /
Joseph Mazilier (1797-1868)

A ballet in three acts, loosely based on Byron's eponymous poem, *The Corsair* was originally choreographed by Joseph Mazilier, to music by Adolphe Adam, and premiered at the Paris Opéra on 23rd January 1856 (there had been an earlier version in London which is now long forgotten).

The complex story is of a young Greek woman, Medora, sold as a slave. She is rescued by the corsair (or pirate), Conrad; captured and rescued again; and the ballet ends with a spectacular shipwreck, from which both Medora and Conrad escape.

Jules Perrot staged a version (with additional music by Cesare Pugni and Prince Peter von Oldenburg) in St Petersburg in 1858, in which Marius Petipa danced the role of Conrad. Ten years later, Petipa revived the ballet in a new version, including his *Le Jardin Animé* scene with music by Delibes, essentially as a vehicle for his wife, Marie. However, it is the 1899 restaging for the Mariinsky Ballet by Petipa – with additional music by Riccardo Drigo and Léon Minkus – that provides the source for subsequent stagings. It was reconstructed, using choreographic notations in the Harvard University Theatre Collection, by Alexei Ratmansky and Yuri Burlaka for the Bolshoi Ballet in June 2007. English National Ballet is the only British company to

have *Le Corsaire* in its repertoire and last revived its staging by Anna-Marie Holmes, here at the London Coliseum, prior to the pandemic, in January 2020.

The sparkling pas de deux presented here has essentially developed a life of its own. Originally conceived as a pas de trois (with the slave being little more than an extra to help in the partnering), it became famous in its own right through the exploits of virtuoso dancers such as Vakhtang Chabukiani and Rudolf Nureyev (who was captured on film dancing the pas de deux with Margot Fonteyn in 1965). It is an exceptional show-stopping representation of virtuoso dancing, especially in the variations and coda, now regularly performed in galas. It is being danced tonight by Inès McIntosh and Shale Wagman, both from the Paris Opera Ballet.

A Stranding

World Première

Marie-Agnès Gillot,

Travis Clausen-Knight and James Pett

Music: Max Richter (b. 1966)

Choreography: Travis Clausen-Knight (b.1990) and
James Pett (b.1990)

PCK is the name of the creative pairing of James Pett and Travis Clausen-Knight, British choreographers who have worked together to push the boundaries of contemporary dance by crafting sensitively provocative work that is stimulated through their intensely powerful movement language. Their work has been commissioned from as far afield as Chile and Malaysia. In 2024, they were nominated as the Best Independent Company in the *National Dance Awards*.



Shale Wagman in *Le Corsaire*

© Francette Leveaux

© James Bort



Marie-Agnès Gillot in A Stranding

James and Travis first met Marie-Agnès Gillot, in 2015, when they were working together on Wayne McGregor's *Tree of Codes* at the Palais Garnier in Paris, The Armoury in New York and at Sadler's Wells in London. *A Stranding* has been developed between the three artists over a number of years and the work was finally created in Marie's studio in Normandy, taking inspiration from the seaside location.

James Pett has spoken of that motivation: *'The nature of such a landscape, wide, absent, active in a silent constant, evoked what we were feeling in our creative process. In a moment of observation, a stoic image of a woman standing and watching the tide, bare feet grazed by the fine particles of sand as they are pulled by the foaming waters. This immediately drew us to Marie, the immense life she has lived and the vastness of its touch. And within her still active life, she resides in a place of quiet, in a landscape that shifts in endless fluidity and solidity all at once, somewhere she lives and leaves in memories'*.

The motivation for *A Standing* also came from a brief poem:

"Is she weeping?
Wind kissed ear
Her sinking vigil
On sand hushed quiet...
Lay hold of the somewhere, suspended."

Laurencia

Mayara Magri and Giorgi Potskhishvili

Music: Alexander Krein (1883-1951)

Choreography: Vakhtang Chabukiani (1910-1992) and Mikhail Messerer (b. 1948)

Legend has it that *Laurencia* led a fifteenth century peasant uprising in a Spanish village, which inspired the Golden Age novelist, Lope de Vega, to write *Fuente Ovejuna* (the village

name), published in 1619. If it took de Vega two hundred years to immortalise the village, then *Laurencia* had to wait another three centuries for her headline as the titular heroine of a ballet created by the celebrated Georgian dancer, Vakhtang Chabukiani.

Laurencia was originally made for the Kirov in Leningrad and premiered in March 1939 with Chabukiani dancing the role of Frondoso, alongside Natalia Dudinskaya as the heroine. It is a quintessential example of the "choreodrama" genre so beloved by the leaders of the Soviet Union and later by Chairman Mao; in the same mould as Vasily Vainonen's *Flames of Paris* (1932) and *The Red Detachment of Women* (1964). All three ballets concern the overthrow of a despot by the underprivileged, and each showcases heroic women. They all end with the victorious masses spread across the breadth of the stage, advancing on the audience in joyful celebration of their triumph.

Given that the two Soviet ballets were creatures of their time, it is not surprising that both fell out of favour and ceased to be performed long before the age of Glasnost. The Russian ballet pedagogue, Michael Messerer, restaged both *Laurencia* and *Flames of Paris* on the Mikhailovsky Ballet of St. Petersburg: the former in 2010, and the latter, three years later. His version of *Laurencia* is not based on Chabukiani's Kirov production, which was last performed in 1972 (although a version was sustained in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi) but on a later staging for the Bolshoi, last presented in the late 50s. As a child of one of the most famous Muscovite ballet dynasties (his mother, Sulamith was prima ballerina at the Bolshoi; and his cousin was Maya Plisetskaya), Messerer has used his memories of the ballet (aided by unearthing an old film of Chabukiani's choreography) to piece together a staging that must be as close to authentic as possible.

Messerer's version of *Laurencia* was the first revival of the ballet for fifty years, and was subsequently premiered by Hungarian National Ballet in 2020.

INTERVAL

Fordlândia

UK Première

Lucía Lacarra and Matthew Golding

Music: Jóhann Jóhannsson (1969-2018)

Choreography: Juanjo Arqués (b. 1977)

Forlândia is the title of the sixth full-length studio album by Icelandic composer, Jóhann Jóhannsson, which was inspired by the failure of the utopian city that Henry Ford built in the rubber plantations of Brazil.

Lucía Lacarra and Matthew Golding created their *Forlandia* separated from one-another during the Covid confinement of 2020 and premiered it at Ballet Dortmund on 19th September 2020. This section, choreographed by Spanish choreographer, Juanjo Arqués, was part of a much larger production with additional choreography by Anna Hop, Yuri Possokhov and Christopher Wheeldon.

It's a piece about forced distance, about the need of being free to be out in the natural world again, and mostly about the dream and longings to be together again.

Grand Pas Classique

Nicoletta Manni and Timofej Andrijashenko

Music: Daniel François Esprit Auber (1782-1871)

Choreography: Victor Gsovsky (1902-1974)

This pas de deux by Victor Gsovsky was first performed at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, on 12th November 1949, danced by Yvette Chauviré – who had recently left the Paris Opera Ballet to dance with Gsovsky at the Ballets des Champs-Élysées – and Vladimir Skouratoff (who was a regular partner of both Chauviré and Tamara Toumanova).

The *Pas Classique* was composed by Daniel Auber perhaps best known for the opera *La muette de Portici*. Auber is commemorated by having one of the roads leading to the Palais Garnier (the Paris Opera House) and the nearby RER Station named after him.

Gsovsky left Soviet Russia in 1925 and led an itinerant life as a dancer, choreographer and ballet master, working largely in Germany, France (throughout WW2) and in post-war London. He returned to Germany as ballet director of the Munich State Opera in the early 1950s. He was best known as an influential



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Nicoletta Manni and Timofej Andrijashenko in Grand Pas Classique

teacher (with Chauviré and Violette Verdy among his most prominent pupils) and the *Grand Pas Classique* is certainly his best known and most enduring work. This dazzling potpourri of classical virtuosity must have had a particular resonance in post-war France and has been regularly performed at gala events and dance competitions over the last sixty years.

It is to be performed at the gala by Nicoletta Manni and Timofej Andrijashenko, Principals with La Scala Ballet in Milan.

Rubies (from Jewels)

Maria Kochetkova and Osiel Gouneo

Music: Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Choreography: George Balanchine (1904-1983)

George Balanchine's homage to three national schools of ballet through the metaphor of gemstones, inspired by a window display of jewellery in the *Van Cleef & Arpels* store in New York, was premiered on 13th April 1967 by New York City Ballet at the State Theater. The *Rubies* section was created on NYCB's two Patricia's - McBride and Neary - dancing with Edward Villella (and a corps of eight additional women). The full programme begins with *Emeralds*, danced to the music of Gabriel Fauré, and used by Balanchine as a motif to signify the romance of the Parisian school where he had been guest ballet master after the Second World War; and ends with *Diamonds*, his homage to the elegance of 19th century Russian ballet.

In between the soft elegance of *Emeralds* and the crisp classicism of *Diamonds*, *Rubies* demands a polar opposite style of pizzazz and attack, which Balanchine choreographed to the jazz-infused music of Stravinsky to portray the vibrant, dynamic, youthful style of ballet in New York, which Balanchine himself had created. *Rubies* is often danced as a stand-alone ballet, an extract of which is performed here by international guest star, Maria Kochetkova, and Osiel Gouneo, Principal Dancer with Bavarian State Ballet in Munich.

© Leszek Januszewski



Lucía Lacarra and Matthew Golding in Fordlandia

Diana and Acteon

Margarita Fernandes and António Casalinho

Music: Cesare Pugni (1802-1870)

Choreography: Agrippina Vaganova (1879-1951) and Vakhtang Chabukiani (1910-1992)

The *Diana and Acteon* pas de deux has had a chequered history. Its origins stem from *La Esmeralda*, a ballet in three Acts inspired by Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris* and originally choreographed by Jules Perrot to music by Cesare Pugni, which premiered in London at Her Majesty's Theatre on 9th March 1844, with Carlotta Grisi in the title role.

Marius Petipa choreographed a new version for performance at the Mariinsky theatre in St. Petersburg in 1886, for which Riccardo Drigo composed some additional music. On 3rd April 1935, the renowned Soviet pedagogue, Agrippina Vaganova revived the ballet with some new choreography including a pas de deux for the leading Soviet prima ballerina, Galina Ulanova and Vakhtang Chabukiani and it is the legacy of that performance that is now retained as a regular gala divertissement. It is danced here by the Portuguese dancers, Margarita Fernandes and António Casalinho, Soloist and Principal respectively at Bavarian State Ballet – winners of both the TV show *Got Talent Portugal* and the *Prix de Lausanne*.

To & Fro

Mayara Magri and Matthew Ball

Music: Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)

Choreography: Matthew Ball (b. 1993)

To & Fro represents the swing of a pendulum, which in turn illustrates some of the most fundamental laws of physics: the power of gravity; the balancing of forces; and the constant

movement. *To & Fro* can even define the passage of time. This simple device is interpreted in Matthew Ball's duet by two bodies, which explore the imagery and implications of this apparently indifferent motion and build upon its connotations: an elderly pair sway in time to the music, a child is pushed on a swing, a rollercoaster rockets through the air, a dangling pocket watch hypnotizes, a couple struggle to synchronise their energies... before moving towards equilibrium and harmony in their relationship.

The duet is created on *Notturmo* by Ottorino Respighi and was created by Ball in 2024 to be premiered at the International Draft Works at The Royal Opera House. The costumes are by Meg Hall.

Commenting on his choreography for *To & Fro*, Matthew Ball has written: *'As we oscillate from side to side we look to find harmony and flow with our movements. Sometimes moving as one, sometimes in direct contrast, driving each other on, clashing with one another. The sway of the music leads our momentum to ever greater heights and finally allows for us to come to perfect balance and stillness'*.

Giselle

Chloe Misseldine and Reece Clark

Music: Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)

Choreography: Marius Petipa (1818-1910) after Jean Coralli (1779-1854) and Jules Perrot (1810-1892)

This most famous of all romantic ballets was premiered at the Paris Opéra on 28th June 1841. It is now to be found in the repertory of every classical company in the world. *Giselle* is an innocent peasant girl who falls in love with Albrecht, a nobleman, masquerading as a peasant (named Loys). When she discovers that Albrecht is betrothed and his true identity is revealed, *Giselle* is driven to madness and dies. In some interpretations, she commits suicide by stabbing herself with Albrecht's sword; in others, she dies of a broken heart.

Giselle joins the nocturnal Wilis, vengeful spirits of girls who have died before their wedding-day, but the purity of her true love for Albrecht saves him from being danced to death by the Wilis (their routine vengeance against men). *Giselle* was first performed in both London and St. Petersburg in 1842, but it is the later Petipa productions for the Mariinsky (the last of which was in 1884) that provides the source of today's interpretations.

The gala features the 2nd Act pas de deux for *Giselle* and Albrecht, danced by Chloe Misseldine, a Principal Dancer with American Ballet Theatre and The Royal Ballet Principal, Reece Clark.

© Jesús Vallinas



Margarita Fernandes and António Casalinho in *Diana and Acteon*

© Altim Kafira



Anna Tsygankova and Giorgi Potskhishvili in Thando

Thando

UK Première

Anna Tsygankova and Giorgi Potskhishvili

Music: Mthuthuzeli November (b. 1993)

Choreography: Mthuthuzeli November (b. 1993)

Thando is a Xhosa word for love. Mthuthuzeli November's duet premiered at the National Opera and Ballet, Amsterdam, on 28th June 2024. It draws inspiration from the qualities of love, loving, being loved and the romantic ideal of love, emphasising the power of two people when they come together; and how comfortable and yet explosive that can be. The piece also draws its inspiration from a larger work by November entitled *From Africa With Love*. It is danced by the same dancers who performed the premiere, Anna Tsygankova and Giorgi Potskhishvili, Principals of the Dutch National Ballet.

Don Quixote

Maia Makhateli and Timothy van Poucke

Music: Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917)

Choreography: Alexander Gorsky (1871-1924)
after Marius Petipa (1818-1910)

The aging knight errant, created by Miguel de Cervantes in his novel published in two parts (1605 and 1615), has been the subject of many ballets, including a mid-eighteenth-century version choreographed by the French Ballet Master, Jean-George Noverre; but virtually every surviving production is based on

that created by Marius Petipa. His first version was a four-act comedy ballet, with music by Ludwig Minkus, which premiered at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow on 26th December 1869, in which Petipa gave full vent to his love affair with Spanish dance (he had danced in Spain in 1845). In 1871, Petipa extended the ballet to five acts for the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, using the same music and designs, but making significant revisions to the choreography.

The plot of the ballet centres on the love affair between Kitri (or Quiteria) and the barber, Basilio, which is briefly described in the second volume of Cervantes' novel, and their comedic attempts to escape Kitri's arranged marriage to the dilettante, Gamache. Don Quixote and his servant, Sancho Panza, are generally little more than supporting characters.

Alexander Gorsky mounted a much-revised version of the ballet at the Bolshoi, in December 1900, which transferred to the Mariinsky, just over a year later – in January 1902 – starring the Mariinsky's Prima Ballerina Assoluta Mathilde Kschessinska and Nicolai Legat. This version retained much of the Petipa choreography and has formed the basis for many subsequent productions, including that currently in the repertoire of the Mariinsky Ballet. The complete ballet was not shown in the west until being performed by Ballet Rambert in London, as late as 1962.

The extract shown here is the grand pas de deux between Kitri and Basilio danced by Maia Makhateli and Timothy van Poucke, Principals of the Dutch National Ballet.

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Maia Makhateli and Timothy van Poucke in Don Quixote

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Biographies



Timofej Andrijashenko

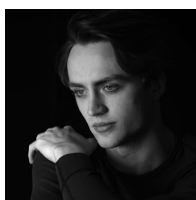
Timofej was born in Riga, Latvia, where he started his studies of ballet at the National State Academy. In 2009, at the age of 14, he participated at the *International Dance Competition "Città di Spoleto"*, winning a scholarship; this prize allows him to attend the Russian Ballet College in Genoa directed by Irina Kashkova and, in June 2013, he graduates with the highest marks.

Timofej joined the Rome Opera Ballet under the direction of Micha van Hoecke for the Season of 2013/14. In November 2014, he joined the Ballet Company of Teatro alla Scala where he became a Principal Dancer in April 2018.

Timofej's repertoire includes *The Nutcracker* (Duato), *Cello Suites* (Spoerli), Albrecht in *Giselle*, *Grand Pas Classique*, The Slave in *Excelsior*, Prince Désiré in *The Sleeping Beauty* (Ratmansky), *Swan Lake*, *Romeo and Juliet* (MacMillan), *Symphony in C* (Balanchine), *The Valse* and *Shéhérazade* (Scigliano), *Progetto Händel* (Bigonzetti), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Balanchine), Wilfried in *Giselle*, Lensky in *Onegin* (Cranko), Armand in *The Lady of the Camellias* (Neumeier), *The Goldberg Variations* (Robbins), *Petite Mort* (Kýlián), *Boléro* (Béjart), Conrad in *Le Corsaire* (Holmes), *The Sleeping Beauty*, Basilio in *Don Quixote*, Des Grieux in MacMillan's *Manon*, Cavalier of the Sugar Plum Fairy in Balanchine's *Nutcracker*, and for the national première of Wayne McGregor's *Wolf Works* he is in *I Now, I Then* (Septimus) and *Becomings*. Also, Timofej debuted in Nureyev's *Sleeping Beauty* in the role of Prince Desire alongside Polina Semionova, and was invited to Royal Opera House in London to dance the role of Romeo in MacMillan's *Romeo and Juliet* alongside of Melissa Hamilton.

Timofej's awards include Positano Premia la Danza Léonide Massine 2010, awarded by Alberto Testa, for the technical and professional high quality, GiffoniDanza Prize 2010, RomainDanza 2011, Napoli Cultural Classic Award 2012, Amalfi Dance Award 2012 as the most promising young dancer, the Grand Prix at the *International Dance Competition "Città di Spoleto"* 2011, the Premio MAB Milano 2011, the first prize in the Pas de Deux section of the *TanzOlymp* in Berlin 2013, a gold medal at the *XII Moscow International Ballet Competition* 2013, the Danza & Dance Award as Performer of the Year for the 2016 Season.

Timofej is Honorary Ambassador of Culture for the City of Spoleto in the world.



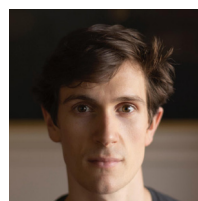
Matthew Ball

English dancer Matthew Ball is a Principal Dancer of The Royal Ballet. He trained at The Royal Ballet School and joined the Company during the 2013/14 Season, promoted to First Artist in 2015, Soloist in 2016, First Soloist in 2017 and Principal Dancer in 2018.

Ball was born in Liverpool. He joined The Royal Ballet School aged 11 and graduated through the School. Roles while a student included Fritz (*The Nutcracker*) with The Royal Ballet. Awards as a student include at the School's 2011 *Lynn Seymour*

Competition, the 2009 *Kenneth MacMillan Senior Choreographic Competition* and the *Gailene Stock and Gary Norman Award for Excellence*. He was twice a finalist at the *Young British Dancer of the Year Award*.

Ball's roles with the Company include Antigonus in *The Winter's Tale*, leading role in *Requiem*, Prince Siegfried, Romeo, Apollo, Armand, Prince Florimund and Bluebird in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Prince in *The Nutcracker*, Crown Prince Rudolf in *Mayerling*, Des Grieux in *Manon*, Solor in *La Bayadère*, Lensky in *Onegin*, Lysander in *The Dream*, Young Man in *The Two Pigeons*, Troyte in *Enigma Variations*, Escamillo in Acosta's *Carmen*, Officer in *Anastasia*, Rasputin in *Anastasia Act III*, Albrecht and pas de six in *Giselle*, Matvei and Beliaev in *Month in the Country*, Lensky in *Onegin*, Wirt Roddy in *The Wind*, Basilio in *Don Quixote*, Franz in *Coppélia*, The Prince in *Cinderella* and in *Yugen*, *Symphonic Dances*, *Jewels*, *The Human Seasons*, *Wolf Works*, *Afternoon of a Faun*, *Carbon Life*, *Scènes de ballet*, *Aeternum*, *Age of Anxiety*, *The Statement*, *DGV: Danse à grande vitesse* and *For Four*. His role creations include Dr John Brown in *Like Water for Chocolate*, Albert de Belleruche in *Strapless*, The Conductor in *The Cellist* and in *Corybantic Games*, *The Illustrated 'Farewell'*, *Multiverse*, *Obsidian Tear*, *Strapless*, *Connectome*, *Untouchable*, *The Unknown Soldier*, *Medusa*, *The Dante Project* and *Light of Passage*. In 2016, he was named Best Emerging Artist at the *Critics' Circle National Dance Awards*. He performed The Swan/Stranger in Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*.



William Bracewell

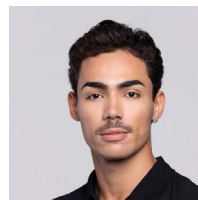
William's introduction to ballet was through his first teacher Pamela Miller in Wales, she nurtured and encouraged him which subsequently earned him a place at

The Royal Ballet School where he trained till

2010. After dancing with Birmingham Royal Ballet and leading the Company in many of its signature ballets he joined The Royal Ballet in 2017 as a Soloist and was promoted to Principal Dancer in 2022.

William's repertoire includes many of the classics such as *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker* and masterpieces including *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Month in the Country*, and *Dances at a Gathering* by Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Sir Frederick Ashton and Jerome Robbins respectively.

He also created many new roles with choreographers including Wayne McGregor, Christopher Wheeldon, David Bintley, Pam Tanowitz and Kyle Abraham. His awards include Young British Dancer of the Year 2008, the Grand Prix at *Youth America Grand Prix* 2010, Outstanding Male Classical Performance 2015 at the *National Dance Awards*.



Victor Caixeta

Victor Caixeta is a Guest Principal Dancer with the Dutch National Ballet. He was born in Brazil and started his training at the age of 12, and in the following years, his teacher prepared him for several ballet competitions. At the age

of 15, Victor took part in the *Prix de Lausanne*, where he received scholarship offers from 18 prestigious schools. He chose Canada's National Ballet School but soon transferred to a ballet school in Berlin, where he had the opportunity to dance works by choreographers such as Wayne McGregor, Nacho Duato, and Marco Goecke.

In 2017, Victor participated in the prestigious *International Ballet Competition* in Moscow, during which he was offered a contract with the Mariinsky Ballet in St. Petersburg.

Once in St. Petersburg, Victor was noticed by the legendary former dancer and teacher Gennady Selyutsky, who began coaching him. They rehearsed together for months, leading Victor to perform principal roles in *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and other classics, as well as in ballets by choreographers such as Hans van Manen, Wayne McGregor, and Twyla Tharp.



António Casalinho

António Casalinho was born in Leiria, Portugal, where from the age of eight he studied ballet at the Annarella Sanchez International Conservatory of Ballet and Dance. António joined Bavarian State Ballet as a

Demi-Soloist for the 2021/22 Season at the age of 18, he was promoted to Soloist in January 2023, and on November 29, 2024, the night of his debut as James in *La Sylphide*, to Principal.

His repertoire includes Franz in Roland Petit's production of *Coppélia*, Demetrius and Puck in John Neumeier's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the pas de trois in *Emeralds*, Benjamin in Christopher Wheeldon's *Cinderella*, the Peasant Pas in *Giselle*, Benno in *Swan Lake*, Alexei Ratmansky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* and a creation by David Dawson and Marco Goetze.

Other roles he has performed include James in *La Sylphide Act 2*, the principal roles in productions of *Giselle*, *Swan Lake*, Aurora's Wedding, *Don Quixote*, and the Gilpin solo in Dolin's *Variations for Four*. And in Gala performances, pas de deux from *Le Corsaire*, *The Flames of Paris*, *La Sylphide*, *Grand Pas Classique* and *The Talisman*, pas de deux of Diana and Acteon, and the contemporary solo *Les Bourgeois* by Ben van Cauwenbergh.

António has won numerous prizes in international ballet competitions, including First Prize Classical and the Contemporary Prize at *Prix de Lausanne 2021*; Grand Prix at *YAGP in Barcelona 2020*; Grand Prix at *Beijing International Ballet Competition in 2019*. In 2018, in Varna, he received the Special Distinction Award Junior Category, the Emil Dimitrov Prize for Young Talent, Promising Young Dancer and Bounty Award for youngest Round 3 competitor; in 2018 and 2016, the YAGP Senior and Junior Grand Prix Awards.



Reece Clarke

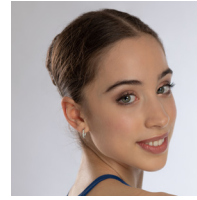
Reece Clarke is a Principal Dancer of The Royal Ballet. He trained at The Royal Ballet School and graduated into the Company during the 2013/14 Season, and was promoted to First Artist in 2016, Soloist in 2017, First Soloist in 2020, and Principal Dancer in 2022.

Reece trained at the Janis Ridley School of Dance in Scotland before joining The Royal Ballet School. He entered White Lodge in 2006 – the first time in the School's history that four boys from the same family have all trained at the School. Awards while at the School included the Young British Dancer of the Year in 2012, the *Lynn Seymour Competition* in 2013 and an award from the Ballet Association. Awards since joining the Company have included the Emerging Artist Award at the 2016 *National Dance Awards*.

Clarke's appearances with the Company have included Prince Siegfried in *Swan Lake*, Onegin, Albrecht in *Giselle*, Prince Florimund and Florestan in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Prince in *The Nutcracker*, Young Man in *The Two Pigeons*, Aminta in *Sylvia*, Polixenes and Antigonus in *The Winter's Tale*, Dr Samuel-Jean Pozzi

in *Strapless*, Officer in *Anastasia*, Des Grieux in *Manon*, principal roles in *Symphonic Variations*, *After the Rain*, *Monotones II*, *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*, *Dances at a Gathering*, *Within the Golden Hour* and *In Our Wishes*, as well as roles in *Carbon Life* and *Obsidian Tear*.

He created roles in Charlotte Edmonds's *Meta* and Liam Scarlett's *Symphonic Dances*.



Margarita Fernandes

Margarita Fernandes was born in Portugal and studied from the age of three at the Annarella Sanchez International Conservatory of Ballet and Dance in Leiria.

For the 2021/22 Season, at the age of 16, she joined the Bavarian State Ballet in Munich, and in November 2024 she was promoted to Soloist. Her roles there have included Emeralds pas de trois in *Jewels*, Clementine in Christopher Wheeldon's *Cinderella*, pas de six in *Giselle*, pas de six, 4 Swans and Italian Princess in *Swan Lake* (R. Barra) as well as Alexei Ratmansky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, and David Dawson's *Affairs of the Heart*. She danced her first principal role as Swanilda in the 2022 opening night of Roland Petit's *Coppélia*. Her other repertoire includes the Sylph in Act 2 of *La Sylphide*, the title role in Maina Gielgud's *Giselle* and *Swan Lake*, partnered by Antonio Casalinho, and Taglioni in Dolin's *Pas de Quatre*, while in various galas, she had danced a number of pas de deux such as *Le Corsaire*, *Don Quixote*, *The Talisman*, *The Flames of Paris*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *La Sylphide* and *Swan Lake*.

She has participated in competitions such as *YAGP South Africa International Ballet Competition* and *IBCC China*, winning first and second place prizes.



Mara Galeazzi

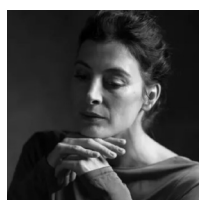
Mara Galeazzi was born in Brescia and studied at La Scala, Milan, where she earned her diploma with full marks. She joined The Royal Ballet in 1992 and was promoted to First Artist in 1995, Soloist at the end of the 1997/98 Season, and Principal in September 2003.

Her repertoire includes the leading role in Fokine's *Firebird*, Marie, the Sugar Plum Fairy, and the Rose Fairy in *The Nutcracker*, *Giselle* (also under Carla Fracci's direction) and Myrtha in *Giselle*, Medora in *Le Corsaire*, Gamzatti in Natalia Makarova's *La Bayadère*, the leading role in *Paquita divertissement*, Aurora's Wedding pas de deux and Bluebird pas de deux in *The Sleeping Beauty*, the Act I pas de trois in *Swan Lake*, the *Talisman* pas de deux with Irek Mukhamedov, and Rudolf Nureyev's *Raymonda Act III*. She has also performed in Frederick Ashton's ballets, including Diana in *Sylvia*, Julia in *Wedding Bouquet*, Fairy Autumn in *Cinderella*, and Moth in *The Dream*, among others.

She has also danced as Tatiana in Cranko's *Onegin*, the Young Wife in Tetley's *La Ronde*, *Chroma* (McGregor), *Symphony in C* and Emeralds from *Jewels* (Balanchine), *In the Middle*, *Somewhat Elevated* (Forsythe), *Le Spectre de la Rose* (Fokine), and many roles from MacMillan's repertoire, such as Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Manon and Lescaut's Mistress in *Manon*, Mary Vetsera in *Mayerling*, the title role in *Anastasia*, the Chosen One in *The Rite of Spring*, and the Second Movement from *Concerto*, among others. Mara's performance of *Symphony in C* was broadcast live in many major squares across the UK in June 2005. Director Philip Cox produced the documentary *Facing Mara*.

In May 2006, she was named *Best Italian Dancer Abroad* (Danza & Danza Award). In November 2003, she was nominated for *Best Female Dancer* at the *Critics' Circle National Dance Award*. In February 2005, following a charity gala in her hometown of Brescia, Mara became an honorary member of Soroptimist International, a global organization for women in management and the professions, aimed at equality, development, and peace. On March 7, 2009, Mara was awarded the medal *Cavaliere Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana* (Knighthood) by the President of Italy.

Mara retired from The Royal Ballet at the end of the 2012/13 Season.



Marie-Agnès Gillot

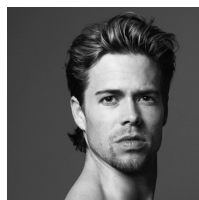
Marie-Agnès Gillot began her training in 1985 and joined the corps de ballet of the Paris Opera Ballet in 1990 at the age of 15 with an age exemption. In 1991, she was promoted to Quadrille, Coryphée in 1992, Sujet in 1994, and First Soloist in 1999. At the end of a performance of *Signes* (Carlson) on March 18, 2004, she was named Étoile.

Marie-Agnès participated in the creation of the ballet *Le Parc* by Preljocaj and danced *Sérénade* in the role of the Angel, as well as *Capriccio* by Balanchine. In 1996, she took part in the creation of John Neumeier's *Magnificat* and was once again chosen to perform in an evening of Young Dancers alongside Karl Paquette.

Marie-Agnès's repertoire includes *Concerto Barocco*, Polymnia in *Apollo*, Diamonds from *Jewels*, *Violin Concerto*, The Siren in *The Prodigal Son*, Coleric in *The Four Temperaments*, *Liebeslieder Wälzer* (Balanchine), *Symphony IX*, *Webern Opus V* (Béjart), Myrtha in *Giselle* (after Coralli and Perrot), *In the Middle*, *Somewhat Elevated*, *Woundwork I*, and *Pas/parts* (Forsythe), *Paquita* (Lacotte after Mazilier and Petipa), Diane in *Sylvia*, Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Neumeier), *Raymonda*, Gamzatti and Nikiya in *La Bayadère*, Kitri in *Don Quixote*, Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake* (Nureyev), Death in *The Young Man and Death*, Esmeralda in *Notre-Dame de Paris* (Petit), *Casanova*, the Angel in *Annunciation* (Preljocaj), The Queen in *The Cage* (Robbins), Terpsichore in *Apollo*, *Agon*, *Symphony in C* (Balanchine), *Boléro* (Béjart), *Giselle* (Ek), *Études* (Lander), *Les Mirages*, *Phèdre* (Lifar), The Miller's Wife in *The Three-Cornered Hat* (Masse), *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella* (Nureyev), *Carmen* (Petit), and *Glass Pieces* (Robbins).

Marie-Agnès Gillot bid farewell to the Paris Opera on March 31, 2018, dancing *Orpheus and Eurydice*, choreographed by Pina Bausch. At the end of the performance, the audience stood and applauded for 20 minutes.

Marie-Agnès has received several awards, including the Cercle Carpeaux Prize in 1997 for her performance in *Signes* (Carlson), the AROP Dance Prize in 1998 for her performance in *The Rite of Spring* (Nijinsky), and for her role as Lescaut's Mistress in *Manon* (MacMillan).



Matthew Golding

Matthew Golding was born in Saskatchewan and, from the age of 14, trained at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School, before joining the Universal Ballet School in Washington D.C. aged 16. In 2002, he won the *Youth America*

Grand Prix and the *Prix de Lausanne* and then joined American Ballet Theatre in 2003.

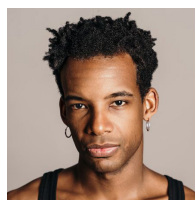
He joined the Dutch National Ballet and was promoted to Principal Dancer in 2010. He then went onto becoming Principal Dancer with The Royal Ballet from 2014-2017.

He has guest performed with Bavarian State Ballet, Norwegian National Ballet, Mariinsky Ballet, Berlin State Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, English National Ballet, Universal Ballet of Korea, Ukraine National Theatre of Kiev and with Hong Kong Ballet. Golding's classical principal repertoire includes *Manon*, *Onegin*, *Anna Karenina*, *The Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *La Bayadère*, *Giselle*, *Don Quixote*, *Cinderella*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*, among others.

Golding's awards include the Dutch Zwaan Prize (2010), the Alexandra Radius Prize (2011) and nominations for the Benois de la danse Prize (2012 and 2013).

Together with Lucía Lacarra he founded GOLDENLAC Productions.

In September 2020, they premiered their first show called *Fordlandia*, created and produced by both of them. In October 2021, they premiered the second show called *In the Still of the Night* choreographed by Matthew.



Osiel Gouneo

Cuban dancer Osiel Gouneo was born in Matanzas, Cuba. He began his training at the Cuban National Ballet School in Havana in 2005. In 2008, he joined the Cuban National Ballet, where he was appointed a Principal

Dancer in 2011. Afterwards, Osiel Gouneo danced with the Norwegian National Ballet for three years. With the beginning of the 2016/17 Season, he joined the Bavarian State Ballet as a Principal Dancer.

He performed on stages such as the Coliseum in London, the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, the Lincoln Center in New York, the Paris Opéra Ballet, and the National Theatre Japan in Tokyo. Osiel's repertoire includes Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* (Cranko, Corder), The Bluebird in *The Sleeping Beauty*, The Moor in *Petrushka*, Prince in *The Nutcracker*, Prince in *Swan Lake* (Alonso, Dean), Prince in *Cinderella*, Basilio in *Don Quixote*, Franz in *Coppélia*, Des Grieux and Lescaut in *Manon*, Escamillo in *Carmen* (Scarlett), Albrecht in *Giselle* (Wright, Petipa), Soloist in *Symphony in C* (Balanchine), Solor in *La Bayadère* (Petipa, Bart), title role in *Spartacus* (Grigorovich), Philostrate and Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Neumeier), Basilio in *Don Quixote* (Barra, Minkus), Dancer in *Borderlands* (McGregor), Abderakhman in *Raymonda* (Petipa, Barra), 1st solo couple in Rubies from *Jewels* (Balanchine), Günther in *The Nutcracker* (Neumeier), Gaston Rieux in *The Lady of the Camellias* (Neumeier), Onegin in *Onegin* (Cranko), Petrucchio in *The Taming of the Shrew* (Cranko), Belkin in *Der Schneesturm* (Kaydanovskiy), Prince Guillaume in *Cinderella* (Wheeldon), Prince Siegfried in *Swan Lake* (Barra), *Passages* (Ratmansky), *Tchaikovsky Overtures* (Ratmansky), and *Schmetterling* (Sol León und Paul Lightfoot).

Osiel is a recipient of such awards as a gold medal at *Cuban Grand Prix*, a gold medal at *Beijing International Ballet Competition*, a silver medal at *Varna International Ballet Competition*, Best Newcomer on the international dance scene in the annual *Positano Awards*.



Jason Kittelberger

Jason Kittelberger hails from Rochester, New York, where he began training and performing at Performance Plus, Draper School of Dance and School of the Arts, studying dance, acting, musical theatre and production design, and where he had plentiful opportunities to perform, choreograph and create. He continued his dance education at the North Carolina School of the Arts, where as a ballet major he was able to focus on technique and perform works by Twyla Tharp, George Balanchine, Carlos Orta, Lynne Taylor Corbett and Duncan Noble.

Kittelberger has performed with the Rochester City Ballet under Timothy Daper, Carolina Ballet under Robert Weiss and Hubbard Street II under Julie Nakagawa, where he appeared in works by Robert Battle, Aszure Barton and Kevin O'Day. With Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, under the direction of Benoit-Swan Pouffer, he was able to work with Ohad Naharin, Crystal Pite, Hofesh Shechter, Didy Veldman, Jo Stromgren, Jacopo Godani, Jill Johnson, Emanuel Gat and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui.

His interest in commercial work has led Kittelberger to training actors such as Emily Blunt and Benedict Cumberbatch. He appeared in films *The Adjustment Bureau*, *MA*, *Afloat (in 10 Crosby)*, *Looking Glass* and Samsung advertising spots. Recent projects include working with photographer and director Anton Corbijn on a music video for Depeche Mode's *In Your Room* and contributing to *Jagged Little Pill* at A.R.T. as associate choreographer.

Kittelberger is currently working alongside Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui as assistant choreographer, rehearsal director and dancer in productions *Shell Shock*, *Fractus V*, *Pluto*, *Firebird* with Stuttgart Ballet, *Milonga*, *Puz/zle*, *Icon*, *Harbor Me* with L.A. Dance Project, *Satyagraha*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and *Qutb*.



Sebastian Kloborg

Sebastian trained at the Royal Danish Ballet School, graduating in 2003, and joined the Royal Danish Ballet that same year, where he was promoted to Soloist in 2009.

His classical repertoire includes *Romeo and Juliet*, Albrecht in *Giselle*, the Prince in *Cinderella*, Theseus/Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the Professor in *La Leçon*, numerous pieces by Balanchine, *Petite Mort*, *Bella Figura*, *Cacti*, *La Stravaganza*, and *The Unsung*.

From 2012 to 2014, he joined Gauthier Dance, directed by Eric Gauthier, where he explored different styles of work. He created various roles in *Cherry Pink & Apple Blossom White* by Itzik Galili, *Malasangre* by Cayetano Soto, and *Burning Bridges* by Jiří Bubeníček. He has also danced in pieces by Mauro Bigonzetti, Hans van Manen, Alejandro Cerrudo, Christian Spuck, and Eric Gauthier.

He successfully ventured into choreography, staging *Ways to Go* (2013) for Gauthier Dance, *Strangers* (2015), *Betty Be Black* (2016), *1970 Now* (2016) for the Royal Danish Ballet, and *Limberly* (2016) for the German National Youth Ballet.

Recently, Sebastian has taken a new step in his career — he is now a freelance dancer and choreographer.



Maria Kochetkova

Born in Moscow, Maria Kochetkova trained at the Bolshoi Ballet School. She worked with The Royal Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theater, Finnish National Ballet and the English National Ballet.

Maria has performed as a guest artist with the Bolshoi, Mariinsky, Mikhailovsky and Stanislavsky Theaters, Opera di Roma, Teatro alla Scala, Tokyo Ballet, National Ballet of Cuba, Compania Nacional de Danza Madrid, Teatro Colon, Hong Kong Ballet, Semperoper Dresden and Berlin State Ballet.

Her classical repertoire includes lead roles in *Giselle*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Don Quixote*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, *Onegin* (Cranko), *Alice in Wonderland*, and *The Kingdom of the Shades* from *La Bayadère*. She has also performed in ballets by George Balanchine, William Forsythe, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Frederick Ashton, Wayne McGregor, Serge Lifar, David Dawson, Derek Deane, Jorma Elo, Mark Morris, Yuri Possokhov, Alexei Ratmansky, Jerome Robbins, Helgi Tomasson, Christopher Wheeldon, and Hans Van Manen.

Maria Kochetkova has created principal roles in *Diving into the Lilacs* (Possokhov), *Raymonda pas de deux*, *Classical Symphony* and *Francesca da Rimini*, *On a Theme of Paganini* and *Trio* (Tomasson), *Cinderella* (Wheeldon), *Within the Golden Hour* and *Number 9*, *From Foreign Lands* (Ratmansky), *One Overture* (Elo), *Cinque* (Bigonzetti) and *Borderlands* (McGregor).

Maria is a recipient of many awards including a bronze medal at *Moscow International Competition* (2001), *the Prix de Lausanne* (2002), a silver medal and the jury prize at *Varna International Ballet Competition* (2002), gold medals at the *International Ballet Competitions* (Korea and Italy, 2005), and Luxembourg (2003), the Isadora Duncan Award for the role of *Giselle* (2008), Benois de la Danse Award (2013) for her *Tatiana* in *Onegin* (Cranko), a gold medal on NBC's *Superstars of Dance*, *Ballerina of the Year* award (Premio Positano, 2017) and Benois de la Danse award (2018).



Lucía Lacarra

Lucía Lacarra was born in San Sebastian, Spain, where she started studying dance at the age of nine. She moved to Madrid to study at the Victor Ullate Dance School, joining Ballet de Víctor Ullate in 1990. She joined the Ballet

National of Marseille in 1994 as a Principal Dancer and later became a Principal Dancer for the San Francisco Ballet. Lucia has joined the Bavarian State Ballet for the 2002/03 Season in order to return towards the leading European choreographers. In 2016, she left Munich and joined Ballett Dortmund as a permanent guest star. She has an extensive and impressive repertoire including works by George Balanchine, Roland Petit, John Neumeier, Hans Van Manen, Helgi Tomasson, Misha Van Hoecke, Eduardo Lao, Victor Grovsky, David Palmer, Mikhail Fokine, John Cranko, Ray Barra, Ivan Liska, Russell Maliphant and Victor Ullate among others.

Her awards include Artist of the Year from the city of Venice and Artist of the Year from the city of Positano (1995), Isadora Duncan Prize for *The Cage* (Jerome Robbins, 1999), Nijinsky Award for the Best Female Dancer in the World (Monte Carlo, 2002), the Benois de la Danse Award for *Onegin* (Moscow, 2003), the Sabino Arana Award (2004), the Spanish Premio Nacional de Danza (2005), the honorary title of "Bayerisches Kammertänzerin" (Principal Honorary Dancer of the State of Bayern, 2008), the Dance Open Award (St. Petersburg, 2010), Best Ballerina of the Decade

Award (The Kremlin, 2010), People's Choice Award at the *Dance Open* (St. Petersburg, 2011), and again the Dance Open Grand Prix (2013). In 2007, she was announced Honorary Citizen and Cultural Messenger of her home town San Sebastián.

Lucía Lacarra's guest star appearances include the Politeama Theatre (*Carmen*, Petit), Stars of the XXI Century Gala in Toronto, New York, Paris and Cannes, Tours of Japan with Vladimir Malakhov, Theatre of the Arena of Verona in the Pas de Quatre (Dolin) and La Vivandière, the 8th World Ballet Festival, The Stuttgart Ballet for *Giselle*, *The Sleeping Beauty* with Vladimir Malakhov, Paris Opera Ballet, The San Carlo Theatre and Asami Maki ballet, New Year's Concert in Vienna performing *Blue Danube*, La Scala de Milan for *Jeune Homme et la Mort*, *Carmen* and *The Lady of the Camellias*. Her film credits are *Violette et Mr. B* (Dominique Delouche), *Great Dancers of Our Time*, *Les Chemins De La Création* by Roland Petit, and the *Hans van Manen Festival*.

Together with Matthew Golding she founded GOLDENLAC Productions. In September 2020, they premiered their first show called *Fordlandia*, created and produced by both of them. In October 2021, they premiered the second show called *In the still of the night*.

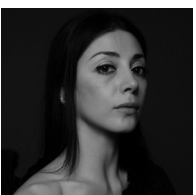


Mayara Magri

Brazilian dancer Mayara Magri is a Principal of The Royal Ballet. She trained at The Royal Ballet School and graduated into the Company in 2012. She was promoted to First Artist in 2015, to Soloist in 2016, First Soloist in 2018 and Principal in 2021.

Magri grew up in Brazil and won a scholarship at the age of eight to train at the Petite Danse School in Rio de Janeiro. She won the Senior Age Division of the *Youth America Grand Prix* and the Prix de Lausanne Scholarship and Audience Prize in 2011.

Magri's repertoire with the Company includes Paulina in *The Winter's Tale*, Fairy Godmother, Fairy Winter in *Cinderella*, Odette/Odile, Juliet, Gamzatti, Myrtha in *Giselle*, Gypsy Girl in *The Two Pigeons*, Princess Aurora and Lilac Fairy in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Tatiana in *Anastasia*, Kitri and Mercedes in *Don Quixote*, Rose Fairy and Vivandière in *The Nutcracker*, Handmaiden in *Apollo*, Entertainer in *The Invitation*, Polyhymnia in *Apollo*, Countess Larisch and Mitzi Caspar in *Mayerling*, Lescaut's Mistress in *Manon*, lead roles in *The Cellist*, *Rhapsody*, *Five Brahms Waltzes in the manner of Isadora Duncan* and roles in *The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude*, Rubies from *Jewels*, *Woolf Works*, *Within the Golden Hour*, *Monotones I*, *Symphonic Variations*, *Dances at a Gathering*, *Within the Golden Hour*, *After the Rain*, *Asphodel Meadows*, *Woolf Works*, *Carbon Life*, *Solo Echo*, *women with water* and *DGV: Danse à Grande Vitesse*. She created Rosaura in *Like Water for Chocolate* and roles in Mthuthuzeli November's *For What It's Worth*, *Multiverse*, *Corybantic Games*, *The Illustrated 'Farewell'*, *The Dante Project* and *Prima*.



Maia Makhateli

Maia Makhateli was born into a dance family in Georgia. Maia began her dance training at the Choreographic Institute of Vakhtang Chabukiani in her hometown. At the age of 16, she left with her parents for the United States where she studied at the San Valley Ballet School in Idaho. After that, she joined the Colorado Ballet and became a Principal Dancer with

the Company. In 2005, Maia joined the Birmingham Royal Ballet and shortly after that auditioned for the Dutch National Ballet, where she started as a Grand Sujet in 2007. In 2009, she was promoted to Soloist and a year later to Principal.

Maia has won several ballet awards in the United States. In her homeland, Georgia, she received the Nina Ananiashvili & Gilbert Albert Star Award (2011), which was established by the Georgian prima ballerina Nina Ananiashvili and a Swiss jeweler. In 2015, she was awarded with the Alexandra Radius Award. She was also nominated for Benois de la Danse. In 2020, she was chosen as 'Dancer of the Year' by Critics' Choice *Dance Europe*.

She has been invited to perform with various theatres such as the Teatro San Carlo, Rome Opera House, and the Macedonian opera and ballet. She performed José Carlos Martínez's *Le Corsaire* in the Slovenian National Theatre, Benjamin Pech's *Swan Lake* in Rome Opera House, *Frida Kahlo* ballet which was made for her by Annabelle Ochoa Lopez at the Dutch National Ballet. Most recent appearance was in a new production of *Giselle* by Eleonora Abbagnato which premiered at the Opera House in Cagliari.

She has also been acclaimed for 'Outstanding performance by a female dancer' by Critics' Choice *Dance Europe* in 2019, 2021, 2022, and in 2023 (for *Tschaikovsky Pas de Deux*, performed during the *Ballet Icons Gala* in London).



Nicoletta Manni

Nicoletta is a Principal Dancer Étoile with Teatro alla Scala. She was born in the province of Lecce, Italy and began her training at the age of 13 at the La Scala Academy Ballet School.

In 2009, after graduating at age 17, she joined the Berlin State Ballet under the direction of Vladimir Malakhov, where she stayed for three seasons, performing in all the classical and contemporary productions.

She returned to Italy, under the invitation of Makhar Vaziev, joining La Scala Ballet Company and a year later was promoted to Principal Dancer. Since then, she has danced all the main roles, alongside international guest stars, and performed many new creations, as well as masterpieces of the classical repertoire in Milan. On 8 November 2023 she was appointed Étoile of the Teatro alla Scala at the end of the second performance of *Onegin* by John Cranko, in which Nicoletta Manni is the protagonist in the role of Tatiana next to Onegin by Étoile Roberto Bolle.

Nicoletta's repertoire includes Ratmansky's *Russian Seasons* and *Concerto DSCH* (Main couple), Balanchine's *Jewels* (Diamonds and Rubies), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Titania), *Apollo* (Terpsichore), and Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*, Petit's *Pink Floyd Ballet* and *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort* (alongside Ivan Vasiliev), Nureyev's *Don Quixote* (Kitri and the Queen of the dryads), Chauvire's *Giselle* (Giselle and Myrtha), Manzotti's *Excelsior* (Genius of Civilization), Ratmansky's *Sleeping Beauty* (Aurora and Lilac Fairy) and *Swan Lake* (Odette-Odile), MacMillan's *Manon* and *Romeo and Juliet*, Spoerli's *Cello Suites*, Duato's *Nutcracker* (Clara), Bigonzetti's *Cinderella* (title part), Volpini's *The Lovers Garden*, Fokin's *Petrushka* (the ballerina), Balanchine's *Symphony in C* (main couple), Neumier's *The Lady of the Camellias* (Marguerite Gautier), Cranko's *Onegin* (Tatiana), *Le Corsaire* by Anne Marie Holmes (Medora), McGregor's *Becomings* in *Woolf Works* (main part), Petit's *Carmen* (Carmen pas de deux) and others.

Nicoletta toured with La Scala's Ballet Company in Hong Kong, Kazakhstan, France, Poland, China, Japan, and Australia. She participated in *Dance Open* ballet festival (St. Petersburg, 2017), *Elisa y Amigos* (Mexico, 2016), *All Star Ballet Gala* (Toronto, 2017), *Yurgita Dronina Ballet World Star Gala* (Vilnius, 2015), *Season Opening Gala* (Bucharest, 2016), *Iana Salenko and Stars of Ballet* (Ukraine, 2017), *La notte della taranta* in Melpignano (Italy), *Ballet Gala* (Warsaw, 2018), *Petipa Methamorphosis XXI century* (2018), *Stars of 21st century* (St. Petersburg, 2018), and *Somos Arte* (Valencia, 2019).

Nicoletta's awards include the 3rd prize at *Premio Roma Danza* (2012), *Danza & Danza Prix* as Best Female Dancer (2014). Also, she was named Dancer of the Year 2014 by the online magazine *giornaledelladanza.com*.

In 2020, she received the award 'Dancer of the Year on the International Scene' in the 48th edition of *Positano Premia la Danza Léonide Massin*.



Inès McIntosh

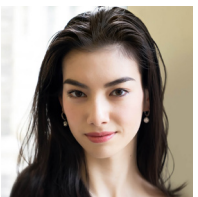
Inès McIntosh entered the Paris Opera Ballet School in 2013, where she graduated.

In 2019, at the age of 16, she joined the Paris Opera Ballet Company. In April 2021, she was promoted to Coryphée during her first promotion contest and to *Sujet* in November 2021. That same year, she won the 1st prize at the *Rudolf Nureyev International Ballet Competition* in Rimini. In November 2023, she was promoted to *Première Danseuse* (First Soloist).

These promotions gave her the opportunity to dance principal roles such as *Kitri* in *Don Quixote*, the title role in *Giselle*, *Paquita*, *Clara* and *Sugar Plum Fairy* in *The Nutcracker*, *The Flames of Paris*, *Grand Pas Classique*, *Blake Works I*, and *The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude* (Forsythe), along with various soloist roles in the repertoire.

In August 2023, Inès was a guest dancer with Cape Town City Ballet, where she performed *Kitri* in Maina Gielgud's production of *Don Quixote*. In June 2024, she danced the leading role in *Études* with the Hungarian National Ballet. She also made her debut as *Odette/Odile* in *Swan Lake* in Greece in July 2024.

Her repertoire also includes *Talisman* pas de deux, *Le Corsaire*, *La Esmeralda*, MacMillan's *Concerto* pas de deux, and *Les Deux Pigeons*.



Chloe Misseldine

Chloe Misseldine began her classical training at Orlando Ballet School. She attended ABT Summer Intensives in Orange County, California, and New York City as a National Training Scholar from 2016–2018. In 2016,

she performed a traditional Chinese fan dance called *Mo Li Hua* in the CCTV New Year's Gala known as the Beijing Spring Festival Gala (*Chunwan*), broadcast to over 700 million viewers. At age 15, Misseldine earned 2nd place in the 2017 *Youth America Grand Prix New York City* Finals and performed at the YAGP "Stars of Today Meet the Stars of Tomorrow" Gala. In 2018, she was named a finalist at the *Prix de Lausanne* and joined American Ballet Theatre Studio Company.

Misseldine became an apprentice with American Ballet Theatre in

December 2019 and joined the corps de ballet in September 2021. She was promoted to Soloist in September 2022 and to Principal Dancer in July 2024.

Her repertoire includes a Flower Girl in *Don Quixote*, Myrta in *Giselle*, Rosaura in *Like Water for Chocolate*, Clara, the Princess, one of the Nutcracker's Sisters, and the Spanish dance in Ratmansky's *Nutcracker*; Queen of Babylon in *Of Love and Rage*, Tatiana in *Onegin*, Rosaline and Lady Montague in *Romeo and Juliet*, Ice in *The Seasons*, *Odette/Odile*, the pas de trois, and a big swan in *Swan Lake*, *Becomings* in *Wolf Works*, leading roles in *Ballet Imperial*, *La Boutique*, and *Sylvia* pas de deux, and featured roles in *Bernstein in a Bubble*, *La Follia Variations*, *Petite Mort*, and *Songs of Bukovina*.



Marianela Núñez OBE

Argentine dancer Marianela Núñez is a Principal of The Royal Ballet. She joined The Royal Ballet Upper School in 1997 and joined the Company in 1998, promoted to First Soloist in 2000 and to Principal in 2002 aged

20. She has performed all the leading roles in the classical, dramatic and contemporary repertory, including in works by Frederick Ashton, George Balanchine, John Cranko, William Forsythe, Jirí Kylián, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Wayne McGregor, Ashley Page, Jerome Robbins, Liam Scarlett, Glen Tetley, Will Tuckett, Antony Tudor, and Christopher Wheeldon. Many of her roles have been captured on DVD. She has created numerous roles in *Infra*, *Carbon Life*, *DGV: Danse à Grande Vitesse*, *Aeternum*, *Asphodel Meadows*, 'Diana and Actaeon' (*Metamorphosis: Titian* 2012), *Human Seasons*, *Tetractys*, Acosta's *Carmen* and *Multiverse*, among other works.

Núñez was born in Buenos Aires and began dancing at the age of three. When she was six she began training at the Teatro Colón Ballet School, joining the Teatro Colón company aged 14. She took on corps and soloist roles and toured internationally, both with the Company and as a guest artist with Maximiliano Guerra.

Núñez's awards include Best Female Dancer at the 2005, 2012, 2018 and 2022 *Critics' Circle National Dance Awards*, *Konex de Platino* for 'Best Dancer of the Decade' in Argentina in 2009 and the *María Ruanova Award* in 2011. She received the 2013 *Olivier Award* for 'Outstanding Achievement in Dance', in recognition of her performances in *Viscera* and in roles created on her in *Aeternum* and 'Diana and Actaeon' (*Metamorphosis: Titian* 2012).

She has appeared as a guest artist with companies including Vienna State Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, La Scala, Milan, Ballet Estable del Teatro Colón, Ballet Argentino de La Plata and Australian Ballet, and in galas around the world.



James Pett Travis Clausen-Knight

James Pett and Travis Clausen-Knight are choreographers, dancers and founders of Pett Clausen-Knight Dance. After having incredibly successful individual careers

dancing for world-renowned choreographers and companies, such as Studio Wayne McGregor, Michael Clarke Company, New Adventures Matthew Bourne & Richard Alston Dance, this dynamic duo has built a reputation for creating highly provocative and emotionally charged works captured through their intensely physical movement language. After their first year of inception, the Critics Circle

nominated Pett Clausen-Knight for the “Best Independent Company Award” at *The National Dance Awards*.

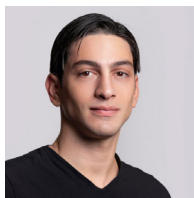
Their company tours extensively around the world, from Asia to Europe and the US, with their current touring work, *IMAGO*, receiving an outstanding five-star review upon its premiere at the world-renowned Teatro Grande in Italy and further receiving impressive accolades in its London debut. In 2024, they were personally invited by the British Embassy of Jakarta and the British Council to perform *IMAGO* for the 75th Anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Indonesia and the UK.

The duo has developed an extensive repertoire of over 20 works in a short period since establishing their company. They have created several commissioned pieces for dance companies such as Bangkok City Ballet and Ballet de Monterrey, in addition to a variety of compelling self-produced creations.

Their first choreography together was presented at the Royal Ballet’s Draft Works, where they shared their duet *Splinter The Noise*, garnering the attention of Dame Monica Mason as well as artistic directors and critics alike. Before forming Pett Clausen-Knight, the pair created a triple bill performance of works entitled *Elevation*, premiering at The Cerulean Noh Theatre in Tokyo, Japan. This broke new boundaries, being the first ever international contemporary choreographers to present work in this traditional style Noh Theatre.

James and Travis continue performing extensively worldwide as guest dancers in Ballet Galas, Opera Houses, and festivals, including Roberto Bolle & Friends, Alessandra Ferri Gala, Paris Opera Ballet, Royal Ballet, and many more. In 2024, they became the first-ever contemporary company to be programmed in the internationally acclaimed Ballet Icons Gala at the London Coliseum.

Alongside touring and creating, they actively engage across a wide cultural platform, advocating for education in the arts and fronting projects that bring dance into people’s daily lives. Having formed respected relationships with arts institutions, cultural organisations and communities, Pett Clausen-Knight has embarked on several initiatives for the arts, hosting lectures, masterclasses, community projects and creative workshops, that seek to share the importance and impact of dance culture.



Giorgi Potskhishvili

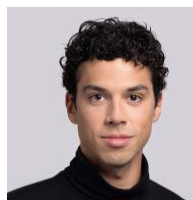
Giorgi is a Principal Dancer with the Dutch National Ballet. He was born in Georgia and started his training at the Vakhtang Chabukiani State Ballet School, Tbilisi at the age of 13.

In 2017, he accepted an invitation from former Principal Ballerina Elena Glurjidze to do Masters of Ballet summer course in London. A year later, upon Elena’s recommendation, Giorgi joined Grigori (Grisha) Tchitcherine’s class at the Dutch National Ballet Academy in Amsterdam.

In 2021, Giorgi joined the Dutch National Ballet and his career took off like a shot. While he was still an Élève, he danced a main role in Toer van Schayk’s *7th Symphony*, with overwhelming success.

His repertoire with the Company includes such leading roles as Abd al-Rahman in *Raymonda*, Death in *The Green Table*, Prince Siegfried in *Swan Lake*, and the title role in *Dorian*.

Giorgi has great admiration for Van Schayk and for Hans van Manen, with whom he has since worked as well.

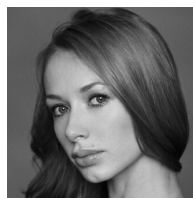


Timothy van Poucke

Timothy is a Principal Dancer with the Dutch National Ballet. He was born in the Netherlands and comes from a highly gifted family in both music and dance. At the age of ten, Timothy was accepted into the Dutch National Ballet Academy, and from that moment on, he regularly performed children’s roles in productions by the Dutch National Ballet, including the role of Frits in *The Nutcracker* and *the Mouse King*.

In 2016, he was accepted into the Junior Company, and just one year later, he moved up to his “dream company,” the Dutch National Ballet. A couple of weeks later, at the company’s annual gala, he danced Wubkje Kuindersma’s *Two and Only* with Principal Dancer Marijn Rademaker, and a week after that, he performed in Hans van Manen’s *5 Tangos*.

Highlight roles in his dancing career include Basilio in *Don Quixote*, his collaboration with Van Manen, and roles in ballets by William Forsythe, among others.



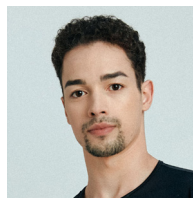
Iana Salenko

Ukrainian ballet dancer Iana Salenko is a Principal of Berlin State Ballet. She made her Royal Ballet debut as a Guest Artist in 2013 as Kitri in *Don Quixote*. She has since returned to dance Kitri and Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake* and in the 2015/16 Season dances Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, *Tchaikovsky Pas de deux*, Young Girl in *The Two Pigeons*, Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*, and Giselle with The Royal Ballet.

Salenko was born in Kiev and trained at the Pisarev Ballet School, Donetsk, graduating in 2000. She was a member of Donetsk Ballet 2000–02 before joining Kiev Opera Ballet as a Principal. She joined the Berlin State Ballet in 2005 as a Demi-Soloist, promoted to Soloist in 2006 and Principal in 2007.

Her roles in Berlin have included Malakhov’s Cinderella, Princess Aurora, Marie (Patrice Bart’s *The Nutcracker*), Olga (Cranko’s *Onegin*), *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*, Schaufuss’s the Sylph and Cranko’s Juliet.

Her many awards include first prizes at the *International Ballet Competitions* in Helsinki and Nagoya in 2005. Iana regularly performs as a guest artist around the world, with engagements including Kitri in Florence, Munich, Moscow and Rome, Princess Aurora in Essen and Bratislava, Odette/Odile (*Swan Lake*) in Bratislava and the Sugar Plum Fairy in Slovenia.



David Motta Soares

David began his training in 2007 at the Regina and Ofelia Corvello Ballet School and continued at the Moscow State Academy of Choreography from 2010 to 2015. He joined the Bolshoi Ballet in 2015.

His repertoire at the Bolshoi included *Moydodyr* (Smekalov), Albrecht in *Giselle* (Grigorovich), the Golden Idol in *La Bayadère*, the Nutcracker Prince in *The Nutcracker*, the Evil Genius in *Swan Lake*, Ferkhad in *The Legend of Love*, Emeralds and Rubies from *Jewels* (Balanchine), *Symphony in C*, Pechorin in *The Hero of Our Time* (Possokhov), *Études* (Lander), Antoine Mistral in *The Flames of Paris* (Ratmansky), Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, the Torero in *Carmen*

Suite (Alonso), Thaor in *The Pharaoh's Daughter* (Lacotte), Franz in *Coppélia* (Vikharev), Basilio in *Don Quixote* (Fadeychev), Gaston Rieu in *The Lady of the Camellias* (Neumeier), James in *La Sylphide* (Kobborg), Shelmerdine in *Orlando* (Spuck), and the pas de deux from *The Ninth Wave* (Arias).

In May 2022, David became a Principal Dancer with the Berlin State Ballet. His repertoire at the Company includes *The Sleeping Beauty* (Haydée), *Voices* (Dawson), *Messa da Requiem* (Spuck), Rodolphe and Lover in *Bovary*, Rival in *Petrushka* (Goecke), Albrecht in *Giselle* (Bart), *Approximate Sonata 2016* (Forsythe), *Blake Works I, Angels' Atlas* (Pite), and *Aria* from *20 Years of Berlin State Ballet* (Lee).

David is the recipient of numerous awards, including a bronze medal (Pas de Deux, Junior) at the International Yuri Grigorovich Competition *Young Ballet of the World* (2014) and a gold medal (Pas de Deux, Senior) at the *Russian Ballet Competition* (2015), among others.



Anna Tsygankova

Anna is a Principal Dancer of the Dutch National Ballet. She was born in Novosibirsk, Russia and at the age of nine, she began ballet training at the Novosibirsk Ballet Academy.

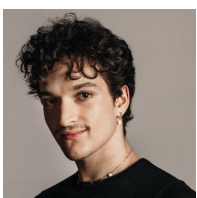
By her third year, she was already dancing solo roles in school performances, culminating in the role of Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake* for her graduation performance. Two years earlier, she won a silver medal at the *Prix de Lausanne*, which was held in Moscow for once.

In 1996, Anna won a bronze medal at the *International Ballet Competition* in Perm and was invited to join the famous Bolshoi Ballet. She later moved to the Hungarian National Ballet, where she danced all the leading roles in the classical repertoire. In 2007, Anna joined the Dutch National Ballet as a Principal Dancer.

Some of her most notable experiences include collaborating with Christopher Wheeldon on several of his ballets, performing the title role created for her by Ted Brandsen in *Mata Hari*, Beaujean's new productions of *Giselle* and *Raymonda*, Ratmansky's *Don Quixote*, Neumeier's *The Lady of the Camellias*, and Forsythe's *Pas/Parts 2018*.

Anna has received numerous awards, including the Alexandra Radius Prize (2008), a nomination for the 'Zwaan' Award for 'Most Impressive Dance Achievement' (for *Don Quixote*, 2011), a nomination for the Benois de la Danse (for *Cinderella*, among other roles, 2013), the Grand Prix at the *Dance Open* Ballet Festival in St. Petersburg (2014), the Miss Expressivity Award at the *Dance Open* Ballet Festival in St. Petersburg (2016), the 'Zwaan' Award for 'Most Impressive Dance Achievement' (for *Mata Hari*, 2016), the Dancer of the Year Award (2017), the Critics' Choice *Dance Europe*, Merit Award from Dansersfonds '79 (2017).

She has also been acclaimed for 'Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer' by Critics' Choice *Dance Europe* in 2019, 2020, and 2021.



Shale Wagman

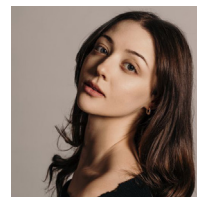
The Canadian dancer Shale Wagman trained in Toronto and Monte Carlo at the Académie Princesse Grace. He was the youngest guest ever invited to perform in a principal role — James in *La Sylphide* — at the Mariinsky.

He has participated in numerous gala performances, including the International Ballet Festival in St. Petersburg, *Dance Open* (2019), and the *Gala de Danza* in Los Cabos, Mexico. His first engagement was with the English National Ballet in London under the direction of Tamara Rojo. Since spring 2021, he has been engaged by the Bavarian State Ballet and was promoted to First Soloist for the 2022/23 Season. In 2024, he joined the Paris Opera Ballet.

His repertoire includes James in *La Sylphide*, Lead Autumn and Summer in *Cinderella* (Wheeldon), *Hungarian Dance No.1 Pas de Deux* (Goecke), *Grand Pas Classique* (Gsovsky), Neapolitan Pas de Deux and Pas de Trois in *Swan Lake* (Deane), Beggar Chief in *Manon* (MacMillan), *Casse-Noisette Compagnie* (Maillot), Male Frida in *Frida* (Lopez Ochoa), Freddie, Chinese, Russian, and Spanish roles in *The Nutcracker*, *Second Breath* (Maliphant), *Don Quixote*, *Dust* (Khan), *Chroma* (McGregor), Benjamin in *Cinderella* (Wheeldon), Rubies and Emeralds from *Jewels* (Balanchine), Franz in *Coppélia* (Petit), Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* (Cranko), Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Neumeier), Golden Idol in *La Bayadère* (Bart, Petipa), and The Mad Hatter and The White Rabbit in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Wheeldon), among others.

Since 2015, Shale Wagman has choreographed several works, including pieces for the Académie Princesse Grace, Les Rencontres Philosophiques de Monaco, and the Gala de Danza in Mexico.

Shale has received several awards, including a gold medal at *Prix de Lausanne* 2018, the Youth Grand Prix Award at *Youth America Grand Prix* 2014, and recognition as a 'New Name to Watch' and 'Spectacular Young Dancer' in *Dance Europe's* Annual Roundup.



Madison Young

Madison is a Principal Dancer at the Bavarian State Ballet. Born in Utah, USA, she trained at Ballet West Academy and Houston Ballet Academy in Texas. In 2016, after competing in the *Prix de Lausanne* and receiving the Beau Rivage Palace 2nd place Award, she accepted an apprenticeship with Houston Ballet for the 2016/17 Season. She was promoted to group dancer in 2017.

For the 2017/18 Season, she joined the Vienna State Ballet as a corps de ballet dancer under the direction of Manuel Legris. She was promoted to Soloist in 2018 and to First Soloist in 2019. At the start of the 2020/21 Season, she joined the Bavarian State Ballet as a First Soloist, and in December 2021, she was promoted to Principal.

Madison's repertoire includes Tatiana in *Onegin* (Cranko), female soloist in *Le Parc* (Preljocaj), title role in *La Sylphide* (Lacotte after Taglioni), Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* (Cranko), Dancer in *Silent Screen* (León and Lightfoot), as part of the *Schmetterling* Double Bill, Dancer in *Schmetterling* (León and Lightfoot), as part of the *Schmetterling* Double Bill, title role in *Giselle* (Wright after Coralli/Perrot/Petipa), Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake* (Barra), *Cinderella* (Wheeldon), Miranda in *Tchaikovsky Overtures* (Ratmansky), Hippolyta/Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Neumeier), Nikiya in *La Bayadère* (Bart after Petipa), and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Wheeldon) among others.

Contributors biographies



Rafael Porzycki

Founder and Concept Creator of *Theatrum Vitae*, Rafael Porzycki is a man with a vision. After graduating in architecture from Wrocław University of Technology he has had a successful international career, working with leading architectural offices around the world. He is a Founder of Creator Architectural Studio which delivers international design and architecture projects in the UK, Cyprus, Russia, Greece and Poland. Rafael Porzycki's deep interest and passion for design and theatre led to his involvement as a creative director on a number of international cultural projects across Europe – and inspired him to create *Theatrum Vitae*. This multi-faceted cultural initiative involves leading performing and visual artists from around the world, and rising stars selected through international competitions established to discover young talent for the project. He believes that *Theatrum Vitae*, with its inspirational outlook, will leave a long-lasting cultural legacy in its host countries, and will contribute hugely both artistically and spiritually to present and future generations.



Graham Watts OBE

Graham Watts is a freelance dance writer and critic. He writes regularly for *Bachtrack.com*, *Shinshokan Dance Magazine* (Japan), *The Spectator*, *Tanz* (Germany) and *Ballet Magazine* (Romania) and he has written for *Dancing Times*, *Dancetabs.com*, *Dance Europe*, *Danza Europa*, *Londondance.com*, *Sunday Express* and other magazines and websites in Europe, Japan and the USA; and he writes features for Sadler's Wells, the Edinburgh International Festival, London Coliseum, the Hong Kong Arts Festival and other theatres, festivals and galas around the world.

He has also appeared regularly on TV and Radio (*Newsnight*, *BBC News*, *BBC Breakfast*, *BBC Politics*, *BBC London Today*, *BBC Southern Today*, *BBC South East News*, *BBC News 24*, *BBC 5 Live*, *ITV News*, *Channel 4 News*, *Channel 5 News*, *Sky News*, *ABC News* and *Forty Minutes* (Australia), *France 24*, *Working Lunch*, *The World Tonight*, *Gyles Brandreth on Sunday*, *Olympic Grandstand*, *Talk Sport Radio*, *LBC*, *South of Westminster*, *Russia Today* various documentary films and several Russian, Italian, US, Spanish and Chinese TV channels). He is Chairman of the Dance Section of the Critics' Circle in the United Kingdom and of the UK National Dance Awards (both roles since 2011) and he was Secretary in 2009/10. He is a member of the UNESCO International Dance Council and the Society for Dance Research. He was nominated for the Dance Writing Award in the 2018 One Dance UK Awards His book, *'Agony & Ecstasy'*, written with the Czech ballerina, Daria Klimentová, was published in March 2013. He has also written a chapter on Akram Khan in the *Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Ballet* and a chapter on Shobana Jeyasingh in Routledge's *Fifty Contemporary Choreographers* (both published in 2021).

Graham has interviewed many of the greatest names in dance including Maya Plisetskaya, Vladimir Vasiliev, Irek Mukhamedov, Boris Eifman, Alexei Ratmansky, Andris Liepa, Sir Peter Wright, David Bintley, Patrick de Bana, Emio Greco, Carlos Acosta, Lil Buck and John Boogz, Christopher Wheeldon, Angelin Preljocaj, Patricia Kelly (Gene Kelly's widow), Savion Glover, Tamas Solymosi, Sir Richard Alston, Johan Kobborg, Alina Cojocar, Leanne Benjamin, Tamara Rojo, Wayne Eagling, Koen Kessels, Dame Merle Park, Dame Darcey Bussell, Henry Danton (first cast of *Symphonic Variations*), Steven McRae, Christopher Hampson, Stephanie Lake and Dame Gillian Lynne. He was the regular interviewer of ballet stars for Crystal Ballet in 2015/16 and is now a regular interviewer for the London Ballet Circle.

Graham has also had a lifelong involvement with the sport of fencing and was Captain of the British Sabre team at the Barcelona Olympic Games, and won a Commonwealth medal in 1990. He was the Manager of the British Fencing Team at the Athens (2004) and Beijing (2008) Olympic Games.

He was appointed OBE (Officer of the British Empire) in 2008.



Mariana Gomes

Mariana Gomes, discovered by the legendary Vladimir Vasiliev at the Bolshoi School in Brazil, made history as the first Brazilian dancer to join the prestigious Bolshoi Ballet under Alexei Ratmanský. Over the course of an illustrious 18-year career with the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, she graced the stage in more than 35 ballets spanning classical, neoclassical, and modern repertoires. Her remarkable performances included iconic roles in *La Sylphide*, *The Nutcracker*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Symphony of Psalms*, *Jewels*, and *Don Quixote*.

Gomes toured over 15 countries, collaborating with some of the world's greatest talents, such as Svetlana Zakharova, Nikolai Tsiskaridze, Carlos Acosta, and Diana Vishneva. She also worked with renowned choreographers including Yuri Grigorovich, John Neumeier, Pierre Lacotte, and Johan Kobborg, enriching her artistry and expanding her influence in the world of ballet.

Mariana earned a Bachelor's degree in Classical Dance Pedagogy from the Russian Theatre Institute (2009–2013), where she trained under Bolshoi prima ballerinas Svetlana Adyrkhaeva and Anna Leonova. She later became a faculty member at the Central School of Ballet in Moscow under Ekaterina Shipulina and has since taught internationally, leading masterclasses in Greece, Germany, Brazil, and the UK. In addition to her international teaching engagements, she offers private coaching sessions for aspiring dancers, helping shape the next generation of ballet talent.

In 2022, Mariana's contributions to the world of dance were officially recognized when she was appointed as the Consul of Dance and an Official Member of the International Dance Council (UNESCO).

Now based in London, Mariana continues to shape the future of ballet, staging renowned works such as *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker* across Europe. As a passionate curator and producer, she stages and curates ballet events worldwide. She has been a major part of the prestigious Ballet Icons, contributing significantly to its success as its Global Artist Manager over the past three years at the London Coliseum and Dubai Opera. Her dedication to the art form has earned her numerous accolades, including the prestigious Order of the Rio Branco in 2022, Brazil's highest cultural honor.

For more information or class bookings, visit www.marianagomes.com



Andrew Ellis

Andrew is a London-based lighting designer, relighter and production manager. His extensive work in the dance world includes designs for BalletBoyz, The United Ukrainian Ballet, New English Ballet Theatre, English National Ballet, National Youth Ballet of Great Britain, English National Ballet School, Central School of Ballet, Tom Dale Company, Aakash Odedra, ACE Dance and Music, Agudo Dance Company and others. Other notable design credits include the acclaimed "The Mongol Khan" (Coliseum) and new British musical "Eugenius!" (The Other Palace) for which he won the Broadway World Award for Best Lighting Design in 2018. No stranger to galas, Andrew has also designed the Ballet Icons Galas at the Coliseum and at Dubai Opera for the past four years, as well as the All England Dance Gala (Coliseum, Glyndebourne), Dance for Ukraine (Palladium) and Darcey Bussell's British Ballet Gala (Royal Albert Hall) among many others.



Nina Kobiashvili

Nina Kobiashvili graduated from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London, in 1998 with BA (Hons) in Theatre & Performance Design. Her works include: set design for ice musical *Nutcracker* by Ilya Averbukh, VTB Ice Palace – Park of Legends in Moscow, Russia, 2016; production design for the Ilya Averbukh's ice show *Musicians of Bremen* at Moscow's VTB Ice Palace; set design for the Bandy World Championship 2016, the XXXVI Bandy World Championship; production design for the ice musical *Carmen* by Ilya Averbukh at the 2014 Sochi Olympic "Iceberg" Skating Palace, 2015; set and costume design for the musical *Oliver* by Lionel Bart for the Tbilisi State Opera and Ballet Theatre (which was granted exclusive rights from Cameron Mackintosh Company to perform the musical in Georgia); stage design for Gorby 80; The Mikhail Gorbachev Charitable Gala Concert and *The Man Who Changed the World Award Ceremony* at the Royal Albert Hall in 2011; set and costume design for the opera *Mitridate Re di Ponto* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart for the Tbilisi State Opera and Ballet Theatre in collaboration with Rustaveli National Theatre (Tbilisi, Georgia) in 2011. In 2007, Nina worked as a production designer for the Channel 4 TV drama *Poppy Shakespeare*, directed by Benjamin Ross for Cowboy Films, which was awarded the Panavision Spirit Award for Independent Cinema at the 24th annual *Santa Barbara International Film Festival*. She has also worked as a production designer for feature films: *Generation P* by Victor Ginzburg, *Jolly Fellows* by Felix Mikhaylov, *The Seventh Day* by Kakha Kikabidze.

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Since Dame Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin founded what is now English National Ballet in 1950, the Company has always been committed to achieving the highest musical as well as dancing standards. From the very beginning, the English National Ballet Philharmonic played an important part in creating the magic which is a vital part of every live performance.

The dancers and the musicians do not usually see each other until the dress rehearsal, instead rehearsing separately. However, the conductor will attend as many of the dancers' rehearsals as possible

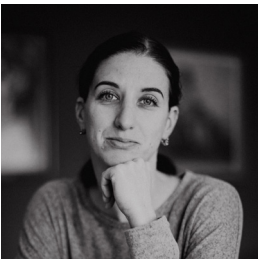
so they know the tempo at which the ballet should be played. This is not an easy task – each Principal Dancer will want his or her solo at a specific speed whilst every other divertissement must be at a consistent tempo, so the other dancers know what to expect. The music also guides much of the drama of the productions, and the Orchestra has a very keen theatrical sense which provides the perfect pace for any scene. The Orchestra is accompanying silent soloists so they are reliant on the conductor's beat to synchronise the different aspects of a production. As a result, the musicianship and musicality of both dancers and orchestra are allowed to shine in every performance. The Orchestra is made up of many of the country's top musicians, and boasts considerable experience in all forms of music-making.

Recent notable events have included galas at both the London Coliseum and the Royal Opera House, accompanying visiting ballet companies, appearances in concert (including the Bath and City of London Festivals) and, most recently, providing the music for the Royal Academy of Dance's children's ballet syllabus grades. They also play a significant part in the Learning Department's school visits and workshops, taking a taste of the music of ballet to tomorrow's audience.



Conductor

Maria Seletskaja



Maria is the Music Director of the English National Ballet Company. She graduated from Tallinn Ballet School in 2002 and continued her studies at St. Petersburg Vaganova Ballet Academy. From 2003 to 2006, she studied choreography at Tallinn University. She has been a Soloist with the Estonian National Ballet, Berlin State Ballet,

Zurich Ballet, and the Royal Ballet of Flanders and has guested in many theatres around the world. While pursuing her career in dance, Maria studied both piano and violin. She studied music theory, harmony, and orchestration at Berklee College of Music in Boston and conducted under James Tuggle's tutelage. During her final years as a dancer, she was also an assistant conductor at Stuttgart Ballet,

where she made her conducting debut in April 2017. Since 2018, Maria has dedicated herself fully to conducting. In 2021, she began her master's studies in orchestral conducting with Maestro Arvo Volmer at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre and graduated in 2022.

In 2022, Maria made her conducting debut with Ballett am Rhein and Estonian National Ballet. She assisted David Briskin at the Royal Danish Ballet, where she conducted *Romeo and Juliet*, and returned to Stuttgart Ballet to conduct a revival of Marcia Haydée's *The Sleeping Beauty*. She also made her concert debut with the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, conducting a New Year's concert which was broadcast on national television to an audience of over 100,000.

In 2023, Maria successfully debuted with San Francisco Ballet, conducting their production of *Romeo and Juliet*, and with L'Opéra de Paris conducting a *Jerome Robbins Evening*. Maria also concluded her residency with The National Ballet of Canada by conducting their production of *Cinderella*. Highlights of the 2023/24 Season included debuts with Berlin State Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, Finnish National Ballet, and English National Ballet. The 2024/25 Season sees engagements with Mecklenburgisches Staatstheater, Opéra Bordeaux, Staatsballett Hamburg, and Norwegian National Ballet.

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Founded by Chiara Gorodesky in 2022, a lawyer who specialised in housing and property litigation at a London practice for more than a decade, Chiara turned her life around after moving to New York City, where she founded vildwerk. a registered charity with a mission of raising environmental conservation awareness through dance and other artistic collaborations.

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Licensing Regulations

The public may leave at the end of the performance by the exit doors and such doors must at all times be open. All gangways, passages and staircases must be entirely free from chairs or any other obstruction. Persons shall not under any circumstances be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways. If standing be permitted, in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be strictly limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions. The safety curtain must be lowered and raised in the presence of each audience.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the London Coliseum. The use of still or video cameras, or sound recording equipment, is forbidden during any performance

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