



THE END OF the season approaches fast, particularly in London, with only performances of *Jewels* before The Royal Ballet leaves for its summer tour of Washington, Grenada and Havana. Birmingham Royal Ballet finishes its season at The Lowry in Salford during the first week of July. We wish all members both companies a successful end to the season and restful holidays, though, no doubt, some will fill them with guest appearances. Some of The Royal, for example, hot foot it from Havana to appear with Carlos Acosta at the Coliseum.

Since our last newsletter we have had two very enjoyable meetings, as well as our Annual Dinner. At our meeting in April, we welcomed Artistic Administrator and Character Artist, **Philip Mosley**, as our guest. Philip gave a very interesting talk about his career and the two very different roles he currently fills. It was fascinating to hear some of the detail involved in arranging rehearsal schedules, etc. At our meeting in May, we welcomed Principal Guest Artist **Miyako Yoshida** and Administrative Director **Kevin O'Hare** as our guests. Miyako and Kevin last spoke to us five years ago. Miyako spoke of her decision to become a guest artist, which followed her marriage to an international sports agent. She spoke of the many aspects of her current life, including masterclasses on Japanese television and dancing with a number of companies.

When Kevin last spoke to us, he had just become Company Manager. He spoke of the work involved in his old and new roles and how these had developed over the last five years. Amongst other things, he gave us an insight into the organising of the Company's foreign tours, including this summer's to Washington, Granada and Havana.

As members will know, we give a present to all dancers who have been with the Company for more than ten years when they retire from being a full time member of the Company. So Miyako should have received her present three years ago. At the meeting, we gave Miyako a box with a cheque in it. She will let us know what she chose to buy as her present from the Association.

For members unable to attend meetings, a summary is made available on our website once the report has been checked by the guest speaker.

Future meetings

With The Royal Ballet on tour, we have two very special meetings to finish our season. Please note that both dates are different from those originally advertised. At our next meeting on Thursday 25 June we are delighted to welcome **Wayne Eagling**, Artistic Director of English National Ballet, as our guest. Former Principal with The Royal Ballet, Wayne was very supportive of the Association in our earlier years, when, for example, we had cricket matches with the Company. Born in Montreal, Canada, Wayne trained in California before joining The Royal Ballet School and then The Royal Ballet in 1969. In 1991, he left the Company to become Artistic Director of Dutch National Ballet, where he remained until 2003. In December 2005 he became Artistic Director of English National Ballet. We have a lot of catching up to do as Wayne hasn't spoken to the Association since he left The Royal. The week before he speaks ENB will be presenting two programmes celebrating the Centenary of the Ballets Russes, the week after they perform in St Paul's Cathedral. Earlier this season saw ENB successfully bring *Manon* into their repertoire and last season saw them premiere a number of new works, including a piece choreographed by Wayne. We can expect a very entertaining evening.

At our last meeting of the season on Friday 31 July we welcome dance critic and editor of *Dance Europe* magazine, **Emma Manning**. It is some years since we've had a critic talk to the Association. We can expect a fascinating evening, not only learning how Emma became a critic but how she came to set up *Dance Europe* and all that is involved in running a magazine that reviews work in the UK, Europe and the wider world. It will also give us the opportunity to discuss different styles of criticism. We are sure these two meetings will provide us with an enjoyable end to the season.

Meetings, unless otherwise stated, begin at 7.30 and are at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church at the eastern end of Shaftesbury Avenue, opposite the Shaftesbury Theatre. From Covent Garden you walk up Endell Street and cross Shaftesbury Avenue. The church is then on your left, if you face East. Nearest tube Tottenham Court Road. Doors open at 6.30 p.m.

Dates for next season

Provisional dates for next season are Thursday 27 August, Friday 4 September, Thursday 10 September, Friday 2 October, Thursday 15 October, Friday 20 November, Wednesday 25 November, Tuesday 8 December, Tuesday 15 December, Thursday 7 January, Friday 22 January, Thursday 28 January, Friday 5 February, Thursday 11 February, Thursday 18 February, Wednesday 3 March, Wednesday 17 March, Wednesday 7 April, Friday 16 April, Thursday 13 May, Thursday 20 May, Thursday 27 May, Thursday 3 June, Thursday 17 June, Thursday 24 June. We will not be using all these dates, but members have indicated that it is helpful to know what dates are possible. Most months there will be one meeting, sometimes two, depending on how busy the ballet schedule is. Some dates may change depending on commitments of speakers.

Exits, entrances, etc.

As members will probably be aware, Alexandra Ansanelli has announced her retirement from The Royal Ballet at the end of this season. We presented Alexandra with a bouquet at our Annual Dinner to mark her time with the Company. Alexandra wrote:

Thank you for a beautiful evening. It was very special and memorable. The Ballet Association is really so very special. Much love, Alexandra.
P.S. My flowers smell and look divine.

The Friday before the dinner, Henry St Clair retired from the Company. We presented him with a bottle of wine. Soloist Vanessa Palmer will also be leaving the Company at the end of this season, although will return occasionally as a guest artist. As Vanessa has been with the Company for well over ten years, we will be giving her a present from the Association. We will let members know what, when Vanessa has indicated what she would like. We wish all of them success in their future careers.

As members may know, Ruth Bailey joined The Royal Ballet from The Royal Ballet School part of the way through this season. Joining from the School for next season are Tristan Dyer, Benjamin Ella and Leticia Stock. This season's Prix de Lausanne Apprentice Akane Takada also joins the Company as an Artist. We wish them all much success in the Company.

As members will know, Tristan Dyer was one of the recipients of last season's Ballet Association Awards at The Royal Ballet School. The other, Shiore Kase, is joining English National Ballet. This season's awards will be presented at the School's Graduation Ceremony after the School's Matinee. We will an-

nounce the recipients in the next newsletter.

Annual Dinner 2009

On Tuesday 5 May, we had one of our most successful dinners ever, celebrating the 35th Anniversary of the Association. Apart from one last minute cancellation, we were able to fill every seat, so there were 179 present. It was a particular pleasure to welcome Sir Peter Wright, who hasn't been able to attend our dinner for a few years, and Bruce Sansom, who takes up his post as Assistant Director of San Francisco Ballet in July.

Our final guest list was: Dame Monica Mason, Desmond and Denise Kelly, Jonathan Cope, Christopher Saunders, Sir Peter Wright, Jeanetta Laurence, Kevin O'Hare, Ursula Hageli, Bruce Sansom, Alexandra Ansanelli, Federico Bonelli, Roberta Marquez, Marianela Nunez, Rupert Pennefather, Yuhui Choe, Steven McRae, Helen Crawford, Hikaru Kobayashi, Brian Maloney, David Pickering, Sergei Polunin, Tom Whitehead, Paul Kay, Sian Murphy, Lara Turk, Melissa Hamilton, Elizabeth Harrod, David Trzensimiech, Leanne Cope, Olivia Cowley.

We presented flowers to our Patron, Dame Monica Mason and small gifts to a couple of our long serving members. Monica wrote:

I just wanted to thank you and the Ballet Association for your splendid dinner last night. It's always a pleasure and fun to meet members one's not met or talked to before and to hear their comments, and also to renew old friendships.

As usual, we had photographs taken of the guests on each table during the evening. These will be available for members to purchase at future meeting and some will be placed on our website.

Newsletters and website

If you currently receive your newsletters by post but have an e-mail address, please consider receiving them by e-mail in future. E-mail has the advantage of ensuring that you are not subject to the vagaries of our postal system and that you receive your newsletters as soon as they have been written. It also helps The Ballet Association save money on postage. Please inform the Chairman via davidbain@balletassociation.co.uk if you would like to do this. Our website is regularly updated with pictures, reports of meetings, etc. Please recommend it to friends.

David Bain (Chairman)

Visit To Elmhurst – interested in participating?

We are considering organizing a Ballet Association visit to Elmhurst School for Dance in Birmingham this autumn. The Ballet Association was set up to give active support to both the Royal Ballet companies and we are keen to maintain the links with the Birmingham company. As you'll know, Elmhurst is now the feeder school for Birmingham Royal Ballet. Desmond Kelly, one of our Association Presidents, is now Artistic Director there and has very kindly offered to host our visit. Before going any further with detailed plans, however, we need to know whether this is something that you would be likely to join in.

OR if the visit is on the day of BRB performance, for those who wish to stay for the evening...

4.45	leave by taxi to Birmingham Hippodrome (before the performance we would try to arrange meeting with BRB dancers)
7.30	performance
11.10	train from Birmingham
01.13	arrive London Euston

The cost would be, for rail fares at current prices, £26.65 return for Senior Railcard holders or £40.40 for other adults. However, Virgin Trains are currently advertising fares to Birmingham at £7 each way, which we may be able to obtain as a group. Clearly, if members decide to stay for an evening performance, they may prefer to stay overnight rather than arrive in Euston so late.

The draft programme would be something like this:

09.43	depart London Euston
11.08	arrive Birmingham New Street station. Taxis to Elmhurst.
11.45	arrive Elmhurst
12.00	welcome from Desmond Kelly in school theatre
12.10-1.10	tour and presentation of the first Ballet Association Award. Buffet lunch in foyer (with teachers).
1.15-2.45	watch class
2.45-4.20	watch second class
4.45	depart by taxi for 5.30 train to London
6.54	arrive London Euston

To help us gauge interest, please will you fill in the form below and return it to any committee member at the next meeting or send it to the Chairman.

Name:			
	Yes	No	Comments
I am interested in participating in the Elmhurst visit. (Please indicate whether you would like it arranged on a BRB performance date or not.)			
I am not interested in participating in this but am interested in the idea of visits organised by The Ballet Association.			
My suggestion for a visit is.....			