



## newsletter

*November/December 2009*

**O**CTOBER SAW TWO very enjoyable meetings. At the beginning of the month, First Artists **Nathalie Harrison** and **James Wilkie** spoke briefly about their careers before giving us a detailed account of this last summer's tour. We are extremely grateful to James for replacing **Lara Turk** at very short notice. Lara was ill. Nathalie and James gave us a fascinating insight into touring, whether it be shopping in Washington, ending up in a bush as a swan in Granada or partying in Havana!

At our second meeting, it was a pleasure to welcome Principal, **Alina Cojocar**. Alina spoke with great candour about the injury which kept her off stage for much of the last two years, as well as speaking about her performances both with the Royal and as a guest artist around the world. After the meeting she talked at length to individual members. So much so, that we had to turn the lights out to clear the hall.

### Future meetings

We are delighted to announce that our guest on Friday 20 November, after our AGM, will be Répétiteur and Association President **Jonathan Cope**. Having made a spectacular return to the stage this summer in *A Month in the Country* in Havana, Jonny will have much to talk about. He last talked to the Association soon after his retirement from dancing, although he has since performed with **Darcey Bussell** and **Leanne Benjamin**. We know this will be a popular meeting. The AGM will start at 6.45 p.m. and finish at about 7.15, allowing plenty of time for those not attending the AGM to find seats.

To finish 2009, we have a pre-Christmas treat, as on Tuesday 8 December our guest will be the Association's Patron, **Dame Monica Mason**, Director of The Royal Ballet. Monica last spoke to us three years ago. Much has happened in this time and, as always, Monica will provide us with a fascinating evening both looking back and forward to this and future seasons. This will be a very popular meeting and we advise early arrival to get the best seats.

Meetings, unless otherwise stated, begin at 7.30 p.m. and are at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church which is at the eastern end of Shaftesbury Avenue, opposite the Shaftesbury Theatre. From Covent Garden

you walk up Endell Street and cross over 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.

Provisional dates for the rest of the season are Friday 22 January, Tuesday 23 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 24 June. Some dates may change depending on commitments of speakers. Please note Thursday 17 June has been removed from list as is the date of our trip to Elmhurst.

### Royal Ballet School

**Imogen Chapman**, one of the recipients of the Ballet Association's Annual Awards to the Royal Ballet School wrote just after the last newsletter was posted to thank us for the award:

'Thank you very much for your generous support. We have just come back from our summer holidays, which I really enjoyed, and I am now looking forward to the school's trip to Canada in November. Thank you again for our kind help. Imogen.'

### Annual Dinner 2010

A date for your diary: our Annual Dinner for this season will be on Monday 17 May. Details, including an application form, will be in the January newsletter.

### Membership

If you haven't already returned the renewal form, which was attached to the last newsletter, to Joan Seaman please do so as soon as possible, but not later than the end of October.

### Visit to BRB & Elmhurst, 16/17 June – payment

Tickets for *On Their Toes!*, 16 June 2010

If you have requested seat/s (now secured as indicated on your form), we require a cheque made out to The Ballet Association for the correct amount. DEADLINE is Friday 20 November for our receipt of all cheques. Please note that the Hippodrome operates a no refund

policy. Ticket costs: *Front Stalls and Front Circle*: £25, *Rear Stalls*: £18.50. Please send your cheque to: Brian Don, 5 Weirdale Avenue, London N20 0AN, or, with the current postal strike problems, hand in at a meeting or to David Bain.

**Accommodation**, 16 June 2010, at The Holiday Inn Birmingham City, Smallbrook Queensway, Birmingham B5 4EW

This has now been secured as indicated on your form. Deadline for your payment by cheque made out to The Ballet Association, is 30 April 2010. Please note that if we have not received your cheque by this date, your reservation will be cancelled.

Room costs: Single (double room for single occupancy): £60, Twin (standard twin rooms for double occupancy): £70. Both rates are inclusive of full English breakfast and VAT at the current rate.

Details of the day at Elmhurst on 17 June and any event pre-performance on the 16th will be provided nearer the time. You are reminded that you should make your own travel arrangements. Early booking of trains reduces the cost enormously.

### **Annual General Meeting**

The meeting on **Friday 20 November** will be preceded by our AGM. Consequently the evening's proceedings will commence at 6.45 p.m. It will be held at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church. The AGM will be followed by a meeting with **Jonathan Cope** at 7.30.

### **Agenda**

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Financial Report
6. Election of Committee
7. Any Other Business

At this meeting we shall be electing Honorary Officers and Committee Members. The current Committee is David Bain (Chairman and Organising Secretary), Sylvia Tyler (Deputy Chairman), Joan Seaman (Membership Secretary), Melanie Shipton (Treasurer), Liz Bouttell (Reporting Secretary), Rachel Holland, Geoffrey Griffiths, Belinda Taylor, Chris Scott and Brian Don.

All of the current members have indicated they wish to continue on the committee. Association members wishing to nominate candidates for election should write to the Chairman, David Bain, by Friday 21 November, using a copy of the nomination form included in the last newsletter. No nomination can be received at the AGM. Candidates for election must be proposed and seconded, in writing, by members of the Association.

Anyone interested in joining the committee should phone David to discuss what it entails. If we have more than one nomination an election may be held.

*David Bain* (Chairman)

### **British Friends of the Ballet Nacional de Cuba**

If you have attended any of our meetings this season you will have heard about The Royal Ballet's successful tour to Havana. In the spring, the Ballet Nacional de Cuba will be dancing at the Coliseum in London, as well as in Manchester, Birmingham and Cardiff, with **Carlos Acosta** dancing in some performances. **Alicia Alonso** has asked the British Friends to sponsor new costumes and sets for her production of *Magia de la Danza*, which they will be dancing in most venues.

If you would like to make a donation towards this production, however small, or join the British Friends, please contact the Ballet Association Chairman who will provide you with the relevant forms. The British Friends of Ballet Nacional de Cuba are a registered charity, so donations can be Gift Aided.