

Thomas Whitehead

SOLOIST, THE ROYAL BALLET

interviewed by David Bain

Swedenborg Hall, London, 6 December 2007.

David Bain welcomed Thomas Whitehead and began by asking Tom what had made him take up dancing.

TW: None of my family is from a dance background but I was one of those children who liked dressing up and enjoyed dancing to music – impersonating Shakin’ Stevens and, later, Michael Jackson. I was also very small until I was about 16. I’ve known Jenny Tattersall for a long time and when I first knew Jenny I was smaller than her – I was that small! I was also poorly as a child. I had a lot of problems with Asthma and allergies so sports were difficult for me because I was always sneezing in the field. So it was actually doctor’s orders. The doctor said I should go to do some dance lessons. I was about nine when I started ISTD ‘Modern Dance’. I started with one teacher and I wasn’t really into it. There was also something on telly I wanted to watch the night of my class so I never went back! About a year later I went to a local school in Bingley. A couple of years after I started tap, I was told I really should do ballet and I was 13 when I decided that this was my career. Then I stopped concentrating at school and started going to ballet classes every night and I was there until I was 16.

I considered going to White Lodge but I didn’t feel like I wanted to move away at that point as I quite liked the set-up of going to school then going afterwards to my dance classes. I was one of six ‘full-time’ students who went every night and I would have to do my homework in the morning in the car on the way to school.

DB: What was it at 13 that made you decide to take this up as a career?

TW: I’m not sure really. By then I was doing a little bit of modelling as well – a lot of knitting patterns and stuff like that! I liked the idea of show business. I never wanted to be a ballet dancer – that was never my intention. I wanted to be an entertainer but I can’t sing and I can’t play an instrument – although I did learn the piano and the guitar but I never really put in the practise that was necessary because of the dance classes every night. But something sparked in me that this was what I wanted to

do. I wanted to be in London and I wanted to be on the stage. I wanted to be like Danny Kaye and that character in *Singing in the Rain*, Cosmo Brown, a song and dance man.

At 16 it was time to audition for a school in London. I auditioned for the Arts Educational Schools and the Royal Ballet School and was given a place in both. I went away to have a think about it but I didn’t want to just be a ballet dancer. One year I received an award for Best All-Round Dancer. I was very proud of that as I prided myself on being an all-rounder and so therefore going to Arts Educational School let me continue with that. I loved jazz and tap. It was only when I went to Arts Educational that I was introduced to contemporary dance. At the end of that year I went to the Yorkshire Ballet Seminars – which I was a regular at because for a number of years I lived down the road – and Donald MacLeary was teaching that year and he asked me to go to the Royal Ballet School. I explained to him that I had turned down a place there but he said he had spoken to the School and it would be fine. So I went because I was asked by someone like him – I was given a second chance and I figured that there must be something in it and it felt like I should follow that path. But having done my first year at Arts Educational, I had to repeat my first year when I went into the Royal Ballet School.

DB: Talk us through some of the differences between Arts Educational and the Royal Ballet School.

TW: I had just left home and come to London and I was like somebody let loose. During that year I got out of my system all those things that students get up to and it was a good thing because I quickly realised that it was quite strict at the Royal Ballet School. It was more varied at Arts Educational because of the different classes. Without wishing to sound arrogant, I was also aware that I was the best in the class – there weren’t many boys and I didn’t really have any competition in ballet class. So, for me, that was the main thing.

I remember that the boys who came up from White Lodge enjoyed the freedom but I felt like I had had my

wings clipped a bit because I had had this year of going a little bit crazy but working hard too. I was also very aware of being an outsider. In fact they actually called us that in the beginning. I remember Julie Lincoln bringing us into a studio and putting the 'White Lodgers' on one side and the 'outsiders' on the other! I lived in a house with a lot of the other boys so I got to know them pretty quickly.

DB: In those days quite a lot of people came from outside, didn't they?

TW: Yes, but we were certainly in the minority.

DB: Who was in your year?

TW: Matthew Dibble, Edward Watson, Christina Arestis and Jenny Tattersall. And Robert Parker – we two were thick as thieves during school. I miss Robert as he's moved to America now. David Makhтели was in my year as well. It was quite a good year and a lot have done OK. The competition was obvious to me so I knew I had to push harder straightaway. I soon got over not being able to do jazz class. I haven't done a jazz class since I was 16 – I'd love to but I'm a bit scared of it now. There were other things to keep you occupied too like having to do school-work like Dance Studies and I chose Politics too. I was at the Royal Ballet School for two years and a term.

DB: What were the high points and low spots during that time?

TW: I don't think I was ever Merle Park's favourite. In fact I know I wasn't! I don't know if you remember that TV programme *The Boss* which was on the English National Ballet and Derek Deane. It showed an audition – mine. Seeing her in that programme, I realised that Merle didn't like me. I also remember seeing her put Robert Parker over a bin and cut his fringe! It was probably a low spot for him but I laughed! Robert being Robert, he didn't go to get the rest of it cut; he just had long hair with a spiky fringe!

I found test classes difficult and hard to deal with. I didn't ever do well in my test classes – in fact I think I came last in my final one but I already had a job by then. You would learn a class and one or two solos and then you would perform in front of a panel and they mark you on each exercise then mark you again on your solos.

DB: Who offered you the job and how?

TW: Monica [Mason]. I did that audition for English National Ballet which I always felt a little bit was my audition for the Royal Ballet too. I was offered a place with English National Ballet and it was the very next day that I was called in to see Monica and was offered a place at the Royal Ballet too. She had seen me in School when we were all at Baron's Court. I joined in December 1994 with Edward and Christina. Matthew Dibble had joined in the previous September.

DB: What are your first memories of the Company?

TW: One of my earliest memories of the Company was being given corrections by David Drew in the shower – which was shocking, to say the least! I didn't want to shower in there for a few weeks after that!

It was intimidating joining the Company even though I kind of knew the people because I had worked with the Company a little bit as a student in *Nutcracker* and *Petrushka*. In *Petrushka* I was the Bearded Lady!

The transition is eased a little when you are no longer an outsider but I still think it is the hardest company to join. When you first join you feel like nobody can see you. It's not that we don't care, it's just that there is no time to go and look after the new people because everyone is working so hard and concentrating. Now I understand why it is that some of those higher up in the Company don't know the people in the Corps de Ballet. It took about a year to fit in, keeping ourselves to ourselves. It took that long really to feel a part of it and to start making friends.

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DB: Male dancers seem to get some very bad roles to start with.

TW: Yes, like the Bearded Lady! When I very first joined, I seemed to be on stage all the time. Then it kind of dried up. I think that happens quite a lot with new people. At first the new people get thrown in to all kinds of things. Then you tend to spend the next couple of years wondering when you are next going to get to do something. I think you have to be very patient. And just when you think it's all over and you are never going to get to do anything, they promote you!

DB: What is the first role you remember?

TW: I think *La Valse* was in my first year – that was a nice role to do. Very early on I rehearsed *Rhapsody* which is a big number. Then there was the Mandolin Dance in *Romeo and Juliet*, I really wanted to get up and do that. *Rhapsody* – I would have died to do that then someone else came in from higher up the Company. But I did get to do it eventually. The Bearded Lady is still big in my head from that time – it scarred me!

DB: Can you remember what your first solo was?

TW: I don't do big solos like Bluebird; I do demi-character roles. Paris – it was very exciting to get to do that, and I've been doing it for about 10 years now along with Wilfred and Benno. Very quickly I thought that was OK – that's what the Company sees in me.

Everyone who joins the Company thinks that they will become a Principal – and rightly so because it's good to have that kind of ambition. Some people get

upset if they are put in character shoes too early but I thought that if that was what the Company wanted me to do, I just had to do it better than anyone else and make that my place in the Company. I still try to do that. People think those kinds of roles are easy but they aren't because they have a whole other side to them that you are not taught in School.

DB: What type of help do you get in learning characterisation?

TW: It was Chris Saunders who taught me Paris and he had done it a lot. I was reading a very old Ballet Association interview with Chris and I didn't realise that I was the first person he rehearsed. There is a lot of talking about the characterisation. I think Paris is a much harder role than Tybalt because it is so subtle. You could spend a good month on learning Paris whereas Tybalt I learnt in about two weeks. The Company also leaves you alone with those kinds of characters and those types of roles. Of course you'll be told if you are doing it wrong but you are allowed to find the character for yourself. Monica gives amazing direction, she always knows exactly what to say.

DB: Do you do Paris differently according to who is dancing Juliet?

TW: Not intentionally apart from the partnering – there are little things that the girls need. It changes and evolves on the stage in terms of the relationship and what Juliet gives to you. So I suppose it does change with different people.

DB: Let's talk about some of the other roles you have done. You have done Tybalt recently.

TW: I loved it and had a great time doing it and people have said some really nice things to me about it.

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DB: You have also done Hilarion.

TW: That's another role I love. Those are great roles because you dance a little bit and you are featured and you are a principal but you don't have the technical pressure of Romeo or Albrecht. There is a solo for Hilarion which is not easy and it is quiet difficult because you have been standing around in character mode then suddenly you have got to get up and start throwing yourself around. You find yourself warming up in the interval.

I have done great dancing roles as well but there are some I have missed out on and would love to have done such as Lescaut. But my favourite role has to be in

[Mats Ek's] *Carmen*.

DB: And it's coming back, isn't it? You were Don José – a bit of a wimp!

TW: Yes, when Monica told me it was coming back I was really surprised and really pleased. I guess he was a bit of a softy. I didn't think I played him as a wimp. He's in the Army but he is sensitive and he is a lover. He falls for her and everybody is a wimp compared to Tamar's *Carmen*! She's difficult to keep up with.

DB: Can you talk a little about your experience of working with Ek on that ballet?

TW: I loved every second of it. It was during Ross's year. I was very proud of how I got in. It was like an open audition and Mats brought the whole Company in and taught us some material. I had watched the video with Rupert [Pennefather] the day before the workshop and we loved it but we looked at each other and said we didn't want to be the guy who has to keep running around at the end – and then of course I was him! But I was thrilled to be able to do it.

Mats is a genius in the studio. A really great man, yet he is really nice and humble and not at all starry. As I said, some directors and choreographers don't have to say much – it's just what they do say makes perfect sense, for example, like Matthew Bourne. He was trying to get right the relationship between the Prince and the Swan and he said 'It's like dogs. The way they just look at you. Whatever you do they just stare at you.' That made perfect sense for the character. Mats is one of those people too, he can come up with a little gem that gets right to the point.

DB: You got chosen over a lot of Principals.

TW: Yes, and I don't know how they felt about it but I felt very privileged and I wasn't going to start looking behind me to see who it had upset. I got it on my own merits and nobody can take that away from me. I don't know if that sounds bad but you have to adopt that kind of attitude if you are to get up and do a principal role like that. You have to believe you own it. And I don't think there was any shame in being second cast to Sylvie and Massimo either.

DB: I think there are a lot of people who felt that the second cast was the better cast.

TW: That's very nice.

DB: Are you doing it next time?

TW: I don't know. I would love to do it again. I love that ballet and that role so much I could quite happily retire if I could do it again – it means that much to me – and I never thought I would get the opportunity to do it again either.

DB: Have you seen his other work?

TW: I had not seen a lot of his work but at the end of September I went to New York where they have this event called 'Fall for Dance' and Mats was dancing *Memory* with Ana Laguna. I thought 'I can't miss that, I

have to see it' and it was fantastic. He moved amazingly. I thought it would be a nice opportunity if I could get to see him afterwards. I'm not sure he knew who I was at first – just some crazy person from the audience – then I explained who I was and he was charming.

DB: How did you get to join Matthew Bourne?

TW: It's always been in my heart. I think *Swan Lake* is great and I have seen it quite a lot with four or five casts. And my own background is slightly more modern work. I have never been purely classical and I never will be. Henry St Clair was dating one of the girls working with New Adventures and he had a little inside information – he knew the company needed a Swan. I figured it was now or never so I wrote to Matthew and sent him my CV and a photograph and he invited me to audition. I hadn't told anyone about it because I didn't think that there was any point in going to the office and saying 'I'm going to audition for this, if I get it, can I go?' I thought

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I had better see if I got it first. I did the audition. It was an open audition. It's not about names with Matthew. I know that there are big names who have wanted to do it but he's not really interested – he doesn't need a star name to sell it, it sells itself anyway. And I think he knew that I was prepared to muck in with everybody. So I got the call and I went back in the afternoon and he offered me the job the same day. I told him 'Leave it with me, I'll talk to Monica.' It was in the summer and she was away at the Bregenz Festival so I tracked her down to her hotel and called her. I think I was the last person she was expecting to hear from. I told her I had been offered this job and asked her what she thought and she said she thought it was a great, a wonderful idea. She asked for three days to work out if it would be logistically possible to release me. Three days later she rang me up and said 'Do it, go for it.'

I had one year's leave of absence but I did the beginning of the season – *Voluntaries* and *Sinfonietta*, both of which I love. Actually, it was quite emotional and I fell over in my last performance which I had never done on stage and apparently it is an old saying in the theatre that if you fall over, it means you are coming back – which Monica told me with glee by the look on her face! I always had the intention of coming back.

DB: Matthew works differently and in a different style.

TW: Yes, but the first thing I noticed was the different environment. I did a month's rehearsal with Matthew at Three Mills and I was with a lot of dancers from very mixed backgrounds and standards. Some were ballet

trained, some musical theatre trained, some were jazz dancers.

Matthew is clever in the way he casts people. It's not about their technique. It's about what they can bring to the role and to the show. I think this is why his productions work so well. The emphasis is on performance and the technique is secondary. I shared the role with a purely contemporary dancer so we had very different ways of moving. I wanted to join those two things – my contemporary background and my classical line. I learnt a lot from Alan [Vincent], although I have done contemporary and jazz dance training, I would not consider myself a pure contemporary dancer. It's not an easy discipline at all. So I tried to marry the two. It was important to me that the technique was right and I spent a lot of weeks being told I was too balletic so it was a challenge.

DB: What was class like?

TW: Class was mostly ballet. But when we were on the road, for example in Australia, it was a case of finding people. We had teachers from Australian Dance Theatre. We also had Yoga classes, hardcore contemporary dance classes, Release Technique classes, so it kept you on your toes. You had to concentrate as it's not like having the same teacher every day where you know their exercises – although that has benefits too as you can just work on the exercises. But it was interesting to keep changing.

DB: Prior to doing the role yourself you had seen four or five different dancers in that role. All the Swans have been different from each other. What was the difference about yours?

TW: I tried to find something between Alan, with whom I shared the role, and Adam [Cooper] who created it and who was from the Royal Ballet. I tried to keep it looking refined, with nice arms and line, but also make it grounded, weighty and contemporary. I wanted to make it mine and to own it. It grew as well. It was such a long tour that it evolved. I know that some people didn't think I was right for the role when we first performed it but I've managed to change their minds!

My Princes were Matthew Hart who is an amazing guy and an amazing professional. He is wonderful to work with and is brilliant. He really did something with his role that made it his own. Then there was Simon Williams who I had known for many years, so I was excited to dance with him as I had only ever seen him work with Michael Clark and that was really great. And there was Chris Marney, who I didn't know, and who is a lovely guy. Simon went to White Lodge but is now a contemporary dancer – so we had similar ways of moving. Chris is much more classical ballet. Matthew is Matthew – he's just a powerhouse. He moves in a very individual way. Even though you are playing a role, I think it's impossible not to let some of yourself come through. For example, Simon and Chris are very different personalities so the way they played their role made

me play mine differently.

DB: It is a work with a lot of humour in it. The Royal Ballet doesn't do that type of work often, does it?

TW: No. When Monica came to see one of the performances at Sadler's Wells one of the things she commented on was the difference in the audience. Clearly it is not an Opera House audience. Recently Matthew [Bourne] came to see one of my performances as Tybalt and he made the same observation. Matthew's *Swan Lake* and Mats Ek's *Carmen* make some people feel uncomfortable, for example, the dancers make noise on stage.

Swan Lake opened in Paris which was quite nice because I got to have a go at it before London. London was really important to me and I was lucky enough to open at Sadler's Wells so it was very important to me for it to be good there. I was lucky enough to get some nice reviews. Then we did a massively intense tour. It's a big role and when we started out we did four shows a week each and that continued through Paris, London, Athens then we went to Australia for three months. Then Alan, who I shared the role with, had to go back to London to rehearse *The Car Man*. Then four peoples' work was split between three of us. Simon would do three shows as the Swan and two as the Prince. Chris would do five as the Prince and I would do five as the Swan a week – which was tough. I even did a double. I was sort of enlightened after that, like I had reached nirvana.

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DB: It's a different workload to Royal Ballet performances.

TW: Yes, it is. I was talking to Rupert and he said 'I don't know how you did it for nine months'. He did five nights at Sader's Wells with Carlos Acosta's production and he said it murdered him. But you just get on to a roll. I never had a serious injury. There was just one week in Melbourne where a few things went wrong all at once. I've had more pain since I've come back because its stop/start. There you just had to keep going because you couldn't afford to get injured. We had a physio who travelled with us but we didn't have all the facilities we have in the Opera House. It's even worse for smaller scale companies like Michael Clark's where if someone goes off they have to rework it and rehearse them out of it.

DB: Tell us about the funny moments and the high points of the tour.

TW: At Sadler's Wells I managed to make the show go

up late because I cut my head open warming up. I was all ready – I had the entire make up on, everything – and there was a bar in the wing which I used to do chin-ups on. On this particular day Simon was asking me a question and I turned to face him then smashed my head open on something and I had this big cut that kept bleeding.

It's quite a dangerous piece on stage too. During that week in Melbourne where it all went wrong, I had my tooth chipped by Chris Marney when he accidentally hit me in the face. Then I fell down the hole in the bed!

The whole year was such a journey. There were so many ups and downs. Australia was amazing. It was so nice, I love Australia. I had been there before – in fact most of the tour was to places I had visited before – and it was nice to go back and not have to rely on the guide book quite as much. As you have already done the sight-seeing you can immerse yourself in the place a bit more. We had some great times on the beach. But for me there wasn't a lot of time for high jinks. As soon as a show was finished, straightaway I was thinking about the next one and trying to recover, making sure I was eating the right things. It really taught me how to look after myself and I found a strength I really didn't know I had. Even when you are just so tired, you can't stop because there are people watching you and you just have to keep going. I don't think all dancers realise the reserves that they have.

DB: Being in a small company on such a long tour together must have its advantages and disadvantages – and be very different from being in the Royal Ballet.

TW: Straightaway I thought, 'Wow, this company is amazing – everybody is everybody else's friend.' Then you realise it was never really like that and that there are little groups and this person doesn't like that person. But I really liked being around people who just wanted to perform. It wasn't about the technique so much – I do think that the performance is the most important thing. In an ideal world, you have a great dancer to dance a role like Romeo who is also a great actor and it just happens that the dance tells a great story. They were fantastic artists and they have a lot of fun but they also kept you grounded – Matthew is very clever with the people he picks.

I'll be honest, in the beginning there was a little bit of a strained relation with my director in that production. I think she thought I was going to be some kind of Royal Ballet diva and I had to show I wasn't like that at all. But I did have to explain where I had come from. For 12 years I had been in the Royal Ballet which is a high pressure environment. Without really realising it, I kept that kind of pressure on myself in every show of *Swan Lake*. Being at the front I felt I couldn't afford to have an off show. All the way through it I wanted to represent myself, I wanted to represent the Royal Ballet and I

wanted to represent Matthew Bourne's company to the best of my abilities. I was very aware that the audience deserves a first night performance every night. So, on occasions, I would have to bite my tongue and remind myself that this was a different environment. I got a little frustrated at times but it was just because of that pressure I was putting on myself.

Matthew is just the nicest man – I see him occasionally, socially, and he's got no airs or graces – he's very humble and he's normal and I respond to normal people. I'm just someone from Bradford who ended up in the Royal Ballet by accident. I don't have any illusions of grandeur. He is a great, great director and he can say just one thing and you get it. The only regret was that he wasn't around all the time. He lifted the company whenever he came. It's human nature, I suppose. When Monica walks in the studio everyone works a little bit harder. I cannot say one negative thing about Matthew. I think he is a wonderful man and I would dearly love to work with him again in the future.

DB: The year is up and you return to the Royal Ballet. It must have been a shock in some ways.

TW: I must admit, while I was away I went up and down a bit. The plan was always to go away, do *Swan Lake*, then come back. On some occasions though, I thought I wasn't coming back. I thought about it a lot. In the end I decided I wanted to bring back to the Opera House that experience because I think I grew as an artist during that time and I learned a lot about myself too.

DB: How did it feel at the end of August?

TW: I was exhausted at the end of July and I had four weeks off and did absolutely nothing then I came back in. I knew it was going to be difficult. I had spoken to other people who had done it and I knew I was going to have to adjust. I had spoken to Monica about it before the Company went on tour and she knew there was going to be an adjustment period for me. I'll be really honest, it's been tough and it is still tough, which I why I really needed that role as Tybalt. I wasn't supposed to do it but because of the nature of the Royal Ballet Company I got the chance to do it and, for me, it justified my decision to come back. I think I did OK with it. And I think I did better with it than I would have done a year previous. When people like David Drew, Sandra Conley and Genesia Rosato are telling me that I look much more comfortable and commanding on stage, it means a lot to me.

DB: David didn't give you corrections in the shower this time?

TW: No – fortunately we have separate showers now! I became so happy in that zone in the role as the Swan. I'm still a little uncomfortable in tights now. I'm very happy with roles like Tybalt and Solor's Friend. But the Waltz in *Bayadère* is proper ballet and I do think I lost some technique during the last year. I'd always had to work

hard for my technique. Doing the same show again and again – achieving muscle memory – means I could get up and do *Swan Lake* right now because it is so in my body. So I'm fighting a bit and working hard.

Also the workload is different. I'm doing extra things to get back up to that level of fitness and stamina – I've never be so in shape as I was last year. The Waltz of the Flowers is hard and hard for me because it is classical ballet in white tights but it is not the same at all as a three act ballet every night. I was lifting guys around for a year. The girls are so light for me now. They say 'Oh, you are so strong!' and I say 'You should have seen the guys I was lifting around last year!' so I'm lifting heavy weights just to try to keep that. I'm sure sportsmen feel the same, there is a buzz that comes with that level of fit-

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ness. So I do miss that and it's a case of finding it in other ways, so I'm on the running machine every day now.

DB: You said you would like to do another Matthew Bourne work at some stage. What other ambitions do you have?

TW: I have a little pipe dream. I have always had this dream to become an actor. When we were in Moscow, we were performing at the Moscow Arts Theatre and its director has invited me back to work and perform with them to do Shakespeare. To be invited by the director of the theatre was amazing. I'm very aware of how difficult that business is to get into – it's probably harder than dancing simply because of the number of people who want to get into it.

To be a guy and to be a dancer, the odds are kind of in your favour as there are not that many guys who want to be ballet dancers. To be a girl who wants to be a ballet dancer or a guy who wants to play for Manchester United – the competition is massive. The competition is not that fierce to be a male ballet dancer. I am having some voice training and some acting lessons but not in Russian! They did say I wouldn't have to speak Russian. I don't know how it would work or if it will ever happen but they said I would play my part in English and they would play theirs in Russian. They were just so nice. The Chekhov Players would watch every one of our shows, even though they had been working all day. They threw parties for us. Moscow for me was almost as important as London because it was the first time it was going there and, after all, it was *Swan Lake* in Moscow. The Russians could have hated it but they absolutely loved it. The audiences went wild every night. I have never been part of a production like it. In Korea, you didn't hear a peep out of the audience for the entire show and yet at the

end, it was like they had just watched Robbie Williams – it was like a pop concert! It was really quite amazing. They saved it all up until the end.

I didn't know Matthew before I did *Swan Lake* and now I know him a bit better and know more about his work, there are roles I would like to do but I think ideally I would love to create with him. That would be a really special thing to do. I have put that to him, so we'll just have to wait and see.

A member of the audience then congratulated Thomas on his performance as Tybalt and in *Jewels*...

TW: I really enjoyed the last performance of *Diamonds*. I'm still trying to get my ballet head and ballet legs back on. It'll come, it's all in here. It's a confidence thing as much as anything. I don't feel that comfortable in that situation just now but I'll get there – I have to.

I will be eternally grateful to Monica for giving me a year's leave of absence. It makes you realise that there is a whole world out there. The Opera House is like a world on its own and it is very easy to become detached and only focus on the Opera House. In the Royal Ballet we are incredibly lucky – a lot of people don't realise just how lucky they are in terms of the facilities and the rights that the dancers have. As a dancer it is a great place to work. It can be frustrating at times, but can't anywhere?

Having that year out made me fall back in love with my art. It's given me a renewed ambition and hunger. I am very aware of my limitations but since last year I also know what I can do now and I just want to push forward.

David Bain thanked Tom for his fascinating insight. Members had enjoyed Tom's performances over many years and they looked forward to seeing him, hopefully in the role of Don José, again and also looked forward to perhaps seeing a further collaboration with Matthew and maybe a performance with a Russian theatre company.

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