



CECCHETTI  
INTERNATIONAL  
classical ballet

# Cecchetti International Classical Ballet

Annual Newsletter No. 15, 2009

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*Garrett Groat - American Ballet Theatre Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Scholarship winner  
from the Cecchetti International Competition - 2008 (credits on photo)*

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# Welcome to the Fifteenth Edition of Cecchetti International Classical Ballet Newsletter

After the rush and bustle of 2008, and our highly successful Competition and Conference in Canada, I trust that you have all had busy and successful activities in 2009. The economic situations in our various countries have always had some effect on our organisations, most particularly in the attendance or lack of students in our schools. Parents' disposable income is usually spent on 'extras' and sometimes dancing lessons are foregone when finances are low. Let us hope that the downturn has bottomed, and we will all be recovering slowly, and getting back to normal circumstances as soon as possible.

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## CONTACTS

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www.cicb.org - CICB  
www.cecchettiballet.org - Australia  
www.cecchetti.ca - Canada  
www.danzarececchetti.org - Italy  
www.cecchetti.co.za - Southern Africa  
www.cecchettiusa.org - CUSA  
www.cecchetti.org  
- Cecchetti Council of America  
www.istd.org - UK & Europe  
ALWAYS WELCOME: suggestions for further Cecchetti Pioneers, comments, articles, photographs, videos, web sites, book & music titles for the next newsletter.  
Please mark CICB and send at any time to robina\_madge@bigpond.com

## Up-coming Events 2010

**AUSTRALIA** July 9 Lucie Saronova Memorial Award - Sydney  
July 10, 11 Annual Cecchetti Conference held in Brisbane, Queensland  
Melbourne Summer School January 4th - 10th inclusive at Ormond College, Melbourne  
University, Parkville. Contact - Nina Dungan + 03 9592 2463 / Sandra Allan + 03 9783 6804  
Perth Summer School January 11th - 15th inclusive at WA Academy of Performing Arts, ECU Campus,  
2 Bradford St, Mt Lawley. Contact -Helene Gowers: + 08 9399 2473 or Diana de Vos + 0400 898 143  
Sydney Summer School - January 13th to 15th at St. Scholastica's College, 4 Avenue Road, Glebe  
Contact Jane Moran + 0299186668 or Kay Cranwell + 024472 7701

**CCA** Jan. 25 CCA Ballet Day  
July 12- 25 International Student Summer School, Hope College, Holland Michigan  
July 12- 25 Teacher Training Intensive - The Art of Classical Ballet, location as above  
Each of the 17 committees also hold 1 or 2 days of workshops several times a year. Watch www.cecchetti.org for details.

**CANADA** Aug. 2 - 6 Cecchetti Society of Canada Summer Course, Royal Winnipeg Ballet School,  
Winnipeg, MB. Participants Grade 5 - M.C. Diploma (residence)  
Guest teachers: David Moroni, Founder of the RWB Professional Division and Diane van Schoor, Principal of  
the Royal Ballet, White Lodge. Other teachers to be announced later.  
Contact: stanolar@mts.net also www.cecchetti.ca

**CUSA** Summer School, location and dates to be announced www.cecchettiusa.org

**UK** July 24 - July 30 incl. Summer School for Young Dancers (10 to 16 years) at Tring Park, Hertfordshire  
Tel.:+ 44 1245 293781 (24-hr voice mail) or email cjss@cecchetti.co.uk  
July 31 - Aug. 6 incl. Summer School for Vocational Students (15 up, holding a minimum of Intermediate)  
Tel: + 44 1245 293782 (24-hr voice mail) or email cssc@cecchetti.co.uk  
July 30 - Aug. 6 incl. Summer School for Teachers and Mature Students, Chichester: Alternatively, anyone  
interested is very welcome to contact: Elisabeth Swan Tel: + 44 1245 267314 or email eswan@cecchetti.co.uk

**S. AFRICA** Unfortunately South Africa is unable to advertise specific courses. Due to the logistics of the imminent 2010  
Soccer World cup they are unable to secure bookings for venues as a result of this event. Information pertaining  
to courses may be obtained through the National Secretary Mrs. Eileen Phillips at + 27 11 782 0677 or  
cecchetti@yebo.co.za

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## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE *Betty Seibert, FISTD Chair, CICB*

Here, in my neck of the world, New England is experiencing its first taste of autumn with the leaves doing their magic act of changing into beautiful hues of red, orange, rust, and gold. There is crispness to the air with smells of a harvest yet to come.

For most of you, my fellow colleagues, I imagine that you have begun the start up of a new school term, with many happy dancers excited to be back at the barre and eagerly preparing for the plethora of Nutcrackers about to take place in all parts of the world. Or perhaps some of you are heading into summer as the rest of us brace for the winter!

Even in a relatively quiet CI year we have not been entirely idle.

Amendments to the constitution agreed to at the Banff conference, are

with the lawyers, who are slowly proceeding with their ratification.

Teleconference between all Delegates is planned for January 2010 – please send any issues you would like discussed to [bseibert@chesthiredancecentre.com](mailto:bseibert@chesthiredancecentre.com)

Revisions for 'Notes for a Dancer', though few, are completed.

CICB books sold since Sept. 2008: R. Glasstone Vol. 2 – 3 copies;

R. Glasstone Vol. 1&2 – 52 copies; Notes for a Dancer – 107 copies

The Advanced 2 updates from Diane van Schoor and Richard Glasstone as commissioned by the CICB at the 2008 conference in Banff, are currently being considered by all the societies. They have been well received, and results will be communicated when finalized.

Additional music for training pur-

poses, also created at the Banff conference is being considered and will be available when finalised

S. Africa and Canada each purchased 100 bags for a fundraising drive. (see Resources)

CICB Competition 2011 - I am delighted that Britain is enthusiastic that this event will take place in Britain, late July/early August, dates and venue will be confirmed as soon as possible.

I, like the rest of you, am inundated with the daily routine of keeping my head above water, and know full well that we are all doing the best we can. At the very least, Cecchetti work is alive and well and thriving around the world! I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sheila Kennedy for her undying support and for always being there for me! Cheers!

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## News of 2008 Competition Dancers

**KIRSTEN MARSH**, by Anne Butler. It is with great pride to inform all that the winner of Cecchetti International Ballet's Competition 2008 - Kirsten Marsh - from Victoria, Australia has accepted an invitation to the National Ballet of Canada School. This was a result of her award which included a months study at their 2009 Summer school, at which time Kirsten also auditioned. On Saturday 5th September, 2009 her family and friends joined in a farewell and early eighteenth birthday party at her home and hosted by her parents. It was wonderful to be with a group of dedicated and aspiring young artists from the elite training/vocational schools in Melbourne - all supportive of one another and very, very proud of their friend's achievements. Amongst the crowd were those teachers who had helped her journey - in particular from the Cecchetti flock - Nicole Davies, Ben Ho and myself. Personally, I am so grateful to have had the opportunity of sharing in the development of a young artist - five years at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and the connected Cecchetti Program. It was during this period that she was awarded both Silver and Gold Medals in the state Victorian (Enrico Cecchetti Medal Awards) and later both Silver

and Gold levels nationally - Australia - (Lucie Saronova Medal Awards). She was also the recipient of many Cecchetti scholarships state, national and international. She is a Cecchetti dancer and her greatest quality, in my opinion, is her "purity and simplicity of movement". My biggest congratulations to Kirsten, her parents and fellow helpers for making her passion and desire one step closer - or in this instance a shooting star crossing the Equator.

**GARRETT GROAT** update on Garrett Groat, ABT JKO School scholarship recipient from the CICB 2008 International Competition in Calgary. Garrett has made good progress this year and danced the role Solor in The Kingdom of the Shades scene from La Bayadere in the ABT JKO School performance April 5, 2009. He also performed in works by Jessica Lang and Raymond Lukens. The students had the amazing opportunity that several rehearsals for the principals of La Bayadere were taken by ABT Artistic Director, Kevin McKenzie himself. Garrett's family traveled from Edmonton, Canada to see him dance. On May 18, 2009, Garrett performed, at the ABT Opening Night Gala at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City, in

a world première by Raymond Lukens for the ABT JKO School students. We would like Maggie Dalwood, Garrett's teacher in Edmonton, to know that her school was credited for Garrett's training in the ABT JKO School performance program.



**ALEXANDRA POTGIETER** greeting's from South Africa by Lynne Fouche.

It seems like such a long time ago that the International Cecchetti Summer School was held in Calgary, how marvelous it would be to meet more often with shared viewpoints.

Alexandra Potgieter the recipient of the Royal Ballet Summer School Scholarship and \$2000.00 suffered an avulsion injury, so unfortunately could not attend. However she has due to the time factor,

...from page 3

and a generous scholarship offer of a year's tuition in the pre-professional division at the Alberta Ballet School, been able to benefit from this instead.

Alexandra has settled in, loves it in Calgary, and loves the Canadian people whom she has met. Murray Kilgour and all of the faculty have made her first month very happy, and to all of them we

say a very big thank you, for their care and generosity of spirit.

She has had lessons with a Cuban teacher who was at the school for 10 days and at this time is taking classes with a guest teacher from the Paris Opera School, vowing to have legs just like hers. At the start of the year in September she had Mr Kilgour for class and what with nerves, felt at home to have someone she knew, she reckons he's an absolute

darling. She also wrote to tell me she took class with Nancy Kilgour and found the Cecchetti foundation sooo comfortable. At the moment she is in the corps for Jean Grand-Maitre's production of Romeo and Juliet and even had to stand in for the part of Juliet's father, Capulet! She had a great time, with many laughs but hopes to do her female role in performances.

## LOUISE LIGHTFOOT and the FIRST AUSTRALIAN BALLET - the Cecchetti Link

by Anne-Patricia Butler

The première Australian production of *Coppélia* was staged by Louise Lightfoot and performed by the First Australian Ballet (FAB), Sydney, 1931, with Mischa Burkalov dancing Franz. "Despite its bold claim to be the first ballet company in Australia, the FAB was definitely not professional and often lacked finesse."<sup>i</sup> The FAB was founded by Louise Lightfoot and Mischa Burkalov who had opened a ballet school initially in 1929 in Kings Street and later in Henrietta Lane at Circular Quay. Despite FAB not being a professional company, Lightfoot and Burkalov managed to inspire, develop and promote an artistic awareness in Australia.

Louise Lightfoot from all accounts was an intellectual woman having been the first female recipient of a degree in architecture from The University of Melbourne, in the state of her birth, Victoria. She had worked closely with architect/designer, Walter Burley Griffin, on his Sydney projects. Lightfoot was attracted to the art of dance by the inspiration of Anna Pavlova during her 1926 tour of Australia. This passion for ballet led her to study with Ivan Sergieff<sup>ii</sup> and Alexis Dolinoff, both dancers with Pavlova's Company. Dolinoff, who had been a pupil of Enrico Cecchetti in his London studio, remained in Sydney after the tour, and set up a studio teaching the Cecchetti method. Lightfoot trained briefly in dance with Daphne Deane at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music<sup>iii</sup>; Sonia Revid, a pupil of Mary Wigman, who opened a school in Melbourne in the early 1930s<sup>4</sup> and Irene Vera Young who

studied German dance with Sara Strauss in America<sup>v</sup>.

According to dance historian/researcher, Michelle Potter, Lightfoot met Mischa Burkalov "through the Griffins and their friends".<sup>vi</sup> Walter Burley Griffin and his wife Marion Mahoney's interest in the theatre is more than evident in the stunning ceiling light features that they designed for the Capitol Theatre, Melbourne. Considered one of Griffin's most important commissions, the Capitol House (1924) contained the richly ornamented theatre at ground-floor level below a ten-storey office block.<sup>vii</sup> In the words of one of Lightfoot's leading students, Moya Beaver -: "bohemian people, artists of note, all went to Lightfoot."<sup>viii</sup> Listening to Beaver's accounts, along with photo collections and ephemera held at the National Library of Australia, the studio of the FAB certainly was frequented by an incredible artistic milieu of the time. To name but a few were -: artists Walter Burley Griffin, Marion Mahoney Griffin; musician John Anthill, who at the time played the piano for Burkaloff and became a prominent Australian composer;<sup>ix</sup> Peter Finch, a pupil who performed the wicked brother in a production of *Schéhérazade* and became an Oscar award - winning actor; and Warwick Fairfax Senior (great grandfather of young Warwick) a prominent Australian businessman.

According to Moya Beaver, Louise Lightfoot taught the girls purely by the Cecchetti method and stated that Lightfoot was a "brilliant teacher" but "we were in awe of her"<sup>x</sup>. Mischa Burkalov, of Ukraine background, conducted the boys' classes based totally on classical dancing and character. Beaver also recalled that a number of the touring dancers

with de Basil's company would use their studios - for example, Woizikowsky, Roland Guerard and Thadee Slavinsky. She felt that many came because Mischa could speak Russian. Woizikowsky who was the ballet master at the time for the touring troupe, had himself been a pupil of Enrico Cecchetti in Warsaw<sup>xi</sup>. The discussions together with the style and format of the classes given by these overseas guests were observed by Lightfoot, Burkalov and their dancers, including Moya Beaver. They would surely have been significant influence to these emerging Australian artists.

The Lightfoot/Burkalov school entered students for Cecchetti examinations during the 1930s.

An interesting program note from a production of *The Nutcracker* and *Schéhérazade* by the First Australian Ballet, 22nd October, 1934 at the Sydney Conservatorium reads:

*Lightfoot-Burkalov school is the only existing school in Australia intimately associated with an organised Ballet, and offering its students opportunities to appear in actual Ballet productions. The system of technique used by Enricho [sic] Cecchetti, teacher of Pavlova, Nikinski [sic] and the famous members of the Imperial Russian School. Recently M. de Basil, director of the world-famous 'Ballet Russe.' decided to locate his school of ballet in England. The system to be used, he announced, is the Cecchetti method; and therefore members of the Lightfoot-Burkalov School know they are being trained on exactly the same lines as the Continent's most ambitious dancers. On account of the number of schools now adopting the Cecchetti method, the British Imperial Society has recently incorporated it into their examination syllabus.*

In reference to the British Imperial

Society - in 1922 the Cecchetti Society was established in London and in 1924 the Cecchetti Society became a branch of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing. The first Cecchetti examinations to take place in Australia were in 1934 with Molly Lake as examiner. She was an English dancer who had studied with Cecchetti and was performing in Australia with the Dandr -Levitoff Russian Ballet.

Valrene Tweedie (1925-2008) was one student who was prepared by Lightfoot's student Moya Beaver for her Grade Three examination in 1938. She received Honours from examiner Madam Lucie Saronova.<sup>xii</sup> Tweedie was accepted into Colonel De Basil Original Ballet Russe which toured Australia commencing in 1939 and departing in August of 1940 to the USA. Gordon Hamilton (Brown) who was a leading dancer in the First Australian Ballet was Tweedie's older cousin. Moya Beaver was left to look after the Lightfoot/Burkalov studio in March 1937 when Lightfoot and Burkalov left on an overseas trip to search for music for performances and to enlarge their knowledge of dance. It was during this trip that Lightfoot stopped off in Bombay. This was to change her career and direction to Indian dance forms. It is interesting to note that the Griffins moved to India in 1935. Walter Burley Griffin died in India of peritonitis and was buried there in 1937.

Returning from India, Louise Lightfoot choreographed *The Blue God* for FAB. An excerpt from *The Canberra Times*, Wednesday 21 September, 1938 reads:-

*The Corps de Ballet consists of thirty dancers, trained by Louise Lightfoot and Mischa Burlakov, who, after extensive experience in leading Russian Ballet in Europe, have conducted a special school in Sydney for the training of classical dancers.*

*The programme will include "La Dieu Bleu" a striking ballet based on ancient Indian story, and presented with a wealth of beauty and colour, Miss Lightfoot visited India especially to obtain local features and costumes for this ballet, which will be performed to authentic Hindu music.*

*Two other favourites from the repertoire of the classic Russian ballet will be produced in "Les Sylphides" based on the music of Chopin, and in "Spectre de la Rose."<sup>xiii</sup>*

Lightfoot left *The First Australian Ballet* in late 1938. Returning to India she continued to study Kathakli, Manipuri and Bharatanatyam dances which became her lifelong passion. Lightfoot's new chapter was devoted to presenting and teaching the beauty of Indian culture through dance, particularly in the United States of America and Australia. Lightfoot "managed Indian dance groups which toured the world. The star performer was the outstanding male dance and actor, Ananda Shivaram,

who Lightfoot brought to Australia five times.<sup>xiv</sup>" The National Ballet Company under the direction of Joyce Graeme premiered Lightfoot's Hindu ballet *Indra Vijayam* at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne in 1949.<sup>xv</sup>

Louise Lightfoot died in Melbourne, Australia, 1978. She donated her collection to the Department of Music at Monash University, where she had been associated during the later years of her life. Burkalov retained the helm of FAB until it disbanded in the 1950s.

#### Endnotes and Bibliography

- i Valerie Lawson. 'The First Australian Ballet', *Dance Australia* 94(1998), 40-47
- ii Discussion with dance researcher Jordan Beth Vincent, 2008 and also confirmed in Oral History - Moya Beaver interviewed by Michelle Potter; National Library, Canberra
- iii Refer Oral History, Moya Beaver and <http://www.australiadancing.org/subjects/362.html> 30/10/2006. Daphne Deane was an Impresario on the first Ballet Russes October, 1936-July 1937 tour of Australia
- iv Edward Pask: *Enter the Colonies Dancing*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1979, pge 135. More detailed information on Sonia Revid refer article by Jordan Beth Vincent at [http://kinesismagazine.com.au/dance/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id...28/09/2009](http://kinesismagazine.com.au/dance/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id...28/09/2009)
- v Edward Pask: *Ballet in Australia: The Second Act*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1982, pge 60 and Jordan Vincent
- vi <http://www.australiadancing.org/subjects/362.html> 30/10/2006
- vii Tracey Judd Iva: *Art Deco 1910-1939 Catalogue*, Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria, 2008, pge 257. The Capitol Theatre is presently owned by RMIT University.
- viii Oral History - National Library of Australia
- ix Lightfoot student Valrene Tweedie used a commissioned score by Anthill in her production of *Wakooka* for the Elizabethan Opera Ballet Company, 1957
- x Oral History M. Beaver
- xi Leon Woizikowsky came to Australia on the first of the Ballet Russes tours October 1936- July 1937, as Regisseur General/Ballet master. His wife Helen also accompanied him. Guerard and Slavinsky were also on this tour. Refer *Ballet Russes Australian Tours Personnel - a work in progress*, National Library of Australia.
- xii Discussions with author and Athol Willoughby, OAM, 2008/09
- xiii *The Canberra Times*, 21/09/1938, pge 4 -: <http://newspaper.nla.gov.au/nla.news-article2498639>
- xiv Valerie Lawson (1998) pge 43
- xv The cast was led by Shivaram in the title role. Jenny Stielow, now a well respected Australian Cecchetti Examiner and teacher, danced as one of the Apsaras. Information taken from National Festival of Theatre Arts programme.

#### Books:

Pask, Edward. *Enter the Colonies of Dancing* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1979)  
*Ballet in Australia - The Second Act* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1982)

#### Catalogues/Journal Articles:

Judd Iva, Tracey, *Art Deco 1910-1939 Catalogue* (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2008)

Lawson, Valerie. 'The First Australian Ballet', *Dance Australia* 94 (1998)

#### Oral History:

Moya Beaver interviewed by Michelle Potter - National Library of Australia, Canberra - TRC 3162; nla.cat-vn513088

#### Internet:

<http://www.australiadancing.org/subjects/362.html> 30/10/2006

<http://newspapers.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/printArticleJpg/2498639/3?print=y> 27/09/2009

Louise Lightfoot collection at Monash University, Melbourne

## News From...

### CANADA:

A few projects have been accomplished for CSC:

Our Members' Handbook and Qualifying Guidelines have been updated and are being translated into French. Books 1 & 2 'Related Subjects' and the Music book for Associate and Associate Diploma are completed and become compulsory in Canada from Sept. 2009.

### Cecchetti National Summer School August 2009 ~ Toronto, Ontario

- for the first time combining the Cecchetti Society Summer Program with the National Ballet School Teachers' Seminar

"What an exciting week we had this year with the mix of Cecchetti teachers and students, visiting faculty teachers for the Cecchetti Summer Program and the NBS Teachers Seminar as well as Teachers' Seminar participants. To see so many dancers and teachers coming together with a common bond, sharing experiences, breaking bread together, renewing old friendships, and forming new friendships was both rewarding and very satisfying. It has long been a dream o

We all share a love of the best art form on the planet and its fantastic when we can work together to promote it!" *Anuschka Roes, Manager of the Teachers Training Programme at Canada's National Ballet School*

Congratulations to Nancy Pidgeon and her Ontario Committee

### MALTA:

Congratulations to Tanya Bayona



*Tanya Bayona being decorated by the President of the Republic of Malta, Dr. Edward Fenech Adami*

On the 13th December, 2008 Ms. Tanya Bayona was decorated by the



*Elisabeth Swan presenting the Cecchetti Medal to Tanya Bayona.*

President of the Republic of Malta, Dr. Edward Fenech Adami, with the Medal for service to the Republic – Midalja għall Qadi tar-Republika (MQR) – or the National Order of Merit. This was awarded for her life-long commitment to dance and promoting Classical Ballet in Malta.

Tanya Bayona, Fellow of the ISTD and holder of the Enrico Cecchetti Diploma, directed the Tanya Bayona Princess Poutiatine Academy of Ballet for 23 years. She started her training in Classical Ballet in Malta with Princess Nathalie Poutiatine and continued her professional training with Betty Vancani and Nesta Brooking in London, England and later on in Rome and Paris.

In 1965 Tanya introduced the Cecchetti Method in Classical Ballet to Malta and established her own school, which she successfully directed until 2004. The Method has flourished and there are now 12 ballet schools teaching it. She has worked extensively as a dancer and choreographer with her own Dance Company for local and International festivals in theatre and television productions.

In 2005 Tanya celebrated, together with other ballet schools, the 40th anniversary of the Cecchetti Method in Malta.

### AUSTRALIA'S 2009 'CONFERENCE'

The 42nd annual gathering of the Cecchetti Members in Australia was an excellent affair, dedicated most beautifully to Miss Valrene Tweedie, teacher, mentor, guardian angel, historian and much beloved ballet icon to all Cecchetti members, and the ballet world here in Australia and in many other countries.. Valrene died in 2008 so this conference was the first one held since any of us could remember, when Miss Tweedie was not a driving force.

The conference opened with a delightful performance "Homage to Miss

Tweedie" with students from 5 years old to about 25, filling the stage with most beautiful port de bras (one of Miss Tweedie's specialties) and lovely pictures of positions and bodies, choreographed by Dianne Pokorny and Jane Moran. This was followed by a short video history compiled most elegantly by Thomas Pokorny. The audience was moved and appreciated the whole opening most enthusiastically.

The conference continued with a huge variety of offerings, all the usual technical classes including a presentation of the Intermediate.

A terrific panel was assembled to discuss the teaching of boys - Graeme Murphy, celebrated international contemporary choreographer, Simon Dow, ex principal dancer of Stuttgart, San Francisco and Boston ballet companies, and Hilary Kaplan a teacher who has trained many young male dancers who have moved to companies around the world. It was chaired by one of our patrons Colin Peasley who has been a member of the Australian Ballet for over 25 years. Graeme Murphy also gave another conference lecture - a fascinating insight into his method of choreographing, for which he had a diverse group of young male students who rolled and fell and flew across the stage as commanded.

The second day of the conference was divided into three different sets of lectures, delivered three times, so that every member of the conference could attend each one. The subjects of the lectures were all based on requirements for our Certificate Four qualification and covered "Safe aesthetic pointe work" "Teaching ideas for 9 to 13 years, and "Nutrition for Dancers" The delegates who were divided into three groups - red, blue and green - moved in little crocodiles around the venue all day.

As usual, the annual Cecchetti dinner finished off the weekend with a flash and a stamp, with a burst of Spanish Dancing organized by Graciella Yoia, who always thinks we should be dancing and not talking. Most of us agreed and we finished the night in high spirits.

If ever you are in Australia when we are holding the conference (2010, July 10th & 11th in Brisbane, Queensland) you are all most welcome to attend. We had many of our new Asian members and teachers there this year, and our band of international associates is growing all the time.

Cecchetti Ballet Australia

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# Cecchetti Examinations In Malaysia

by Anne-Patricia Butler, Fellow & Examiner, Cecchetti Ballet Australia

During late April this year I was asked to conduct examinations and workshops on behalf of Cecchetti Ballet Australia. After a nine hour flight, arriving at Kuala Lumpur in the early hours of the morning, I found my way to the bus depot and awaited transport for a further three hour journey to Ipoh. As the bus entered the outskirts of this former tin mining town, one was confronted by the sight of a very official looking police/security party on motor bikes lining either side of the main street. As well as being an official holiday for royalty it turned out that a major world cycling competition had arrived in Ipoh – all staying at the same hotel that I had been booked into!!! After being greeted so warmly by Miss Kim Yee Chan (who is the Organiser and Cecchetti teacher) and her mother, I settled in for a good nights sleep before commencing the examination schedule the following day. The exams commenced in Kim Yee's delightful studio. The children were all very well rehearsed and I was most relieved that on the whole everyone seemed to understand my directions. If at any time I considered that confusion may have arisen, I was able to secure the help of the lovely pianists – both artists in their own right – with fluent

command of Malay and English.

That night I was driven to the lovely seaside town of Sitiawan. Here I was treated to resort style accommodation with magnificent views and sunset. Whilst wishing that I had booked a holiday for myself at the end of the session here, an incredible storm brewed up overnight, with huge waves and winds lashing in and the fire alarms sounding. Grabbing my torch, passport, monies and exam reports, I was prepared to evacuate. Looking out the window one would think that this was what comes before a tsunami. Opening the hotel room door to get out was another matter – besides the alarms blasting – not a person in sight departing. Perhaps when they changed my room to one with a sunset view they had forgotten to record where I was. Panic!! Back to the room, I phoned reception to be assured that this was a regular occurrence at this time of the year and not to worry about the fire alarms!!!! Going back to bed with my "important" by my side, I eventually managed to get back to sleep with the alarms. Despite the funny night the place is beautiful and breakfast cheered me no end with everyone's hospitality.

Teh Kai Sin is the lovely teacher in Sitiawan and I spent the day examining her students here. That night we drove back with Kai Sin's mother and had a delightful meal back in Ipoh. That is the wonderful thing about traveling – to be privileged to let those who know their country share with you their culture, food and friendship.

The next three days were further exams in Ipoh with Miss Chan and her pupil Kai Sin, who is also teaching for her and studying the appropriate status level. After the exam session Miss Chan had organized four days of workshop classes for students and also teachers. This is a most rewarding time sharing and imparting knowledge in such a friendly atmosphere. The hospitality was wonderful, the students and teachers a delight to work with. Miss Chan looked after me each evening treating with the fresh and exotic flavours of Malaysia and also a tour of Ipoh and its beauty before departing on the bus back to KL airport.

My sincere thanks to Kim Yee Chan, Teh Kai Sin, their families and the beautiful students that I had the great pleasure to examine and teach.

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## Obituaries

### Jennifer Morgan

by Elisabeth Swan

It is with great sadness that I announce the death of Jennifer Morgan, one of our most loved and respected examiners. Her son and daughter, Paul and Anna, have decided with the Cecchetti Society, to set up the "Jennifer Morgan Summer School Scholarship" for a teacher to attend the Cecchetti Teachers' Summer School in Chichester. Anyone wishing to contribute should make their cheque payable to The Cecchetti Society and send it to me. Ballet was Jennifer's life, from the Royal Ballet School, dancing in Europe to teaching and examining ballet. The Cecchetti Society is the foundation that enabled Jennifer to do the work she loved. One of the key events of the year is the Teachers' Summer School. Jenny was concerned that due to the lack of support in teachers' own countries, many overseas teachers were unable

to attend this key event. This fund will be managed by the Cecchetti Society Trust and will ensure her memory will live on forever more.

Jenny was a dear, kind lady with a wicked sense of humour. She will be sadly missed.

### Ross Coleman – choreographer

by Robina Beard

Australia has lost one of its most talented and internationally famous commercial choreographers. Ross Coleman died at 60 in his sleep in Melbourne, just before he was to attend the premiere of "Priscilla Queen of the Desert" the Australian Abba based musical he choreographed which is about to transfer from London to Broadway. Ross has been the leading, in fact almost the only 'musicals' choreographer here in Australia for many years. His most

recent work included "Dusty" and "Shout" both list musicals based on the lives of pop stars. My experience of his choreography was for the Sydney theatre Company's production of "Chicago", he did his own original choreography for this, unlike subsequent productions which re-produced Bob Fosse's production. His style was unique, and most suited to this show. He first commenced his professional career as a dancer on the pop television program "Australian Bandstand", He then became its choreographer for several years. His first dance lessons, age about 7 came from his teacher, Helen de Paull, who taught him Cecchetti Ballet, jazz and tap. He was the first boy ever to win our Mabel Ryan Award, and was always ready to return to judge or guest for us. He has touched many dancers in Australia, and we will miss his hip swivels, and his great talent.

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## Talented Children

I knew that if and when I commenced a dancing school, I would be responsible to my young students, and I would have to give them the best training possible. They of course, as little children, did not know that. I knew that if I found any really talented students it would be a tremendous responsibility, not only to the child, but also to my art. If one of my students was gifted I would have to ensure that this child had every opportunity to excel, to realize all the talent that they had. It happens so seldom that a child is born to dance, you simply HAVE to nurture the talent - it cannot be ignored, it must be cared for and nourished, and given every opportunity to flourish and succeed.

You must know, you must have seen in your life, someone who was born to do what they have succeeded in doing in the arts - a musician, a singer, and of course, my obsession, a dancer. In almost every case, if you asked them, they would say they had someone who encouraged, coached, coaxed their talent, gave them the confidence, gave them the opportunity, and finally showed them the path to their fame. If you happen ever to teach anyone like that, you cannot just take it lightly - you must take it seriously.

As it so happened in my years as a suburban dancing teacher, I had only three students of this ilk. It is the most wonderful thing to find a tiny child, of five or six who understands what you are



doing, and simply absorbs the words and the music and the joy, and returns it to

you effortlessly. These children are most certainly born to dance, but often this talent is a big shock to their parents, who have never thought of 'dance' as a career path, but rather simply as a recreation which is good for their child. So, one has to tread very carefully so as not to frighten everyone. Goodness, with children aged 5 or 6 parents are not thinking about careers, but in dance, this is often the age when it becomes apparent. In the case of one of my students, her parents had decided on a medical career for her, and took her away from dance so as not to confuse the child. As these special children are very often ten-talented, and perform very well academically in school, it can often be a choice between a well-paid reliable career, or the uncertain unstable life of the theatre. Which would you choose for your child?



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# Dance Heritage Think Tank, Toronto, November 1-2, 2008

## History from Dance Collection Danse

### DCD Gathers Dance Professionals for Historic Meeting

(The following information was received too late to be included in our last newsletter, so we are including an edited report. Dance Collections Danse is a unique organization with great interest in the history of dance in Canada, and indeed in the world. We must continue to record our dance history for future dancers and teachers. Value it while you are making it!!!)

Dance Collection Danse brought together a group of dance professionals currently involved in dance preservation in order to devise new ideas and solutions that would help to disseminate Canada's dance legacy to a broader audience.

While pivotal, this meeting was not the first of its kind; however, it was an animated two days and resulted in the formation of the Movement for Canadian Dance Heritage. A network has now been established in order to promote public access to heritage works of Canadian dance.

Among the topics of discussion were:

- issues facing artists and companies interested in preserving their works or those of other choreographers through performance
- the kind of policy changes that need to occur to move this initiative along
- ways of educating and galvanizing others to care about Canadian dance heritage
- the need for facilities for remounting choreographic masterworks or works of historic importance and for housing the necessary documentation, research materials and artifacts associated with such works

Future gatherings with an expanded list of participants are being planned.

#### Background

Dance exists at a perpetual vanishing point; the dance profession is currently losing the battle to preserve and perform works from the past. The works in which Canadian dance artists and the general public have invested throughout the twentieth century will be completely lost if the appropriate infrastructure for their preservation and continued performance is not put in place soon. By making it possible for such choreographic works to have a renewed life on the stage, a greater understanding of the context in which contemporary dance works are created will be developed by dance audiences.

Other artistic disciplines – theatre, film, music, literature and visual art – are inherently self-recording. Dance in Canada, which has a rich although lesser-known history, has not kept up with its fellow disciplines in this respect.

Since the mid-1980s, activities focused on the remounting of older Canadian dance works have occurred, but without continuity. The ability to remount works as early as 1942 exists, the interest for such remounts is growing; the urgency to build the proper infrastructure to keep dance works alive is immediate.

Those present were Miriam Adams, Peggy Baker, Stephanie Ballard, Marc Boivin, Amy Bowring, Pamela Grundy, Eddie Kastrau, Marie-Josée Lecours Laurence Lemieux and Bill Coleman, Adrienne Nevile, Kaija Pepper, Colleen Quigley, Sharon Vanderlinde.

The meeting was facilitated by Jane Marsland, and was supported by:

Dance Collection Danse, the Audience and Market Development Office of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Society for Canadian Dance Studies and the National Ballet of Canada.

# Mao's Last Dancer

by Robina Beard.

The best selling autobiography which chronicles Li Cunxin's journey from a farm in China to premier danseur on the worldstage, has been translated into a film which premiered around the world in October. His epic journey from a small boy plucked from his family farm by Madame Mao's talent scouts through his ballet training to his eventual triumph as an acclaimed premier danseur

and his subsequent career choices after his retirement from classical ballet, make a unique and fascinating story. The film was shot in Australia, where he now lives, and the cast was assembled from within the ballet community there, with Huang Ben Win playing the young boy, and Chi Cao from the Birmingham Royal Ballet playing the adult Li Cunxin.

It is an extraordinary book, and it has been made into a fascinating film. It is recommended to all of you as an insight into ballet training in China, and the amazing life that dancing can bring.

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## CICB's Website

Open our website and have a browse through it. Submissions and suggestions for the web site should be sent to Betty Seibert, Chair. CICB, at [HYPERLINK](mailto:HYPERLINK) mail to [bseibert@cheshiredancecentre.com](mailto:bseibert@cheshiredancecentre.com) Please help us keep it up to date. We are very happy that Garth Buchholz finds he is able to help us again and has volunteered to work with Mark Zetler. They are presently updating it, to include all the Cecchetti Pioneer Articles and they have plans to rotate photos to add interest. Has anyone photos they would like posted? We need written permission and credits.

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## Dance Photography

Recently Cecchetti Ballet Australia held a photographic competition for members and students, and received some marvelous entries. The winning photographs are presented here:



Action category - Photographer: Terry Cullinane, entered by Liz McMahon NSW



Female category: Photographer: Trevor Marsh, entered by Kirsten Marsh VIC



Pas de Deux category Photographer: Terry Cullinane, entered by Liz McMahon NSW  
The photograph which won the pas de deux section is of Elizabeth McMahon and her daughter Zoe Roberts. Elizabeth has just successfully completed her Maestro Cecchetti Diploma, the first Diploma examination to be taken in Australia. Her daughter Zoe has just her Advanced 2 exam with honours. This photograph is a wonderful record of a very successful 2009 for them both.



Group category Photographer: Lani McGeady, entered by Lani McGeady WA



Male category Photographer: Unknown, entered by Jarrad Cramp NSW

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## Resources

Cecchetti Bags for fundraising, contact [hsken@telus.net](mailto:hsken@telus.net)  
The Days of the Week Posters can be bought from  
Judith Wilson, The Cecchetti Shop,  
88 Willow Lea, Tonbridge, Kent. TN10 3RQ Tel 01732  
356388 email [jwdance@talktalk.net](mailto:jwdance@talktalk.net)

### Proceeds to the next CICB Competition:

Color Portrait of Maestro Cecchetti  
- 12" X 19" limited quantity - \$25.00 USD  
email [bseibert@cheshiredancecentre.com](mailto:bseibert@cheshiredancecentre.com)

CD - Photos of 2008 Summer Course & CICB  
Competition - \$45.00 Cdn.  
order forms [www.cecchetti.ca](http://www.cecchetti.ca)

DVD - Classes, Semi-Finals, Finals CICB Competition -  
\$55.00 Cdn. order forms [www.cecchetti.ca](http://www.cecchetti.ca)

T-Shirts - see order form - \$15.00 Cdn.  
order forms [www.cecchetti.ca](http://www.cecchetti.ca)

**Proceeds to CICB;  
orders through your own society  
or by email [hsken@telus.net](mailto:hsken@telus.net):**

**Thoughts - Volume I & II by Richard Glasstone,**  
49 Articles written for The Dancing Times, 1997-2000.  
Price \$35.00 Cdn. incl. postage

**Thoughts - Volume II by Richard Glasstone**  
(a few copies for those who have already  
purchased Vol.I). 13 Articles written for  
The Dancing Times, 1997-2000  
Price \$10.00 Cdn. incl. postage

**Notes for a Dancer**  
compiled by Sheila Kennedy - to use in  
conjunction with the Cecchetti Manuals,  
\$50.00 Cdn. + postage

## Diploma Course

July 5 - 18, 2010

Kate Simmons Dance - UK

for registration please email: [katesimmons@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:katesimmons@ukonline.co.uk)

An Intensive Course for the study of the Enrico Cecchetti Diploma, 3 classes a day  
for 2 weeks, with the opportunity to take the Diploma exam as a dancer or a mature  
candidate at the end of the course.

Faculty will include:

Kate Simmons - Fellow & Senior Examiner ISTD (CB) Enrico Cec. Dip.  
(Ex-London Festival Ballet)

FRSA (Fellow of Royal Society of Arts)

Gillian Hurst - (Fellow & Senior Examiner ISTD (CB)  
RBS Dip (TTC) ARAD, C.D.E (CB NB) PDB,

Examiner Spanish Dance Society, Enrico Cec. Dip

Lynsey Kidd - (AISTD (Cecc) Ex Northern Ballet

Peter Parker - Ex Northern Ballet & Ballet Du Rhin

Price for 2 weeks intensive training will be £425.00.

Accommodation will be approximately £400.00  
for 2 weeks this has yet to be confirmed

## From Brenda Hamlyn in Italy The CICB DVD of the 2008 Competition

I so enjoyed watching everything, especially the beautiful soft, and for me, new style of the use of the arms in the classical variations. In the past it was an added individual talent of the pupil, where as obviously now it has become part of the whole, as demonstrated in the Maestro's time judging from the photographs of the period. What a joy! The general standard was high and the talent exceptional.

Also the contemporary dance section was a revelation. Keep the flag flying!!!

## Affiliated Members and Friends of CICB

CICB Delegates would like to expand this membership category. Affiliated members are anyone holding a Cecchetti Teaching Qualification, but not belong-

ing to a Corporate Member organization. Friends are all those interested in CICB, who by paying an annual membership fee receive the International Newsletter that

comes out in November each year, and other information. Please visit: [www.cicb.org](http://www.cicb.org) or email [hsken@telus.net](mailto:hsken@telus.net)

