



International

CECCHETTI

Dance News

No. 4, 1999
5

Australia - Canada - Great Britain - Italy - Malta - New Zealand - Southern Africa - United States of America

The Cecchetti Society in it's early days

A talk given by Laura Wilson

Although I cannot claim to be a founder of the Society, I think it was only in it's third year when Margaret Craske, whom I had known, admired, and liked very much when we were both in the 1921 Diaghilev Seasons, persuaded me, much against my inclination as I had a great aversion to examinations, to join the Society. Eventually I agreed and took the three Major examinations in rapid succession. In those days for the Elementary and Intermediate there were three Examiners, one of whom was always Mr. Beaumont who asked the theory questions and was very quick at spotting faults and asked very cunning questions. The Advanced Examination had five Examiners.

I remember just after doing the Intermediate examination Miss Craske asked me if I would mind going with a small group of children and teenagers to a hall, I forget where, to demonstrate some of the work, the three Grades and a little of the Major work. I imagine this was one of the early Congresses. The only thing I remember about it was a little skinny girl who seemed very talented and who eventually became Helen Wolska.

Soon after taking my Advanced I was invited to become a Committee Member, another thing which I found very daunting.

To begin with the Advanced examination had no syllabus, one had to know all the Adage and enchainements;



Laura Wilson.

Photograph courtesy Rose Marie Floyd.

those Examiners who had been pupils of Maestro, either at his private classes or like myself at company classes all had our notes and lists of the set work. The barre and the centre work were simply regarded as warming up and using the muscles in all the ways necessary to keep the machine in

running condition. Then the Adage, each day its particular 'motif' as it were, these were again the regular ones and then several more elaborate of which two or three were done at each class. Allegro always started with some simple enchainements based on the particular

continued Page 9

CECCHETTI INTERNATIONAL . . . WHY, WHAT AND WHERE TO?

Sheila Kennedy

The seven Cecchetti Organizations around the world have now financed two conferences towards the development of Cecchetti International - Classical Ballet. The Italian city of Civitanova Marche also contributed most generously to the second conference held there in April this year. What better cause than to ensure a unified future for the method we all value so much.

Through the teaching of Enrico Cecchetti we have a direct link with the major influences in dance from Noverre, to Blasis, to Lepri from whom Cecchetti took classes. The teaching principles laid down by Cecchetti are still valid today and it is for us to interpret them for present day and future dancers.

For 75 years or more, the Cecchetti Method has been evolving in many parts of the world. As we enter a new century, the advances in global communication make it possible to share this knowledge and growth, to unite to strengthen the whole. This is what Cecchetti International (CI) is setting out to do. The discovery that similarities, in spite of time and distances, are far greater than our differences is very exciting. We are so fortunate to be involved in such an illustrious heritage and rich art form that enhances both professionals and amateurs alike. We must do everything possible to keep it secure in our changing times.

To give an idea of the scope of the venture so far, here are some of the projects and proposals arising from the two conferences:

- overseas Societies will jointly address problems with ISTD
- incorporation of CI as a non-profit organization; a proposed constitution drafted; legal advice will be engaged to finalize these duties
- co-ordinator/secretary, Robina

Beard, until next meeting

- financial supervisor, Betty Seibert, until next meeting
- finances - allowable expenses clarified
- annual fee of \$500.00US per Founding Corporate Member FCM (each of the seven organizations) to remain in own country at present
- fundraising discussed, to be considered once CI is incorporated
- logo, submissions were presented, agreement has yet to be reached
- newsletter, to be published annually by DCD, Toronto, content to be expanded
- internet: it was agreed that CI should have a website, this will go ahead
- FCMs agreed to share papers given at symposiums involving CI (see this newsletter)
- CI to create an international resource list of additional teaching tools, books, etc.
- international roster of Enrico Cecchetti Diploma holders will be kept by CI
- Cecchetti International Competition, Melbourne, Australia, July 2001, is being planned
- watch for announcements of ANCEC's summer school in Italy, July 2000, with CI involvement supported by the city of Civitanova Marche, suggestions from Raymond Lukens and Livia Brillarelli
- a video of all Cecchetti Major work made by professional dancers
- a film of making the video for public release
- founding an Academy of Classical Ballet in Civitanova Marche
- making a film about the life of Enrico Cecchetti.

Please forward any other ideas you may have re proposals or projects to Sheila Kennedy. •

News from the Cecchetti Society Inc. USA . . .

Upcoming events in the United States:

The Summer School will be held during the second week of August 2000 in Los Angeles at CSULA with the help of returning member **Don Hewitt**. Teachers are still to be determined. Examinations will be available.

Recent successful examination candidates:

Over the last year we have had several candidates achieve success in their qualifying exams for Diploma, Associates, Licentiate, Fellow:

- Denise Rinaldi** - Fellowship
- Jean Fulton** - Licentiate
- Judith Krugel** - Associate
- Norine Brown** - Associate
- Elaine Werner Hutchison** - Fellowship
- Joanna Shofner** - Associate
- Susan Cherney** - Associate Diploma
- Heather Scott** - Associate
- Darcy Sellers** - Associate
- Greg Bomke** - Maestro Cecchetti Final Diploma

(Greg is the youngest teacher to hold this certificate in the United States, and the Bornkes' are the only Mother/Son Diploma holders known off!!!!)

Trinette Singleton, former Joffrey principal dancer and Licentiate with the ISTD, is now on the teaching faculty of The New School in New York City.

New appointments:

Deborah Vinton, Fellow/Examiner of the ISTD, is now the Principal of the School of Sarasota Ballet in Sarasota, Florida.

Scholarship:

Amanda Smith from Denver Colorado received a scholarship from the U.S. to attend summer school in Vancouver this year.

Betty Seibert EMail address: chesdance@aol.com •

Taking Cecchetti into the Next Century

Presented at Civitanova Marche - 10 April 1999

Richard Glasstone

As we stand on the threshold of the millenium, we devotees of Enrico Cecchetti's great legacy, can look back with pride on more than a century of artistic achievement. But we can also look forward to a future rich in the renewal and original invention. In many ways, that future will be something Cecchetti himself could probably not have imagined -- yet, there will be aspects of that future firmly rooted in the important principles of the Maestro's teaching.

I am thinking in particular of the work of two contemporary British dancers and choreographers: Michael Clark and Matthew Hawkins. These are two of the most innovative, avant-garde dance artists of their generation, yet their understanding of dance movement remains rooted in the Cecchetti work they studied with me, as young students at the Royal Ballet School.

Reflecting on his early training, Michael Clark has said that: "So many dancers seem to make ballet into a series of poses. What I got out of my study of the Cecchetti work was an understanding of the continuity of movement. There is a line that goes from one movement to another. The movement between the shapes is very simple. There is nothing added. It is not necessary to add anything."

Too many people see the study of classical ballet primarily as a technical training, teaching the dancer to operate his body like a well-oiled piece of machinery. The study of the Cecchetti work sets out to do much more than that. The complexity and the richness of invention to be found in Cecchetti's adagio and allegro set studies are like a treasure chest of choreographic information. As well as teaching the dancer technical control, they present him with a tremendous variety of choreographic ideas. These make the dancer physically aware of the myriad possibilities of movement invention.

Matthew Hawkins has described these set sequences as choreographic

"roots". "Within them", he says "is the key to innovation. Studying the Cecchetti work has helped me to move into a variety of other dance forms."

These, then, are the opinions of two avant-garde dancers and choreographers concerning the importance of their Cecchetti roots. I also asked the opinion of a very old lady, now well into her nineties, who was herself a student of the Maestro, Laura Wilson. I asked her: "If you had to put your finger on one thing which you find is different in the way most ballet dancers move nowadays, as compared to the way they danced in Cecchetti's own classes, what would that be?" Without hesitating, she replied: "We used to bend sideways much more!"

Indeed, classical ballet seems to have become much more vertical and statuesque. There is a tendency today for dancers - and choreographers - to indulge in a leg-dominated distortion of classical dance. Too much of the focus of attention is concentrated on the look of the raised leg in space. This usually has three harmful results.

- 1 - The neglect of *épaulement*
- 2 - The reduction in speed and complexity of footwork
- 3 - and most importantly to my mind -- the loss of those marvellous, dangerous-looking sideways bends and swoops of movement found in many of Cecchetti's classroom steps, as they are in Ashton's choreography and indeed, in that of Merce Cunningham, as well as Michael Clark and Matthew Hawkins.

This particular aspect of Cecchetti's teaching, and one that he shares with so many contemporary dancers and choreographers, can be summed-up as the ability to find a centre of balance which deviates from the vertical.

A few years ago, I was teaching a ballet class in Germany. A young American modern dancer asked to join in. He danced well and enjoyed the class, but commented afterwards that "I didn't realize you *Continued page 12*

News from Italy. . . A.N.C.E.C.

Susan Brooker

The most important event in the past year for A.N.C.E.C. was the 2nd meeting of Cecchetti International in April. Thanks to the generosity and goodwill of the Comune of Civitanova Marche we were able to host the meeting in Cecchetti's family town. The links forged with the comune have prompted them to offer A.N.C.E.C. the use of the Teatro Annibal Caro for the **Rya Teresa Legnani** annual competition and the annual festival **Una Serata per Enrico Cecchetti** as well as premises for an International Summer School in the third week of July 2000 as part of their millennium celebrations (dates to be confirmed).

We are happy to report that the Comune has succeeded in purchasing the Cecchetti family house in the old town of Civitanova and is showing an interest in purchasing the villa of Napoleon III's wife in which to start an academy of dance! We wish them all the best and are very grateful for all the support they are giving to A.N.C.E.C. and Cecchetti International. The **Rya Teresa Legnani Competition** was held in the Teatro Annibal Caro in Civitanova this year and we were delighted to have a distinguished international jury; **Robina Beard** (Australia), **Mary Jane Duckworth** (England), **Pino Carbone** (Italy), **Diane Van Schoor** (South Africa), and **Betty Seibert** (U.S.A.). The Junior section was won by **Juliette Brunner** a young Swiss pupil of the Hamlyn School.

The revised Intermediate syllabus has been received with enthusiasm and courses with **Gillian Hurst** and **Susan Brooker** were very well attended. A.N.C.E.C. has increased the number of courses in Anatomy and History of Dance.

We now have a group of young teachers who are completing their Anatomy and History examinations and are working towards their Fellowship. It is encouraging to hear the enthusiasm with which they approach the theoretical examinations. •

Examining in Malta - 1999

Jennifer Morgan

Malta is a country of less than half a million inhabitants. In that small island are seven thriving Cecchetti ballet schools where I was privileged to examine for three weeks in May/June, and what incredible enthusiasm and talent I found in those 500- plus candidates.

The teachers are young and highly trained. Some trained in England or have had additional training abroad but the 'parent' school is Tanya Bayona's - the Tanya Bayona Princess Poutiatine Academy. It is her vision and through her training that so many excellent schools have become established, staffed by Miss Bayona's ex-students. She herself received her Cecchetti training from Nesta Brook-



ing. The range of candidates was from Primary to Advanced and I was impressed at all levels in all the schools. The Maltese love to dance. I cannot pinpoint a single characteristic that could be identified in explanation of this as it is a multicultural society. To love to dance is just there, inherent in their culture as it has evolved. For the examiner it is bliss! To have every candidate bursting to dance (in this case in the blistering heat of an unseasonal heatwave) is an examiner's dream, especially when accompanied by talent.

In addition to the examining I was lucky enough to be asked by the Dance Council of Malta to give two open classes (billed on the posters as two "EXTRAORDINARY CLASSES" which made me a little nervous), one Junior and one Senior open to all the dance schools in Malta.

The students were wonderfully responsive, simple or complex exercises and enchaînements were tackled avidly, and they were sensitive to qualities. I think we all enjoyed ourselves. This was when I also became VERY hot.

The "examiner care" was immaculate, oh that I had had more spare time! In the time that I did have I was very fortunate to be taken to fascinating and beautiful places and to be wined and dined by the sea in their pretty harbours; also most importantly to talk with the teachers themselves to learn about them and how they structure their schools. They have marvellous premises and they have worked for them. They run International Summer Schools and put on first-class shows and this last in a country where, compared with the UK, there is very little live theatre.

The kindness and generosity of the teachers, the approach of their students and the talent of all cannot be too highly praised. •

News from the United Kingdom

Cecchetti Day, July 25. This day in London is always an important annual occasion and provided an opportunity to welcome guests from abroad as well as teachers from the UK. This year, however, was particularly special. In her annual report the Chairman, **Mary-Jane Duckworth**, reminded members of all that had been achieved in the last decade and the list was a very long one - a tribute to her untiring work for the Faculty. It was therefore particularly appropriate that she should be presented with the Cecchetti Medal in recognition of her achievements for the Society.

The day offered members the opportunity to observe the calm, encouraging manner of **Phroso Pfister** as she taught a class of young children in Natural Movement, and the professionalism and delightful sense of humour of **Brenda Garratt-Glassman** in her class for Senior Associates. The major work was covered by **Richard Glasstone** in a clear and precise presentation entitled "Approaching the Major Work" demonstrated by four young men from the Rambert School, and by **Cara Drower** who presented a selection of the major work demonstrated by students drawn from several schools.

The day also provided the opportunity to see the solos of the Mabel Ryan Award winners and the **Barbara Geoghegan** award winner. Also a ballet for the Scholars Cup Winners, choreographed by **Linda Young**, and *A Ballet for Barbara* specially choreographed by **Richard Glasstone** as a tribute to **Barbara Geoghegan** who was retiring after more than 40 years caring for Cecchetti Scholars.

The day was brought to its climax with the guest appearance of **Silvia Jimenez** and **Jonathan Payn** from Birmingham Royal Ballet (by kind permission of **David Bintley**) dancing excerpts from the repertoire. A pas de deux from Act I of *Hobson's Choice* made a light hearted finale. •

2 REPORTS: Second International Conference held in Civitanova Marche, Italy April 8th, 9th 10th and 11th, 1999

Robina Beard

1 Civitanova Marche is as difficult to say as Cecchetti, but when it was proposed by the Italian Cecchetti organisation A.N.C.E.C. as the venue for our second international conference, the founding member organisations of Cecchetti International - Classical Ballet from around the world were all delighted to have a legitimate reason for a trip to Italy, to the small town where Maestro Enrico Cecchetti lived for a large part of his life.

The town of Civitanova Marche has two distinct precincts - the new town is one of the biggest shoe manufacturing areas in the world. The materials of which shoes are made are all manufactured in this region, so as well as shoe factories, there are rubber factories and all the other components of shoe making there. In addition to this, Civitanova is a seaside town, a fishing centre and a holiday resort. The international delegates were taken on a tour of all these facets of the town, and received the most wonderful hospitality and many presents from the business leaders, (including a new pair of shoes for every delegate). The other precinct is Civitanova Alta, which is the original small town, high up on the hill about ten minutes drive from the modern part of town.

This is a beautiful medieval 'walled' town, full of tiny streets, wonderful stone steps, the town square and the old town hall, the beautiful old churches, and of course wonderful old houses in which families have resided for generations. One of these families was the Cecchettis and their original house has just been bought by the town Council for a museum they intend to

establish to celebrate their most famous resident.

As he was an internationally famous dancer and dance master, Cesare Cecchetti was obviously away from home for quite long periods, but his wife and children lived in the house and attended the beautiful old church. Enrico danced on the stage of il Teatro Annibal Caro, with his sister Pia in a



Teatro Annibal Caro, built in 1872, Civitanova Marche, Italy.

piece choreographed by Cesare when this beautiful small theatre was opened in 1872.

This theatre is a miniature opera house in the horseshoe design, which

we attended a recital of organ and piano music

has recently been restored by the Comune of Civitanova Marche under the supervision of the architect Claudio Ridolfi. It is very small, the stalls having 106 seats and the three tiers each having 15 boxes which would hold about 4 people - so the capacity would be no more than 300 - just right for the tiny town for which it was built. The Cecchetti family's

box in this theatre has a brass plaque to identify it, and two of his grandchildren and some cousins were seated in this box on the evening of the recital which was held during our stay. The ambience in this intimate little theatre was wonderful - the warmth of golden lights, red velvet seats, and the 'raked' stage with an orchestra pit which could fit no more than six musicians.

This quite recent recognition that a famous international ballet dancer and teacher lived in the area was instigated by Livia Brillarelli a dedicated historian who has been researching the life of Cecchetti for several years. Signora Brillarelli was an opera singer from the area, and has researched a book about Enrico Cecchetti and his family entitled *CECCHETTI: A Ballet Dynasty*. She is now gathering information on his life and teaching for the establishment of the museum. During our visit, she spoke to us several times, and also accompanied us on the tour of the old town.

Her joy and devotion to her subject was evident in her shining eyes and extravagant gestures when she was telling us her stories - which were being translated for us by our Italian members, Raymond Lukens and Susan Brooker. Many fascinating letters and photographs of Cecchetti's life and teaching have been discovered, and now reside in the lovely old library building in the old town, as well as in the brand new library in the new town. In the new town a statue created from the famous photograph of Cecchetti with Pavlova has been erected in a courtyard in front of the public library. This design has also been used to create the "Cecchetti d'argento" Award for excellence in dance. During our stay two of these awards were presented - one to Dr. Giannandrea Poesio, a dance historian and dance critic for the *Times* newspaper in London, and to the Italian ballerina Elizabeth Terabust.

Enthused by Livia Brillarelli's research and her eloquent support of the

Cecchetti legend, the Civitanova local government offered to host our second conference of Cecchetti International members. They arranged the meeting rooms, meals and accommodation for all delegates, and entertained us with receptions and performances, show-



Statue representing Anna Pavlova and Enrico Cecchetti in Civitanova.

ered us with presents and generally made us feel very welcome.

On our second evening we attended a recital of organ and piano music and Giorgio and Elena two of Cecchetti's grandchildren were in attendance.

Elena has recently translated the Olga Rackster book entitled *The Mas-*

The agenda was complex and dense. Major decisions were reached

ter of Russian Ballet (1922) into Italian, for its re-publication. She joked that her grandchildren are not learning English so she translated the book on their great-grandfather's life into Italian for them. The new translation of this book has some wonderful new photographs and a colour cover of the beautiful painting by Dame Laura Knight of Cecchetti teaching class in his London studio. Elena was a vibrant energetic grey-haired lady who described how she had come to Australia last year, to Perth and up the West

Coast, over to Darwin, and then down to Uluru, and finally to Sydney where she visited the office of The Cecchetti Society in NSW.

Elena spoke excellent English and it was a delight to talk with her and her brother. She showed us a picture in the book of a magnificent 'Faberge' medal presented to Cecchetti as he departed from St. Petersburg after 15 years there, proudly telling me that she now has that medal - which her mother gave to her.

Delegates from the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, South Africa, Italy and Australia who attended this conference - the seven founding member organisations of Cecchetti International-Classical Ballet - were fascinated and a little overwhelmed by all the history, and new information that we were learning. However, we were there to attend an important conference and to discuss the future of this wonderful heritage and moving it on and out into the classical dance training of the future.

The agenda was complex and dense. Major decisions were reached on the international incorporation of Cecchetti International-Classical Ballet - a constitution was written and it is anticipated that incorporation will take place in Italy. We discussed the forthcoming inaugural International Ballet Competition to be held in Melbourne, Australia, in July 2001, and entry conditions and rules were finalised.

The third international Cecchetti conference will be held in conjunction with the competition, as we look forward to welcoming the international delegates after their long trip to the antipodes. We certainly have a great deal to live up to in the hospitality and support of our Italian hosts in Civitanova Marche.

It was a successful and energising conference, and an emotional and fulfilling visit to Civitanova Marche - home of Enrico Cecchetti and his family. •

Civitanova Marche has an extensive web site which has images of the city as well as photo reproductions of the Cecchetti family. It is worth a visit:

<http://www.sit.wnt.it/civitanova.it>

Honouring the Maestro

Richard Glasstone

2 Like so many Italian towns, Civitanova Marche, near Ancona, on the Adriatic coast, boasts its own little opera house. But this particular one, the Teatro Annibal Caro, has a special significance for balletomanes. The opening performance, in the summer of 1872, had featured the ballet *Lo Spirito Folletto*, choreographed by Enrico Cecchetti's father, Cesare, with the twenty-two year old Enrico and his sister, Pia, dancing the leading roles. Recently lovingly restored, this enchanting miniature opera house (it seats only 280, including three tiers of private boxes) was the focal point for the recent week-long celebration of the legacy of Civitanova Marche's most famous son.

The historic resonance of being able to celebrate the Maestro's legacy on the very stage where he had once performed

Indeed, this charming seaside town was for many years the home of the Cecchetti family. Their villa, perched on a hilltop with panoramic views of the verdant Marche countryside, is now in the process of being acquired by the city, to be turned into a Cecchetti archive and museum. Local historian Livia Brillarelli's meticulous research of the Cecchetti dynasty provides the core of the collection of documents and memorabilia presently still housed in a special section of the city library. This was also the venue, from April 8th through 10th, for the second conference of Cecchetti International-Classical Ballet, attended by fourteen delegates representing Cecchetti teaching organisations from all over the world.

This important conference was followed by three more days of Cecchetti celebrations, superbly hosted by the



Delegates and friends outside the Cecchetti ancestral home in the medieval village of Civitanova Alta. Cesare Cecchetti bought the house in the early 1860's and Enrico sold it in 1894. The house is being acquired by the city and converted into an archives and museum.

mayor, Erminio Marinelli, and expertly co-ordinated by Stefania Sansavani and Susan Brooker on behalf of the Associazione Nazionale Coreutica Enrico Cecchetti. These events included a symposium entitled Cecchetti - towards the millenium, featuring papers on various aspects of the Maestro's method and it's relevance for the future, as well as a fascinating account by Giannandrea Poesio, of his research into the history of Italian mime, with particular reference to its use in *The Sleeping Beauty*. A tempting foretaste of Poesio's forthcoming definitive biography of Cecchetti, the dancer.

Signor Poesio and the Italian ballerina, Elisabetta Terabust, were also presented with the city's prestigious "Silver Cecchetti Award", a miniature version of the huge modernist sculpture (incorporating figures of the Maestro and Anna Pavlova) which was recently erected in front of Civi-

tanova's public library.

Other events included a performance by students currently studying the Cecchetti method, as well as a competition for younger children in honour of Rya Teresa Legnani, a student of Cecchetti and a niece of Pierina Legnani of thirty-two fouettés fame.

The historic resonance of being able to celebrate the Maestro's legacy on the very stage where he had once performed was further enhanced by the surprise presence in the audience of three of his direct descendants. One of these, Elena Cecchetti, has recently published an Italian translation of her grandfather's biography, *Master of the Russian Ballet*, superbly illustrated with a wealth of historic photographs and featuring, on the dust cover, a rare and very beautiful Laura Knight painting of Cecchetti teaching a class in London.

It was indeed a pleasure to witness the enthusiasm and the genuine interest

shown by the civic authorities of Civitanova Marche in planning and conducting this celebration of an important aspect of Italian dance culture - not to mention the warm and no-expense-spared generosity with which they entertained all their guests. An object lesson for those of our town councillors and government officials who blithely dismiss ballet as 'élitist', showing scant respect for so much of our own dance heritage.

To end on a light-hearted note, I was amused by a detail I noticed on the poster announcing the opening performance, in 1872, of the Teatro Annibal Caro. Proudly displayed in a glass case in the entrance to the foyer, this poster informs us that, in addition to all the star names listed, the performance of *Lo Spirito Folletto* also include CORYPHEES, BOYS, EXTRAS and ELECTRIC LIGHT. •

News from South Africa . . . Much Giselle

South African Students Study Abroad. During July, **Lauren Summerley**, student of **Gail Myburgh** from Johannesburg, was invited to attend the Summer Course of the Royal Birmingham Ballet in England. After the course she auditioned for The English National Ballet School and has been accepted for the 99/2000 intake. Lauren commences her studies in September.

Yolandi Olkers, student of **Martin Sconberg** from Johannesburg, commences her studies at the National Ballet School of Canada.

New Young Professionals Abroad. **Durrell Hammond**, winner of The 1998 Cyril Beaumont Award, trained by **Joy Cooper**, has recently joined London City Ballet, with director, ex South African **Harold King**.

Megan Swart and **Iohna Loots**, members of Cape Town City Ballet and trained by **Lynne Fouche**, have enjoyed much success recently. Megan performed a pas de deux in young choreographer, **Sean Bovin's** latest ballet and also danced Queen of the Willis in *Giselle*, whilst Iohna performed Peasant pas de deux in *Giselle*. During the summer Iohna was accepted by The Royal Ballet in London and joins the company shortly.

Angela Malan, principal dancer with The State Theatre Ballet in Pretoria recently guested in Cape Town in the *Giselle* season and **Nicci Theis**, still with Scottish Ballet, is preparing for her first *Giselle*. Both dancers were trained by Lynne Fouche. Angela was a Cyril Beaumont bursary winner in South Africa and Iohna in London while she was training at the Royal Ballet School.

Members On The Move. Four young teachers from the Cape Town branch travelled to London to attend The International Teachers' Summer School in Chichester. They were **Donna Bernhardt**, **Timo Liston**, **Lana van Blerk** and **Adele Fourie**.

Denise Schultz taught at The National Ballet School of Canada Summer School and also set *Aurora's*

Wedding for the forthcoming school show early next year.

Diane van Schoor taught at The National Ballet School of Canada and together with **Glenn Gilmour** mounted a Cecchetti project for the Betty Oliphant Theatre. The Senior students, both girls and boys, spent the four-week programme studying a selection of the work from the Cecchetti Advanced and Diploma syllabi, not previously encountered. The purpose of the project was to further broaden their education and stylistic experience of classical ballet and in particular, the Cecchetti Method.

Diane stayed on in Toronto to attend the Teachers' Course and work with guest teacher **Irene Dowd** of the Julliard School in New York, **Mavis Staines**, artistic director and the staff of the NBS, along with about 90-100 teachers from all over the world and reports that the week which embraced "leaping and landing" was a most exhilarating experience.

Awards For Dedicated Service. We are proud to announce the recipients of certificates for dedicated service presented in London at Cecchetti day in July this year. **Mrs. Mary-Jane Duckworth**, Chairman of the Cecchetti Society, accepted the certificates on behalf of the following senior major South African Examiners: **Mervynne Fernie**, **Ann Geddes**, **Kathleen (Kay) Keegan** and **Vivienne Keegan**. The South African Membership congratulates these Members and extends sincere gratitude to them for their sacrifices over many, many years. They truly were the cornerstones of our Society.

New Premises. The Cecchetti Society of Southern Africa has invested in an apartment so as to upgrade the administrative offices in Johannesburg. We hope to move in towards the end of this year. The address:

P.O. Box 48672, Roosevelt Park, 2129. Tel/Fax: number 011-27-11-782-0677 are unchanged, but we now also have an EMail address:

cecchetti@yebo.za.com •

Mary Jane Duckworth Honoured with Cecchetti Medal



Mary-Jane Duckworth, Chairman of the Cecchetti Society was presented with Cecchetti Medal in recognition of her achievements for the Society during the July 25th Cecchetti Day in London.

The presentation was made by **Monica Mason**, Assistant Director of the Royal Ballet Company and a Patron of the Cecchetti Society.

Mary-Jane Duckworth is retiring as Chairman of the Cecchetti Society in London after nine years of outstanding achievements.

Linda Pilkington has been elected as Chairman of the Society. Linda's early training was with Rita Emmerson and she was a Cecchetti Scholar for five years before going on to study at the Royal Ballet Upper School. In 1963 she passed her Advanced examination as a dancer, coached by Nora Roche. She has been teaching since 1964 and examining since 1988 and holds a parallel career as Course Tutor for the Benesh Institute's Professional Dance Notator's Course. She is Chairman of the Cecchetti Scholars Subcommittee and is currently Senior Co-ordinator for overseas examinations •

movement of that day and the more elaborate ones, so many that one seemed to be constantly encountering new ones.

After several sessions of Advanced examinations, teachers began to clamour for a written syllabus in order to have a more definite guide as to the work needed. So a sub-committee was formed consisting of Miss Craske, Miss Lake, Miss de Moroda, Madame Rambert and myself, to choose from the welter of notes, the most useful enchainements which would give examples of the variety and range of the Method. We used to meet in the evening in Madame Rambert's house in Camden Hill as she, in those days, was the only one who had children, and being busy with her school and the beginning of the Mercury Theatre, she did not care to be away from home in the evenings.

It was a very interesting time, we indulged in endless arguments as to the merits and demerits of one step or another, inevitably some had different versions, and of course the Maestro could and did vary some steps at different times, and why not, he was not having to go by the book. Being dancers, followers of a speechless profession, we talked an awful lot, sometimes so noisy that one or other of the children would call to their mother to please keep the ladies quiet we cannot get to sleep'.

These meetings were more or less weekly and continued for over a year. Finally we were able to present it to the full Committee and in the following Summer show it in a big demonstration at Congress, held in the Portman Rooms, a large ballroom with a very slippery floor in Baker Street. I am not sure of all the people who did that first demonstration but certainly Jocelyn Yeo, Mary Skeaping, Peggy van Praagh and I were some of them. Though there have been some alterations in format and the work which we considered a necessary selection of Maestro's vast repertoire of exercises to produce an Advanced dancer, this has now been divided into three by shortening the amount of the Advanced work and introducing the two Diploma examinations. These do contain, I think all the work of the original

syllabus we produced all those years ago. Of course there were many full meetings of the Committee at 75 Charing Cross Road, Mr. Beaumont sitting behind his not very large roll top desk, probably Madame Rambert and Miss Craske on the two chairs, the rest of us perched precariously on piles of books. Every item of the syllabus had to be discussed and agreed upon, and even in the few inches of floor space very often one of us would get up to show how they thought a step should be done. Again much argument with Mr. Beaumont, with that incredible patience of his, listening, making comments or amendments in wording, often going on till 10:30 or so. The shop would have been closed by Mrs. Beaumont who took charge on these occasions. Some time during the evening, having gone down the very narrow cork screw stairs to the cellar where, beside the famous printing press on which the beautiful early books Mr. Beaumont and his wife and friends printed (and hand coloured some of the ballet publications) was a small cooking apparatus and sink, she made us tea and somehow carried the tray, cups and saucers, a plate of cake, generally Madeira or Russian cake', and never spilled anything. I only went down there once and didn't like those stairs at all, and I was so much younger and more agile than she.

About the time that we finished the Syllabus the I.S.T.D. took some rooms in the upper part of Charing Cross Road and by that time the Cecchetti Society had been incorporated with it, so our examinations took place there. The number of candidates was increasing and there were great numbers of children entering the Grade examinations. There were many requests from teachers in the provinces that they might have visiting examiners at their studios, because of the difficulties involved in bringing children from places like Bath or Manchester or Liverpool. After much discussion it was decided that Miss Craske and I might be sent to Manchester.

Mr. Beaumont, except for a fortnight's holiday in Bournemouth, as far as I know, never left London. We visited two schools there and saw some nice work, and the ice having been

broken, the Provincial examinations multiplied rapidly. Which was just as well as it had become increasingly difficult to fit in all the examinations at Charing Cross Road, even when the HQ moved to Imhof House, where there was more than one studio it was quite a problem. By this time Mr. Beaumont, fond though he was of children, could not spare the time to attend all their examinations and the other examiners took their turn at writing the reports. We did not sign the certificates ourselves as we had done during the earlier years.

We were of course as Committee members rather amateurish and unruly. I think that our dear Mr. Beaumont indulged our own individual egos too much, and looking back over vast number of years that have flown by, I sometimes wonder how he put up with us at all.

On the other hand of course there were times when we found him a little trying, points on which we seemed to be stuck for ever, and one could not get on with a long agenda. But how much we owe to him, and, though the younger generation over here did not know her, what a debt we owe to Margaret Craske for her gentle, impeccable teaching, her tremendous kindness and appreciation of her pupils talents and problems, and her intellectuality and integrity. Although in many ways so different there were ways in which she and Miss Barker were much alike. We became great friends and indeed my daughter was named after her.

I have been worried as to how to end this talk about our early days. Perhaps it is better not to end as the work, the Art, is timeless and therefore without end. I would like to think that everyone will remember that the taking of examinations is not an end in itself but a means to ensure that dancers and teachers have the requisite knowledge and skill to serve this beautiful Art which is sometimes so ill treated, and determine to see that it is used ever more fully and creatively, worthy of the Maestro and those great people Cyril Beaumont and Margaret Craske without whose courage and determination and love, so much would have been lost.

Laura Wilson •

News from CCA . . .

50th Anniversary coming in 2000

Rose Marie Floyd

49th Annual Summer School: The Cecchetti Council of America held its 49th Annual International Summer School at Hope College in Holland, Michigan. From July 4th through July 17th, the studios were active with 230 students and 95 teachers eager to enhance their knowledge and skills. Participants came from all across the United States, England, Canada, Jamaica, and Haiti.

During the two-week Student Course, the dancers were placed in one of seven class levels and received four daily lessons. The schedule included two ballet technique classes taught by guest faculty and CCA faculty.

This year's guest faculty included: **Franco DeVita, Cara Drower, Pirkko Lawlor, Raymond Lukens, Anita Young, and Lynn Tabor.** Special classes in other dance forms and related subjects highlighted in the conference were Modern, Jazz, Caribbean Folk Dancing, Highland Dancing, Anatomy for dancers, and Body Mechanics. All teachers attending the seminar were encouraged to observe student classes as an excellent way to learn how various teachers prepare, communicate, and present their classes.

The Teachers' Seminar consisted of all the Graded work and Major syllabi through Diploma. CCA Examiners served on the teaching faculty along with other Guest faculty members. **Cara Drower**, guest faculty, taught the Major syllabi with consistent clarity and quality of movement. Her patient, amiable personality truly created an excellent atmosphere for learning and experiencing the joy of dance. It has been an asset to have Cara share her knowledge with us.

Teachers and students were also inspired by the talented **Anita Young** with her versatile qualities. Her presentation of a classical variation and Pointe class was enthusiastically received. She is an exciting and delightful teacher, with a true love of dance.

Raymond Lukens and **Franco DeVita** were on the CCA faculty for the

first time this year adding another dimension to an already stimulating Summer School. Raymond taught two special classes for the teachers, one focused on the development of better turn out and the other explained progression of pirouettes. Both classes were logically presented and were a great value to the teachers. Franco's sincere feeling for dance was felt in his teaching.

Scholarships: Over 45 scholarships were awarded to teachers and students for this year's Summer School. It is always a pleasure to see how our active committees support deserving students and teachers by providing scholarships in addition to those awarded at Summer School. At the awards banquet, **Bethany Lenhart**, CCA President, announced the names of the recipients of these scholarships. This year's student scholarship winners were chosen and announced by members of the guest faculty.

Rehearsals for the seven groups of students were conducted daily during the Summer School, culminating in two exciting performances at the Knickerbocker Theatre. Compliments go to the choreographers and the teachers for their excellent works. **Anita Young, Franco DeVita, Raymond Lukens, Lynn Tabor, and Pirkko Lawlor** all created artistic choreography which was well suited to the dancers. It was an excellent performance and a perfect way to end the 49th CCA Annual Summer School. The National Executive Board and the summer school committee, **Dawn Greene, Lee Ann King, and Gail Choate-Pettit**, worked together to make this year a wonderful success.

CCA Committees: There are 16 CCA Committees that sponsor regional workshops, Cecchetti ballet days, and seminars. These regional events range from one to six days in length. Our committees are located in the United States, the Caribbean, Haiti, and Windsor, Canada. The newly formed Windsor committee was recently formed by a group of CCA

members who expressed the need for a local committee to serve their area.

Committees are currently securing dates for the 1999-2000 season. The **International Summer School** will be held July 9 through July 22 in Holland, Michigan. The West Coast Committee will once again sponsor a week-long seminar at Mills College in Berkeley, California in late June. The East Coast committee is busy making arrangements for the fall (October, 23-24) and Spring (March, 2000) for Ballet Days to be held at the University of Maryland. The Southwest committee will have a fall conference on October 23-24 in Joplin, Missouri and another week-end session at the University of North Texas in the March, 2000.

50th Anniversary: The Cecchetti Council of America looks forward to the year 2000 and to the celebration of its 50th anniversary. •

Cecchetti International Competition - 2001

Get out your maps and start planning!

The first Cecchetti International Ballet Competition is being held in Melbourne, Australia from July 12 to 14, 2001.

This is the first ballet competition of its kind and entries from around the world are expected to compete for the \$7,000 dollars in prizes. As well as a First prize the jury will award \$2,000 to the Most Promising Young Student to appear in the Competition.

Contemporary, Modern or Neo-Classical solos can be performed but must stay within the three minute time limit. Entrants can be between the ages of 15 to 21 as of June 30, 2001 and must be students and have not danced professionally. Male and female candidates are welcome if they hold a Cecchetti Intermediate Certificate Cat. A. The closing date for entries is January 15, 2001.

The Melbourne Competition will also be the occasion for the 2001 Cecchetti International Conference.

For details contact:
The Cecchetti Society of Australia Inc.
302 High Street, Northcote Vic 3070
Australia. •

CECCHETTI: THE METHOD OF THE FUTURE

Presented at Civitanova Marche, April 10 1999

(Excerpts) Classical ballet based on scientific principles **Raymond Lukens**

Classical ballet based on scientific principles is tantamount to teaching the dancer how to use the body correctly, with optimal muscular involvement, complete control and total mastery of kinetics. A dancer who has been well trained following scientific principles is strong, supple and dances without affectation. This dancer has no technical limitations and is free to develop the sensitivity to different qualities and textures of movement necessary to correctly execute the classical, neo-classical and contemporary vocabularies of dance. A talented dancer who has benefited from this type of training is prepared to interpret with artistic intelligence a myriad of different roles. Scientific principles should not be confused with stylistic preferences or an individual teacher's pedagogical solutions.

The technical and aesthetic principles that lie at the base of Cecchetti work give the dancer flow, breadth and harmony of movement, purity of line, stability, coordination and speed. It could be said that Enrico Cecchetti was the first great master to have incorporated elements of the biomechanics of movement for he was the first to have formulated a scientific methodology for the teaching of theatrical dancing. We can ascertain this through the tradition handed down to us by his students and by the students of his students and by studying the three most noted texts on the Cecchetti Method.

The aesthetic principles in Cecchetti training are typified in the port de bras. To correctly execute port de bras the dancer needs to have a deep understanding of how the head and arm movements organically grow out of the use of the spine and shoulder girdle. The Cecchetti aesthetic also deals with movement, passing through clear shapes while following strict rules of anatomy and balance of line. These rules were established by the Florentine Renaissance artists and refined by the great dance masters as ballet developed from court spectacle into professional theatrical dancing. Line in Cecchetti work refers not only to the forming of shapes in space, but also to

lines of movement, which connect those shapes. Clarity of shape comes from coordinated, uncluttered movement.

Florentine Renaissance artists worked, refining and searching for the essence in art, as Brunelleschi said, "beauty is in the essential". They were great thinkers and many became painters, sculptures, architects, and scientists, all at the same time. They balanced shapes, eliminated all that was superfluous to their work and they invented perspective. It is not surprising that the first spectacles of opera and ballet were performed in Florence. They were the architects of modern thinking. ... Cecchetti grew up in Florence and was a product of this culture. Style according to the Cecchetti Method also follows the principles of the Florentine Renaissance; it is simple, coordinated and natural. A dancer who is natural when dancing conveys the intended meaning and emotion with clarity, making the audience believe that what is unfolding on stage is true to life. Understanding the science, the essence of movement opens infinite doors that help the dancer achieve artistic versatility. An artist is truly successful when the audience is moved and can read the intended message.

Audiences today, of course, wish to see dancers who are beautiful by the modern canons of aesthetics. They wish to see high extensions, more articulate movement and turn out. They also wish to see performed on stage the new steps that have been added to the vocabulary after the second half of the 20th century. For these reasons it is necessary to continually evolve. This however does not put into question the validity of the Cecchetti Method. On the contrary, with careful study of Cecchetti work one can discover that the Maestro's teaching offers the way to modernization, because the method is based on scientific principles, not only concerning technique but also aesthetics.

The Cecchetti Method is indeed a method for the dancer of the future because it teaches the dancer how to

Remembering Laura Wilson

The Charter Members of the Cecchetti Council of America had the insight to bring the first generation Cecchetti teachers to guide us when we were first learning the Cecchetti principles. Laura Wilson was one of our very special teachers.

Laura Wilson had a great influence on many of us in the United States. The Cecchetti Council of America invited her numerous times as a guest teacher in the 1960's. Several CCA teachers found Laura's teaching so valuable that they traveled to England to study with her privately.

As a mentor, she provided a wealth of understanding of the Cecchetti principals. As a person, she took great joy in sharing experiences of her life. When one thinks of Laura, one remembers a poised, lovely person, a brilliant dancer, a superb ballet teacher with a keen sense of humor, and a person who enjoyed every aspect of life.

Laura, who danced in Diaghilev's Ballet Russes in London, was known for her beautiful port de bras, which she attributed to Maestro Cecchetti's tutorage. Laura demonstrated brilliant quick footwork, breathtaking grand allegro, and light, elastic ballon. Laura was a mentor. She enjoyed all forms of art and dance and taught Cecchetti's work in its purist form.

She was a true friend and was loved by many. •

move naturally. It inculcates acute awareness to detail and kinetic logic and also teaches the dancer how to use the body correctly, without distortion. The dancer of the future will need to use the knowledge of the biomechanics of movement together with artistic intelligence to possess the means to impart the intended images to the audience. The dancer of the future will need to interpret an infinite variety of roles, in many styles, using different vocabularies. And this dancer must do all this without suffering unnecessary injuries and enjoy a long and healthy career. •

Full text available from S. Kennedy.

Ballet Postage Stamp

In 1998 Mariko Crane, a student of the Santa Barbara Ballet Center in California, became the first living person in the United States to appear on a U.S. postage stamp.

Mariko has been a student of the Santa Barbara Ballet Center since the age of nine. Co-owner of the studio, Denise Rinaldi, is a Fellow with the Cecchetti Society.

Mariko posed for Philip Channing, a local photographer who sent in the photograph several years later when the U.S. Post Office was looking for a picture to represent ballet in the United States. Channing's photo was chosen. The stamp is printed in full color against a black background.

The American Ballet Commemorative Stamp was officially issued at a ceremony celebrating the 50th anniversary of the New York City Ballet, at the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center in September, 1998.

Mariko Crane graduated from high school earlier this year and spent the summer at American Ballet Theatre. She is now pursuing a ballet career and we will be looking forward to following her career.

If you would like more information on this stamp and have access to the World Wide Web, you can visit the U.S. Postal Service's web site: <http://www.stampsonline.com>



News from Canada . . . 50 years for the Society

The Cecchetti Society was founded in 1949 by **Betty Oliphant**, co-founder of the National Ballet School in Toronto.

This anniversary was celebrated at the Cecchetti International Summer Course in August. Ontario has a celebration planned for November.

Cecchetti International Summer Course: More than 140 students and teachers from Canada, USA and Britain attended this course held August 8-14 at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia. It was organised by the Cecchetti Society of Canada/BC and the Cecchetti Society Inc. USA with sponsorship from the School of Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University. Special guest teacher **Veronica Tennant**, patron of the Cecchetti Society of Canada, was part of the distinguished faculty. Participants had the opportunity to share her invaluable professional experiences both in the studio and in her inspiring presentation on career goals. Cecchetti examiners, **Kate Simmons** from Britain, **Marnell Himes** and **Betty Seibert** from the USA and **Sheila Kennedy** and **Christine Richardson** from Canada rounded out the ballet faculty. Syllabus and unset classes were received with equal enthusiasm. **Judith Garay** an associate professor of dance at Simon Fraser complimented the ballet classes with excellent modern classes as did **Lynn Sheppard** with Jazz. Also included in the programme was an informative lecture on nutrition given by **Anna Slivinski**, nutritionist and former dancer. Classes were accompanied by talented musicians, **Daniel Chow**, **Zebalita Fraser**, and **Isabella Tsiserev**.

The Margaret Saul Scholarship 1999: Sponsorship from this scholarship allowed a two day intensive workshop covering all the Enrico Cecchetti Diploma work to follow the summer course. **Kate Simmons** presented it with detail and a refreshing sense of performance, style and simplicity. This proved an invaluable insight for

teachers and students, some of whom experienced this part of the Cecchetti work for the first time.

Fundraising for the Margaret Saul Capital Fund this year has passed all expectations. Grateful thanks are extended to everyone who responded so generously to the appeal, assuring the \$1,000.00 award annually.

Jean Geddis, one of our senior examiners has taken a post as ballet mistress in Sweden. **Nancy and Murray Kilgour** are back in Toronto after many years in Britain. Visitors **Mary Goodhew** from Britain, examined in Ontario and British Columbia. We congratulate her upon her new appointment as Ballet Principal of White Lodge, London. **Diane van Schoor** attended our examiners' meeting in Toronto as she was teaching there during July. Her time and generosity in sharing her knowledge and experience with us was very much appreciated.

Exams: The newly revised Intermediate syllabus has been well received and successfully examined across the country. As from September 1999 the revised Intermediate, the new Grades 1-6 and Primary-Standard 6 become mandatory.

The Society is proud of the ongoing energy and enthusiasm of our teachers and of all the volunteers who work tirelessly for our Society. •

From page 3 Cecchetti - Next Century

could do off-balance movements like these in a ballet class". Similarly, when dancers from the Merce Cunningham Company joined my class at the Cecchetti Centre in London, they felt completely at home with these movements which, alas, now seem foreign to so many ballet dancers. So the enormously rich and varied vocabulary of movement to be found in Cecchetti's work is still very much valid as a means of training dancers of the future. We can move into the new century confident that there is much in our training that remains relevant to the future. •