

DANCE COLLECTION DANSE

THE NEWS

No. 42, 1996

Nesta Williams Toumine (1912-1996) Legacy of a Luminous Lady

by Edgard Demers

The curtain that went up on Nesta Williams' life on October 28, 1912, came down on Nesta Toumine, dancer, ballet teacher and choreographer on February 1, 1996. She was 83 years young. This luminous lady had devoted close to eight decades to her art.

A few weeks before her death, she was still teaching in downtown Ottawa, contributing to her legacy by instilling in her students the love of dance in general and ballet in particular.

Of course, Nesta Toumine's legacy goes much farther and deeper for those who have known her well, like myself, privileged with a forty-year friendship. It is difficult for friends to refer to Madame Toumine, as we all called her, in the past tense. She was so very present and vibrant to a great number of her students and dancers. There was no greater joy for her, throughout her life, than when her former students, many of whom had gone on to professional dance careers, came to visit at her Classical Ballet Studio on Ottawa's Rideau Street.

In fact, Madame's face would light up and her eyes would become brilliant as visitors told of their dance achievements, as well as their personal and family lives. She had that enviable gift of being able to listen, observe, and absorb. This talent went back her corps de ballet days in Europe in the 1930's.

While many of her Ballets Russes dance colleagues would preoccupy themselves with down-to-earth interests such as the after-performance reception following a premiere of a work by George Balanchine, Michel Fokine or Leonide Massine, Nesta Williams would be in the wings or out front, taking notes or memorizing the choreography. She had a photographic memory and many a choreographer cashed in on this gift at the first crisis. The Ottawa girl could easily step into a part -- on one occasion she rehearsed during intermission and went onstage to perform without a flaw.

The Second World War curtailed the European dancing days of Nesta Maslova (companies insisted on Russian stage names at that time). As the German army approached Paris, she sailed to New York.

She became Mrs. Sviatoslav Toumine in the early 1940's. The couple had met on



tour in Europe and now each was performing with one of the two Ballets Russes companies touring in North America. They were married between train stopovers in Toronto. The Toumines elected New York as their home. But after the birth of sons Peter and Lorne, the future choreographer decided that the Big Apple, exciting as it was,

was no place to rear two boys. She longed for the calm and serene upbringing she had known in Ottawa. She wanted her children to be heirs to the same legacy.

Another legacy accompanied Nesta and her boys to Canada's Capital. She was endowed with all she had learned and ob-

...cont'd page 6



OPENING REMARKS

DCD has been busy over the past months with many fascinating archival, research and new publishing projects.

The *Dictionary of Dance*, which DCD has been working on for the past 2 1/2 years, is in the final editing stages. Susan Macpherson, the Dictionary's efficient and exacting Editor, has been busily examining numerous draft copies of the text. This task will soon be complete.

We have been supplying the venues across Canada who are mounting the Cecchetti Exhibition with brochures and flyers for their mailings and public showings. The Exhibition has so far claimed enormous success across the country and is on its way to Edmonton in August.

The fundraising campaign was very encouraging and we acknowledge all the donors who have been so generous in their support. Some new names have been added to the list of continuing supporters, and in this time of economic uncertainty for many of us, DCD is grateful.

Four new publications are also underway and we will release news of these when details have been completed.

Memorabilia continues to be donated and is being transferred to the electronic archives as quickly as we can keep up with the flow. A programme to search turn-of-the-century newspapers for dance articles and advertising has also been introduced.

Two important dance figures in Canada, Nesta Williams Toumine and Eric Hyrst, who both passed away this winter, are featured in this issue of *The News*. As we learn more about these incredible people and their contributions, we learn also how very much more research work there is to do.

And so, as the past becomes the present, DCD continues . . .

Lawrence and Miriam Adams

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New in the Archives . . .

IF THERE IS NO RECORD, THEN IT NEVER HAPPENED!

DCD has launched a project to search the newspapers of the land for news of dance. We are beginning these searches as of January 1, 1900.

Over the next few years, thousands of dance news items will be found, permitting the first comprehensive serial trace of Canada's dance history. Although a lot of research work has been done to date, it has primarily concentrated on individuals. This new survey will allow a more complete picture to be assembled, clearly demonstrating the map of this history.

We will begin to harvest some of this material as it comes through the door and republish it on these pages.

At the time of the news item below, the Boer War was being fought in Southern Africa. Canadian troops were at the front.

Amy Sternberg and her sister Sarah had moved from Montreal in 1894 and had opened a school in Toronto where they taught a type of rhythmic gymnastics. They also designed and choreographed numerous theatrical events.

Similar to today's charitable dance events, such as Dancers for Life, many of the Sternberg's performances were put in the service of raising money for charities.

Toronto Daily Star, January 4, 1900
Excerpted from a news item titled:
Relief Fund is Started.

The Toronto Ladies Branch of the [Red Cross] Society is actively engaged in raising money. The proceeds of an entertainment to be given in the Princess Theatre on Tuesday evening next will be devoted to this fund.

Miss Amy Sternberg is one of the hardest workers to promote the entertainment, and she has enlisted the services of 75 young ladies and children, who will appear in unique drills and picturesque dances and drills.

On Wednesday evening next there will be a series of tableaux vivants at Massey Hall.

* * * *

In the Social and Personal column:

WITH AFTERNOON TEA

Chocolate sandwiches are made by beating cream to a stiff froth and adding grated chocolate. Almonds and chocolate mixed make a delicious sandwich.

Dried figs and dates are also chopped fine and mixed with a little lemon juice and spice—such as nutmeg or cinnamon—and placed between layers of bread.

Almond sandwiches are tasty accompaniments of chocolate . . .



Friends of Terpsichore

DANCE BOOKS
Second hand & out of print

Ballet Design - Past and Present
by Cyril W. Beaumont, 1946, 216 p.p.
\$70.00

The Life and Works of John Weaver
by Richard Ralph
Dance Horizons, 1985, 1075 p.p.
\$115.00

The Romantic Ballet in Paris
by Ivor Guest
Dance Books Ltd., 1966, 313 p.p.
\$55.00

Isadora. Portrait of the Artist as a Woman
by Frederica Blair
Quill, 1986, 470 p.p.
\$18.50

Classical Dances of the Orient
by Xenia Zarina
Crown, 1967, 232 p.p.
\$30.00

The Illustrated Dance Technique of José Limón
by Daniel Lewis
Harper & Row, 1984, 208 p.p.
\$15.00

Canada's National Ballet
by Herbert Whittaker
McClelland & Stewart, 1967, 105 p.p.
\$25.00

The Pre-Romantic Ballet
by Marian Hannah Winter
Pitman, 1974, 306 p.p.
\$150.00

Baron at the Ballet
by Arnold Haskell
Collins, 1950, 222 p.p.
\$45.00

Maria Los/Carol Los
836 - 20 Carlton Street, Toronto M5B 2H5 TEL: (416) 348-0896



ERIC HYRST

1927 - 1996

by Lawrence Adams

Following a conversation from a telephone booth with Ludmilla Chiriaeff in 1961 during which she says, "we want you in the Les Grands Ballets Canadiens", I am soon standing in the Montreal studio of the Company -- the new guy, not knowing a soul!

Just before the Company class begins, a very fast-walking male dancer enters the studio and goes straight to his "place at the barre". One of the unwritten rules for the new guy is to make sure he does not occupy somebody else's place at the barre. It's a territorial, dance-company-hierarchical-behaviour thing.

The fast walker is immaculate - white T-shirt, black tights, every hair in place. As the class progresses everybody is scrutiniz-



ing the new guy who is trying to find his status within the class. The fast walker is not too bad -- feet, turn-out, pirouettes, jumps - not high, but decent with a lyrical, proud -- no, it's a noble look. The new guy is appropriately ignored by this person, and is beginning to see the pecking order.

In the dressing room, following the day's rehearsals, the decorum changes, everybody relaxes and conversations are begun and handshakes happen. Mr. fast walker, again immaculately dressed, head held in a stately fashion, leaves without a word.

A week or so later, obviously having thoroughly checked out the new guy, a hand is proffered and "I'm Eric Hyrst" is offered. The new guy has been accepted.

These are among the flood of memories that surfaced after the death of dancer/choreographer Eric Hyrst on January 31, 1996.

cont'd page 10

"Have you heard the news my dear..."



Everyone needs the
Dictionary of Dance:
definitions of the
Words, Terms
and idiomatic Phrases
of the dance
Mexican to Métis
Ballet to East Indian
Revived Greek to Tap
Ukrainian to Modern
Ice to Ghanaian
Square to Jazz . . .
coming soon from

DANCE
COLLECTION
DANSE
PRESS/ES

YES, it true!. Dance Collection Danse is publishing a dictionary of dance and it is entirely made up of definitions of the language that teachers, choreographers and dancers use day to day. For example: Mercury Skip position/Revived Greek Dance; Sprint Point/Highland Dance; Mapassa/Congolese Dance; Desplante/Spanish Dance; Kolomyika/Ukrainian Dance; Petits pas de basque en manège/Ballet; Bijous/Theatre Slang; Triple Minor/Contra Dance; Hitch Kick/Jazz Dance; Debka Jump/Israeli and Arabic Dance; Corte/Mexican Dance; Nayaka/Indian Classical Dance; Précédence/Baroque Dance; Walley Jump/Figure Skating; Quadrille

NEW PUBLICATIONS . . .

CECCHETTI: A BALLET DYNASTY



Enrico Cecchetti and his sister, Pia. St. Petersburg, Russia, 1874

There are few dancers who do not know the name Cecchetti. But how many know about the four generations of the dancing Cecchetti family? Enrico Cecchetti's mother and father were dancers, as was his sister, his sons and grandson. This book unravels the source of Enrico Cecchetti's genius. Author Livia Brillarelli scoured the Cecchetti family scrapbooks which revealed a remarkable new dance story. A feast of photographs, many never-before-published, makes this superb photo-essay an essential for dance lovers, history buffs, teachers, students and scholars.



Price \$27.00

Mail Order Price \$33.00
(includes tax, M&H)

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DANSE**

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1 800 665-5320**



Missing and Found Covers

Busy as we are with the impending major reorganization here at Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library, I could not let your remarks about the strange practices of librarians [News #41, page 2] pass without comment.

I enclose a photocopy of Metro Library's June 1937 issue of *Dancing Times*, bound with the cover (thus preserving the sought after cover photograph of Betty Oliphant). I also enclose a printout of the library's holdings for *Dancing Times*. It may be of interest to your readers to know we have long runs of a number of dance magazines. In the case of *Dancing Times*, our holdings begin with the first issue [September, 1894]. There are some breaks in the early years. From the mid-thirties, the run has very few gaps.

I do enjoy reading your newsletter.

Annette Wengle
Senior Collections Librarian,
Arts Department

NOTE:

This letter refers to an item in the last News in which we wrote that we were told by two librarians that it "used to be the practice in some" libraries to tear the covers from periodicals when binding them. This was done in order to save space.

Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library is to be congratulated for not subscribing to this practice.

CECCHETTI: A Ballet Dynasty

I write on behalf of The Council of Management of The Cecchetti Society of Southern Africa to congratulate you and to commend you on the above publication.

Not only is the book informative, filling a great need for more information on the Man and his work, but it is beautifully bound and presented and will no doubt be treasured by all who invest in so noble a collector's item.

I personally am proud to have met the publisher.

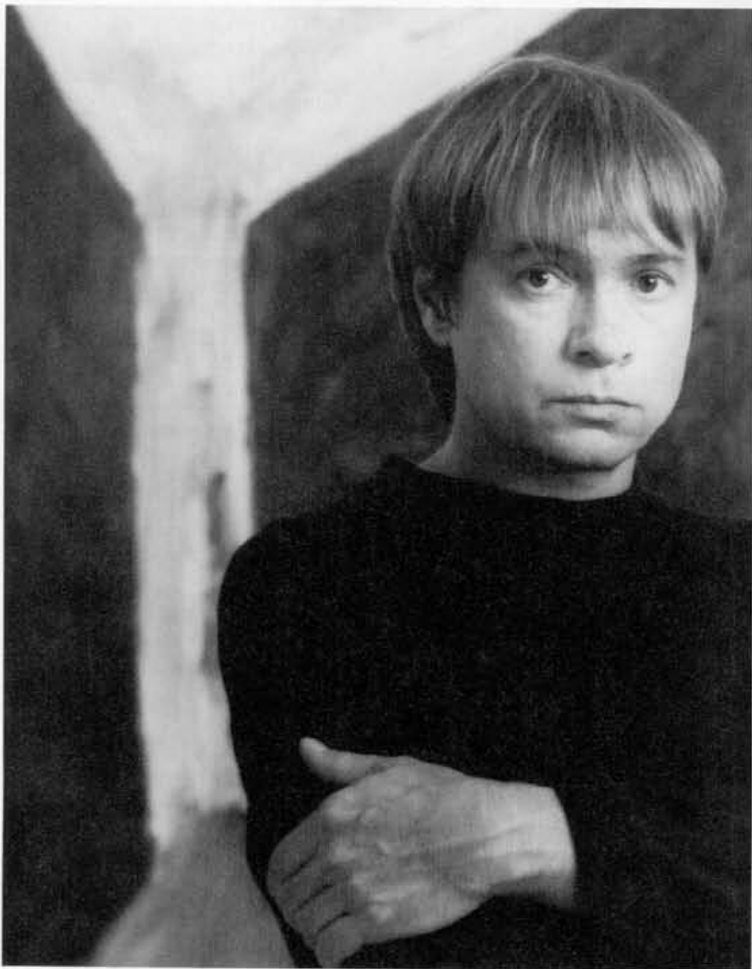
Diane van Schoor
Artistic Director
The Cecchetti Society of
Southern Africa

NOTE:

The Special Hard Cover Limited Edition of CECCHETTI: A Ballet Dynasty is SOLD OUT.

JEAN-PIERRE PERREAULT WINS 1996 JEAN A. CHALMERS AWARD for DISTINCTION IN CHOREOGRAPHY

Known to colleagues and friends as JPP, Jean-Pierre Perreault entered the dance world through his studies at Le Groupe de la Place Royale school with the provocative Montreal modern dancer and creator Jeanne Renaud, and began his dance career with the Le Groupe's company in 1967.



Four years later, along with colleague Peter Boneham, Jean-Pierre became the Company's Co-Artistic Director and initiated his choreographic explorations. At the Chalmers Awards reception in May 1996, twenty-five years later, he said he had written in his diary, after creating his first dance work, that this would be his last . . . and each time he choreographs a new one he says the same!

In 1981 Jean-Pierre undertook a freelance dance career and in '84 formed his own Company, Fondation Jean-Pierre Perreault. He worked at Vancouver's Simon Fraser University and the Laban Centre in London as artist-in-residence, and taught at the Université du Québec à Montréal for 8 years. His travels to Europe, Asia and Africa en-

couraged a fascination in architecture and the sacred arts, and he studied the influence of costume on dance and choreography.

His dance work has been informed through contact with artists of various disciplines and his artistically comprehensive approach to creation closely links the choreography, set,

costumes, music, and lighting.

Jean-Pierre begins his creative process by drawing and has been invited to show this significant body of work in solo exhibitions in New York, Belgium, Quebec and Sweden.

Over the years a distinct Perreault style has manifested itself and is reflected in a form of dance anchored in its atmosphere, echoing movement through music created by complex rhythmic steps. Directed by Bernard Picard, a television adaption of Perreault's 1983 work, *Joe*, was broadcast by

Société Radio Canada and attracted an audience of more than 300,000, also winning the best Studio Adaptation Prize given by the City of Deauville at the 8th Grand Prix International de Vidéo Danse in France.

Perreault has created close to forty works and is in frequent demand internationally. The Cullberg Ballet of Sweden commissioned a work from him in the early 1990's, and in May 1995 at the invitation of the Office Artistique de la Région Aquitaine in France, he undertook the creation of a series of duets entitled, *Les Années de Pèlerinage (Years of Pilgrimage)*. In February of 1996 his piece *Eironos* was premiered at the Festival of Perth in Australia to public and critical acclaim. The North

American premiere of *Eironos* will take place in Montreal in April 1997. This work highlights the artistic maturity of dancers who, for the most part, have been working with Perreault for many years. Coined "Perrealesque" his choreographic designs for groups of dancers express the desire, strength and fear which are at the heart of human experience.

Referred to as a choreographer-scenographer, Perreault designs his own architecturally splendid sets, and stages most aspects of his productions including close collaboration with a lighting designer in the "choreography" of the lighting environments.

The Chalmers Dance jury, Carol Anderson, Lee Eisler and Daniel Léveillé, noted the "huge impact Perreault had had on the dance community and on the arts in general in Canada". They praised his work as "lasting and profound both nationally and internationally."

AND STILL MORE . . . SYLVAIN ÉMARD

Montreal choreographer and Director of his own company, Sylvain Émard, won the Jean A. Chalmers Choreographic Award which recognizes promising choreographers whose work is achieving national attention. Émard's work, *Terraine Vagues*, was acclaimed at the prestigious festival of contemporary dance, New Moves Across Europe, in Glasgow and was received enthusiastically by audiences across Canada during its 1995 tour.



The annual Chalmers Awards are organized by the Ontario Arts Council Foundation and were held in May at Toronto's historic Royal Alexandra Theatre.

Nesta Williams Toumine

continued from page 1

served with the great ballet masters and choreographers in Europe, as well as stars of the magnitude of Danilova - godmother to son Peter - and Igor Youskevich. Her years with the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo served the Ottawa dance community and the country well and long. Other ballet company directors had heard or read of Balanchine, Fokine and Massine, but Nesta Toumine had worked with them -- the direct links with the greats of the Russian ballet.

All this knowledge was to be dispensed to her students beginning in 1947 when Nesta Toumine joined forces with Yolande Le Duc's Ottawa Ballet Company. Her first of three dozen choreographies date back to that period.

Success came immediately and the level-headed Madame Toumine was ready for it. Known as an unassuming personality, modest and kind, it is difficult to imagine that she could have had a difference of opinion with anyone . . . yet she felt so strongly about her vision that it caused a split with Le Duc. Underneath the kindness and modesty, there was a strong will and a great determination. It must be said that this separation was brought about by professional, not personal, differences. All through the years I'd known the Toumines, no cross word was ever uttered about Yolande Le Duc. The couple would only refer to her as part of the good old days of the late 1940's.

By 1949, Nesta Toumine was head of her own studio and the Classical Ballet Company. She set high disciplinary and technical standards for her students and dancers.



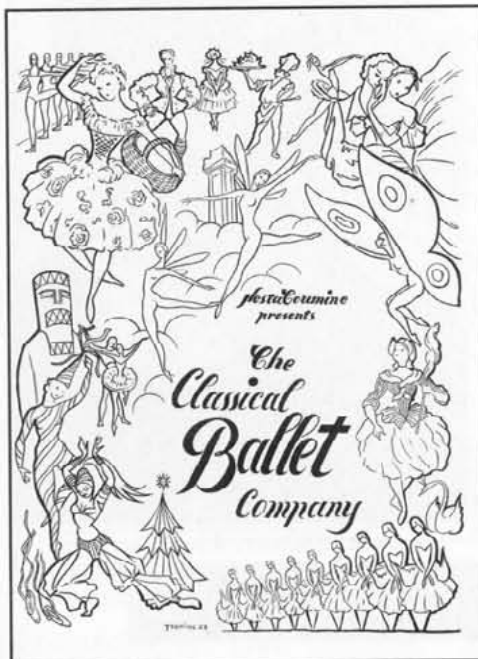
Nesta and her brother Lorne in *Tango* for an Ottawa performance, 1929.

Through ballet festivals and tours in Canada and in the USA, she was recognized, praised and envied for the tantalizing Toumine Touch. Envious was so young a company of up to forty members of such surprising skills . . . already of semi-professional stature . . . and all those male dancers!

The next logical step was to form a professional company in Ottawa. This was not an easy task in the 1950's and became more difficult in the 1960's when the Canada Council decreed that three ballets companies - the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the National Ballet and Les Grands Ballets Canadiens - were enough for the country's population.

Nevertheless, with her downsized Classical Ballet Concert Group and along with her principal dancer and co-director Joanne Ashe, Madame T. came very close to realizing her dream. However, this dream of a professional company escaped her. She never gave up . . . a tribute to her inner strength and courage.

These virtues were to help her through more bad times when in the 1960's her loyal dancers left one by one for greener pastures . . . with her blessing. She was sad to see



Nesta Williams during her time with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.





Nesta Toumine, Sviatoslav Toumine, Galina Ulanova, David Moroni and Joanne Ashe.

In 1986, Dance Collection Danse reconstructed Nesta Toumine's ballet *Maria Chapdelaine*. Nesta was on hand for the two week reconstruction period.

them go, but happy that they would endure as professional dancers around the world: Joan Askwith, Rosemary Jeannes, Jean Orr, Christopher Bannerman, Carol Barrett, Jean Leger, André Lewis, David Moroni, Alistair Munro, Victoria Pulkinen, Richard Sugarman, Susan Taylor, her son Lorne Toumine, her niece Marilee Williams, to name only a few, all carried the indelible Toumine Touch.

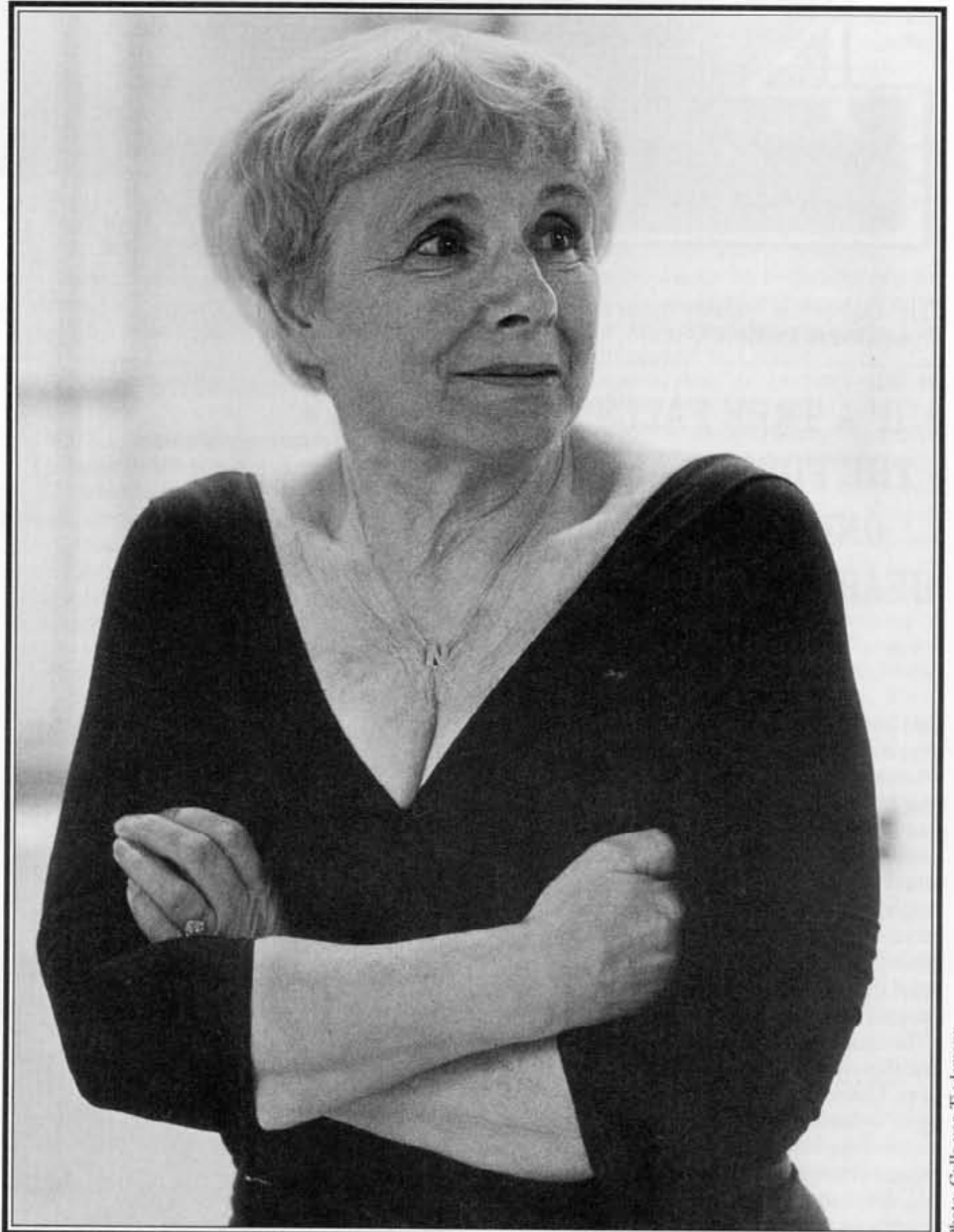
Some of the above are still in the business. Strange that, except for Susan Taylor who has revived some of Madame T.'s ballets in Banff and elsewhere, no other ex-dancer has been inspired to produce one of this luminous lady's works for the enjoyment of another generation.

Once in a while there was talk that the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens or the Eddy Toussaint Company was interested in her full-length ballets *Maria Chapdelaine* or *Gymnopédies*, *Les Sylphides*, *Les Valses*, *Pas de quatre*, etc. But nothing was to come of it. Unfortunate for Madame T. and a loss for balletomanes at large.

Luckily many of these works have been taped or recorded in some fashion or other. Some of these tapes are part of the memorabilia - costumes, sets, photographs, sketches, clippings - bequested by Nesta Toumine to Dance Collection Danse Archives. As long as there are archives, there is hope. But it would be unjust if Madame Toumine's luminous legacy were to linger in storage too long.

Madame T. had more inspired talent than studied bravura. Perhaps if she had stayed on some distant shore Canadians would have come to know her better . . .

*Edgard Demers is an ex-dance critic; he is presently theatre critic and columnist with **LeDroit**, Ottawa's French daily.*





The expression "putting bums in seats" may date back to the Greek theatre. Pondering the variety of bums that filled this theatre seat, patented in Preston, Ontario, in 1898, could conjure up a flood of memories for many a performer, usher, manager and sweeper.

IF A TREE FALLS IN THE FOREST AND NO ONE IS THERE TO HEAR, DOES IT MAKE A SOUND?

by Susan Cash

This year has posed a challenge for the faculty, staff and students at the University of Waterloo's Dance Department. Since this year brings the degree program to a close, it was difficult to see through the sadness at how we were to mark the day. I think for all of us it might have been easier just to disappear silently without any fanfare at all. Instead we have chosen to celebrate with pride the accomplishments of the past 24 years that are credits to the existence of this Dance Department.

The damage has been done. The struggle that this department has had to endure is over. Unfortunately the Dance Department's closing at this university is symptomatic of inevitable reductions and fundamental change to education at our universities. Even though this closing may dishearten us, we must learn from it and

continue to develop the field of dance in this country.

Dance has always had a pioneering role in society. We must continue to be crusaders in our profession. With that in mind this concert underlines our sense of community and support for each other to pursue the greatest potential we are capable of achieving. As we continue to develop in the field of dance, "dance" will continue to elevate itself and become a more integral fibre of the culture of this country. Only then will this kind of closing be more difficult to effect.

Today's celebration is for our final graduating class (eight brave students) who continued on this year, and for all of the students who have gone before. We have had a wonderful response from alumni as you will see by the letters and pictures in the lobby and by the choreographers and dancers in the concert. You can see how dance has touched all our lives whether we have

gone on to perform or to work in a complementary profession.

I am so grateful to the participants in this concert who have given their time and energy so freely to help make this event a festive occasion. Also a hearty thanks goes to all those helpful behind-the-scene angels who have worked on stage managing, lighting design, costuming, publicity, open house and the reception that follows this concert. Finally, it is encouraging that so many alumni have returned to Waterloo to join our loyal audience on this occasion. We hope that the Dance Department has inspired an appreciation of this art form in Kitchener-Waterloo that will continue to grow after we go.

Concert Director Susan Cash's remarks reprinted from the final concert programme of the Dance Department of the University of Waterloo.

*Dance Department
University Of Waterloo
1972 - 1996*

Shadow on the Prairie: An Interactive Dance History Tutorial

by Anna Blewchamp

I am sitting at home surrounded by all the toys and gadgets of late twentieth century life. There's the computer, the CD player, the VCR, the television, even the modem with which I can surf the Net. Most of this hardware is designed to deliver information. On a daily basis, I am indoctrinated into believing that, yes, Virginia, we have entered the Information Age, and that all of us need to develop computer skills and have access to the new technologies. Like many people (especially those in education), I try to stay ahead of new software programs; I check out Web pages for new resources; I search for that elusive "information" which I can incorporate into either creative work or into university courses. And guess what, it's the same old story. The information I find is virtually the same as I can find in books. Once again, in terms of dance history, there's an awful lot about Isadora, Martha, Vaslav, George, and very little about Gweneth, Boris, Celia, Françoise. Our libraries are filled with texts on dance, but how many are about Canadian artists? Do you ever think about all the fantastic archival material held at Canadian sites and how much of it translates into print or electronic media? How many Canadian dancers, choreographers or companies are documented onto videotape? How much of the tireless work spent on research and critical analysis of Canadian dance is accessible for study in schools and universities throughout Canada? In short, what is the point of the hardware if it regurgitates the familiar lopsided view of dance history, a history that marginalises Canadians?

It was with these thoughts in mind that I unwrapped my brand new copy of the CD-ROM *Shadow on the Prairie*. Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt and Mary Jane Warner of the Department of Dance at York University, the creative team behind this innovative program, are among the many visionaries who are embracing the world of dance and technology with enthusiasm. Their foresight has led to the first interactive multimedia (IMM) dance history tutorial on Canadian dance which uses CD-ROM technology. *Shadow on the Prairie: An Interactive Dance History Tutorial* is a Macintosh computer-based self-guided tutorial, which uses Hypercard software making it ideally suited for navigation by novice computer users. The disc I held in my hand represented over five years of accumulating data, refining, fine-tuning, and testing; it involved many collaborators, apart from the primarily dance historians and notation experts, with many dance colleagues and students providing input for improvement during the development process. As soon as I loaded the disc in my computer, I could enter the world of Gweneth Lloyd and of her ballet *Shadow on the Prairie*. I could follow the

history of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet from 1939-1995. I could unlock the mysteries of the choreography and music with an instantaneous click of the mouse.

The CD-ROM opens with both sound (music from the ballet) and a graphic representation of the stage set, followed by instructions that clarify use of the program. There's an index, a glossary, and a series of activities which follow each section. *Shadow* is divided into several main sections, allowing you to choose which area you want to study. It could be *Gweneth Lloyd - The Early Years* which includes biographical information about Lloyd, the



founding of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Lloyd's choreographies, and the Canadian Ballet Festivals. Or *Arnold Spohr - The Middle Years* which charts the period of the RWB's success on the international stage, and this section precedes *Today - 1990-1995*. Each individual hypercard, designed with both text and images contains highlighted areas for cross reference, leading to more information on a particular subject.

The activities which follow each section are a series of questions with multiple choice answers. If you get the answer wrong, you are asked if you'd like to review the appropriate material and it reappears on the screen. This option helps to both reinforce the information and allows for repeated chances to obtain the correct answers. Apart from providing a vast range of information, these three areas provide a context for viewing the ballet *Shadow on the Prairie*, which is fully explored in its

own section.

Shadow on the Prairie was filmed by the National Film Board of Canada in 1954 and video clips are incorporated into the ballet section. Information specific to the dance itself, relating to the music, the decor, the original dancers, or the scenario is presented in depth. My favourite part of this whole CD-ROM is the choreographic analysis. Certain scenes can be viewed simultaneously against descriptive text; the action of the dance video gives life to the words on the scene. (By clicking on the still image, it can be turned into a danced segment.) Fisher-Stitt and Warner have also included musical analyses of Robert Fleming's score. The choice of instrumentation for certain characters can be isolated, again by clicking on highlighted text. A flute theme or trumpet sound emerges and these can be identified later when the full orchestral version is played. All these elements enhance comprehension and engage the user in discovery of the ballet.

There are two printed Teacher's Guides which make an extremely useful addition for classroom teachers in intermediate and senior schools. The Guides have a number of suggested activities that could evolve from the tutorial in related areas of dance history, dance analysis, the creation of choreographic studies, or connected to other disciplines such as Canadian literature, art or music. The Guides also include a bibliography of additional resources.

Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt tells me that she hopes *Shadow* marks the beginning of a series of dance-related CD-ROMs which will be useful to dance students and teachers in a variety of educational settings.

She comments that "as computer skills are increasingly identified as critical skills, it is important that meaningful dance-related computer programs be developed so that dance students are introduced to the potential uses of computers in education." I agree with her. I can see that computers are fabulous learning tools because they offer room for interaction. But no amount of computer skill or potential interactivity is meaningful unless it opens up a world of significant information. CD-ROMs which give us access to a missing Canadian dance history, or which extend the availability of current texts and research materials, are brilliant ways to foreground the history we know exists. The void which once characterized Canadian dance history is diligently being filled in by many Canadian dance scholars and archivists; this CD-ROM translates that kind of painstaking research into a vital and innovative resource. I know longer have to kick the hardware because it doesn't deliver anything new. Warner and Fisher-Stitt have indeed brought Gweneth Lloyd into the "Information Age" where she belongs.

This CD-ROM is part of a Hypercard Dance History Series from the Department of Dance, York University and produced by Norma Sue Fisher-Stitt and Mary Jane Warner, 1996.

Eric Hyrst

continued from page 3

Born in London, England in 1927 Eric was a rarity, a male prodigy at the Italia Conti School at the ripe young age of 9. By age 16 and in the midst of the blitz, he had made his debut in the principal male role of *Les Sylphides* with the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet.

Two years after World War II's end he moved on to the Metropolitan Ballet to dance among such names as Svetlana Beriosova, Sonia Arova, Eric Bruhn, Poul Gnatt and Celia Franca, as well as David Adams -- the Canadian connection.

Over the next four years he would hardly have a chance to unpack his bag. The Metropolitan Ballet collapsed, and having worked with Balanchine when he was with the Wells Company, in 1950 Eric left to join the New York City Ballet.

He left New York to do a season with the Alicia Alonso Ballet in South America and in 1953 he joined the Royal Winnipeg Ballet where he restaged Act II of *Swan Lake*, dancing it with Jean Stoneham. At the end of the season Jean persuaded Eric to go to Montreal where she knew Ludmilla Chiriaeff, recently arrived from Europe, was choreographing and dancing in the newly arrived medium of television. Jean and Eric performed the *Swan Lake* pas de deux and he staged *Les Sylphides* for television.

With the advent of the weekly television programme *L'Heure du Concert*, there was a need to develop original dance works for the series. This was the founding of Les Ballets Chiriaeff, the seed of what would become Les Grands Ballets Canadiens.

Eric choreographed *La Cage d'or*, and *Romeo and Juliet* with himself and another ex-Royal Winnipegger, principal dancer Eva von Gency, in the leads. (This was later staged by Les Grands as *Labyrinthe*). In 1955, he choreographed an entire one hour show using the music of Canadian composers and in early 1956 he created *Drawn Blinds* featuring Eva and Ludmilla Chiriaeff.

With the formalization of Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in 1958, Eric's choreographic work was once more oriented to the stage. He created *Sea Gallows*, with an original score by Michel Perrault based on a Nova Scotian folk legend and in 1960 he collaborated with Robert Fleming to realize the ballet *Introduction*. A year later Eric and Ludmilla co-choreographed *La Fille Mal Gardée* for the Company.

For the opening of the new Place des Arts, Rosella Hightower was brought in as a guest artist and Eric

choreographed a new work, *Hommage*, which was later televised by CBC.

He had been the right man in the right place at the right time, but after a decade he had to move on.

He opened a school in Montreal North, married Dianne de Saint Pierre and in 1972 initiated The Metropolitan Ballet of Canada. He applied for some money from the Canada Council and was told to first get a orchestra and decor. Broke, he walked the streets of Montreal selling encyclopedias.

Having gone through a divorce, he moved to the United States in 1974 to work for the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, and later the Civic Ballet in Springfield, Missouri. In 1980 he married a Montrealer, Diane Gaumont, and they founded the State Ballet of Oregon in Medford.

While visiting Edmonton in January /96, he heard that there was to be a gala for the anniversary of Les Grands Ballets. He phoned Dorothy Rossetti, a long-time friend and owner of a dance supplies business in Montreal, to say he was on his way and could he stay with her?

On arrival in Montreal, Eric was disappointed to discover that there was no gala, just a meeting of the Les Grands Alumnae Association. Disappointment soon withered as his visit became a homecoming with all his former dance family including Margaret Mercier, his stage partner at the peak of his Montreal dance life.

After a night out Eric developed chest pains and Dorothy Rossetti escorted him to the hospital. The next day, friends flocked to his bedside while he reminisced and chatted about the future. He died later that night.

Ludmilla Chiriaeff describes her relationship with Eric as having the "magic of friendship". In the early days of the Company, she would invite her small group of dancers to the Stanley Street studio on January 1 to do a class and to celebrate the new year with Russian cookies and a drink as a way of cementing their futures together. Every year after Eric left Montreal he would call Ludmilla on January 1 to say he was doing class.



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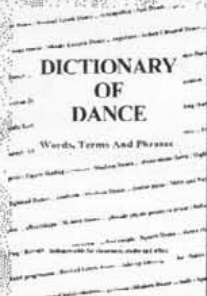
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