

Dancing for your life

Dancecyprus' second gala will be made up of variety of works by famous choreographers with Cypriot and European dancers from the Moscow City Ballet, the Royal Danish Ballet, Staatsoper Dresden and the Mariinsky State Theatre

Ballet is one of the oldest exercise programmes which stimulates both mind and body, leaves you mentally in control whilst giving you a sense of power to command your body to move in a certain way.

Ballet is not only for professional dancers – thousands of people have benefited from this beautiful and rewarding form of exercise. As you are required to move and stand in a balanced way, it helps with co-ordination, posture, flexibility and emotional well-being. Few will believe this, but it's true – even professional footballers have encompassed ballet movements in their exercise regimes.

Ballet requires very precise steps and specific movements. These well defined and flexible movements begin at the barre. The series of exercises are carefully designed to prepare the body for the exacting demand of classical dance with each exercise strengthening a specific part. The barre frees the dancer from

the strain of maintaining control of the entire body before the muscles are sufficiently primed and is used as a preparation to every class and performance.

Looking into ballet as an exercise as well as art form resulted in the title of Dancecyprus' 2nd Gala - Dance for a Better Life. Performances will be taking place on December 10 at the Rialto Theatre, December 11 in Larnaca and at the Pallas Theatre on December 12.

The repertoire includes choreographies from *Le Corsaire*, *Le spectre de Nijinski*, *Don Quixote* and *Shadows* as well as choreographies by Maurice Bejart, Gyula Pandis, Machi Dimitriadou and Eduardo Lao.

Dancecyprus supports and encourages their young, aspiring professional dancers who form the Junior Company. They will make an appearance in *Echos* choreographed by Artistic Director Carolina Constantinou with Evelthon Michaelides drumming. Director Jacqueline Owen ex-

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plained: “These young dancers are chosen by the Artistic Director during auditions, and the opportunity and experience of dancing in the Gala is a momentous one for them.” The Dancecyprus Juniors include Luiza Avraam, Philippa Bush, Katerina Ioannidou, Melany Lambrou, Nicoletta Stylianou and Maria Yerasimou.

Owen was also ecstatic about both the local and international line up of dancers, who include Natalia Krekou, Dafni Mouyiassi, Anastasia Paschali, Loizos Constantinou.

“They have danced in prestigious companies including the Moscow City Ballet, Bejart Ballet Lausanne, Royal Danish Ballet and the Greek National Opera. We are also thrilled to have Andrei Batalov from the Mariinsky State Theatre.

As with each production, we are energised, and hope that the public will continue to show their support.”

While Cyprus has made many strides forward in cultural and artistic matters, we still have no permanent opera or ballet company. As I write this, I hear voices shouting: “We are a small island, and don’t have a history of European culture.”

The time is long overdue for each member of the public to take action; make your voices heard to demand from our politicians and responsible authorities that as “Europeans” we should be building a more promising future for our children.

They should not be dancing in other countries because they don’t have the possibilities of permanent work here. Instead of feeding children only with souvlaki, let’s give them a healthy balance of arts and culture, which will benefit their bodies and minds.

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