

Passionate about dance



SUNDAY MAIL

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DANCECYPRUSFRIENDS

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- Priority booking
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- Dancecyprus Membership card.
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Fees

- Student Friend, £10 yearly
- Friend, £25 yearly
- Company Member, £200 yearly
- Patron Member, £2,000 yearly

By Saskia Constantinou

FOLLOWING an article I wrote about the plight of professional ballet dancers in Cyprus, I received an email from Jacqueline Owen who is passionate about ballet. So passionate in fact, that she decided to take action and form a company herself.

Behind the quiet, soft-spoken face which continually breaks out into smiles, she explained, "I invited a group of sympathetic people from various professions to form the company. We agreed that our aspirations as Dancecyprus would be to provide a permanent, professional company to uplift and entertain our audiences as well as inspiring dancers and choreographers to believe that they have a future in this country."

From there, the company went from strength to strength and other capable and motivated people have joined the Board.

Always an area of concern within the sphere of arts and culture is how to sustain a company financially, thereby enabling it to grow and develop. Dancecyprus has begun carefully without incurring huge expenses and has secured financial backing so that the number of performances can be increased gradually to become a permanent company. At present, dancers and mu-

sicians are called on a 'per production' basis.

Jacqueline, as Company Co-ordinator, emphasised that it was terribly important to Dancecyprus that employment opportunities were given to Cypriot dancers, choreographers, composers, designers and technical people. "With more than 100 ballet teachers in Cyprus, it is time to offer Cypriot dancers the chance to pursue their profession in their own country, rather than staying abroad or becoming teachers out of necessity."

By employing Cypriot, as well as foreign choreographers and composers, the company will have a Cypriot/Mediterranean-European style and the repertoire will be varied. However, it will be firmly based on classical technique, always incorporating a fresh, modern flavour.

The opening production under the auspices of the Italian Embassy will take place in Nicosia at the Municipal Theatre on December 15 with two further performances on December 20 and 21 at the Pattichion Municipal Theatre in Limassol.

The dancers for this production were chosen in auditions held during May and June 2006 in Florence, London and Nicosia with over 200 applicants. The juries were headed by prestigious dance personalities, Elisabetta Terabust (former Principal Dancer and Director of Rome Opera Ballet, La Scala Ballet and the Ballet

of Teatro San Carlo, Napoli) and Alessandra Celentano (Ballet Mistress at MaggioDanza).

There are two ballets - *Sirens*, which is inspired by Mediterranean women and the sea, danced to a compilation of Cypriot, Greek and Italian music by Silvio Brambilla, and *A Pair of Wings Please* inspired by the choreographer Carolina Constantinou's return to Cyprus and with music by Eleni Kara-indrou and Stamatias Spanoudakis.

Choreographer of *Sirens*, Antonio Colandrea, is also the Artistic Director of Dancecyprus. He was born near Naples in 1964 and graduated from the Ballet Academy of the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, from where he then won a scholarship to the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. Colandrea, a soloist of MaggioDanza in Italy, became a member of MaggioDanza in September of 1984, where he had principal roles in classic ballets and contemporary productions.

He has worked with renowned choreographers such as Nureyev, Lubovitch, Armitage and Cosimi among others and since 1990 has been both a dancer and choreographer, for which he has won awards.

His choreographic talents have taken him all over the world where he has created ballets for operas too. In January 2005, Colandrea was the choreographer for the opera by Oliver Knussen, *Where the Wild Things Are* at the Teatro del Maggio

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Musicale Fiorentino, which was received with wide acclaim from press and public. During March 2006, the same theatre was the venue for a world premiere performance of the opera *Snow White* by Luigi Zaninelli with choreography for MaggioDanza created by Colandrea.

He is also interested in teaching and holds the position of Principal Guest Instructor at the School of Balletto di Toscana.

He is currently in Cyprus for the preparation of the two ballets. Dancers have arrived from Greece, Italy, Austria, Britain and Albania, and as Owen said "It was with great pride and pleasure to see the Cypriot dancers

taking their place with the others. The standard of the dancing and teaching was extremely high. The musicians, violinist Ayse Karaoglan, soprano Margarita Makridou and accordionist Nenad Bogdanovic too, met all their colleagues and it was wonderful."

The rehearsals and preparation for opening night is happening in Lophou.

Owen explained "It seems so long ago now, when my husband Michael suggested using the village as a base for the company - and now it's a reality. The Village Committee has given the school to use for class and rehearsals, which have been adapted

with linoleum floors, barres, mirrors and a piano. The dancers live close by in the Agrovani Apartments with generously reduced rates."

Dancecyprus has commissioned a new work by composer Constantinos Stylianou for 2007 performances with the intention of collaborating with the Cyprus State Orchestra. If you would like to join the Dancecyprus Friends, log on <http://www.dancecyprus.org>

■ *December 15, Nicosia Municipal Theatre, 8pm. December 20 and 21, Pafos Municipal Theatre- Limassol, 8pm. Tel: 25-432404*

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MUSICALJOKE

How can you tell when a drummer is at your door?

The knock gets faster.

FAMOUSQUOTES

If you can talk, you can sing.
If you can walk, you can dance.

African Proverb

Ballet dancing is arduous, strenuous activity. Students are engaged in physical training that rivals the training Olympic athletes undergo.

At the same time, they strive for physical perfection not for the prowess alone but as a way of achieving the means necessary to express the pure nature of their art.

George Balanchine

BALLETERM

Batterie: (beats) steps in which one leg is beaten against the other. During execution of the step, both legs must be stretched and slightly opened.

MEETTHEORCHESTRA

Laura Rodgers was born in Northern Ireland in 1978 and began her oboe studies at the age of eight. She graduated from the University of Manchester with a BMus (Hons) and continued her studies at the Guildhall School of Music where she attained a Postgraduate Diploma in Orchestral Performance. She has performed as a soloist with the European Union Chamber Orchestra as well as the Jordanian Symphony Orchestra. While



in London, in addition to playing with the Ulster Orchestra, she freelanced before her arrival in Cyprus. She is the 2nd Principal Oboe in the Cyprus State Orchestra, and in addition to her orchestral obligations, enjoys teaching and chamber music.

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WINTICKETS

Win two tickets to the Nicosia performance or two tickets to the Limassol performance of Dancecyprus by answering the following question and sending it by email with your telephone number to saskia@cytanet.com.cy

Name the 2 choreographers whose work will be seen at the premiere of Dancecyprus.

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