



MERRY CHRISTMAS

We would like to wish all of our Members a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year. Whatever you do over the festive season, we wish you happiness and joy for this special time of year.

And lots of mince pies, obviously!

Lilian Baylis Evening

On Monday 17th December at 7.30pm, to mark the 70th anniversary of Lilian Baylis's death in 1937, there will be a Lilian Baylis evening at the upstairs Clore Studio, at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. It will be presented by Sarah Lenton and Liz Schafer. The presentation will include archival recordings and PowerPoint. Tickets are £14 (£6 students and ROH Access List).

Liz Schafer

Twelfth Night Party

Our traditional Twelfth Night Party will take place on Saturday, 5th January 2008 at the Old Vic, between 5.00 and 7.00pm. Tickets are £6 for Members and £7.50 for Non-members.

Please write to Ruth Jeayes, 185 Honor Oak Road, London SE23 3RP for tickets, or call 0208 699 2379.

Ruth Jeayes

Visit to The Mansion House

We have arranged a visit to the impressive Mansion House on Thursday, 27th March 2008 at 2.00pm. Tickets cost £5.00. Please send your application to myself together with an SAE. We are asked to arrive at the Mansion House at no later than 1.45pm. The entrance is in the side street on the right-hand side of the building. Please note that **no photography** is allowed.

Please reply to: T.J. Rooke, 314B Park Road, London N8 8LA, 0208 552 0492.

Tim Rooke

Annual Visit to the Theatre Royal, Bath

I have arranged our usual visit to the Theatre Royal, Bath early next year, to see the pantomime with our old friend Chris Harris heading the cast. This will take place on Tuesday, 8th January 2008 at the 2.00pm matinee. Several members of our Committee, who come regularly, along with myself, have already booked, and last year some of our members asked me for tickets and joined us, making quite a large party, and I hope that may happen again this time.

After his role as a loveable Buttons in *Cinderella* last year, Chris is back to playing his famous Dame character – this time as Widow Twankey in *Aladdin*, one of the most popular pantomime stories. Joining him is Clive Mantle, as the evil magician Abanazar. Some of you may recall Clive as one of the doctors in *Casualty* and in many other TV shows. With there being no pantomime in Bristol this year, as the Bristol Old Vic is closed, tickets are in big demand, so please let me know as soon as

possible if you would like to join us. Seat prices range from £7.50 to £15 per person, depending on where the seats are.

Please send a cheque made out to Mary-Jane Burcher (I pay for the tickets myself when booking them over the phone) and mark them 'not over £15' and I will fill in the necessary amount, but if more than one of you are coming, please remember it is up to £15 per person. Please send the cheque with an SAE to me at Flat 6, Oak House, Carlton Drive, Putney, London SW15 2BZ, telephone 0208 789 9227.

There is a half hourly train service to Bath Spa from Paddington, leaving at 9.45am (arriving 11.10am), 10.15am (arriving 11.45am), or 10.45am (arriving 12.10pm) but I strongly advise you to check train times before booking as times can change throughout the year. Fares differ, but a reasonable Apex return ticket is available.

There are also several excellent restaurants near the theatre for lunch, and also one at the theatre itself downstairs. After the performance, we generally meet up with Chris for a chat and a cup of tea. I look forward to hearing from you.

Mary-Jane Burcher

Letters to the Editor

If you have any comments, suggestions, or interesting stories, or would simply like to see your name in print, you can write to us and we will print what we can in the Broadsheet. For the time being, please email jen.walker@westherts.ac.uk if you have something to say; a postal address will follow.

Call for Information

Esme Church and Rudolf Laban

I am researching the Drama School that Esme Church set up in Bradford at the Civic Theatre. Once she had established the school in 1947 one of the first teachers she invited was Rudolf Laban, the great pioneer of movement and dance. I am keen to find out how she knew about his work and why she wanted him in particular to teach her

students. I have interviewed several students who were taught by Laban, and none of them know how Esme Church came across Laban. Any information would be gratefully received.

Dick McCaw
dickmccaw@blueyonder.co.uk
7a Vartry Road
London N15 6PR

Andrew Leigh

I've been contacted by Leslie Leigh, a relative of Andrew Leigh (1887-1957), who would like to find out more about what Andrew Leigh was like as a person. I was wondering if any Vic-Wells Association members have any memories of Andrew Leigh they would be willing to share? Leigh was the son of a Brighton physician, and he worked from an early age for the Benson Company, and he toured England, South Africa, the US and Canada with the Bensons. Later Leigh worked for many years at the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells, where he directed a large number of productions, and where he worked alongside many of the great stars such as Edith Evans and Sybil Thorndike. He directed three productions on Broadway – including *Twelfth Night* and *The Merchant of Venice*, and he also directed for the Bristol Old Vic. If anyone does have memories they would be willing to share would they please contact me? Many thanks.

Liz Schafer
E.Schafer@rhul.ac.uk

Annual Accounts

The Annual Accounts of the Vic-Wells Association were presented to and accepted by the recent Annual General Meeting. Enclosed with this issue of the *Broadsheet* is a copy of the Income and Expenditure Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ended 30th June 2007. An examination of the accounts required by the Charities Commission was carried out by our former Treasurer, Stanley R. Underhill FCCA.

Neville C Taylor
Hon. Treasurer

The Vic-Wells Association Annual Report 2006/2007

This report covers the period 1st July 2006 to 30th June 2007. I am sure you would wish to join me in sending our best wishes to our President, Wendy Toy who has not been very well this year but keeps a close eye on our activities. She is still residing at the theatrical home, Denville Hall in Middlesex. Our AGM was held on November 6th and after the business we greatly enjoyed a talk from our Vice-President, Nickolas Grace who talked about his theatrical career with many amusing anecdotes.

Our traditional Twelfth Night Party and Shakespeare's Birthday Party were both held in the very pleasant surroundings of the second floor bar of the Old Vic. The Twelfth Night cake was cut by Edward Hall who was most appropriately directing a production of Twelfth Night at the Old Vic. Following the cutting there was a book launch of Professor Elizabeth Schafer's fascinating and well researched biography of Lilian Baylis. Two of her students dressed up as Miss Baylis and quoted excerpts of her sayings both humorous and serious. Oliver Ford Davis launched the biography with a witty speech. It was a very well attended party with over 100 members and guests present. The guest of honour at Shakespeare's Birthday Party was Robert Lindsay ably assisted by Pam Ferris in proposing the toast. They were both appearing in *The Entertainer* at the Old Vic. Our thanks to the many helpers who provided such an excellent buffet for both occasions, ably coordinated by Ruth Jeayes and our thanks to the Old Vic for allowing us to host the parties there.

The third function of the year was the Celebration on May 8th in memory of our beloved James Penstone who died the previous year aged 90. This special evening took place in the truly impressive Charterhouse where James had been a Brother. After drinks and refreshments we moved up to the Great Hall to enjoy a brilliant programme of entertainment covering all the wide interests of James from Opera and Ballet to Theatre and Music Hall. The entertainers included Roy Hudd and Sir Donald Sinden who proposed the Champagne toast to James's

memory. Our thanks to Mary-Jane Burcher who produced the evening's entertainment and the many people who contributed to the great success of the celebration.

Members had the pleasure of going on several visits during the year. These included visits to the Boy Friend at the Open Air Theatre, a musical version of the Three Musketeers at the Bristol Old Vic, Cinderella Pantomime at Bath, to see our Vice-President Nickolas Grace as King Rat at the Barbican and the Theatre Museum. As the position of the Hon. Social Secretary is vacant we are indebted to Mary-Jane Burcher who organised the visits with the help of some of the Committee Members.

Members had the opportunity to attend several rehearsals at Sadler's Wells during the year and I should like to thank Nadine Owen of Sadler's Wells for persuading so many visiting companies to let us see their rehearsals. These included Dutch National Ballet, Sylvie Guillem and Akram Khan in *Sacred Monsters*, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Rambert Dance Company, American Ballet Theatre, Nederland Dance Theatre 2 and several others.

Your Committee met five times during the year to run the affairs of the Association and plan future activities and I am sure you will join me in thanking them for their support and good work. We were fortunate to appoint two key officers, Neville Taylor as Hon. Treasurer and Imogen Walker as Hon. Editor who have been very valuable additions to our team. Now that Mary-Jane Burcher has really retired we are still looking for an Hon. Social Secretary to help organise events and parties. There were four issues of our newsletter, the *Broadsheet*, during the year and as you will have seen in the last issue we have now switched to A4 size with more colour, all made possible by a very generous legacy from James Penstone.

I am very pleased to report that our excellent web site, www.vic-wells.co.uk is up and running and is full of useful information. Having existed since 1923 to be the link between the audiences and the Old Vic, Sadler's Wells and their associate theatres, we are looking forward to a more active future and are currently seeking new Members to join the Association.

James Ranger
Chairman

Doreen Wells' talk at the A.G.M.

The AGM was held in the Kahn lecture room at Sadler's Wells at 7.00 pm on Monday 12th November and the minutes of the meeting will be reported elsewhere.

Following the 'business', we had a delightful talk from Doreen Wells, Marchioness of Londonderry, on her life in ballet. She was very thorough, taking us from early childhood right through to her world tours and appearance in Musicals as a famous ballerina. She filled the talk with many amusing anecdotes and afterwards answered questions. We discovered this was the first



Doreen Wells with James Ranger

time she had spoken in public on her life story and we were particularly honoured to be the first to hear this fascinating story. A fuller account of the talk will be published in the next edition of the Broadsheet. The photos show Doreen receiving a bouquet of flowers from the Chairman and chatting to members.



Doreen Wells and members after the AGM

We also took the opportunity of making a presentation of flowers and a framed montage of photos of James Penstone to Mary-Jane Burcher, who has now finally retired from the Committee having served in different capacities over many years, as a sincere thank you for all her hard work .

James Ranger



Mary-Jane Burcher's presentation

More news on the Bristol Old Vic

As I wrote in the last Broadsheet, it is hoped to raise the necessary £2 million by Christmas, so that the required renovations can start early in the New Year. There is a lot of work to be done, amongst which is brand new seats, providing extra leg room and comfort, and positioned to avoid most of the Georgian pillars which cause major sight line restrictions. For disabled patrons, four additional wheelchair positions in the stalls and upper circle will be added. Bristol Old Vic Theatre Club, who have hosted a lavish tea party for the Vic-Wells Association after the performance for many years during our annual visits, have already raised £1,300 through various events. At the last Committee meeting, it was agreed that the Vic-Wells Association would donate a sum of money to this great cause.

Ray Price has informed me that the renovation work will take at least two years. Ray spoke at length to the actress Stephanie Cole last month who, along with many other distinguished actors, are demanding that when the theatre does eventually reopen it does so as a producing theatre. Ray goes on to say that there is a schizophrenia in the air about "saving the Bristol Old Vic" in the theatrical world, and it arises from worries about its eventual reopening. Of course, we look forward to more practical seating and we want the building to be safe and convenient. The major concern is what kind of theatre it will be on reopening. The fear is that the Bristol Old Vic will never return as a producing house, or that it will be a pale imitation of it. Instead, it would be a receiving venue for community theatre, small-scale touring companies, and even amateur groups. Stephanie Cole said, "We are not just talking about a little theatre in Bristol; it is a valuable part of Bristol's cultural heritage. There is no other theatre that evokes such love and affection from those who have appeared on the stage, and those who enjoy watching the production."

Ray went on to say that, "We know that in the current funding climate some co-productions

are essential and indeed desirable. Bristol Old Vic has mostly been great, and an appointment of a passionate, gifted and courageous Artistic Director, who can read the character of the theatre and understand its audiences, will be needed. The audiences of Bristol and the region call for Bristol Old Vic to regain its status as a fully committed producing theatre company."

Our friend Andrew Stocker, who has always looked after our bookings on our trips to the Theatre Royal, is now working at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. Andrew worked at the Theatre Royal for twenty-five years, and after working in various other departments of the theatre such as the bar, he took on the job of running the box office and ran the theatre tours. He was dedicated to the theatre, and devastated when the abrupt closure came about. Now at the Theatre School he is acting as Sales Manager, staffing the box office, and will work front of house on its shows. We wish him luck in his new job, and trust that, when the main theatre does reopen, he will be back.

The Acting Chief Executive of the Bristol Old Vic has promised that the theatre will continue as a full-time producing company with its own artistic director when it eventually reopens; current plans would see an artistic director appointed in the summer of 2008. Equity has responded to this information and declared that, "The Bristol Old Vic must be led out of its current malaise by someone with a clear artistic vision and who can rebuild the trust of the local audiences by putting on plays they want to see...It is particularly troubling that the Board is delaying any appointment until the summer of next year. Surely they should be planning to put on work as soon as possible in the studio theatre, whilst the main theatre is being refurbished."

Concluding, there is still great anxiety amongst the many professions in general about the future of the theatre. Many of today's eminent actors did their early training at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and have wonderful and grateful memories of all they learnt there. I will keep you updated as much as possible in future Broadsheets.

Mary-Jane Burcher

Memories of the Opera at Sadler's Wells

As a result of a donation by one of our members, Kathleen Fletcher, the run of the Vic-Wells newsletters held in the British Library now goes back to 1952. When I picked the newsletters up from Kathleen, I asked her why she joined the Vic-Wells Association and what the Association got up to in 1951. Kathleen's main interest in is opera, and it is of the opera that she has clearest and fondest memories.

Kathleen particularly enjoyed the 'Lecture Recitals' given by Tom Hammond (Sadler's Wells répétiteur) at Finsbury Town Hall during the 1940s, 50s and 60s, where extracts from operas were performed (many from operas that were very rarely performed otherwise) by Sadler's Wells singers. She also has fond memories of the singers from the Sadler's Wells Opera at Walthamstow Assembly Hall, performing extracts from an opera which would be presented in a double bill with orchestral items. These concerts were arranged by Vic Oliver. However Kathleen's first full opera at Sadler's Wells was on the 4th January 1951 - her father suddenly decided the family should visit the opera and off they went to *The Barber of Seville*. The family had to sit separately, but Kathleen was hooked. This performance featured Majorie Shires singing Rosina, Gerald Davis singing Almaviva and Denis Dowling (with sparkly eyes) as Figaro. After that Kathleen went to opera whenever she could, but she only remembers her father ever going to opera again once after that!

This is when Kathleen joined the Vic-Wells Association, which in those days ran sherry parties after selected performances at Sadler's Wells. Kathleen remembers the great pleasure it was to be able to meet the singers who had just performed and to be able to express appreciation for those performances. The Association also had a regular programme of lectures. Because Kathleen was working, her mother used to go up to Sadler's Wells early on the first day of priority booking and queue, and Kathleen and her mother always sat in the same seats on the back row aisle of

the stalls. Going to Sadler's Wells then was like going to a club and meeting friends. Kathleen's favourite opera became *Eugene Onegin*, and she very much admired singer Amy Shuard (1924-75), who was hailed as a successor to Eva Turner as a great English *Turandot*. Other singers Kathleen particularly admired were Ronald Dowd, the Australian tenor, Frederick Sharp, and Patricia Johnson, who was beautiful and convincing as Carmen and Delilah.

Highlights of Kathleen's opera going at Sadler's Wells include the first performance of *Cinderella* (29th October 1959), with Patricia Klein superb in the title role, and the world premiere of the opera of *The Moon and Sixpence* with music by John Gardner. Kathleen also vividly remembers a tea party hosted by the Vic Wells Association at the Arts Council headquarters for Princess Marie Louise.



London Coliseum - home to Sadler's Wells Opera, later ENO, since 1968

The Vic-Wells Association doesn't focus so much on opera these days but Lilian Baylis's opera company, the ENO, is, of course still with us.

Liz Schafer

NEWS from Sadler's Wells

Sadler's Wells Associates are key to the artistic vision for the theatre which marks the transition of Sadler's Wells from receiving house to producing house, and firmly establishes it as the foremost dance venue in the UK. The appointments of Sadler's Wells Associate Artists give them the opportunity to work alongside other collaborators and dancers and develop concepts and ideas for large-scale pieces.

Matthew Bourne is widely celebrated for his stage adaptations of classical works with a twist. **George Piper Dances - Ballet Boyz Michael Nunn and William Trevitt** - have de-mystified dance and choreography with their refreshing Channel 4 TV series. **Jonzi D** is the producer and curator of Sadler's Wells' hugely successful annual Hip Hop dance festival. **Akram Khan** is acclaimed for the vitality he brings to cross-cultural expression, influenced by western contemporary dance and Kathak. **Russell Maliphant** has earned a reputation as outstanding technician of the body focusing on the relationship between movement, light and music. Internationally acclaimed ballerina **Sylvie Guillem** is well known as the dance superstar of her generation. **Jasmin Vardimon** is renowned for her cutting edge style and daring dance-theatre performances. **Christopher Wheeldon** was appointed as Associate Artist of Sadler's Wells in June 2007.

The Associate Artists join the theatre's current Resident Companies, **Random Dance** and **New Adventures**.

Random Dance, under the artistic direction of Wayne McGregor, is renowned for its cutting-edge work and exploration of dance, science and technology. Creators of some of the most successful dance/theatre works of the last two decades, **New Adventures** continues to bring new audiences to dance with its extended record-breaking seasons at Sadler's Wells. **Rambert Dance Company**, the largest contemporary dance company in the country, presents two seasons a year at Sadler's Wells under its Artistic Director, Mark Baldwin. **Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company** became Guest Resident Company at Sadler's Wells in June 2007, with the aim to create adventurous and dynamic dance, as the world's first 'transatlantic ballet'.

www.sadlerswells.com

NEWS from The Old Vic

The Old Vic is a very exciting place to be at this time of year. Final preparations are being made for our pantomime: *Cinderella* written by Stephen Fry and starring **Pauline Collins** and **Sandi Toksvig**. The set is being put in place, costumes and wigs are primed and prepped, and all around are the sounds of the company singing fabulous songs by Oscar-winning composer Anne Dudley. We're looking forward to the first performance on the 4th December and hope to see you over the festive period.

We are very happy to announce that the Peter Hall Company production of *Pygmalion* will come to The Old Vic this spring. **Tim Pigott-Smith** returns to The Old Vic stage for the first time since his memorable performance in *The Iceman Cometh* in 1998 and London audiences will also have the opportunity to discover a remarkable new talent in **Michelle Dockery** as Eliza Doolittle. Tony Haygarth, Pamela Miles and **Una Stubbs** will also reprise their roles in this critically acclaimed production.

Sir Peter Hall, who will direct the company in this classic comedy by Bernard Shaw, said:

"The Old Vic is a wonderful theatre which has figured large in my professional life - from seeing plays there in my youth, to the early days of my Directorship of the National Theatre; and then some 25 years later being in residence there with my own company.

It therefore gives me enormous pleasure that Kevin Spacey has invited me to return to the Vic with my production of *Pygmalion*. This has, happily, enjoyed considerable success since its opening in Bath last summer and on an extended UK tour, and I cannot imagine a better home than The Old Vic for its London season."

Pygmalion runs from 7 May to 2 August 2008.

To keep up-to-date with news and information for all productions at The Old Vic you can register with us at our website to receive regular e-newsletters.

TICKETS: 0870 060 6628
www.oldvictheatre.com
The Old Vic, The Cut, London SE1

Sarah Cooke

REVIEWS

Shaolin Monks: the Peacock Theatre



The Shaolin Monks are world-famous for their displays of breath-taking martial arts stunts, returning to the Peacock year after year for an always-successful run. The moniker “Don’t Try This At Home” has never seemed more apt! From balancing on sword tips to having concrete blocks broken over their backs, the monks stop at nothing to impress. There were a total of twenty monks and five young trainees (the youngest one looking around age five), who commanded the stage with inimitable poise.

I found myself watching the show as a dance piece rather than a martial arts spectacular, and as such began critiquing the choreography and ‘line’ of the performers. Once I had got past this rather unfair viewpoint, I realised that the stunts and physical prowess of the monks spoke for themselves. They undergo rigorous training from a very early age in order to perfect the moves and sparring strategies, often using a variety of potentially dangerous weapons.

However, the relentless series of stunts and spectacle eventually began to lessen the impact of what would otherwise be breath-taking manoeuvres. A change of pace and style might have helped so that the work could build up to a true climax. Even so, the Shaolin Monks are certainly worth a visit, as sometimes seeing is believing!

Imogen Walker

Autumn Dance at the Wells

Sadler’s Wells presented a wide-ranging programme of dance this autumn which included The Birmingham Royal Ballet; *Morphoses*, the new company directed by the young choreographer Christopher Wheeldon; and Carlos Acosta.

BRB was the first to appear with a mixed bill of *Paquita*, *Nine Sinatra Songs*, and *Daphnis and Chloe* in the first half of their one-week season, and *Edward II* in the later part of the week. I saw the matinee performance on October 10th when Jenna Roberts danced the lead in *Paquita*. Technically assured, she made a good shot at the imperious style required of the ballerina in this work, (by no means easy for a young dancer), and was well partnered by the elegant Robert Tewsley. Though a big fan of Twyla Tharp’s *In the Upper Room*, which BRB have performed so well in the past, my affection does not extend to her *Nine Sinatra Songs*. The constraints of the ballroom dance format, and the limited connection between the dance and the lyrics of the songs, means that the work lacks variety and impact, despite receiving commendable performances from many of the younger members of the BRB team. *Daphnis and Chloe* was notable for a fine performance as Chloe from Natasha Oughtred, newly acquired from the Royal Ballet. Chi Cao danced impeccably as Daphnis, without being able to make much of this rather limp character. The Royal Ballet Synfonia performed excellently under the baton of Barry Wordsworth in *Daphnis and Chloe*, perhaps thankful to have some more substantial music to interpret following Minkus’ rumpytum tunes in *Paquita*.

David Bintley’s *Edward II* is a fine work, groundbreaking in its content and in the choreography



for its two principal male dancers, and it received an excellent performance from the company. Iain Mackay was both impressive and moving in the title role, and Martin Harvey gave a scintillating performance as the king’s lover, Gaveston, and was

most sinister as his nemesis, Lightborn. Harvey, a first soloist with the Royal Ballet on loan to BRB, is principal material, and the management at Covent Garden need to recognise this before

too late! Elisha Willis progressed from confused ingénue to vindictive rejected wife as Edward's Queen Isabella. Clearly, 'hell hath no fury as a woman scorned', particularly when scorned in favour of another man!

The first performances of the new *Morphoses* company in London qualify as another major step by the Wells towards becoming, at least in part, a producing house. The company, which is



After the Rain photographed by Yaniv Schulman

part-time and has a mix of London and New York based dancers, was mainly represented by the US contingent. Their presence was perhaps the only advantage of the fact that dance companies in the USA do not contract their dancers for the full year. The last performance of the short season on Sunday 23rd October was of their second programme, which opened with an accurate and cleanly danced performance of Balanchine's *Allegro Brillante*, led by the London based American dancer, Alexandra Ansanelli, newly promoted to principal with the Royal Ballet, and the Spanish virtuoso, Angel Corella, a principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre. Corella was rather wasted in this piece, another victim of Balanchine's conviction that "ballet is woman". William Forsythe was represented by his *Slingerland pas de deux*, danced with brio by Aesha Ash and Gonzalo Garcia.

The rest of the programme was given to two works by Christopher Wheeldon, including a world premier, *Fools' Paradise*. This was an absorbing piece of choreography, which I suspect needs at least a couple of viewings to be really appreciated, but appeared to question the permanence of relationships. For example, there is a passage near the end of the piece in which four couples dance, and the man from the first couple is displaced by the arrival of another man. The new pairing leaves the stage, and the

displaced man in turn displaces the man from the second pair, again the new pair leave, the movement being repeated until only one pair remains, but this also breaks up. The work was impeccably danced, the downside being the costumes and the lighting. Wendy Whelan at one point wore a tube-like garment which did her no favours, and the lighting was of the currently popular murky variety. This style seems currently popular with designers and choreographers, but not in my view with audiences, whose members rather like to see the dancers. I am starting a campaign to have the choreographers and artistic directors responsible chained to the furthest back row of the highest tier of the theatre, for the whole of the presentation of any new work. They may then learn that what is visible from most seats in the theatre is not the same as from the third row of the stalls!

The final work on the programme was Wheeldon's *After the Rain*, to music by Arvo Part. It suffered a little from being rather too similar choreographically to the previous work, but again was very well performed by six of the nine dancers who appeared in *Fools' Paradise*. I think Wheeldon will need to broaden the range of his choreography if a significant number of his works are to be presented in one programme, but he is certainly a choreographer of distinction and great potential. His new company is a brave and commendable venture which deserves our full support. I hope the Royal Ballet will revive his *Triste* soon, with its amazing central pas de deux, and fascinating group choreography in the later stages.

Carlos Acosta (below, photographed by Bill Cooper) appeared with some colleagues from the National Ballet of Cuba, and apart from the traditional *Corsaire pas de deux*, the majority of the programme was by the Cuban choreographer Alberto Mendez, with linking passages arranged by Carlos himself. It is understandable that Carlos would wish to give wider viewing to the works of the man who is Cuba's leading choreographer, but it was quickly evident that what might wow them in Havana would not necessarily succeed in the more sophisticated London environment. The dancers were, of course, excellent, and the last of Mendez' pieces, a send-up of a classic pas de trois, was funny in a manner that the *Trocks*

would have appreciated. Though the evening was well received by a capacity audience, it required the usual stunning performance by Carlos in *Le Corsaire pas de deux* to save the show for me. He was partnered by the sparkling Viengsay Valdes, who I would go a long way to see, but the evening did not compare for overall quality with

Carlos' previous Wells show with Royal Ballet guests. This was down to content, not performance. I hope he will give more thought to the content of his next show at the Coliseum in 2008.

Richard Reavill



Attendance at Rehearsals

We attend rehearsals by kind permission of Sadler's Wells and the Management of visiting companies and dancers may not always be in full costume and may walk through part of their roles. For final details of timing and date, please check with the Secretary, Richard Reavill, tel: 01491 872574, or e-mail nunsacre@tiscali.co.uk. If you have registered your email address with Richard he will send you this information automatically. Please come to the foyer of Sadler's Wells 15 minutes before the start of the rehearsal and pay the £5 admission fee to the Committee member present.

Some future dates to note which we will confirm in the next Broadsheet:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 10 th April: | Random | 28 th April: | Phoenix |
| 20 th May: | Rambert | 11 th June: | Akram Khan Company |

REHEARSALS

Matthew Bourne's Nutcracker!

Thursday 13th December

Please note the revised date.



La La La Human Steps

29th or 30th January



Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wuppertal

12th or 13th February



NDT1

Tuesday 2nd April



Please note in your diary, the future dates for rehearsals at the bottom of the previous page.

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WHAT'S ON

at Sadler's Wells and the Old Vic

Sadler's Wells

0870 737 7737

www.sadlerswells.com

- 13 Dec - 20 Jan: Matthew Bourne's Nutcracker!
- 26 -27 Jan: Sadler's Wells Sampled
- 30 Jan - 2 Feb: La la La Human Steps
- 13 - 22 Feb: Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wuppertal
- 17 & 20 Feb: Film screening of *Coffee with Pina* in the Kahn Lecture theatre
- 26 Feb - 1 Mar: Opera North

Lilian Baylis Theatre 0870 737 7737

- 11 - 29 Dec: The Faerie Queen
- 11 - 26 Jan: Jonathan Burrows and Matteo Fargion
- 1 - 16 Feb: Showtime Jérôme Bel 1994-2005
- 7 Feb: Dance Club - samba night
- 23 Feb - 16 Mar: Connect Festival
- 23 - 26 Feb: balletLorent

Peacock Theatre

0870 737 0337

- 5 Dec - 6 Jan: The Snowman
- 29 Jan - 23 Feb: Tango Por Dos
- 27 Feb - 16 Mar: Bounce

Old Vic Theatre

0870 060 6628

www.oldvictheatre.com

- 4 Dec -20 Jan: Cinderella
- 1 Feb - 26 Apr: Speed-the-Plow
-



SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thank you to all of you who have already renewed your subscriptions and especially those who pay by standing order or direct debit as that entails a lot less work for me!

Subscriptions run from July 1st each year.

The annual rate is £7.50

(reduced to £6.00 for OAP's).

Life membership is available for a single payment of £75.00.

If you have not already done so, please send your payment to the Hon. Registrar at the address below, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for the return of your membership card.

Please note that Emma Cons rules apply – no SAE, no acknowledgement.

Any queries should be sent to same address, preferably by e-mail.

Please also note that members of the London Ballet Circle who joined in February 2007 do not need to renew until July 2008.

WHO'S WHO in the Vic-Wells Association

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