

JONATHAN BYRNE OLLIVIER (1977 – 2015)

Dancer Jonathan Ollivier, who has died at the age of 38, was an internationally acclaimed star in British companies, particularly Matthew Bourne's New Adventures and Northern Ballet.

Choreographer Matthew Bourne paid tribute to Jonathan Ollivier calling the ballet dancer, "one of the most charismatic and powerful dancers of his generation. In our grieving for this irreplaceable artist we take some comfort in the legacy of memories that he has left behind". Ollivier was due to perform in the final show of Bourne's *The Car Man* at Sadler's Wells on 9th August when he was killed in a motorcycle accident.

Jonathan Byrne Ollivier was born in Northampton in 1977. He fell into dance by chance when his mother took two of his sisters to ballet and tap classes and left Jonathan there while she went shopping. "That was it really..... I loved it from the first class... a lot of guy's stories are like *Billy Elliot's*". Speaking recently to the BBC he said, "It's strange that in every other culture around the world dancing is a very masculine thing to do; in Russia it's done in the army for example and somehow here it's all seen as 'men in tights'".

He trained with the Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance, after which he went to Cape Town City Ballet, where he met his future wife Desiré Samaai. The couple married in 1999 and returned to the UK to join The Northern Ballet Theatre (now Northern Ballet) where his roles included Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights* and Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Ollivier later joined Canada's Alberta Ballet company and then moved on to Bourne's company New Adventures.

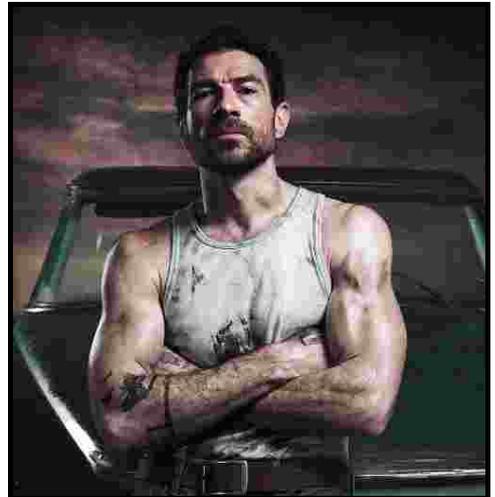
He was nominated as Best Young Dancer in 2003 by the Dance Critics' Circle and Best Male Dancer in 2004. And in 2005 Ollivier and his wife starred together in Veronica Paeper's dance version of *La Traviata*.

In addition to regular guest appearances with companies in the United States, South Africa and Germany, he toured extensively around the world and was seen in Dusseldorf earlier this year in *Der Tod und die Malerin*. In 2011 he made a brief foray into musical theatre when he appeared in the first UK tour of *Dirty Dancing*.

Ollivier worked on a number of roles with Bourne's company New Adventures, including the Swan in *Swan Lake* and Speight in *Play Without Words*.

Bourne described the dancer as, "an intensely masculine presence tempered with tenderness and vulnerability". He added, "A man of great warmth and charm, Jonny was a true gent, loved and respected by his colleagues and adored by audiences who were mesmerised by his memorable performances on stage as well as his friendly and genuine personality at the stage door".

Jonathan Ollivier is survived by his wife and two sons.



Jonathan Ollivier in *The Car Man* Photo: Chris Mann



Jonathan Ollivier in *Swan Lake* Photo: Bill Cooper

Have you filled in the VW's Questionnaire?

A big thank you to everyone who has taken the trouble to fill in their Vic-Well's Questionnaire. Your comments are much appreciated and your responses will help decide the future of the Vic-Wells organisation. There is still time to contribute.

Please send the questionnaire to Liz Schafer at e.schafer@rhul.ac.uk
by Friday 11 September
or by post, as soon as possible, to
Prof. Elizabeth Schafer, 372 Stroude Road, VIRGINIA WATER GU25 4DB



Professor Liz Schafer
wants your views

The Way We Wore - a Life in Clothes

Supermodel Daphne Selfe talks to Marjory Agha about her recently published book

Daphne Selfe is a regular attendee at our Vic-Well's parties. Across a crowded room she stands out. Some years ago, as the new *Broadsheet* Editor, at my first VW party, I asked a fellow guest, "Who is that?" gesturing to a poised, confident looking *femme d'un certain age*. "She's obviously been a ballerina", was the reply, "can't you tell by her deportment?"

Une femme d'un certain age doesn't quite cover it. Daphne is 87. And she is not a former ballerina. At our *last* VW's party, I (belatedly) recognised her from several high profile magazine and newspaper articles, but that was not what essentially drew my eye to her. Top to toe her outfit was perfection. Eye-catching earrings, uplifted coiffed hair, a feminine loosely fitting (very!) colourful top coupled with jazzy tights and fashionable bootees. Latest model, Cara Delevingne, could have worn it without comment. Yet it did not seem incongruous on this octogenarian.

She told me, "Sometime after I was 'rediscovered' at the age of 70 - friends and family kept saying "Why don't you write a book?"

"I have always kept diaries since I was about 17", she continued, "which, although not very personal, at least helped to get my life's events in order. Over a period of some years I kept writing – no computer at first – but eventually I typed it out and tried sending the manuscript to various publishers. Unsuccessfully, of course! It was only when my daughter, Claire, found a friend who knew

someone in the business that I suddenly acquired an agent and before long I was in the office of Macmillan, the publisher, and was offered a contract and a *writer*!"

She explains, "Although I have written it all myself, Rebecca did a lot of research for the details on costume and history which was very helpful and made the whole thing more professional".

And, under-statedly, she comments, "Having had an un-sensational and happy childhood and marriage, I was amazed that anyone liked my story! I had started my career riding horses, then suddenly becoming a model and a dancer and then getting married and having three children. I thought that was enough, but then to be where I am today – 'Britain's oldest working model', and still in demand at 87, it's really extraordinary!"

Though down to earth she obviously relishes the "dressing up" aspect of her work - "I have always loved dressing up and the chance to wear amazing (sometimes outrageous!) clothes, to travel the world and meet so many different people - whilst earning my keep". And, she laughs, "How wonderful is that?"



Daphne in 2004



Daphne Selfe in 1950

THE VIC-WELLS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015
 will be held on Monday, November 30th at promptly at 7pm
 in the Rosebery Room at Sadler's Wells

Vic-Wells Membership: A few annual subscriptions due on 1st July are still unpaid - please check and renew now if you wish to vote at the AGM

THE TRIO JOUBRAN

Jane Salemsen reviews the Trio Joubran concert at the 2015 Salisbury Festival



The three brothers, Samir Joubran, Wissam Joubran and Adnan Joubran, are all oud (Arabian lute) players and fourth generation musicians and oud makers from Palestine. Based now in Paris, they concertize all over the world, and it was a tremendous delight to hear them in Salisbury.

The beginning of the concert was dramatic and mesmerizing. The stage was dark with spots of different colours focussing on each player when soloing, then on them all when playing together. Wisps of vapor gently moved around the stage like puffs of clouds, giving an ethereal feel to the ambience.

Not knowing much about the oud, I was interested to read that Wissam had apprenticed and graduated from the Stradivarius Conservatory in Cremona. I recently visited the Violin Museum in Cremona, a fabulous experience which all string players should have sometime in their lives. The ability to see an instrument, and watch a video of a master playing it, is a great thrill. Although primarily featuring the violin family, there were many other instruments, such as the oud, which are being made in Cremona.

The outstanding part of this performance was the brothers' technical ability on the instrument. Talk about duelling banjos. This was way beyond that! They would challenge each other with riffs, seeing who could play them the fastest and with the most notes. It was breathtaking at times, amazing how dexterous left-hand fingers can be.

The programme was taken from their 2011 recording *As Far*. Although there were many very fast pieces played, there were some exquisitely played love songs, their favourite being *Safar*. Another was *Marriage of Doves*. Two of the players gently provided a drone whilst Samir or Wissam played a love melody. In one piece Samir sang the vocals, and I thought it would be lovely to have more numbers with a singer accompanied by the ouds. The instruments are a joy to look at - all built by Wissam, they are works of art.

The percussionist is a recent addition to the group and he was also outstanding. Using only his hands, Youssef Hbeisch played a bank of instruments - bongo-type drums, cymbals and a bohdran-type of drum, similar to the Irish drum. A thrilling end to an exciting festival.

*“This was way
beyond
duelling banjos”*

The Dark Side of the Moon

Jane Salemsen reviews the Pink Floyd Ballet at the Caracalla Baths in Rome, summer 2015

A superb choice for this location, it was a magical performance by the Rome Opera Ballet Company. The performance dates must have been especially chosen, as the luminosity from the moonlight spread out over the grounds and ruins of the baths, giving an ethereal colour to the stage and performers. In the cool of the evening - the performance started at 9pm - the first work, Roland Petit's *La Rose Malade* (1973) was a classical pas de deux with the recorded accompaniment of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* by the Rome Opera Orchestra. The dancing was exquisite. There were moments of great tension and then relaxation. The two soloists had great rapport in the flowing lines of the movements which were technically extremely challenging, but executed with serene calmness.

The mood then changed, with the performance by the ballet company to recorded music by the Pink Floyd from their album, *The Dark Side of the Moon*. It was the eighth studio album by the English progressive rock band which Pink Floyd released in March 1973. The choreography was by the famous Roland Petit, and the first live performance of this ballet was by Pink Floyd and Petit's Ballet National de Marseille in 1972. The selections from that album included, *One of These Days*, *Careful with that Axe Eugene*, *Obscured by Clouds*, *When You are In*, *Childhood's End* and *Echoes*. The themes portrayed conflict, greed, the passage of time, and mental illness, the latter partly inspired by Barrett's deteriorating mental state. It was all a great contrast to the serenity of the Mahler, but was exciting in the way the dancers followed the challenging rhythms of the pop music. The energy, stamina and flexibility of the troupe were outstanding, as were their coordination routines. I thoroughly enjoyed the selections, except for one which was very hard on the eyes with laser beams rotating at a great speed.

A good introduction for a classical music lover to see and hear another genre of music without suffering.

High Society

reviewed by Liz Schafer

The Old Vic is reconfigured for *High Society* so that the theatre is in the round. This means more of the audience are closer to the action than usual and, in the stalls, you might feel tempted to stand up and join in the party. But the stalls prices are very 'High Society'. Those up in Lilian Baylis's gallery are, by contrast, a long way away.

Maria Friedman's production opens brilliantly with Joe Stilgoe playing the piano and improvising dazzlingly around audience requests, creating variations and mash ups, at the performance I saw, on the Teddy Bear's Picnic. Later, to open the second half, the musical director, Theo Jamieson, comes down and joins him and the two have a piano playing duel, an amazing and exhilarating tour de force. With the action relocated to the 1950s, the frocks are wonderful, and the music and choreography are stunning.

This is not a version of the 1956 musical film *High Society*. It is Arthur Kopit's witty combination of that film and the 1939 play on which it is based, Philip Barry's *The Philadelphia Story*. It combines good things from both. So the daftness of why the father has to pretend not to be who he is in the film *High Society* is gone; but we have the film's Cole Porter songs, plus a few other Porter hits. Kate Fleetwood's Tracy is far more feisty Katharine Hepburn than gorgeous Grace Kelly. For me, the film's pairing of 26 year old Grace Kelly's Tracy with Bing Crosby's paternalistic 53 year old Dexter Haven has always been surprising but in the Old Vic production there's more youthful vigour all round.



Kate Fleetwood and Rupert Young in *High Society*

Photo: Tristram Kenton

Kevin Spacey closed his tenure at the Old Vic with this production, and there's a witty neatness here as in his first season at the Old Vic he programmed *The Philadelphia Story*. Maria Friedman's production of this upper class confectionary tale does, however, allow for some social awareness. The in-the-round configuration automatically invites Brechtian distance. We can see the audience on the other side of the stage and whether they are engaged, falling asleep, laughing or yawning. And the spurned millionaire, George, played spikily by Richard Grieve, is angrily aware he is not posh enough for his High Society acquaintances. It also doesn't entirely seem to be a bad thing that he is actually too serious about serious things to thrive in a never ending swirl of one swell party after another.

But I have to say the sight-lines in some seats are appalling. From my seat which cost £65 I had to lean forward to see a large part of the action but this blocked my neighbour's view (sorry, Mum!). Foolishly I had bought an under-25 seat for my 12 year old daughter who was not tall enough to see more than quarter of the stage. So check the sight-lines carefully before you book.

Choreographics by English National Ballet

Reviewed by Richard Reavill

The capability of dancers seems to improve year on year, perhaps as the awareness of potential talent increases and training methods improve. But will these able new dancers have interesting new material to interpret? Outstanding new choreographers seem to appear only once or twice per decade, and Vic-Wells has found only one emerging choreographer (so far) to give its Ninette de Valois Award. This was Liam Scarlett, so at least we got that one right!

English National Ballet are aware of the need to provide opportunities for potential future choreographers to gain experience. ENB Associate Artist, George Williamson, presented the results, on a theme of post-war America, as *Choreographics* in the Lilian Baylis Studio in June. A leaf was taken from the Ballet Boys book, with video introductions to each item, and many pieces were pas-de-deux.

Some weighty topics were assayed, starting with *Babel*, by Joshua Legge, a 3rd year student at ENB School. It was concerned with communication and language barriers. Performed by four young men, possibly of at least three nationalities, it was an interesting work, and also spoke highly of training standards at ENB School. James Streeter's *A Touch for Eternity* concerned the final meeting of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg prior to their execution for treason in 1953, was an intense piece for Adela Ramirez and Juan Rodrigues. In *Memory of What Could Have Been*, Renatto Parni de Castro, a choreographer from outside ENB, chose the Menenez twins, Vito and Guilherme, as two US sailor brothers courting Sarah Kundi in 1945, but only the brother she does not marry returns from the war. Morgann Runacre-Temple, (another "outsider"), based her work, *Give My Love to the Sunrise*, on a 1947 film by Orson Welles: *The Lady from Shanghai*. Tiffany Hedman and Daniel Kraus danced roles based on characters created by Welles and Rita Hayworth.



George Williamson

Photo: ENB

In *Trauma*, (Traum is German for 'Dream'), by Fabian Reimar, Anjuli Hudson is the woman who is haunted by the image of her lost husband, and hopes to move on, but only after one last embrace. Perhaps the most ambitious item, for six dancers, and one of the strongest, was *Fractured Memory* by Max Westwell. This presented a stream of consciousness view of relationships, and suggested that an emotional memory of a person will ultimately win. In the last ballet, a pas-de-deux for Crystal Costa and James Forbat, Stina Quagebeur chose the love-hate relationship of the American painter Edward Hopper and his wife of 43 years, Josephine Nivision for *A Room in New York*. The contrast between the gloomy, repressed Hopper, and the vivacious, outgoing Jo provided some strong material for the dancers, and Hopper's paintings of brooding loneliness were evoked.

So, a compelling programme on which ENB should be commended. The costume designs by Louis Whitmore and the lighting by David Richardson were excellent. No doubt the emerging choreographers found the mentoring of Kerry Nichols and Russell Maliphant a great help. There was more interesting stuff here than sometimes appears from more established choreographers of modern dance performances. We must accept that new work is needed if dance is not to become a museum. Not all new offerings will be good, and few will be master-pieces. Even so, there is talent here which should be developed.

University of Bristol Theatre Collection

The University of Bristol Theatre Collection is one of the best places to find out about the Old Vic and Sadler's Wells. The Collection, which has full accredited Museum status has Lilian Baylis's private archive, letters, theatre programmes, prompt copies, photographs etc. and now they are fund raising to acquire, catalogue and preserve an archive relating to the designer Oliver Messel, which includes items relating to his work at the Old Vic.

Anyone who is interested in finding out more about this please look on the theatre collection's website:

bristol.ac.uk/theatre-collection

or phone 0117 331 5086

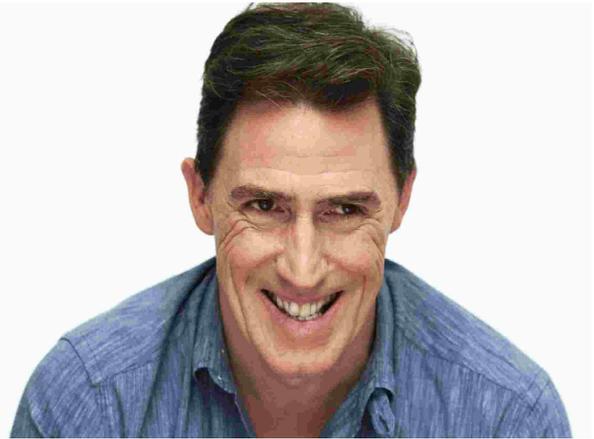


Peter O'Toole as Hamlet in 1957 Bristol Old Vic Production
© University of Bristol Theatre Collection

News from the Old Vic by Laura Pryce

On Tuesday 1 September we begin previews for *Future Conditional*: the world premiere of a bracingly topical and boisterously funny new play by Tamsin Oglesby and starring Rob Brydon, with a cast of 23 young performers. The production opens Matthew Warchus' first season as Artistic Director. Talking about *Future Conditional*, Rob Brydon said "It's funny and thought provoking. I play an inspirational teacher. We see the pressures he is under. We see him at work and - your heart goes out to him - in trying to connect with the children and the obstacles in his way". He added "The Old Vic is a special place and it's an honour to be part of that".

We're also making a few changes to our front of house spaces ready for September. The feel of our foyers will be more relaxed and less formal, and The Pit Bar will become Penny, a new artisan café serving great food, coffee and wines.



Rob Brydon

Photo: Benjamin McMahon

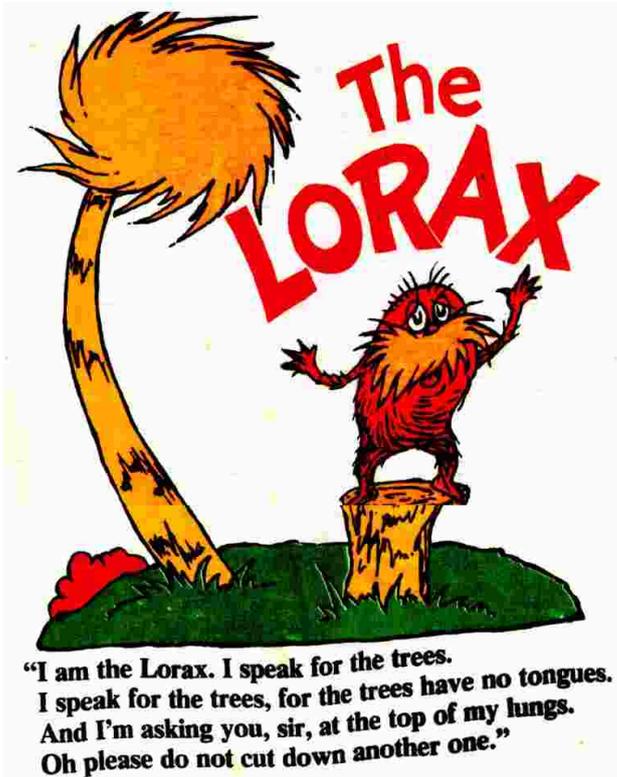
Inspiration for the name comes from the *Penny Lectures*: a series of talks hosted in the halls of the Old Vic in 1882, designed to encourage new thinking and ideas amongst the people of London. *Penny*, we hope, will feed creativity. All our other bars will be made more workable, more contemporary. Look out for art, neon and fun. We look forward to welcoming you there!



Bertie Carvel

Looking ahead to the rest of the year, we recently announced that Bertie Carvel will play the role of Yank in Richard Jones' production of *The Hairy Ape*. Bertie Carvel's TV credits include *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* and theatre credits include 'Miss Trunchbull' in *Matilda The Musical* (RSC, West End, Broadway).

Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax* takes the stage this Christmas, with Charlie Fink (former Noah and the Whale frontman) writing the music for our new stage adaptation.



VW Visit to new Rambert HQ Building

Vic-Wells members recently visited the new state-of-the-art Rambert HQ on London's South Bank. Members sat in on a rehearsal and then were given a guided tour of the building including its five dance studios, treatment and body conditioning rooms, workshops, offices and archive. It was pointed out that input from the dancers themselves was taken into consideration in the decision making process during its construction, for example, the material used for the rehearsal rooms flooring.

Designed by architects Allies and Morrison, it received a prestigious RIBA National Award in 2014 as one of the best new buildings of the year.

Of the visit VW Secretary Richard Reavill said, "It was interesting, enjoyable and very impressive".

News from Sadler's Wells



Botis Seva: InNoForm

Photo: Irven Lewis

This autumn Sadler's Wells presents hip hop dancer and choreographer Botis Seva on Thursday 24th September in the Lilian Baylis Studio as the newest and one of the youngest ever curators of *Wild Card*, the unique initiative providing a glimpse of the rich variety of work that makes up the current dance landscape. Seva presents a rebellious, immersive and politically charged evening examining questions of race and identity in modern Britain and taking the hip hop form in surprising directions.

Presented in partnership with Sadler's Wells resident company Breakin' Convention, this *Wild Card* evening reveals hip hop theatre in a new light, incorporating elements of contemporary dance, spoken word and physical performance. Instead of handing over clearly formed narratives, Seva provides audiences with an immersive experience challenging them to engage with the issues of the work, crack the code, and piece the story together.

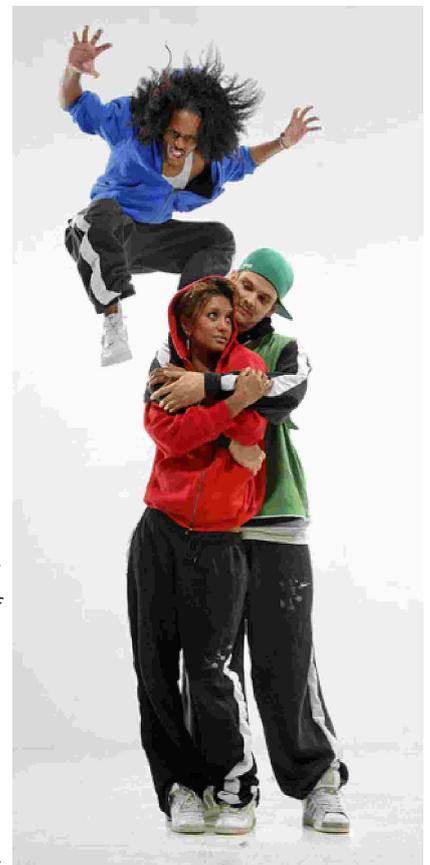
Into the Hoods: Remixed, the newly revamped version of the award-winning production that stormed the West End in 2008 returns to The Peacock from 23rd October – 14th November, under the direction of Sadler's Wells' Associate Artist, Kate Prince before embarking on a national tour in 2016.

ZooNation Dance Company uses its trademark narrative hip hop dance theatre style to tell the story of two school children, lost in the 'Ruff Endz Estate'. The audience follow the children, who have been tasked by the Landlord to find an iPod touch as white as milk, trainers as pure as gold, a hoodie as red as blood and some weave as yellow as corn. Along the way, they meet DJ Spinderella, wannabe singer Lil Red, vivacious rapper Rap On Zel, budding music producer Jaxx and embark upon a storybook adventure into the heart of a pulsating community.



Sasha Waltz & Guests: *Scène d'Amour*

Berlin-based company Sasha Waltz & Guests, known for its innovative choreographic musical theatre performances, presents the UK premiere of a three-part evening entitled *Sacre* at Sadler's Wells from 11th - 13th November. To mark the hundredth anniversary of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Sasha Waltz premiered her own vision of the piece in 2013. The tension-charged and angular composition is characterised by a strong rhythm and a layering of constantly repeating



ZooNation Dance Company:
Into the Hoods: REMIXED

musical motifs. *Sacre* is presented at Sadler's Wells as part of a three-part evening, together with Sasha Waltz' choreographies of *Scène d'Amour* (from *Roméo et Juliette*) with music by Berlioz, and Debussy's *L'Après-midi d'un faune*.

To end the year, Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* will be at Sadler's Wells from 1st December to 24th January 2016.

COMING SOON



Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4TN 0844 871 0090

www.sadlerswells.com

Main Theatre

Stills from Sadler's Wells website used with permission

- 18 - 25 Sep. Hofesh Shechter Company - *barbarians*
28 - 29 Sep. Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui - Yabin Studio/Eastman - *Genesis*
02 - 03 Oct. Sébastien Ramirez & Honji Wang
05 - 10 Oct. Balletboyz - *Young Men*
13 - 15 Oct. Birmingham Royal Ballet - *Swan Lake* ►
16 - 17 Oct. Birmingham Royal Ballet - *Variations Triple Bill*
19 - 20 Oct. La Veronal - *Voronia*
18 - 31 Oct. Hussein Chalayan - *Gravity Fatigue*
03 - 07 Nov. Rambert - *Love, Art & Rock n'roll* ►
11 - 13 Nov. Sasha Waltz & Guests - *Sacre*
16 - 17 Nov. Christian Rizzo - *d'après une histoire vraie*
19 - 22 Nov. China National Peking Opera Company ►
26 - 28 Nov. Russell Maliphant Company - *Conveal I Reveal*
1 Dec. - 24 Jan. New Adventures - *Matthew Bourne's Sleeping Beauty*

Lilian Baylis Studio

- 24 Sep. *Wild Card* - Botis Seva
05 - 06 Oct. Caroline Bowditch - *Falling in Love with Frida*
09 Oct. Robin Dingemans & Nick Bryson - *The Point at which it Last Made Sense*
16 - 17 Oct. Claire Cunningham - *Give Me a Reason to Live* and Idan Sharbi - *Ours*
23 - 24 Oct. Barrowland Ballet - *Tiger Tale*
30 - 31 Oct. Akram Khan Company & MOKO Dance - *Chotto Desh*
26 - 27 Nov. Nora - *Nora invites Burrows, Fargion and Tanguy*
03 Dec. *Wild Card* - *Leila McMillan*
12 Dec. - 03 Jan. Arthur Pita - *The Little Match Girl*

Peacock Theatre

Portugal Street, Kingsway, London WC2A 2HT

- 15 - 20 Sep. Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo - *The Trocks - Programme One*
22 - 26 Sep. Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo - *The Trocks - Programme Two*
29 Sep. - 17 Oct. Shaolin Monks - *SHAOLIN*
23 Oct. - 14 Nov. ZooNation Dance Company - *Into the Hoods: REMIXED* ►
25 Nov. - 03 Jan. Birmingham Repertory Theatre - *The Snowman™*



Old Vic Theatre

Waterloo Road, London SE1 8NB

www.oldvictheatre.com

0844 871 7628

17 October - 21 November *The Hairy Ape*

01 September - 03 October *Future Conditional*

02 December - 16 January *Dr Seuss's The Lorax*

URGENTLY NEEDED

Social Secretary
to organise
VWA's outings
If you would like to
volunteer for this
role, please contact
James Ranger

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