

The National Ballet of Canada Mourns Canadian Prima Ballerina Lois Smith, O.C.

On Stage
Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts

Mailing Address
The Walter Carsen
Centre for
The National Ballet
of Canada
470 Queens Quay West
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5V 3K4

Administration
416 345 9686

Fax
416 345 8323

Website
national.ballet.ca

Charitable
Registration Number
11905 1449 RR0001

January 24... **Lois Smith**, former Principal Dancer of The National Ballet of Canada, died on Saturday, January 22 at the age of 81 in Sechelt, British Columbia. Ms. Smith was one of the founding dancers of the National Ballet and danced with the company from its inception in 1951 until 1969.

“Lois Smith was a continuous source of inspiration,” said **Karen Kain**, Artistic Director of The National Ballet of Canada. “When I joined the National Ballet in 1969, Lois and her longtime partner David Adams had established a captivating partnership that veteran fans still recall with delight and affection. Lois went on to make substantial contributions in the world of dance as an educator and choreographer. She possessed a beautiful unique talent and will be greatly missed.”

Born in 1929 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Lois Irene Smith began her dance training at the BC School of Ballet and at the age of 15, started to train intensively with Rosemary Deveson and Mara McBirney. Ms. Smith danced professionally with Theatre Under the Stars in Vancouver and spent four years dancing in musical productions with the Los Angeles Civic Light Opera.

In 1949, Ms. Smith was partnered by **David Adams** for the first time. The pair were married in 1950 and, at the invitation of Celia Franca, joined the National Ballet upon its inception in 1951.

As a Principal Dancer with the company, Ms. Smith performed all the leading female classical roles, including Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*, the title roles in *Giselle*, *La Sylphide* and *Cinderella*, Princess Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty* and Swanilda in *Coppélia*.

In 1969, Ms. Smith left the National Ballet to begin a new career as a teacher, opening the Lois Smith School of Dance in Toronto, which was later integrated into the Performing Arts Program of George Brown College. During her time at the College she choreographed a number of works and co-founded the Dance Company of Ontario. Throughout her teaching career, she also choreographed, creating several productions for CBC Television, the Canadian Opera Company and the Winnipeg Opera Company and staged ballets for Alberta Ballet, Florida Ballet and South West Ballet Company.

Ms. Smith was the Chairman of the Dance Program at George Brown College from 1979 until 1988 when she retired to live on the Sunshine Coast in British Columbia. She was awarded several honours and medals for her contribution to Canadian dance and was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1980. In 1998, she was recognized by the BC



Hall of Fame for her contribution to culture and entertainment in British Columbia and a bronze star with her name on it was laid on Granville Street near the Orpheum Theatre in Vancouver.

[View the National Ballet's online tribute to Lois Smith >](#)

The National Ballet of Canada gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the Canada Council for the Arts; the Ontario Arts Council; the City of Toronto through the Economic Development & Culture Department; the Government of Canada through the Honourable James Moore, Minister, the Department of Canadian Heritage; the Government of Ontario; the Ontario Arts Foundation; the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

On Stage
Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts

Mailing Address
The Walter Carsen
Centre for
The National Ballet
of Canada
470 Queens Quay West
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5V 3K4

Administration
416 345 9686

Fax
416 345 8323

Website
national.ballet.ca

Charitable
Registration Number
11905 1449 RR0001

- 30 -

ONLINE IMAGE LIBRARY:

www.national.ballet.ca/Media/MediaImageGallery/

UserName: Media **Password:** Media*Ballet

Please note that the Username and Password are case sensitive.

This site is for media use only.

For more information, please contact:

Catherine Chang
Senior Public Relations Manager
416 345 9686 x302
cchang@national.ballet.ca
national.ballet.ca

Christina McGrath
Publicity Coordinator
416 345 9686 x332
cmcgrath@national.ballet.ca
national.ballet.ca

