

Karen Kain
Artistic Director

Alumni Newsletter

The National Ballet of Canada wishes you the very best for the holiday season and New Year

Address

Four Seasons Centre
for the Performing Arts
145 Queen Street West, Toronto
Southeast corner of
Queen and University.

Audience and Donor Services

416 (1 866) 345 9595

Parking

Below the Four Seasons Centre
(enter on York Street, south of Queen)
Additional parking at Green P lot
under Nathan Phillips Square.

Subway

Direct entrance from
Osgoode Subway Station.

Passenger Pick-Up and Drop-Off

East side of University Avenue
between Richmond and Queen.

Contact Us

Email

alumni@national.ballet.ca

If you would like to receive special communications, please send us your email address.

Telephone

416 345 9686 x6077

Mailing Address

Attention: Alumni
The Walter Carsen Centre for
The National Ballet of Canada
470 Queens Quay West
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5V 3K4



Happy Holidays
from The National Ballet of Canada

Celebrating The National Ballet of Canada's Charter Members

By James Neufeld, historian and author of *Passion to Dance: The Story of the National Ballet of Canada*

Myrna Aaron
David Adams
Irene Apiné
Natalia Butko
Connie Campbell
Diane Childerhose
Judie Colpman
André Dufresne
Oldyna Dynowska
Walter Foster

Celia Franca
Jury Gotshalks
Joyce Hill
Fergus Hunter
Robert Ito
Lilian Jarvis
Vera Keiss
Colleen Kenney
Earl Kraul
Angela Leigh

Brian Macdonald
Howard Meadows
Marilyn Rollo
Lois Smith
Katharine Stewart
Grant Strate
Mary Toochina
Elena Trieste
Olivia Wyatt



Charter members Grant Strate, Judie Colpman, Lilian Jarvis, Colleen Kenney and former Principal Dancer Yves Cousineau with Artistic Director Karen Kain at the 60th Anniversary Alumni Event.



Top right: Earl Kraul, Natalia Butko, Katharine Stewart, Oldyna Dynowska in *Etude*, 1951. Photo by Gene Draper.
Bottom left: Artists of the Ballet on tour at the Banff Train Station, 1954.

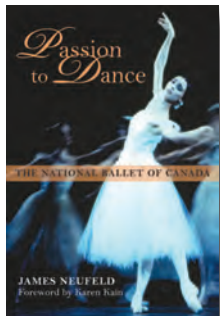
They are the charter members of The National Ballet of Canada. Against all odds, Celia Franca and the twenty-nine brave souls who answered her call to become the first dancers of the company in 1951. A foolhardy choice, as they would discover almost immediately. What little salary they received had a way of evaporating, especially on tour, when Franca had to make appeals from the stage in order to get the company to its next stop, and the dancers, as often as not, had to pass the hat among themselves in aid of their own professional survival. A few lasted only one year. Lois Smith and Earl Kraul danced on for almost twenty. All twenty-nine helped to found a company whose present size, scope,

and reputation would have seemed like a pipe dream in 1951. They all share in the honour of making the dream a reality. In November of 2011, five of them were on hand at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts to see the premiere of the new production of Alexei Ratmansky's *Romeo and Juliet* by the company they had helped to create and to help celebrate its 60th anniversary.

They have been invited back for other special occasions – the company's 25th anniversary in 1976, the opening of the Walter Carsen Centre in 1996, and the landmark 50th anniversary in 2001. And always, the presence of the charter members turns such occasions into a cross between old home week and a family reunion. Whatever their individual memories, collectively they recall that original company as a family. They even took holiday excursions together, the whole troupe going out to spend summer afternoons at the little cottage on Lake Ontario belonging to Celia's Canadian husband Bert Anderson.

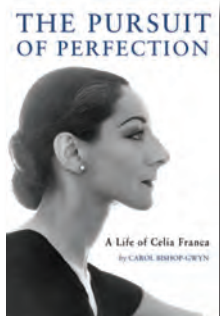
They had been chosen as the result of Franca's cross-country audition tour, but their special chemistry came from something different. David Adams once recalled the vagaries of that audition process: "Some people who got in were not able to do very much at all, and people who were able were told that they weren't good enough. I didn't see the reason why that group was there. We did, eventually, fit. As a matter of fact we fit like a glove; it was fantastic." No one who saw the original company, and there are still subscribers today who were present for the very first performance, can forget that fantastic "fit," or the debt we all owe to the charter members.

Celebrating The National Ballet of Canada in Print



***Passion to Dance:
The Story of
The National Ballet
of Canada***
Updated and
Re-issued by
James Neufeld

Writer and historian James Neufeld updates his acclaimed book *Power to Rise*, which brilliantly chronicles the story of The National Ballet of Canada. Originally published in 1996, the new version, now called *Passion to Dance*, features many new interviews and images. *Passion to Dance* is published by Dundurn Press and is available at The National Ballet of Canada's Ballet Boutique during the performance season and in bookstores now.



***The Pursuit of
Perfection:
A Life of Celia
Franca***
by Carol
Bishop-Gwyn

The first full biography of The National Ballet of Canada's Founding Artistic Director Celia Franca, Carol Bishop-Gwyn's *The Pursuit of Perfection* tells Franca's story from her humble beginnings in London's east end to founding the National Ballet and her 24 years as Artistic Director. Published by Cormorant Books, *The Pursuit of Perfection* is available at The National Ballet of Canada's Ballet Boutique during the performance season and in bookstores now.

The National Ballet Orchestra in Concert at Koerner Hall

The National Ballet of Canada Orchestra will have their first-ever concert performance on April 3, 2012 at Koerner Hall, performing select works from the company's repertoire, led by Music Director and Principal Conductor David Briskin.

To purchase tickets, please visit
performance.rcmusic.ca

Celebrations

Long Service Congratulations

Congratulations to the following individuals for over 20 years of long service with The National Ballet of Canada:

Aleksandar Antonijevic, Principal Dancer
Shelley Brown, Flute/Piccolo
Paul Widner, Cello

Gold service pins were awarded by Artistic Director Karen Kain at the 2010/11 Annual General Meeting on October 13, 2011.

Valerie Lyon

Congratulations to former dancer Valerie Lyon, now Mother Miriam of Jesus, OCD, who marked her Golden Jubilee this summer celebrating 50 years of dedicated service to the Carmelite Monastery. The celebration held at the Carmelite Monastery in Buffalo on August 6, 2011 was presided by the Bishop of Buffalo and attended by many friends.

In Memoriam

Gary Arbour (1947-2011)
Judith Aspinall (1933-2011)
Beverly Banfield Lowe (1941-2011)
Glenn Gilmour (1938-2011)
Alexander Grant (1925-2011)
Lois Smith (1929-2011)

To read more and see special tributes, please
visit national.ballet.ca/thecompany/alumni

Where Are You Now?

As a feature of our 60th Anniversary Season we are celebrating our incredibly accomplished Alumni. Find out what some of our great artists of the past are doing now by signing up for Ballet News.



Margaret Illmann, Dancer 1989-1996
A mesmerizing stage presence, Margaret Illmann thrilled audiences with her dramatic portrayals in many leading roles. She joined the National Ballet in 1989 and was promoted to Principal Dancer

in 1991. After leaving the company in 1996 she danced with Stuttgart Ballet, Berlin Deutsch Oper, Staatsoper Berlin and Vienna Staatsoper. Margaret has returned to her native Australia and now works as a teacher and coach and is currently in the last year of a physiotherapy degree.



Grant Strate, Dancer and Choreographer 1951-1970
One of Canada's most accomplished dance artists, Grant Strate was a charter member of the National Ballet and danced with the company from 1951-1962. He was also the company's first

Resident Choreographer from 1964-1970. In 1970 he created Canada's first university dance program at York University in Toronto and in 1980 joined

Simon Fraser University in Burnaby B.C. as Director for the Centre for the Arts. Following his retirement Mr. Strate continues to be active as a teacher and choreographer.



Martine Lamy, Dancer 1983-2005
Martine Lamy was born in Trois Rivières, Québec. She trained at Canada's National Ballet School, joined the National Ballet in 1983 and rose quickly through the ranks becoming a Principal Dancer in 1990. One of the company's greatest

dance-actresses, she thrilled audiences with her passionate performances including lead roles in *Manon*, *The Contract (The Pied Piper)*, *Oregon*, *Giselle*, *La Fille mal gardée* and *Don Quixote*. Martine retired in 2005 and later enrolled in the Teacher Training Program at Canada's National Ballet School. She graduated in 2008 with distinction, receiving the prestigious Betty Oliphant Award. Since 2009 has been a full time ballet teacher at CNBS.

Margaret Illmann as Swan Queen in *Swan Lake*, 1991. Photo by Cylla von Tiedemann. Grant Strate as Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*, 1964. Photo by Ken Bell. Martine Lamy in *the second detail*, 1992. Photo by Cylla von Tiedemann.

Tell Us About You

If you would like to share where you are now and what you are doing, we would love to post a message on our website for your fans and other Alumni to see. The National Ballet of Canada welcomes postings from all Dancer, Musician and Staff Alumni. Include your name (current name and maiden or stage name, if applicable), the years you performed or worked with the company, what you have done since you left, and what you are doing now. Please keep your message to 25 words or less (we reserve the right to edit submissions for length and clarity). Your email address or website can also be included alongside your posting.

Email:

alumni@national.ballet.ca

Mail:

Attention: Alumni at The Walter Carsen Centre

Share Your Memories of The National Ballet of Canada

Your story is our history! Celebrate 60 glorious years with us by sharing your treasured National Ballet memories. To celebrate The National Ballet of Canada's 60th anniversary season we are collecting stories and memories about the company from alumni, audience members and supporters both past and present. We are proud of our extraordinary history and by telling us your story you will be helping preserve the heritage of the company.

As a part of our 60th anniversary season, your memories will be included in the creation of a tutu highlighting the history of the company as a part

of The Tutu Project. The National Ballet of Canada and The Volunteer Committee are celebrating 60 years of partnership by engaging our friends, audience members and professional designers from across the country in creating a collection of 60 original tutus. The entire collection will be on display at the Design Exchange from July 3 to August 31, 2012. The display will also include tutus from some of the great moments in the company's history.

To learn more about The Tutu Project, please visit national.ballet.ca/tutuproject

To read or share a memory, please visit national.ballet.ca/memories

Or, send your memories to:

Email: alumni@national.ballet.ca

Mail: **Attention: Alumni at The Walter Carsen Centre**