



Former First Soloist Katharine Precourt and First Soloist Linnar Loois in William Forsythe's *Artifact Suite*. Image credit Amitava Sarkar (2016). Courtesy of Houston Ballet.

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PHOTO: STEPHEN A'COURT

INTRODUCTION

BOLD MOVES

Works by

George Balanchine

Vasily Vainonen

William Forsythe

Andrea Schermoly



PHOTO: STEPHEN A'COURT

The stage will be flooded with colour and light.

George Balanchine's *Serenade* is one of the few ballets that can truly be held to be iconic. Conceived in 1934, it is American ballet's founding document, the foundation on which all later works must stand and against which they will be judged.

28 dancers are transported by Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings*, moving through time and space in perfect patterns, architectural yet organic, supremely structured yet somehow free. *Serenade* has an inner light, a tranquillity and a deeply felt emotion that has spoken to generations of dancers and audiences. More than 40 years after it was first staged by the company, the Royal New Zealand Ballet is privileged to bring *Serenade* back to our theatres.

Serenade is all moonlight; William Forsythe's *Artifact II* is a blast of bold colour.

Created in 1984, the year that Forsythe became Artistic Director of Ballet Frankfurt, the full-length *Artifact*, of which *Artifact II* is the second act, was Forsythe announcing

himself as a distinctive new voice in ballet. *Serenade* was Balanchine taking the aura of Russian classicism to his adopted home in the New World: 50 years later, Forsythe blew the cobwebs off European ballet with primary colour, Bach spliced with electronica, and a larger than life American athleticism.

Completing the line-up is a commissioned work by Andrea Schermoly, *Stand to Reason*, first seen in 2018 as part of the Royal New Zealand Ballet's Wellington-only **Strength & Grace** programme, celebrating female suffrage. The work is based on the pamphlet 'Ten Reasons Why a Woman Should Vote' published in 1888, in which women had to justify their right to political participation. *Stand to Reason* celebrates the boldness of the brave women who won the vote in New Zealand. We are delighted to have the opportunity to share it with a wider audience in 2019.

As an additional bonus, audiences can expect to see Vasily Vainonen's energetic pas de deux from *Flames of Paris*.

Choreographers from three continents, sharing New Zealand stages.

CREDITS

Serenade

Choreography: George Balanchine

© The George Balanchine Trust

Stager: Patricia Barker

Music: Tchaikovsky Serenade for Strings in C, Op.48

Costume design: Barbara Karinska

Artifact II

Choreography: William Forsythe

Assistant to the choreographer: Thierry Guiderdoni

Music: J S Bach: Chaconne from Partita No.2 BWV 1004 in D minor, performed by Nathan Milstein

Stage, light and costume design: William Forsythe

Technical preparation: Tanja Rühl

Technical supervisor: Patrick Lauckner

Stand to Reason

Choreography: Andrea Schermoly

Music: Johann Paul von Westhoff, Marin Marais, Ludwig van Beethoven

Lighting design: Andrew Lees



CURRICULUM LINKS

In this unit you and your students will:

- Learn about the elements that come together to create a theatrical ballet experience.
- Identify the processes involved in making a theatre production.

CURRICULUM LINKS IN THIS UNIT

Values

Students will be encouraged to value:

- **Innovation**, inquiry and curiosity, by thinking critically, creatively and reflectively.
- **Diversity**, as found in our different cultures and heritages.
- **Community and participation** for the common good.

KEY COMPETENCIES

- **Using language, symbols and text** – Students will recognise how choices of language and symbols in live theatre affect people's understanding and the ways in which they respond.
- **Relating to others** – Students will develop the ability to listen actively and share ideas regarding theatrical ballet performances.
- **Participating and contributing** – Students will be actively involved in their cultural community, understanding the importance of creative environments.
- **Thinking** – Students will reflect on their own thinking and learning after the personal experience of attending a live theatre show.

WORKSHOP LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR LEVELS 3 & 4

Level 3 students will learn how to:

Develop practical knowledge

- Use the dance elements to develop and share their personal movement vocabulary.

Develop ideas

- Select and combine dance elements in response to a variety of stimuli.

Communicate and interpret

- Prepare and share dance movement individually and in pairs or groups.
- Use the elements of dance to describe dance movements and respond to dances from a variety of cultures.

Level 4 students will learn how to:

Develop practical knowledge

- Apply the dance elements to extend personal movement skills and vocabularies and to explore the vocabularies of others.

Develop ideas

- Combine and contrast the dance elements to express images, ideas, and feelings in dance, using a variety of choreographic processes.

Communicate and interpret

- Prepare and present dance, demonstrating an awareness of the performance context.
- Describe and record how the purpose of selected dances is expressed through movement.

WHAT TO DO AT A BALLET

Talk to your students in advance about how they are expected to behave at the ballet. This will ensure that everyone gets the most out of this wonderful experience.

We recommend that you provide your students with some guidelines about what to look for and listen to during the performance. You may also want to encourage your students to add to this list.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO:

- Watch the dancers – not just at the steps they are performing, but also their expressions, their actions and how they might show their character (if they have one).
- Listen to the music – see how it might compliment the performance or add to the atmosphere.
- Look at the costumes, set designs and lighting used.
- Have a great time – you can laugh if you see the dancers do something funny.
- Show your appreciation by applauding when the dancing stops – this sometimes happens during the middle of the performance.
- Don't worry if you feel like you don't understand what's happening in the performance. Dance is for everyone to enjoy, even if you know nothing about it!

BUT ALSO REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

- You should go to the toilet before the show starts, or in the interval – moving around the theatre during the performance is disruptive to others.
- Unlike television or the movies, this is a live performance. Talking and other noise can distract the performers and spoil the experience for other audience members.
- Please do not eat or chew gum as this can be a distraction to others and create litter in the theatre.
- Using cell phones or other devices in the theatre is not permitted – please ensure they are switched off or on silent before the show begins.
- No photos or videos are to be taken during the show.
- Leaving your seat before the lights go on can be dangerous so stay seated until the lights come up.

THINGS TO NOTE:

- All public performances will last approximately 2 hours, including two 15 minute intervals.
- Please plan to arrive at the theatre at least 30 minutes prior to the performance as latecomers cannot be seated once the performance has begun.



PHOTO: STEPHEN A'COURT

SERENADE

Choreography: George Balanchine

© The George Balanchine Trust

Music: Serenade for Strings in C, Op.48
by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

No. of Dancers: 28

Stager: Patricia Barker

Costume design: Barbara Karinska

Lighting realization: Nigel Percy

"I knew and loved Tchaikovsky's Serenade ever since I was a child. I always wanted to choreograph it. And it turned out to be my first ballet in America. I hadn't planned it, it just happened that way."

GEORGE BALANCHINE¹

First performed in 1934, *Serenade* is often talked about as a milestone in the history of dance. It is the first original ballet George Balanchine created in America and is still considered to be one of the signature works of New York City Ballet's repertory.

The piece itself began as an exercise in stagecraft for students at Balanchine's recently opened School of American Ballet. Balanchine wanted to give his students something new and unfamiliar to dance so that they could understand what would be required of them during a performance.

Balanchine chose an obscure piece of music by Tchaikovsky (*Serenade for Strings in C major, Op. 48*, one of his personal favourites) and began creating the dance in a series of

sections, incorporating many of the basic steps in ballet. The first class that Balanchine taught during these rehearsals had seventeen women, hence the opening scene features seventeen female dancers. The next class had nine women, so another section was choreographed for nine dancers and when a few men joined the class, Balanchine added parts for male dancers too. As the original aim of the *Serenade* was just as a staging exercise, the piece itself is a 'storyless dance' and features no real characters or plot, however Balanchine did hope that his work could remain open for the viewer to interpret.

"Storyless is not abstract. Two dancers on the stage are enough material for a story; for me, they are already a story in themselves"

GEORGE BALANCHINE

During the creation of *Serenade*, Balanchine famously incorporated chance moments from rehearsals into the performance. For example, when one dancer arrived late to the rehearsals, he made it a part of the choreography and when one dancer fell to the floor, he told her to stay there and he choreographed it into the beginning of the final slow movement known as the *Elegy*.

The work was premiered on the 10th June, 1934 by those first students of School of American Ballet on an outdoor, makeshift stage at the White Plains estate of Felix M. Warburg. In the years that followed, Balanchine continued to craft *Serenade* into the version that we know today. In 1948, *Serenade* was performed by New York City

¹ Solomon Volkov, *Balanchine's Tchaikovsky: interviews with George Balanchine, translated from the Russian by Antonina W Bouis*, p129, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1985

Ballet, cementing the piece as one of the company's signature works.

Despite the critically acclaimed success of *Serenade*, Balanchine was never fully satisfied with the work and continued to make small changes right up until the year before his death in 1983. In 1981, while working with principal dancers Karin von Aroldingen, Maria Calegari and Kyra Nichols, all of whom had long, flowing hair, he spontaneously decided that the lead women would let their hair down for the ballet's final movement.

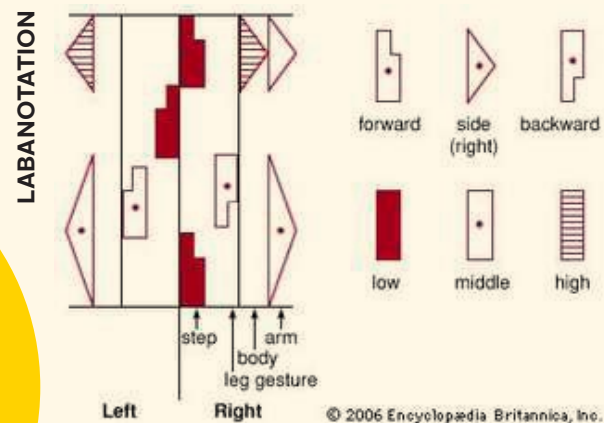
NEW ZEALAND'S HISTORY WITH SERENADE

The first performances of *Serenade* in New Zealand were given by the New Zealand Ballet Company, under the artistic direction of Una Kai, in 1975. Una Kai led what is now the RNZB from 1973 – 1975 and had worked closely with Balanchine at New York City Ballet. She was the first Artistic Director to introduce works by Balanchine into the company's repertoire, and the choreographer helped her in this endeavour by not charging the company any royalties for their performances.

A further RNZB connection with *Serenade* came through former Artistic Director (1981 – 92) the late Harry Haythorne, who created the score of *Serenade* in Laban dance notation ('Labanotation') that is now held in the Dance Notation Bureau in New York.

FACT – The word 'serenade' refers to a musical composition and/or performance delivered in honour of someone or something. Serenades are typically calm and light pieces of music. The word comes from the Italian 'serenata', which derives from the Latin 'serenus' meaning clear, light or bright.

FACT – Labanotation is a system used for recording and analysing human movement, created by Rudolf Laban in 1928. This system uses a variety of abstract symbols that can be used as a way to accurately record choreography.



SERENADE, 1985.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN STEWART,
RNZB COLLECTION



CHOREOGRAPHER GEORGE BALANCHINE

George Balanchine is widely regarded as the foremost modern choreographer in the world of ballet. Commonly referred to as 'the Father of Ballet in America' Balanchine co-founded two of ballet's most important institutions: New York City Ballet and the School of American Ballet.

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1904, Balanchine was accepted into the ballet section of St. Petersburg's rigorous Imperial Theatre School at the age of 9. He began to choreograph while still in his teens and joined the corps de ballet of the famous Maryinsky Theater when he graduated.

In 1923, he and some of his colleagues formed a small troupe, the Young Ballet, and in the summer of 1924, Balanchine and three other dancers were permitted to leave the newly formed Soviet Union for a tour of Western Europe. They did not return. Balanchine was invited by Serge Diaghilev to audition for his renowned company, Ballets Russes, and he was employed as both a dancer and choreographer.

He came to the United States in late 1933, at the age of 29, after accepting the invitation of an American arts patron who dreamed of creating a ballet company in America. Balanchine formed the School of American Ballet in 1934, and in 1948 started the iconic New York City Ballet company. Balanchine served as its ballet master and principal choreographer from 1948 until his death in 1983.

During his career, Balanchine choreographed more than 400 dance works, including choreographing for films, operas, revues, and Broadway musicals. His version of *The Nutcracker* (1954), is still performed every year at Christmas by New York City Ballet. A major artistic figure of the twentieth century, Balanchine revolutionized the look of classical ballet. Taking classicism as his base, he heightened, quickened, expanded, streamlined, and even inverted the fundamentals of the 400-year-old language of academic dance. Although at first his style seemed particularly suited to the energy and speed of American dancers, especially those he trained, his ballets are now performed by all the major classical ballet companies throughout the world.



GEORGE BALANCHINE

SERENADE IN REHEARSAL
PHOTO: STEPHEN A'COURT



COMPOSER

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) studied music at the Conservatory in St. Petersburg, where Balanchine later studied piano in addition to his studies in dance.

Tchaikovsky is still celebrated as one of the most popular and influential of all romantic composers. His contribution to the ballet includes composing the iconic scores for *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker* and *The Sleeping Beauty* in close partnerships with the choreographer Marius Petipa. His work is expressive, melodic, and grand in scale, with rich orchestrations. In addition to his works for the ballet, his output also included chamber works, symphonies, concerti for various instruments, operas, and works for piano.

The Serenade for strings in C, Op.48 was composed in 1880, interestingly at the same time as Tchaikovsky was writing the loud and excitable 1812 Overture. It was premiered in St Petersburg, the city the Balanchine was born in, the following year in 1881. When speaking about the work, Tchaikovsky said the Serenade came 'from inner conviction' and that 'It is a heartfelt piece and so, I dare to think, is not lacking in real qualities.'



FACT –

'Op' is a short hand for the word opus – meaning 'work' in Latin. Composers often give their pieces an opus number in order to help identify the piece.

PYOTR ILYICH
TCHAIKOVSKY

The four movements of Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings in C, Op 48 are:

Pezzo in forma di sonatina: Andante non troppo – Allegro moderato

Valse: Moderato – Tempo di Valse

Élégie: Larghetto elegaico

Finale (Tema russo): Andante – Allegro con spirito

The first performance of the Serenade for Strings was a huge success, it was so popular with the audience in fact that the waltz movement had to be repeated. When Anton Rubinstein (Tchaikovsky's former teacher) conducted the piece, he finally showed the sort of enthusiasm he had so carefully withheld in the past by declaring it to be Tchaikovsky's best piece to date!

Balanchine often spoke about his strong appreciation for Tchaikovsky's music, and he felt that he had a strong and personal connection to the composer.

"I'm not very old, but I still remember that world, which is gone forever. I was born and raised in the old Russia.. some ten years after Tchaikovsky's death. [Marius] Petipa [choreographer of Swan Lake and The Sleeping Beauty] died when I was about six years old. But Tchaikovsky and Petipa were alive for me. And people around me talked about them as if they were alive.. when I was doing Serenade, Tchaikovsky encouraged me. Almost the whole Serenade is done with his help."

GEORGE BALANCHINE²

² Ibid

COSTUME

BARBARA KARINSKA

As with the choreography itself, the costumes for *Serenade* have undergone many alterations before Balanchine settled on the light blue, long skirts that have become an iconic part of the piece. Until 1950, it was danced in short dresses that left knees and thighs visible, and some earlier versions of the costume even included hats!

The design of the costumes is credited to Barbara Karinska (1888–1983), close friend and collaborator of Balanchine. Karinska was born Varvara Ivanovna Zhmoudska in Kharkov, Russia. She originally trained in embroidery and emigrated to Paris in 1923. She first constructed ballet costumes in 1932 for the debut season of the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, which included three works by Balanchine. She quickly won renown for her exquisite craftsmanship, taste and imagination, interpreting dance designs by such as Matisse, Picasso, Chagall and Beaton.

In 1939 she moved to New York, where she would stay for the rest of her professional career and went on to construct and design costumes for opera, dance, on Broadway and in Hollywood. She won a shared Academy Award in 1948 with Dorothy Jeakins for Best Costume Design for Victor Fleming's *Joan of Arc*. This award was for colour costumes as at the time, awards for costume were split into colour and black and white films.

Having previously worked together, Balanchine was eager to collaborate with Karinska again in New York, and she worked closely with him designing costumes for his company Ballet Society (which later become New York City Ballet) from its inception in 1946 to the end of her career. In 1952, *Serenade* was restaged and Karinska added the celebrated 'moonlight



BARBARA KARINSKA

blue' costumes that have become so much a part of the work. Karinska's contribution to NYCB was impressive and during her 28 years working with the company, she created costumes for 48 different works.

Balanchine often spoke very highly of Karinska's costume design, referring to her as a kindred spirit, who understood exactly how to help him achieve his artistic intention. Her dance designs were innovative and often praised for the clarity with which they allow a dancer's line to be seen, a quality particularly vital for Balanchine's choreographic language.

Balanchine once said, "There is Shakespeare for literature, Karinska for costumes."



SERENADE COSTUMES



THE LEOTARDS WORN IN *SERENADE* FEATURE POPPERS, AS SHOWN HERE, WHICH FIX TO THE SKIRTS AND KEEP THEM IN PLACE.



BALANCHINE TECHNIQUE

When Balanchine arrived in America in 1933, ballet was still a relatively new artform in the USA. He therefore made it one of his early ambitions to establish a dance school, where he could train dancers with his own particular style and aesthetic. This became known as the Balanchine Method, a ballet technique still taught today to dancers at the School of American Ballet.

The School of American Ballet is the preparatory school associated with the New York City Ballet, a company where Balanchine was the original ballet master and choreographer, and therefore required all of his dancers to be familiar with his style of technique.

Hallmarks of Balanchine's dance style include the elegant use of line created by the dancers' limbs, dazzling speed, and an athleticism never before seen in ballet.

Some of the diverse technical skill set required by Balanchine technique include:

- Extreme speed
- Very deep pli  (knee bend)
- Explosive and athletic *allegro* or jumps
- Intricate and quick footwork
- Excellent partnering skills
- Dynamic musicality
- Beautifully stretched leg lines
- Elegant * paulement*, or positioning of the shoulders, head and neck



SERENADE IN REHEARSAL
PHOTO: STEPHEN A' COURT

STAGING SERENADE

What do we mean by 'staging' a ballet?

If a ballet has already been choreographed, someone has to 'stage' that ballet. This refers to the process of teaching the dancers the choreography and possibly making some sympathetic adaptations so that the performance will work with the dancers and in the space available.

The person who stages a ballet is not just responsible for teaching the steps, but they also have to convey the artistic intention and style of the piece, making sure that any adaptations are done in a way that honours the original choreography.

The Balanchine Trust

The George Balanchine Trust was established in 1987, four years after George Balanchine's death in 1983. The mission of the Trust is to preserve and protect Balanchine's creative works, meaning that anyone who wishes to perform one of his pieces has to seek a licence first. The Trust also asks that the works are staged by an approved répétiteur (a tutor for ballet dancers). In this way, the Trust aims to protect the integrity of the performance.

Not surprisingly, Serenade is one of the Trust's most requested ballets.

To find out more about the Balanchine Trust, visit the website: <http://balanchine.com/>

An interview with Patricia Barker

Royal New Zealand Ballet's Artistic Director, Patricia Barker is one of the few approved répétiteurs for the Balanchine Trust and has previously staged Balanchine works for companies including Boston Ballet, Slovak National Ballet, Hungarian National Ballet and Czech National Ballet Bruno. She staged Serenade for Grand Rapids Ballet's 2011-2012

season during her time as the Artistic Director along with *Who Cares*, *4 Temperaments* and *Tchaikovsky pas de deux*. Patricia is very excited to be putting her stamp on the work: the Royal New Zealand Ballet has not presented *Serenade* since 1985.

Why did you choose to include *Serenade* as part of this season?

Serenade is an iconic work, and I continue to bring proven works by renowned choreographers to our audiences. In so many ways *Serenade* is a rite of passage, to dance these works allows us to gain so much knowledge, particularly through the beauty of how Balanchine balances the music to the steps. It has been said that when you watch a Balanchine ballet, you see the music and hear the dance. This is mostly because of the deep understanding of music Balanchine has and how he has united the two where one could never think of any other way to see or hear the step and the music separate of each other, a sublime marriage of the two.

In presenting important works by renowned choreographers, the RNZB takes its place among other important companies in the global dance world. One can think of any great company and I assure you *Serenade* is part of their history. The ballet is a timeless piece with staying power through generations of dancers and companies. This work has held up to the test of time and so it's important for the dancers to dance it, and for our audiences to enjoy it.

What was the process for you becoming a Balanchine Trust approved repetiteur?

It was the level of my ability to interpret Balanchine's works as a dancer, and what I could bring to the work, that has allowed me to stage a few of his works. For most of my dance career, Francia Russell was one of my Artistic Directors. Francia was one of George Balanchine's very first ballet masters and she stages his works all over the world. I learned

from her what is important, how to pass on my knowledge and that of the staggers and dancers before me. I had a wonderful teacher and so now it is the next generation of staggers that will continue breathing life into these magnificent works.

Serenade was one of the first ballets I danced as a young dancer and it brought me great joy to dance. I've danced every role possible, as a member of the corps de ballet, a soloist and a principal. I was very fortunate that the Balanchine Trust allowed me to stage my first ballet for Boston Ballet School and from then I have continued to stage his works, either for a company that I was the director for or a company that I built a relationship with. It is a great honour to be able to stage his works, and an even greater joy for me to be able to stage it on RNZB, a company where I work to build the dancers every day and I have an input into their careers and their dance lives.

As a stager, or repetiteur, it's important to pass the knowledge of not only the counts and steps onto the dancers but the intent and musicality and most of all the love of the work to the next generation of dancers and audience goes. Dance is an art form that is passed from generation to generation, from one person to another. You are taught a step, you are given a demonstration of a movement by a person that works with another, to better understand the beauty of the movement and the choreographer's intent of a step. A stager's job is to carry all of this information in their hands and give that to the next generation so that they then carry the torch to the next and so on and so on.

What are some key aspects of Balanchine's style that you have to impart to the dancers?

A key aspects of Balanchine's style is the freedom of movement and the speed in which it's done. As dancers, we study every day working on our technique, how to execute a *tendu* and to cross our 5th positions.

The importance of the Balanchine's style is not how many turns you can complete in one pirouette, or how high you can jump, but how you marry the steps with the dynamic of movement and in the speed that has been set.

At one point, the ladies sauté across the stage, and if it doesn't look like the wind has just come in and caught their skirts and pushed them across the stage it will not have the effect that the work is known for, if the dancers doesn't look like they're joyous and flying, then we have lost the ability to connect the choreographer's intent to our audiences. The beauty and the strength of the ensemble is a vital part of this work. After today's rehearsal, I don't think we'll have any problems. The girls were absolutely beautiful today and I couldn't be more proud of all their work.

Speed and dynamics are aspects that the Balanchine style brings. We're not bogged down with 'how to be proper'. If you think of languages (I have great joy listening to my Kiwi or British employees speaking English as opposed to my American) there's a difference in where we slur a line or how we connect our sentences, where we take a breath or create a comma. Like languages, ballets create their own sentence structures, their own pauses or 'commas' within the phrase. The importance for a dancer is to be able to incorporate this into their sense of style, so that the audience has a true representation of a work. All of this together brings the style of the choreographer to life.

What is your process for staging Serenade?

Staging is a multifaceted process, especially when you have a work that includes roles for corps de ballet, demi soloist, soloists and principals. I started work on Serenade the day after we finished our performances of Black Swan, White Swan and since day one the company has been spending an average of five hours a day in the studio learning and perfecting the work. I start by separating the different components of the work, starting

first with the corps de ballet, and then feed in the soloist and the principal roles.

It's like cooking a beautiful meal. Each element requires a frame of time to complete. We prepare all of the components separately and then bring everyone together when each is ready. There is a beauty to each element, a structure and a journey to the work. We need to take care when teaching and allow time for the dancers to perfect the movement. Only then can we bring all the different elements together to create a complete work.

Are there any particular challenges that you have come across when staging Balanchine's work?

One of the challenges has been the style and dynamic range, the company has had little continuity with Balanchine ballets and the precision and speed are not necessarily in their DNA. Most of my dancers have never trained or attended summer training at The School of American Ballet that is the feeder school of New York City Ballet. Therefore, for many of them the Balanchine style is something new. Many of my dancers have not even seen Serenade in a live performance.

I have been incorporating the speed and dynamic technique into my classwork since my arrival in anticipation of this moment. The challenge for me is for my dancers to understand the importance and for them to accept new ways of moving.

What are some of the challenges for the dancers performing this work?

Serenade is a cardio-vascular performance for the ensemble, meaning that they need to be in tip-top shape. There are also a lot of canons in the work, so the dancers need to have their wits about them as they can't just follow along. Each individual dancer needs to know what they're doing, where they're going and how they're going to get there and most of all on what count.

Challenges are always there for a dancer because dancers always look for perfection. Sometimes however, we are looking for a sense of space or a sense of freedom and dynamic range of the movement, and that is a big part of this work.

How do you think this work contributes to a dancer's skill set?

Serenade is one of those works that takes our everyday training and puts it on stage. Every dancer every day takes morning class in order to better themselves, to confront their faults in a mirror and to work on improving their artform. Serenade takes the comfort of our daily studio work and gives us the chance to put all that hard work on stage in a performance.

Musicality is also key. At the start of staging Serenade, we spend a lot of time counting the music. The counts vary for some of the sections and it's important that each dancer understands the counts, because if someone counts in 4s and another person in 8s, they might both be in time but there is a different understanding of the start of that phrase and the emphasis within in it. The dancers will slowly stop counting all the way through, as they know where they are in the music, but they might be dancing and suddenly find themselves counting '10, 11, 12, 1' because that '1' is important for determining the start of the new phrase.

How do you choose the dancers for the solo roles?

When I stage a work on a company that I know the dancers, such as is the case with RNZB, I have the advantage of knowing their abilities and what roles fit those abilities. I already know what will challenge a dancer and how I want to challenge them. My aim is to give my dancers roles that inspire them to be their best, to be excited to come to work and have

purpose for their hard work. I want my dancers to be successful and have the audience enjoy their efforts and artistry.

I do not do this work in a vacuum, I have a fantastic team and as the Artistic Director I listen and take into consideration the views of my team, for each of us sees a dancers strength differently so when one of my ballet masters suggests to me that a particular dancer would be great in a role I take a close look and give that dancer an opportunity to succeed.

What's wonderful about a ballet like Serenade is we can present it again in 3 to 4 years, as audiences will be hungry for it again, and by then hopefully some of our apprentices will be at a point where we can look at them for solo and principal roles within that ballet.

They would have danced in the corps and gained an understanding of the work. So even now I'm looking at them and seeing how they are handling the timing, how are they handling the musicality, the steps and the technique. How delightful to hope these young dancers will continue to improve so that when we present Serenade in the future they will be taking on the greater challenges of soloist and principal roles.

**INTERVIEW WITH RNZB DANCE EDUCATOR,
CHLOE BISHOP - JULY 2019**



**PATRICIA
BARKER**

FLAMES OF PARIS

PAS DE DEUX

Choreography: Vasily Vainonen

Stagers: Patricia Barker and Michael Auer

Music: Boris Assafieff

No. of Dancers: 2

Costumes: Patricia Barker

Lighting realization: Nigel Percy

After the Russian revolution, there was a movement in the Soviet Union for ballets to tell stories which would showcase revolutionary ideals and be more relevant to everyday people. The French Revolution was the perfect subject, and *Flames of Paris*, a ballet in four acts, was created for the Kirov Ballet by Vasily Vainonen in 1932, to a score by Boris Assafieff, to mark the 15th anniversary of the October revolution. It went on to win the Stalin Prize and was said to be the dictator's favourite ballet.

Flames of Paris is an epic production, set on the eve of the French Revolution and with a mix of historic and imagined characters, including Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. The pas de deux section from *Flames of Paris* is often presented by itself as a gala showpiece, and it is this section from the full-length work that RNZB will be showing as part of the *Bold Moves* bill.

The pas de deux is a celebration of freedom, in which the revolutionary hero and heroine, Philippe and Jeanne, celebrate their marriage as the first newly-weds of the new Republic. Their dance is joyous and high energy, with each dancer performing multiple leaps and turns in an impressive, athletic display.

The full-length *Flames of Paris* has enjoyed renewed popularity in the post-Soviet era and new productions have recently been staged by the Mikhailovsky Ballet, with the original choreography reconstructed by Mikhail Messerer, and by the Bolshoi Ballet, with an altered scenario and revised choreography by Alexei Ratmansky.

FACT – A pas de deux refers to a dance for two people, or a duet. This is a common feature of classical ballets, where a pas de deux often refers to a dance between a man and a woman. The phrase comes from French (where most of our ballet terminology has its origins) and directly translates to 'step of two'.

FLAMES OF PARIS IN REHEARSAL PHOTO: STEPHEN A'COURT

MAYU TANIGAITO AND LAURYNAS VEJALIS IN FLAMES OF PARIS. STILL FROM VIDEO BY JEREMY BRICK, 2019



CHOREOGRAPHER VASILY VAINONEN

Vasily Vainonen (1901 – 1964) was born in St Petersburg and spent his entire ballet career working under the Soviet system. He began choreographing works at the age of 19 and quickly made a name for himself with the works that he made for the Kirov Ballet. His reputation as a choreographer rests almost entirely on *Flames of Paris*, although his version of *The Nutcracker* (1934) remains in the repertoire of the Mariinsky Ballet (formerly the Kirov) to this day and has influenced other Russian choreographers, notably Mikhail Baryshnikov.

Vainonen is remembered chiefly for his new versions of classic ballets such as *Raymonda* and *The Sleeping Beauty*, which he created for the Kirov and latterly for his own company at the Novosibirsk Opera and Ballet Theatre, which he directed from 1951 – 53.

THE KIROV BALLET

The Kirov Ballet was founded in 1735, and through its long history it has remained one of the two most influential and well renowned ballet companies in Russia (the other being the Bolshoi Ballet).

Under the artistic direction of the choreographer Marius Petipa, the Kirov Ballet was the world's leading dance company and premiered many infamous classical works including *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker* and *The Sleeping Beauty*.

Vasily Vainonen worked Kirov Ballet from 1930 to 1938, during what is known as a difficult period for the company following the Russian Revolution, which led many of the company's former dancers to leave the country.

However, in the years that followed the company has enjoyed a renewed success and is once again one of the world's foremost ballet companies. In 1991, the company was officially renamed as the **St Petersburg Maryinsky Ballet**.

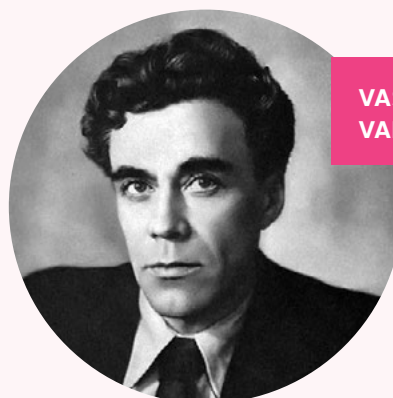
COMPOSER BORIS ASSAFIEFF

Boris Assafieff (1884 – 1949) was born in St Petersburg. He was a composer, writer (under the pen name of Igor Glebov), critic and musicologist, and very influential in Soviet music. Like Vainonen, he was a laureate (a person honored with an award) of the Stalin Prize (1948), though for his academic study of music and not for his compositions.

He wrote a number of successful ballets, drawing particularly on Russian history and literature, three operas, five symphonies, concerti and chamber music.

The recording used for all performances is:

- *Flames of Paris* pas de deux
 - Composer Boris Assafieff
 - Performed by The Sofia National Opera Orchestra
 - Conductor Boris Spassov
 - From the Album *Pas De Deux The Ballet Experience*
 - Label Capriccio Records
 - By kind permission of TritonAV
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VASILY
VAINONEN

COSTUME **PATRICIA BARKER**

The costumes for *Flames of Paris - pas de deux* are simple and elegant, with the female dancer wearing a white tutu and bodice and the male dancer wearing a white shirt and tights. Both costumes are trimmed with the colours of the French flag, sometimes referred to as the French *tricolore*, that features vertical stripes of blue, white and red.

The concept for the costumes came from RNZB's artistic director Patricia Barker, who opted for a simple design that would reflect the title and narrative of this piece.



STAND TO REASON

Choreography: Andrea Schermoly

Stager: Laura McQueen Schultz

Music: Johann Paul von Westhoff, Ludwig van Beethoven, Marin Marais

No. of Dancers: 8

Costumes: Donna Jefferis and Esther Lofley, Royal New Zealand Ballet

Projection design: Will Funk

Lighting design: Andrew Lees

Lighting realization: Nigel Percy

Stand to Reason was the fourth and final work commissioned for the *Strength & Grace* suffrage celebration performances presented at the Opera House in Wellington in August 2018. It has subsequently been performed at the Wanaka Festival of Colour (2019), and the demanding solo created on Kirby Selchow was also performed as a stand-alone work at the Nelson Arts Festival in October 2018.

Writing for Auckland arts journal *Theatrescenes* in August 2018, critic Brigitte Knight was unequivocal in her praise of *Stand to Reason*:

*"Schermoly approached the provocation of the season academically, and the result is a work of sensitivity, depth, and intelligence. The Women's Christian Temperance Union distributed a pamphlet describing ten clear reasons why women should vote, and it is this heartfelt, logical writing that underpins *Stand to Reason*.*

Schermoly's comments about women's experiences of having to explain and re-explain (our reasons, our value, our worth, our experiences, the challenges to our authority and equality) resonated with many audience members. In this way, the work was simultaneously historically accurate and poignantly current.

*Eight women, costumed perfectly in black, epitomised the Royal New Zealand Ballet at its contemporary best. Set to a mixed score, *Stand to Reason* finishes with Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, an instantly recognisable piece of music that could easily overshadow a lesser choreography. Schermoly gifted Kirby Selchow with the standout solo of the *Strength & Grace* programme, and Selchow rose to the occasion, demonstrating that she is at the peak of her physical power, with vitality and presence in spades.*

Stand to Reason resonates with emotion at the end, the women crouched on the floor yet shaking with determination."

BRIGITTE KNIGHT



PHOTO: STEPHEN A'COURT

CHOREOGRAPHER ANDREA SCHERMOLY

Andrea Schermoly (Andi) was born in South Africa where she first started training at the National School of the Arts in Johannesburg under the direction of Vyvyan Llorayne. Andi also competed around the world as a member of The South African Olympic Rhythmic Gymnastics Team. She received a full scholarship to Rambert Ballet and Contemporary School in London and shortly thereafter a full scholarship to the Royal Ballet School in London, where she completed her dance education.

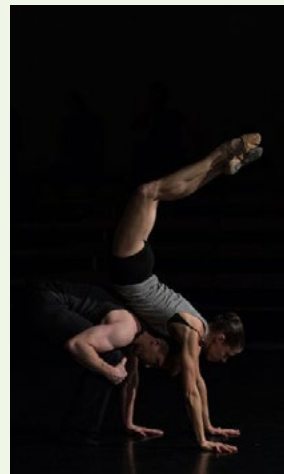
After graduation, she joined Boston Ballet Company where she danced leads in ballets *Ginastera* by Rudi van Dantzig and *Sharp Side of Dark* by Jorma Elo. She was then invited to join Netherlands Dance Theater in Holland where she had the extraordinary experience of performing existing repertoire as well as new creations by choreographers such as Jiří Kylián, Mats Ek, Paul Lightfoot/Sol Leon, Ohad Naharin, Hans van Manen, Alexander Ekman and many other great contemporary choreographers.

After directing the contemporary department at The Marat Daukayev School of Ballet, Los Angeles, Andi has gone on to choreograph full time. She has choreographed for Festival Ballet Theater, Columbia Ballet Collaborative, Ballet Theatre Afrikan, NDT Workshops, Quixotic Fusion Company, Boston Ballet 2, Joffrey Ballet School as well as over 80 solos and group pieces for students attending dance competitions such as the Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) throughout the US and Europe.

She was awarded the 'Outstanding Choreographer' award in both 2012 and 2013 at YAGP and in 2014 YAGP was awarded the 'Emerging Choreographer' grant to choreograph at Lincoln Center at YAGP's 15th anniversary gala 2014 evening, choreographing on dancers Maria Kochetkova (principal, San Francisco Ballet) and Joaquin

de Luz (principal, New York City Ballet). The piece was a huge success and has since been re-staged at the Buenos Aires International Dance Festival, Argentina and the 'Stars of the 21st Century Gala' in the Champs Élysées, Paris. Andi has choreographed for feature films and commercials in Hollywood including 'Beautiful Now', 'Budweiser Superbowl Commercial' and 'Star Trek into Darkness'.

IMAGES OF PREVIOUS WORKS AND REHEARSALS:



MUSIC FOR STAND TO REASON

Violin Sonata No 3 in D minor – Grave
Composer Johann Paul von Westhoff
From the album *Sonatas pour Violin et Basse Continue*

Performers David Plantier (violin), Andrea Marchiol (harpsichord)

Label © Zig Zag Territoires, distributed in New Zealand by Ode Records, courtesy of Outhere Records, SA

Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor ‘Quasi una fantasia’ Op. 27 No. 2 ‘Moonlight’
Composer Ludwig van Beethoven
From the album *The 55 Best Relaxing Piano Songs*

Performer London Piano Consort
Label © Foodcourt Records – X5 Music Group

Le Badinage 4eme livre de pieces de viole
Composer Marin Marais
From the album *Tous les matins du monde*
Label: ALIA VOX
By kind permission of Alia Vox



PHOTO: STEPHEN A'COURT

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANDREA SCHERMOLY

What idea inspired you to create your work *Stand to Reason* on the RNZB?

Patricia invited four female choreographers, including me, to celebrate the 125th anniversary of New Zealand granting women the right to vote. She explained it as a time to celebrate women, dance and New Zealand and have free rein as to how we could interpret that and/or showcase it.

Whilst researching New Zealand's suffrage movement, I was most intrigued with a pamphlet that circulated via the activists of the Women's Christian Temperance Union that stated ten clear reasons as to why women should vote. They are thought provoking as some of these reasons, albeit forthright, seem horribly archaic and arbitrary. The fact that women should have to draw such stark, written articulations and obvious comparisons of reasonings to convince men of their worth is saddening actually. Our humanity is just not assumed and that is still an issue today elsewhere.

Can you tell us about your choreographic process in the studio?

I enjoy working with the bodies in front of me, with the souls in front of me and try my best to collaborate in a way that is fulfilling for the dancers too. I don't pre-set steps too much as I'm inspired by each new individual's character and contribution to the work. I don't know if my process is unique, to be honest. I know I try to remain positive and encouraging and give the artists room to bring themselves to the plate, I hope.

How would you describe your choreographic aesthetic?

I'm drawn to awkward, perhaps quirky movement that strikes an emotional chord and is a deeper portal to internal struggle. My aesthetic is clean, I would say, still rooted in

some form of classical contemporary but has a strange organized chaos about it. I pack movement in quite tightly and enjoy the physical and emotional challenge that comes with the doing of it. Movement motifs are difficult for me to describe but I'd say I place an emphasis on arm movement. It feels descriptive and evocative to me, personally. I have tried to keep a mass of people moving together more as well, which is a new challenge for me.

In what ways do you consider that the music you're working with supports your vision for the choreography?

The music is repetitive but nuanced and lends itself to a feeling of ongoing persistence: the persistence of women trying to get their point across. I archive music constantly and find myself drawn to things, sometimes years later, if it is where my imagination and themes are dwelling.

Do you have any female role models, or women whose achievements or careers have inspired or impacted you in a significant way?

Who are the women that inspire me? I'm a great admirer of my fellow South African, Charlize Theron and take inspiration from her as a strong willed, self-realised, unique, social activist artist.

What do you hope the audience will take away from watching your work *Stand to Reason*?

I'm inspired by the strength and beauty of the artists of the RNZB and the complete humility to try something new and bite in. I don't think I can say what the audience will think or feel. I hope to convey an idea of ongoing need for change and the fact that women have to remain relentless and persistent in their causes for equality and human rights.

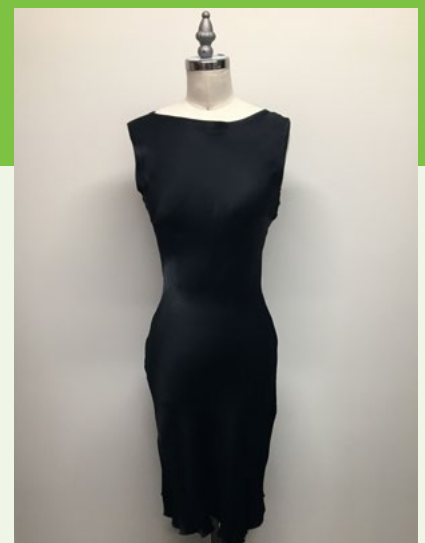
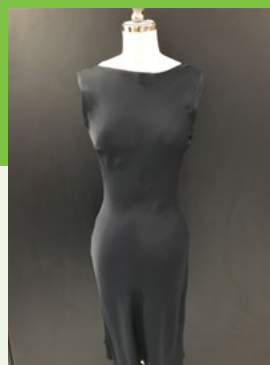
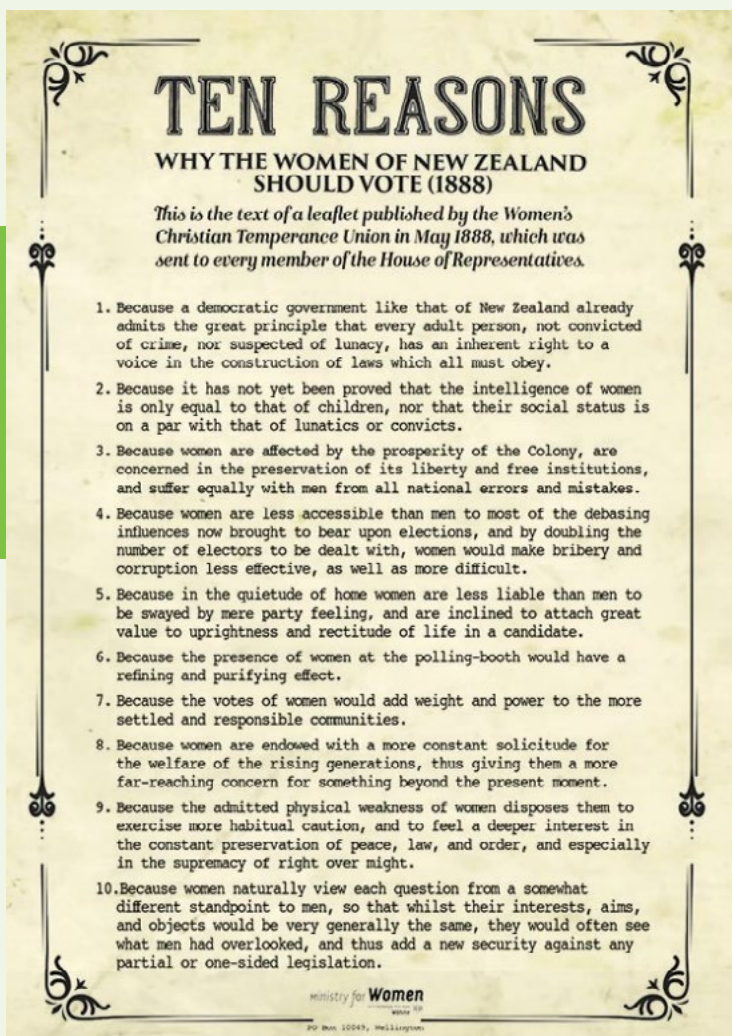
TEN REASONS WHY

This is the text of a leaflet published by the Women's Christian Temperance Union in May 1888, which was sent to every member of the House of Representatives.

Source: nzhistory.govt.nz

- 1 Because a democratic government like that of New Zealand already admits the great principle that every adult person, not convicted of crime, nor suspected of lunacy, has an inherent right to a voice in the construction of laws which all must obey.
- 2 Because it has not yet been proved that the intelligence of women is only equal to that of children, nor that their social status is on a par with that of lunatics or convicts.
- 3 Because women are affected by the prosperity of the Colony, are concerned in the preservation of its liberty and free institutions, and suffer equally with men from all national errors and mistakes.
- 4 Because women are less accessible than men to most of the debasing influences now brought to bear upon elections, and by doubling the number of electors to be dealt with, women would make bribery and corruption less effective, as well as more difficult.
- 5 Because in the quietude of home women are less liable than men to be swayed by mere party feeling, and are inclined to attach great value to uprightness and rectitude of life in a candidate.
- 6 Because the presence of women at the polling-booth would have a refining and purifying effect.
- 7 Because the votes of women would add weight and power to the more settled and responsible communities.

- 8 Because women are endowed with a more constant solicitude for the welfare of the rising generations, thus giving them a more far-reaching concern for something beyond the present moment.
- 9 Because the admitted physical weakness of women disposes them to exercise more habitual caution, and to feel a deeper interest in the constant preservation of peace, law, and order, and especially in the supremacy of right over might.
- 10 Because women naturally view each question from a somewhat different standpoint to men, so that whilst their interests, aims, and objects would be very generally the same, they would often see what men had overlooked, and thus add a new security against any partial or one-sided legislation.



STAND TO REASON
COSTUME DESIGN

STAGER AND RNZB BALLET MASTER LAURA MCQUEEN SCHULTZ

Laura McQueen Schultz was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she started her ballet training at age seven at the Grand Rapids Ballet School. She was a member of both the Junior and Senior Professional Trainee programmes at Grand Rapids Ballet in which she performed alongside the professional company. She also studied on scholarship with the Houston Ballet Academy, San Francisco Ballet School, and the National Ballet School of Canada. She joined the Grand Rapids Ballet as an apprentice for the 1999-2000 season and spent the following year dancing under Lindsay Fischer at the National Ballet of Canada in the postgraduate training programme.

In 2001, Laura was invited to join the St Louis Ballet under Gen Horiuchi. She returned to Grand Rapids Ballet in 2003 where she danced numerous leading and principal roles in such ballets as *Four Temperaments*, *Who Cares?*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Black and White*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Raymonda Pas de Dix*, *Giselle*, *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, and many other iconic classic works. Laura has also worked with contemporary choreographers such as Robyn Mineko Williams, Penny Saunders, Mário Radačovský and Annabelle Lopez Ochoa.

Laura has often appeared as a guest artist in the USA, Canada, Europe and Asia for companies including Ballet Bratislava, Long Beach Ballet, Farrell Ballet Theatre, Whim W'Him, and Olympic Ballet Theater. Laura has also staged works for Grand Rapids Ballet as well as with the National Ballet of Brno. Laura was the Associate Artistic Director of Young People's Ballet Theatre in Flint,

Michigan from 2012 until 2016. From 2012 until 2017, Laura and her husband Nick were the Choreographers and Stage directors for Children's Opera Workshop, during which they taught and created all the stage direction and choreography for each opera.

Laura joined the Royal New Zealand Ballet as Ballet Master in January 2018. Together with Nick she staged the RNZB's recent production of *Black Swan*, *White Swan* and Laura will also be staging *Stand to Reason* for the company's upcoming *Bold Moves* season.

What is the role of a ballet master?

A ballet master (sometimes also referred to as a ballet mistress) is a person who oversees the daily class and rehearsals of a ballet company. Their role is similar to a coach for a sports team, as it is the ballet master's responsibility to ensure that the company are performing to their best ability.

The Royal New Zealand Ballet currently has three ballet masters: Clytie Campbell, Laura McQueen Schultz and Nick Schultz.



LAURA
MCQUEEN
SCHULTZ

ARTIFACT II

Choreography: William Forsythe

Stager: Thierry Guiderdoni

Music: J S Bach

**Stage, light and costume design:
William Forsythe**

Technical preparation: Tanja Rühl

Technical supervisor: Patrick Lauckner

Lighting realization: Nigel Percy

Artifact was created in 1984 by the American-born choreographer William Forsythe and is the first full-length work that Forsythe made in his years as director of Frankfurt Ballet. During his time at Frankfurt Ballet, Forsythe sometimes came under criticism for his experimental style and approach, and his characteristic fractured and hyper-extended interpretation of the classic ballet vocabulary is well demonstrated in this work.

Forsythe was familiar with the works of many great choreographers that had previously gone before him and he therefore set out to create something new, pushing the tradition of ballet into a new direction.

"I had to find my way around Balanchine, Petipa, Cranko, MacMillan, the whole crowd... I realised I had to move on."

WILLIAM FORSYTHE

Forsythe made the entire piece – for a company of more than 30 dancers – in just three weeks during some free time he had within the company's schedule. The full-length work is a two-hour spectacle, including

68 dancers on stage with two speaking roles—a very rare thing within ballet performance.

Describing *Artifact*, dance writer Roslyn Sulcas wrote:

"[This] is dance that is immediately identifiable as 'ballet' but that registers simultaneously the shock of the new, as configurations of familiar positions are altered, and conventional transitions between steps are eschewed or given deliberate and unusual emphasis." Forsythe creates works that "make classical dance seem as valid and exploratory a form of contemporary art as any other style of movement."

Artifact II is the second section of this four-part, full-length work, and features two couples as they attempt to break away from a large mass of dancers, who are led by a ghostly, grey specter. Militant hand and arm movements alternate with Forsythe's thrillingly athletic dance, all interrupted by the curtain periodically crashing to the stage.

The curtain falling is generally regarded as a post-modernist disruption, however Forsythe would like to correct this common assumption with the following, "That is a musical caesura," he says, with a hint of irritation. "It wasn't designed as a disturbance or anything. There is a change in the music each time, so it is giving you the structural chunks of the music."

For more information about artifact, see the following article: <http://www.theballetbag.com/2012/04/18/artifact/>



THIERRY GUIDERDONI IN REHEARSAL
PHOTO: STEPHEN A'COURT

ARTIFACT II IN NEW ZEALAND

Artifact II was first seen in New Zealand in March 1994, when it was brought to the New Zealand International Festival of the Arts by Ballet Frankfurt, alongside Forsythe's *Artifact III*, *In the Middle*, *Somewhat Elevated* and *The Vile Parody of Address*.

Artifact II, the second work by William Forsythe that Royal New Zealand Ballet has been privileged to perform, the first being *In the Middle*, *Somewhat Elevated* which was performed by the company in 2016 as part of the Speed of Light programme.

CORPS DE BALLET

Artifact II features four main dancers who perform a series of intricate duets, whilst the other dancers form a chorus around the sides of space to perform simple and linear positions with the arms. This arrangement could be described as Forsythe's version of a corps de ballet, a common choreographic device within classical ballet.

The corps de ballet translates to the **body of the ballet** and refers to all of the dancers in the company who are not soloists.

They are often presented as a decorative backdrop for the principal dancers, holding static positions for extended periods of time.

Holding some positions can be extremely challenging for the dancers, often requiring them to stand or sit in uncomfortable poses whilst overcoming cramp and muscle fatigue. In Royal New Zealand Ballet's recent production of *Black Swan, White Swan* the corps de ballet had to remain still on stage in some of their swan positions for up to 11 minutes!

THE CORPS DE BALLET IN *ARTIFACT II* STAND AROUND THE EDGE OF THE SPACE

FORMER FIRST SOLOIST KATHARINE PRECOURT AND FIRST SOLOIST LINNAR LOORIS IN WILLIAM FORSYTHE'S *ARTIFACT* SUITE. IMAGE CREDIT AMITAVA SARKAR (2016). COURTESY OF HOUSTON BALLET.



THE SWANS IN *BLACK SWAN, WHITE SWAN* HOLD THEIR POSITION AROUND PRINCIPAL DANCER PAUL MATHEWS.

PHOTO CREDIT: STEPHEN A'COURT



THE CORPS DE BALLET FROM *GISELLE* WITH DANCERS ABIGAIL BOYLE AND JACOB CHOWN.

PHOTO CREDIT: MAARTEN HOLL



CHOREOGRAPHER, STAGE, LIGHTING AND COSTUME WILLIAM FORSYTHE

William Forsythe has been active in the field of choreography for over 45 years. His work is acknowledged for reorienting the practice of ballet from its identification with classical repertoire to a dynamic 21st century art form. Forsythe's deep interest in the fundamental principles of organization has led him to produce a wide range of projects including installations, films and web-based knowledge creation.

Raised in New York and initially trained in Florida with Nolan Dingman and Christa Long, Forsythe danced with the Joffrey Ballet and later the Stuttgart Ballet, where he was appointed Resident Choreographer in 1976. Over the next seven years, he created new works for the Stuttgart ensemble and ballet companies in Munich, The Hague, London, Basel, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, Paris, New York, and San Francisco. In 1984, he began a 20 year tenure as director of the Ballet Frankfurt, where he created works such as *Artifact* (1984), *Impressing the Czar* (1988), *Limb's Theorem* (1990), *The Loss of Small Detail* (1991), *A L I E / N A(C)TION* (1992), *Eidos:Telos* (1995), *Endless House* (1999), *Kammer/Kammer* (2000), and *Decreation* (2003).

After the closure of the Ballet Frankfurt in 2004, Forsythe established a new ensemble, The Forsythe Company, which he directed from 2005 to 2015. Works produced with this ensemble include *Three Atmospheric Studies* (2005), *You made me a monster* (2005), *Human Writes* (2005), *Heterotopia* (2006), *The Defenders* (2007), *Yes we can't* (2008/2010), *I don't believe in outer space* (2008), *The Returns* (2009) and *Sider* (2011). Forsythe's most recent works were developed and performed exclusively by The Forsythe Company, while his earlier pieces

are prominently featured in the repertoire of virtually every major ballet company in the world, including the Mariinsky Ballet, New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, Semperoper Ballet Dresden, The Royal Ballet and the Paris Opera Ballet.

Awards received by Forsythe and his ensembles include the New York Dance and Performance 'Bessie' Award (1988, 1998, 2004, 2007) and London's Laurence Olivier Award (1992, 1999, 2009). Forsythe has been awarded the title of *Commandeur des Arts et Lettres* (1999) by the government of France and has received the *Hessische Kulturpreis* (1995), *German Distinguished Service Cross* (1997), the *Wexner Prize* (2002) the *Golden Lion of the Venice Biennale* (2010), the *Samuel H Scripps / American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement* (2012) and the *Swedish Carina Ari Medal* (2014).

As an educator, Forsythe is regularly invited to lecture and give workshops at universities and cultural institutions. In 2002, Forsythe was chosen as one of the founding Dance Mentors for The Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Forsythe is an Honorary Fellow at the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance in London and holds an Honorary Doctorate from The Juilliard School in New York. Forsythe is a current Professor of Dance and Artistic Advisor for the Choreographic Institute at the University of Southern California Gloria Kaufman School of Dance.

In 2015 Forsythe was appointed Associate Choreographer of the Paris Opera Ballet.



STAGING THIERRY GUIDERDONI

It is a great honour for the RNZB to work with Thierry Guiderdoni who will be staging and rehearsing William Forsythe's *Artifact II* for the RNZB.

Thierry Guiderdoni was born in Nice, France. He undertook his dance education at the Academie de Danse Princesse Grace in Monte Carlo under the direction of Marika Besobrasova. In 1982 he was awarded the Professional Prize at the Prix de Lausanne; he joined The Stuttgart Ballet the same year.

From 1991 to 2004 he was a member of Frankfurt Ballet. In 2005 he was appointed Ballet Master and Artistic Assistant to William Forsythe, and also his Agenda Manager at The Forsythe Company.

Thierry Guiderdoni is currently freelance stager and rehearsal director for Forsythe Productions. He is one of four artists worldwide who is permitted to stage In the *Middle*, *Somewhat Elevated* along with other Forsythe works



THIERRY
GUIDERDONI

LIGHTING REALISATION NIGEL PERCY

Nigel has enjoyed a long association with the Royal New Zealand Ballet. He first worked with the RNZB as Head of Lighting from 1995 to 1996 and then again from 1998 to 1999. He then went on to do a significant amount of work within lighting departments in the film industry; working on films including the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *King Kong*, *The Water Horse*, *Avatar*, *The Lovely Bones* and *The Hobbit*.



NIGEL
PERCY

As a freelance lighting designer, he has lit many theatrical productions and corporate events including *The Spinning Mountain* for Capital E and *The Enchanted Forest* exhibition at The New Dowse Gallery. Nigel lit Capital E's *Hear to See* which won the Chapman Tripp Theatre Award for Most Original Production and Outstanding Music Composer. Nigel also lit Little Dog Barking Theatre's *Duck, Death and the Tulip* (2013), for which the Lighting Design was nominated for a Chapman Tripp Theatre Award, and its production of *Guji Guji* (2015).

Over the past ten years, Nigel has created lighting designs for numerous RNZB productions including *Tutus on Tour* (2009, 2011 and 2013), *Stravinsky Selection* (2011), *NYC* (2012) and *Allegro* (2014). He received particular praise for his lighting of Cameron McMillan's new work *Satisfied With Great Success* which was part of the *Stravinsky Selection* programme.

Nigel also worked with Multi-Media Systems for five years as a Production Manager. Since leaving that role in 2018, he continues to do freelance work as a lighting designer; most recently in the area of exhibition lighting.

DANCE ACTIVITIES

CREATING DANCE WITH THE BALLET BASICS – SERENADE

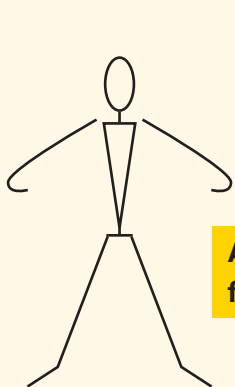
George Balanchine's *Serenade* started as a lesson in stage craft for students at the newly formed School of American Ballet. As some of Balanchine's students were relatively new and inexperienced in ballet, a lot of the steps in the initial choreography were relatively quite simple, demonstrating some of ballet's fundamental positions.

The opening of *Serenade* in particular, featuring 17 female dancers evenly spaced, is striking in its simplicity. Yet, this choreography manages to present basic ballet positions for the feet and arms in a beautiful and artful way.

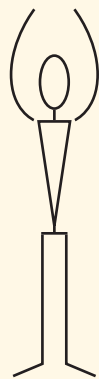
TASK: To create a short piece of unison choreography that incorporates some of the basic positions in ballet, in the style of George Balanchine's *Serenade*.

THE POSITIONS:

- **Arms and feet in 2nd:**
Standing with your feet apart and arms out to the sides, curving slightly at the elbows.
- **Arms in 5th feet in 1st:**
Legs are together with heels touching and toes pointing out to the corners. Your arms are curved up above your head.
- **Arabesque:**
Balancing on one leg with the other leg stretched out behind you. One arm stretches to the front, the other to the side (it doesn't matter which arm is in front, both versions are correct).
- **Tendu:**
Extending one leg out long whilst your toes are still touching the floor. Your arms can be in any position and you can try performing a tendu to the front, back or side. Try including more than one tendu, each with a different direction.
- **Plié:**
Bending both the knees out to the sides (in line with your toes).



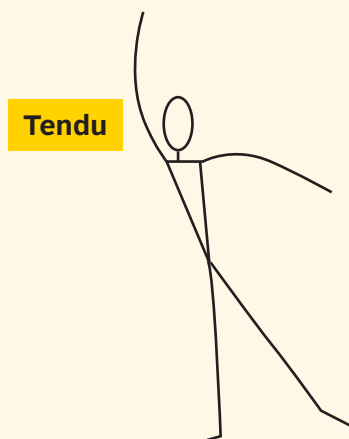
Arms and feet in 2nd



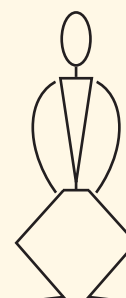
Arms in 5th feet in 1st



Arabesque



Tendu



Plié

INSTRUCTIONS:

- As a class, practise the positions on the previous page until each student is familiar with the different poses.
- In small groups, ask the students to use the above positions to create a short piece of choreography. These positions can be arranged in any order and performed more than once. The choreography can also include other steps (not necessarily positions in ballet) in order to link some of the positions together.
- Ask the students to try and keep their ballet positions very **clear and easily recognisable** within the choreography – remembering that the aim of the choreography is to **demonstrate these positions**.
- Students should perform aim to perform their choreography in unison, with each dancer evenly spaced.

DEVELOPMENT:

Once each group of students has created something using the ballet positions, they can then develop their choreography using the following choreographic devices, each commonly used in *Serenade*.

- **Repetition** – The students can choose a movement, or a series of movements, to repeat. Repetition is often used to give certain movements more impact.
- **Embellishment** – Adding detail to a movement. For example, the students may wish to add an arm gesture to their plié, or detail in the body such as a tilt.
- **Mirroring** – Commonly used in *Serenade*, this is where the dancers perform the same movements as if they were a mirror image. For example, some dancers perform an arabesque on their right leg, whilst others perform an arabesque on their left.
- **Levels** – Students could try and perform some of the choreography at different levels, maybe using their relevé to perform at a high level, or adapt some of the movements so that they can be performed on the floor.



SERENADE IN
REHEARSAL
PHOTO: STEPHEN A'COURT

INTRODUCING FORMATIONS

Serenade makes use of lots of different formations and floor patterns, with the dancers seamlessly weaving between each other as they move from one position to the next. This requires a huge amount of spatial awareness within the group as the dancers constantly have to manage their own position on stage in relation to the other dancers around them.

TASK: To perform the previously created 'ballet basics' choreography, whilst demonstrating different formations and transitions, similar to those used in *Serenade*.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- As a group, as the students to decide on a starting formation for their choreography. They will perform the first few movements of their choreography whilst in this formation.
- The students will then decide on a second formation, and **transition** into this new formation. The transitions can be crossing pathways, circling around the space, walking directly or any other way that the students would like to use.
- The aim is to transition smoothly, making it a part of the choreography. It may be helpful to mark out of the formations and walk between them before the choreography is added.
- Students should include at least two different formations in the choreography, or more if they have enough time.

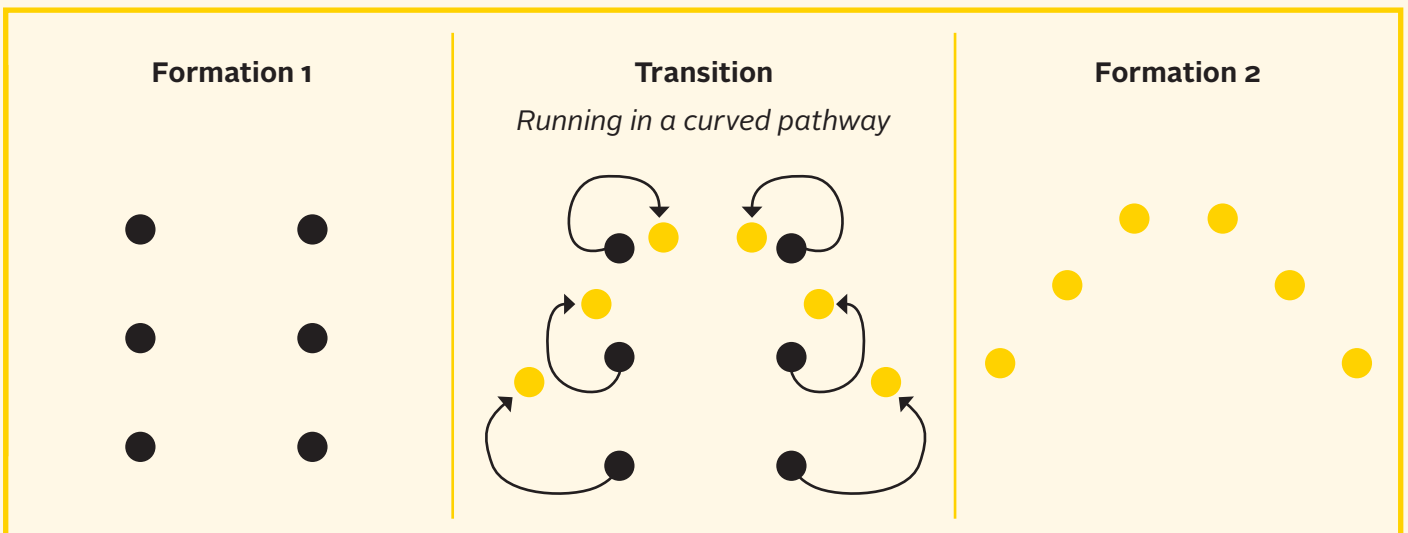
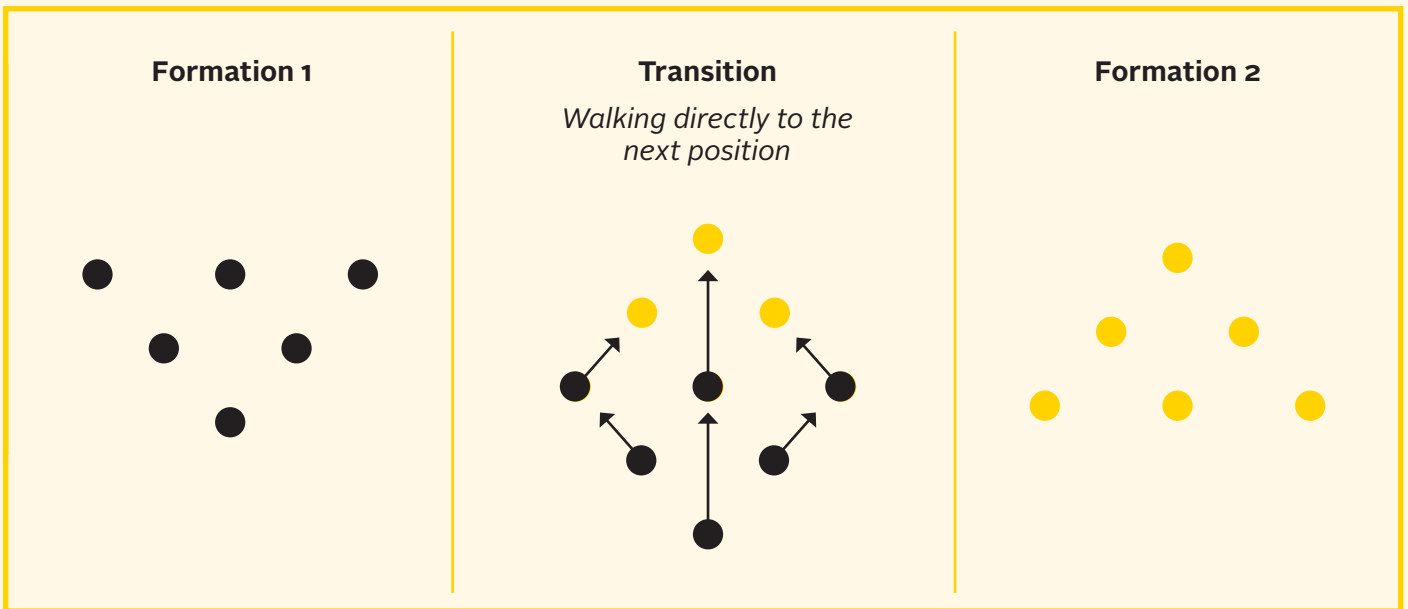
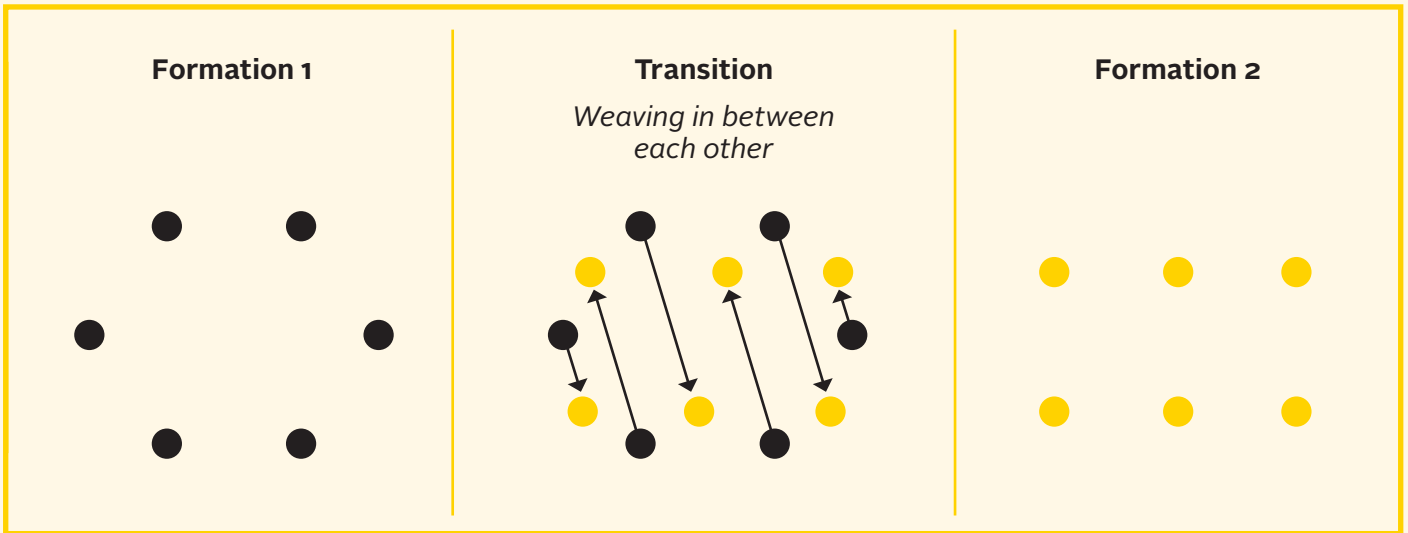
Some examples of formations with different transitions are on the following page, or students can use their own ideas.

DISCUSSION POINTS:

- Did developing the 'ballet basics' choreography make it more interesting to perform/watch?
- Are you still able to recognise the original ballet steps within the choreography?
- What are some of the ways that you could develop the choreography further? (e.g. Changing facings/directions of the dancers, using contact, adding jumps, including pauses, cannon, solos...)
- Was there anything challenging about including different formations?
- Which formations do you think are most effective to watch as an audience member?

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

Following these stages, you could then ask the students to join up with another group and learn each other's choreography to form one, longer piece of choreography. Adding more people into formations will make it more challenging to maintain even spacing between the dancers, and it may be helpful for one of the dancers from the group to step out in order to direct the formations.



BALLET TIMELINE

- 
- 1653** Louis XIV dances the Sun God in *Le Ballet de la Nuit*. His teacher, Pierre Beauchamps, formalises the terms we use as vocabulary in ballet today.
- 1661** Louis XIV (Sun King) founds the Académie Royale de la Musique, later named the Paris Opera Ballet.
- 1726–1727** Marie Camargo and her rival, Marie Salle, make debuts in London. Camargo shortens her skirt to show her feet, paving the way for the modern tutu.
- 1789** Jean Dauberval produces *La Fille Mal Gardée*, making it the oldest ballet still extant in modern-day repertoire.
- 1828** Marie Taglioni makes her debut at the Paris Opera, dancing on pointe for the first time.
- 1880** Tchaikovsky composes *Serenade for strings in C, Op.48*.
- 1890s** Marius Petipa (1818–1910) choreographs the great classics of ballet including *The Sleeping Beauty* (1890), *Swan Lake* (1895) with music composed by Tchaikovsky.
- 1900s** Ballet companies visited New Zealand through the first half of the twentieth century including Adeline Genée, Anna Pavlova, Covent Garden and Russian Ballet.
- 1932** Vasily Vainonen created *Flames of Paris*, a full-length work for the Kirov Ballet.
- 1934** George Balanchine's *Serenade* is premiered by students of the recently formed School of American Ballet.
- 1953** Poul Gnatt (1923–1995) founds the New Zealand Ballet (now RNZB).
- 1975** The New Zealand Ballet is the first company to perform *Serenade* in New Zealand under the artistic direction of Una Kai.
- 1984** The New Zealand Ballet Company becomes the Royal New Zealand Ballet. In the same year, William Forsythe created the full-length work *Artifact*.
- 1998** The St James Theatre becomes the home of the RNZB.
- 2013** The Royal New Zealand Ballet celebrates its 60th anniversary.
- 2017** Appointment of Patricia Barker, RNZB's 12th Artistic Director.
- 2018** Andrea Schermoly's *Stand to Reason* is premiered in 2018 as part of the Royal New Zealand Ballet's *Strength & Grace* programme.
- 2019** The RNZB moves out of its home at the St James Theatre into the new, purpose built RNZB Dance Centre.

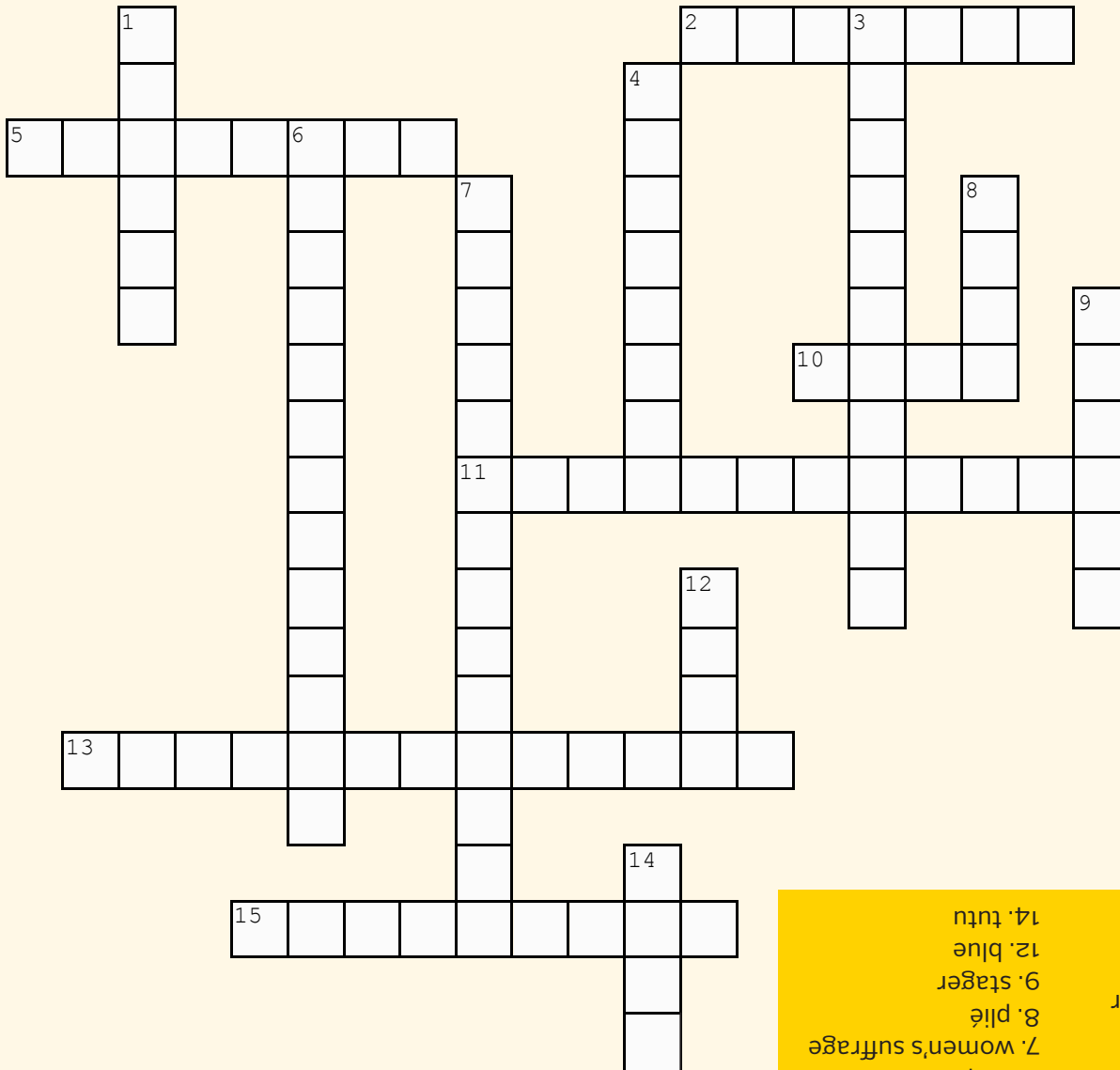
BOLD MOVES CROSSWORD

Across

2. A part of the stage design that keeps falling during the performance of *Artifact II*.
5. Forsythe's nationality.
10. *Stand to Reason* is based on the pamphlet 'Ten Reasons Why a Woman Should ____.'
11. George Balanchine was born in this city.
13. A term used to describe a person who makes dance.
15. A dance for two people, commonly seen in classical ballet.

Down

1. The ____ revolution was the subject for 'The Flames of Paris'
3. The famous composer of *Serenade for Strings in C major op. 48*.
4. A musical composition delivered in honour of someone or something, also the name of Balanchine's first work in America.
6. A group of dancers who are not soloists, translates to 'the body of the ballet'.
7. Andi Schermoly was invited to create a piece for the RNZB in honour of this political movement.
8. A term in ballet used to refer to a bend in the knee.
9. The person responsible for teaching an existing ballet, ensuring the artistic intention and style of the original work.
12. The colour of the iconic costumes from Balanchine's *Serenade*.
14. A ballet dancer's skirt, consisting of multiple layers of fabric.



ANSWERS

Across

2. curtain
5. American
10. vote
11. St Petersburg
13. choreographer
15. pas de deux

Down

1. French
3. Tchaikovsky
4. serenade
6. corps de ballet
7. women's suffrage
8. plié
9. stager
12. blue
14. tutu