

Cutting the cake at the Vic-Wells' 12th Night Party



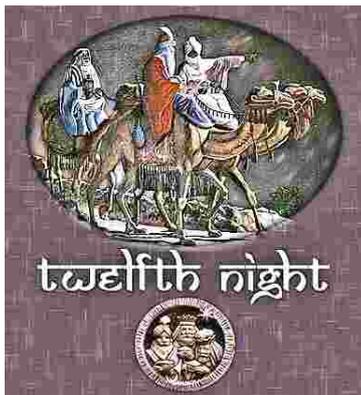
2011 - Freddie Fox

2012 - Janie Dee

2013 - Clive Rowe

... but who will be there in 2014 to do this important operation? Why not come along and find out? As you can see, there is a very special cake made for the occasion and the guests certainly enjoy the ceremony. We make sure that everybody will get a slice to enjoy. Don't be left out, book now!

The Annual 12th Night Party



Our annual Twelfth Night Party will be held at the Old Vic on Saturday, 4th January 2014 from 5.00pm to 6.30pm in the second circle bar area.

Tickets are £6 for Members and £7.50 for Non-Members.

Please write for tickets,
enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope, to:
Ruth Jeayes, 185 Honor Oak Road, London SE23 3RP
(0208 699 2376)

Stuttgart Ballet at Sadler's Wells

Report by Richard Reavill



Alicia Amatriain and Jason Reilly in *Le Grand Pas de Deux*

Photo: John Ross

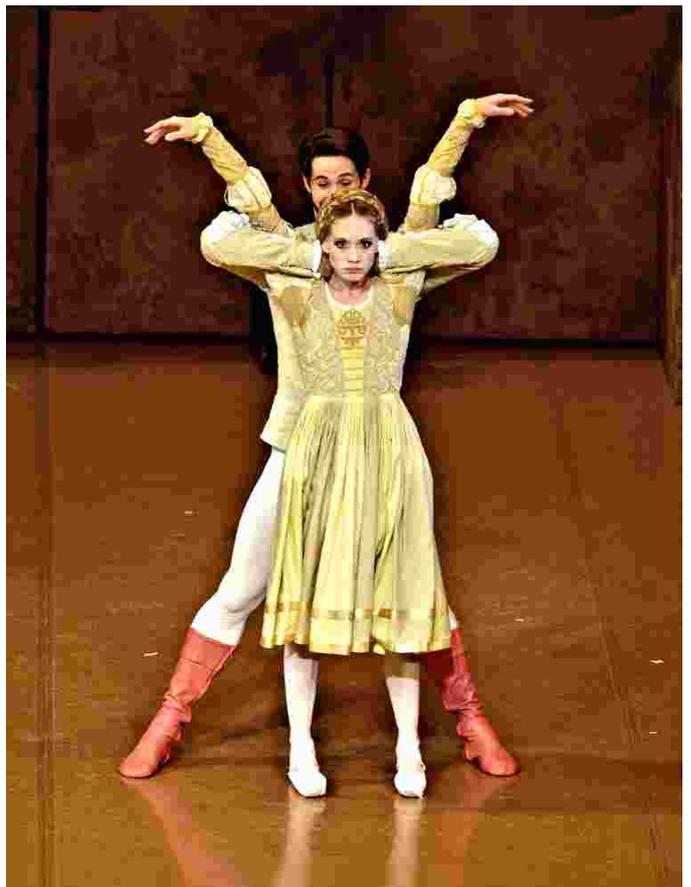
The Stuttgart Ballet is one of the world's major international ballet companies, but it does not often visit the UK. It did make a short trip to Sadler's Wells in November with two programmes and five performances over four days. The first one, *Made in Germany*, featured excerpts from works choreographed in Germany for the company. Though presented in three groups with two intervals, (like a triple bill), there were thirteen items, mostly pas-de-deux and solos, and only one piece, given last, for a larger group of dancers. The most successful items were generally by established choreographers, but the company is to be commended

on the way it encourages new work. The dancers gave excellent performances, often disguising the variable quality of the material. The solos were all for male dancers, which perhaps indicates the strength of the male contingent, and the minimal costuming allowed displays of some enviable physiques. A parody of the grand pas-de-deux, as performed by Jason Reilly and Alicia Amatriain, amused me but not some sterner newspaper critics, who may have felt that it belonged to *The Trocks*, or that the joke about the unwillingness of a woman to be separated from her handbag was over-extended.

John Cranko's *The Taming of the Shrew* was last seen in the UK more than a decade ago, performed by the Birmingham Royal Ballet. It is a fine story ballet based on the Shakespeare play and was given a rousing performance at the Saturday matinee. Amatriain was the angrily combative Katherine, tamed (maybe) by the Petruchio of Alexander Jones, who displayed some spectacular rotating jumps and very secure partnering. Elisa Badenes was the cute younger sister Bianca, whose three competing suitors perform a reverse-gender version of Balanchine's *Apollo*. Bianca explains to suitor Hortensio, the "muse" of music, (Roman Novitzky), that his singing as imitated in the

'The Stuttgart company has a wide range of nationalities'

Scarlatti score, is pitched too high because his music sheet is upside down. She chooses the suitor representing dance, and performed by David Moore. There is a deal of fun in this ballet, and it was presented with great commitment, and much enjoyed by the matinee audience. Both Jones and Moore are English dancers. The Stuttgart company has a very wide range of nationalities, with as many English principal dancers as German (actually one of each). That's how it is with international dance companies these days!



Alicia Amatriain and Alexander Jones in *The Taming of the Shrew*

In Japan with the Royal Ballet in 2013

by Joyce Parsons

Along with 22 other supporters I had the great privilege of going to Japan with the Covent Garden Royal Ballet who were performing in Tokyo. Tokyo itself was an eye-opener and a pleasure – the cleanliness everywhere, no pieces of paper, no cigarette butts. The Japanese themselves were always most courteous and caring.



Carlos Acosta

‘Watching Carlos Acosta from the wings one really appreciated the physicality and effort of the dance’

style, only to be thrown out of the ring within seconds of facing their opponent! We also participated in meditation and Judo, all meant to be for our own well-being.

Two ballets were performed *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Swan Lake*, the former was ecstatically received. In *Swan Lake* Carlos Acosta shared the lead role of the King with Steven McRae – both wonderful in their own way. I had the added honour and privilege of sitting on stage behind the curtains to witness the third Act of *Swan Lake*, viewing Acosta from the wings was quite something else as one really appreciated the physicality and effort of the dance.

Besides this we were introduced to a whistle-stop tour of Japanese culture. We had the opportunity to move around the splendid underground and in particular go on the Bullet Train itself which conveyed all of us with great speed and comfort to visit Mount Fuji in all its glory.

We witnessed Sumo wrestling, the participants like prize bulls parading around the ring with great panache and



A view of Mount Fuji



A Japanese Tea Ceremony

The Japanese Tea Drinking Ceremony was a splendid occasion where we all sat around in a room while one lady, naturally dressed in her Kimono, made the tea on a small stove which was then poured into a special receptacle before being placed in small cups which each participant drank.

We witnessed Origami, the tearing of paper into images of all varieties including one made for me personally, that of a ring. The Master was so deft with his fingers and was a wonder to watch.

Visiting Japan under such ideal circumstances was, for me, a truly wonderful experience.

Jim Ranger Reminisces

by Liz Schafer

On 27 November, the Vic-Wells' AGM audience was treated to an excellent talk by our Chairman, Jim Ranger who looked back over his long and distinguished career in supporting the arts.



Oxford University

Initially Jim was interested in opera and enjoyed listening to his father's collection of (wax) records featuring the voices of singers such as Tetrizzini, Melba and Caruso. Jim began to visit Sadler's Wells for the opera and especially remembers the 1945 premiere of *Peter Grimes*. Whilst visiting Covent Garden for opera, Jim began to notice, and then get interested in, ballet. After National Service, he went to Oxford University and there he revived the Oxford Ballet club. Guest speakers such as John Cranko and John Piper were extremely generous with their time and, indeed, Cranko, almost did a one man performance sketch of *The Lady and the Fool* in Jim's room when Cranko was close to completing but still working on the choreography.

The Oxford Ballet club also began providing extras for ballet performances and Jim appeared onstage in some unusual guises as an extra; his most memorable experience as an extra, however, was in *Sheherazade*. Jim had roped in a variety of fellow students to help, but one student, the Captain of the rugby team, was so enthusiastic about rushing on and flinging a doomed concubine onto the floor that he didn't realise the stage wasn't ready, there were no mats in place, and the poor

dancer ended up very bruised and battered. She got her revenge, however, in the performance by biting and scratching the rugby captain for all she was worth.

At Oxford, Jim also organised jive lessons with live jazz band and used the money the club made to pay for new choreographic works for the Oxford Ballet Club. One particular event had an extraordinary décor as Jim wrote to Seckers asking for a donation and a large quantity of silk off-cuts were delivered allowing for the stage to be festooned in a very grand style.



John Cranko

Photo: The Duffy Archive

Sunday Ballet Club

Once Jim moved to London and joined Shell, he and Francis Sitwell, a colleague at Shell, started the Sunday Ballet Club which Jim ran from March 1958 until November 1962. This provided amazing opportunities for dancers and choreographers. When he described his plan to Ninette de Valois, she said "not big enough, you must use

Ninette de Valois said his plan was "not big enough"



Antoinette Sibley and Anthony Dowell



Gillian Lynne

my dancers with other companies' choreographers" and they did. Jim particularly remembers the thrill that ran through the audience when Anthony Dowell made his first appearance, in a Sunday Ballet Club performance. The Club used a variety of theatres - Wyndhams, the Lyric, the New, The Prince of Wales - and performed on Sunday evenings. Highlights included Alan Beale choreographing with Donald McCleary and Lynn Seymour; Norman Dixon choreographing with Antoinette Sibley, Gary Burne and Ann Horn. Peter Wright choreographed a piece. Gillian Lynne choreographed *The Owl and the Pussy Cat* with music composed and played by Dudley



Lynn Seymour

Moore with a fabulous party afterwards. Ray Powell's very funny *One in Five* was

one of the most successful works and was later performed by companies in the USA, Canada and Australia. In the period the Club put on over 50 new works. This was also the beginning of Jim's association with Ian Albery who was then, in effect, serving a seven year apprenticeship learning everything about theatre.

In Memory of... Paul Rogers 1917 - 2013



Paul Rogers as Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* (1956)

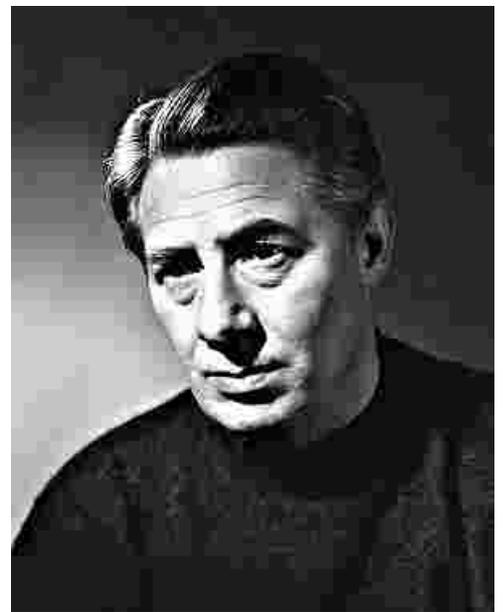
Paul Rogers, who has died aged 96, rose to eminence at the Old Vic in the 1950's as a sturdy interpreter of the great Shakespearean roles and later took the lead in more modern plays, notably TS Eliot's last two works, *The Confidential Clerk* and *The Elder Statesman*.

The versatile Rogers was a stocky, forceful, four-square player who knew how make Shakespeare's verse intelligible. He also appeared, frequently, on TV and the big screen.

Born in Plymouth, Devon, in 1917, Paul Rogers was the son of a headmaster. He studied at the Michael Chekhov Theatre Studio at Dartington Hall before making his first stage appearance in *A Bird's Eye View of Valour* at the Scala in 1938. After moving into rep at Colchester, he joined the Royal Navy on the outbreak of war.

Having had two small parts in Ronald Gow's version for the Bristol Old Vic of Hardy's *Tess of the d'urbervilles* at the Piccadilly in 1947, he stayed on with the company for two seasons before going to the Old Vic where he remained for nearly a decade.

When the Old Vic went to Broadway in 1956 he played John of Gaunt in *Richard II*, Mercutio, Macbeth and Pandarus. Then he led the company on its Australian tour as Lord Foppington in *The Relapse* and as Hamlet. On his return, he played Lear at the Old Vic. In 1967 he won a Tony Award for Best Actor in a Drama for his role as Max, a hectoring old north London widower in Pinter's *The Homecoming*. Among Roger's other successful stage roles was "Sir" the Wolfit-like actor-manager in Ronald Harwood's *The Dresser*.



He was twice married and is survived by two sons and two daughters.

News from the Old Vic

Report by Liz Moon

After a fantastic run we bid adieu to *Much Ado About Nothing* which starred theatrical titans James Earl Jones and Vanessa Redgrave. From 6 December, we look forward to welcoming Mike Poulton's adaptation of Turgenev's savagely funny play *Fortune's Fool*, which stars Iain Glen and Richard McCabe in this new production directed by Lucy Bailey.

A pair of newlyweds arrive at their country estate to be welcomed by Kuzovkin (Iain Glen), the penniless gentleman-in-residence. Their wealthy and mischievous neighbour Tropatchov (Richard McCabe) calls by for a seemingly innocent celebratory lunch. Fuelled by champagne the proceedings degenerate, leading to a shocking revelation with far-reaching consequences.

The tenth anniversary of The Twenty Four Hour Celebrity Plays Gala, a fund-raiser in aid of The Old Vic and Old Vic New Voices was a runaway success. This year's cast included Ronni Ancona, Zawe Ashton, Douglas Booth, Lily Cole, Tom Cullen, Lisa Dillon, Amanda Donohoe, Tom Ellis, Jeff Fahey, Anthony Head, Tina Hobley, Allen Leech, Harry Lloyd, Nick Moran, Clive Rowe, Annabel Scholey, Kaya Scodelario, Lesley Sharp, Robert Sheehan, Nathan Stewart-Jarrett, Neil Stuke, Catherine Tate, Jack Whitehall and Jaime Winstone. You can watch a behind-the-scenes video of the evening on The Old Vic's Youtube channel (search for The Old Vic). To keep up to date with the latest news and announcements from The Old Vic you can join our list of e-subscribers by visiting oldvictheatre.com and signing up to our newsletter. Alternatively search for The Old Vic on Facebook or follow us on twitter @oldvictheatre.



Iain Glen and Richard McCabe in *Fortune's Fool*
Photo : Jay Brooks

Tim Rooke reviews (not) *Much Ado about (absolutely) Nothing!*

I was not sure what to expect of this production as I arrived at the Old Vic and I must confess to not being a great fan of La Redgrave! Suffice to say, I was not impressed. No, I have to say this was probably the worst production of the Bard's canon I have ever seen and that includes the O'Toole productions. Why these two superannuated geriatrics were engaged to play these parts remains a mystery to me. All the wit and humour in Benedick disappears in the long laboriously delivered lines by James Earl Jones, spoken so slowly one wondered if we would be able to get

'Why these two geriatrics were engaged is a mystery'

the last tube home. Miss Redgrave gave the impression that she was having trouble remembering her lines. (Their total ages add up to 158 years!)

The set did nothing to help – just a ghastly wooden box. As for Mark Rylance's direction, or lack of it, words fail me. The only relief in this dire evening was Dogberry as portrayed by Peter Wight who was actually funny. Other people who deserve praise are Beth Cooke as Hero and the Borachio of Kingsley Ben-Adir. And *why* set it on an American air base in England in 1944? Why? I just hope David Tennant's Richard at Stratford and the Barbican will make amends. But I will let you know...



Vanessa Redgrave and Beth Cooke
Photo : Simon Annand

Christmas at Sadler's Wells

The stage show *The Snowman* based upon the book by Raymond Briggs and the subsequent film has become a much-loved festive tradition at the Peacock Theatre. With music and lyrics by Howard Blake, including the beautiful *Walking in the Air*, performed by a live band, choreographed by Robert North and directed by Bill Alexander, this is an essential part of London's Christmas calendar.

Another treat for children is *BOING!* at the Lilian Baylis Studio. This is an energetic and enchanting piece of children's dance theatre that captures the delirious excitement of waiting for Father Christmas to arrive. Directed by Sally Cookson and choreographed by Wilkie Branson and Joel Daniel, *BOING!* combines comedy, acrobatics and breakdance to dazzling effect.

Matthew Bourne's iconic production of *Swan Lake* blends dance, humour and spectacle with extravagant award winning designs by Lez Brotherston, to create a provocative and powerful *Swan Lake* for our times. It is perhaps best known for replacing the traditional female corps de ballet with a menacing male ensemble.



Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*

Commencing in March next year (2014) at the Peacock Theatre is *Shadowland*, the ground-breaking show by the dance troupe Pilobolus Dance Theatre. *Shadowland* is a mix of shadow theatre, dance, circus and concert, incorporating multiple moving screens of different sizes and shapes to create a performance that merges projected images and front-of-screen choreography.



Shadowland



BOING!

WHAT'S ON



Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4TN

Phone: 0844 871 0090

Main Theatre ** UK Premieres

04 Dec. - 26 Jan. New Adventures - *Matthew Bourne's Swan Lake*

29 - 30 January Boris Charmatz/Musée de la danse - *enfant* **

07 - 16 February Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch -
1980 - A Piece by Pina Bausch

21 - 27 February Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan ➔
Nine Songs / Rice **

01 - 15 March Flamenco Festival London ➔

20 - 23 March Hofesh Shechter - *Sun*

25 - 29 March Compagnie du Hanne-ton / James Thiérée
Tabac Rouge **

03 - 06 April Savion Glover - *SoLe Sanctuary* **

Lilian Baylis Studio

20 Dec. - 05 Jan. Travelling Light & Bristol Old Vic - *BOING!*

13 February *Wild Card* - Cindy Claes

27 March *Wild Card* - Eva Recacha

Peacock Theatre

Portugal Street, Kingsway, London WC2A 2HT

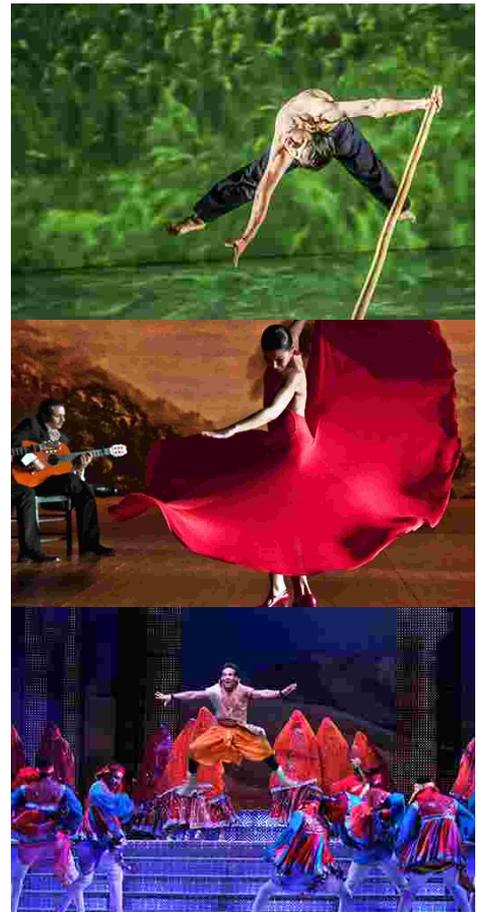
27 Nov. - 05 Jan. The Snowman

28 Jan. - 15 Feb. The Merchants of Bollywood ➔

18 Feb. - 8 March Blaze

11 - 30 March Pilobolus Dance Theatre - *Shadowland*

08 - 19 April English National Ballet and
English National Ballet School -
My First Ballet - Coppélia



Old Vic Theatre
www.oldvictheatre.com
Waterloo Road, London SE1 8NB
0844 871 2628

6 December 2013 - 22 February 2014

Turgenev's *Fortune's Fool*

with Iain Glen and Richard McCabe



Don't forget the
Vic-Wells' Annual
12th Night Party
5.00 to 6.30 on
Saturday 4th
January 2014.

Make a note of the
date now, full
details on the front
cover of this issue.

The Vic-Wells Association

Founded in 1923 by Lilian Baylis CH

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Items or letters
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should be sent to
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by this date.