

# THE PETER DARRELL TRUST

## NEWS

### January 2025



Peter Darrell, Venice, 1981  
Photographer: Alan Crumlish

### Happy New Year and welcome to our first Newsletter of 2025



Matthew Bourne - Photographer Hugo Glendinning



Adam Cooper - Photographer Matt Frost

### Some great news to start off the new year

We are delighted to announce that Sir Matthew Bourne OBE and Adam Cooper have pledged their support to the Peter Darrell Trust by becoming Honorary Patrons. This really is exciting news to start 2025 and heralds a new phase of development for the Trust.

It is almost incredible to realise that the first Swan Lake that Matthew ever saw was Peter Darrell's celebrated production for Scottish Ballet which was in performance at Sadler's Wells Theatre in 1979. He bought himself a ticket and watched as Peter's bold reimagining of the story unfolded on stage blissfully unaware, at that time, just how radical it was. But he was hooked! His respect for Darrell was there from the start and Matthew has declared his delight and pride to be an Honorary Patron of the Peter Darrell Trust.

Adam has expressed how lucky he has been, during his own celebrated career, to have danced in three of Darrell's ballets, *Tales of Hoffmann*, *Othello*, and *Jeux*, and he freely admits to his admiration for Peter's work. He regrets he was not able to perform more of Peter's ballets, but he now looks forward to supporting the Trust in encouraging performances of Peter's work by companies worldwide.

### **O Caritas:**

We are delighted that the MA dance students at Roehampton University will be learning and performing **O Caritas** in May of this year. **O Caritas** was first performed by Scottish Ballet in 1975. The music and lyrics are by Andrea Toumazi, Jeremy Taylor and Cat Stevens.

It is a moving one act ballet expressing the senselessness of violence in human affairs. Originally set in Northern Ireland **O Caritas** is as relevant today as it was then, with conflicts taking place in virtually every corner of the world. Fifty years on Peter would have been alarmed to see how relevant its messages of peace are today.

It is with sadness we say goodbye to two former Scottish Ballet dancers - **Paulene Laverly** and **Susie Cooper** who were well known and loved by everyone. Both gave a great deal to the ballet world and will be greatly missed.

Paulene passed away suddenly on 1st November 2024. She was a dancer at Scottish Ballet for 8 years. She was the first person in the UK to audio describe ballet and had over 22 years' experience of delivering audio descriptions for ballet, theatre and pantomime. She had a deep understanding of Scottish Ballet and its performances and, as such, provided the highest quality

descriptions for the audiences. Pauline was also a Trustee and later Patron of the Peter Darrell Trust and was always a passionate advocate of Peter's works and an ambassador of his legacy as well as really championing dance in the community.

Dr Susan (Susie) Cooper passed away on the 13th of December after a brief illness.

"Students, RAD staff and teachers will remember Susie with much fondness. Always adopting a positive view on life, she brought humour and fun to all that she was involved with. As a teacher, she was supportive and encouraging to the many, many students she taught over the years. She had a wonderful way of nurturing self-belief in students while at the same time setting high standards both of herself and others".

- Dr Michelle Groves, Director of Education at the Royal Academy of Dance



Paulene Laverty taken at the Edinburgh Festival



Dr Susan Cooper

On a happier note we would like to say a huge thank you to the people who made very kind donations to the Trust in November - sadly because of the Justgiving package we have we can't see who you are - so please drop us an email at:

**[peterdarrelltrust@gmail.com](mailto:peterdarrelltrust@gmail.com)** to let us know so that we can thank you properly. We are now going to upgrade our package so that in the future we can see this information!

The Trust is actively seeking funds at the moment to assist us in teaching **O Caritas** to the students at Roehampton University this year which follows on from the success of **Economy in Straitjacket with Room for Movement** last year. We are also doing archival work and recreating pieces that have been lost due to lack of decent film footage and promoting Peter Darrell ballets to companies abroad. This is vital work, so if you feel able to help support these projects please consider making a donation to the Trust via the link below.

<https://www.justgiving.com/thePeterdarrelltrust>

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