

THE PETER DARRELL TRUST – SUMMER 2017

WESTERN THEATRE BALLET

60th ANNIVERSARY

Western Theatre Ballet was formed in 1957 by Elizabeth West and Peter Darrell. The inaugural performance was on 24th June 1957 at the Dartington Hall, Devon with Peter's *The Prisoners* - Two convicts escape from prison, one to his death, the other to life enslavement to his friend's wife.

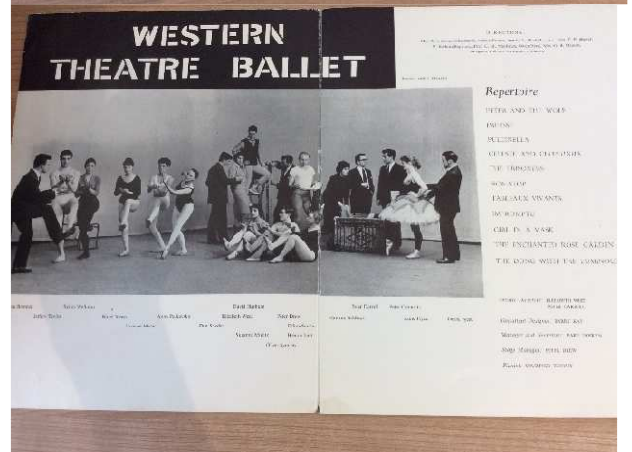
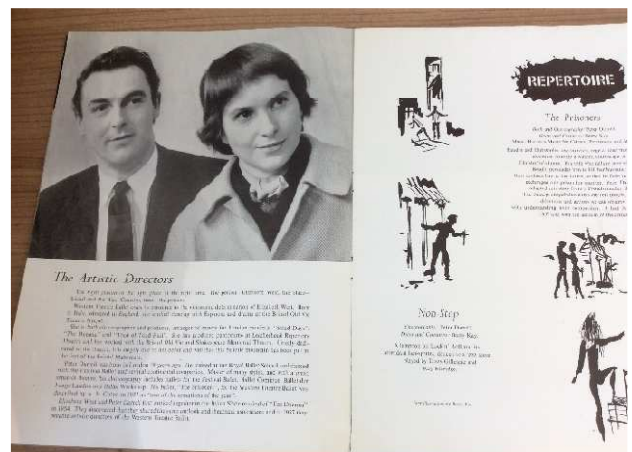
Composer: Bela Bartok (Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste) Designer: Barry Kay

Casting: Suzanne Musitz, Barry Salt, Erling Sunde and dancers of Western Theatre Ballet

The company came out of a theatrical base, The Bristol Old Vic, but was based in the classical technique. The company took to the road with very little money and no home base, performing in scout and church halls and, on one memorable occasion, a west country barn where the pigsties stood in for changing rooms. But it was the innovation that made Western Theatre Ballet special. The company tackled darker and more realistic themes in a way that combined dance and drama in works such as *The Prisoners*, *Nonstop* and *A Wedding Present* that dealt with sex, murder and desire in a way that has perhaps never since been equalled. The company lasted 12 years before becoming Scottish Theatre Ballet, with Peter Darrell at its helm. To celebrate 60 years of WTB, Brenda Last, a founder member of the company, former Royal Ballet principal dancer and widely respected teacher organised a reunion in London. Judy Spence was delighted to attend the reunion and had a great time meeting friends and sharing special memories.



The Prisoners: photo of Western Theatre Ballet taken by Liz West.



The first Western Theatre Ballet Programme



WTB Reunion - Photo: Elaine Mayson Photography

From left to right - Back: Bob Verbrugge, David Hepburn, Hazel Merry, Peter Docherty, Oliver Symons, Rodney Macdonald, Domy R. Soffer, Yvonne Joseph, Arlette van Boven. Front: Carina Morgan, Colin Ford, Jackie S. Thomas, Peter Wright, Molly Spicer, Brenda Last, Jeffrey Taylor.

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The Peter Darrell Trust, A Scottish Charity No. SC 0230011

Dance School of Scotland - Choreography Evening

The Trust has been delighted to award a grant to the Dance School of Scotland in Glasgow. This has enabled the School to add into the Dance Education classes a module on Peter Darrell and his works, including teaching parts of some of his works and having the students create their own versions. The students' choreography will be presented within the school's annual choreography event, to be named the Peter Darrell Choreography Evening. This annual event involves the whole school, with the focus of the evening being on the choreography. Throughout the year in their Dance Education classes the junior school will have looked at choreographers of different styles and will have had workshops with various companies and recreated their versions of some iconic choreographers' works.



The senior school have workshops from a much wider range of styles and as they are preparing for auditions they must choreograph solos for themselves. The Dance School of Scotland staff are experienced choreographers as well as teachers and they mentor the senior school with the choreographing of their solos. With no increase in the Dance School of Scotland's base funding, the grant from The Peter Darrell Trust has enabled the school to maintain all elements of the choreographic evening which offers so much experience and enhanced understanding for students. The Peter Darrell Choreography Evening will take place in The Dance School of Scotland in December.

Scottish Ballet – *The Nutcracker* by Peter Darrell

We are delighted that Scottish Ballet will be performing Peter's Nutcracker again this Christmas, with performances in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Inverness.

Visit: <https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/event/the-nutcracker> for more information and to see the making of Nutcracker.



Photo: Andy Ross

DATES:

Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

Sat 9 – Sat 30 December 2017

Theatre Royal, Glasgow

Thu 4 – Sat 13 January 2018

His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen

Wed 17 – Sat 20 January 2018

Eden Court, Inverness

Wed 24 – Sat 27 January 2018

www.scottishballet.co.uk

PETER FARMER

It is with sadness that we report that Peter Farmer, a painter and leading figure in British theatre design, died on January 1st, 2017. Peter worked extensively in ballet and worked with many of the major ballet companies around the world. In 1976, he designed Othello for Scottish Ballet, creating a rich backdrop for Darrell's powerful and dramatic one act-ballet. He went on to design Peter's Tristan and Iseult for New London Ballet in 1979 and Peter's Tales of Hoffmann for Hong Kong Ballet in 1991 and Scottish Ballet in 1998. In 2010, Peter Farmer received a Prix Benoit de la Danse Lifetime Achievement Award.

Below: Tales of Hoffmann designs by Peter Farmer, from the Hong Kong Ballet Production in 1991



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