

THE PETER DARRELL TRUST NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2024



Welcome to our first Newsletter of 2024

Tales of Hoffmann in Japan

We have an exciting year ahead and we are delighted to tell you that Peter Darrell's '**Tales of Hoffmann**' opened to a full house in Tokyo at the New National Theatre on 23rd February.

'**Tales of Hoffmann**' is one of the finest examples of Darrell's long narrative works, illustrating his unique approach to storytelling. It was first performed by Scottish Theatre Ballet in 1972 and has also been performed by American Ballet Theatre in New York; by the Ballet of the National Theatre, Belgrade; the Ballet of the National Theatre in Prague; the Australian Ballet; Asami Maki Ballet Company, Tokyo; Hong Kong Ballet and The National Ballet of Japan.

Noriko Ohara OBE and Kenn Burke oversaw the remounting of '**Tales of Hoffmann**'. It was first staged as a new production by The National Ballet of Japan in 2015. <https://cms.nntt.jac.go.jp/.../ballet-dance/hoffmann.html>

Photos: Takashi Shikama

Top right: Hoffmann: Yudai Fukuoka

Left: Antonia: Yui Yonezawa; Hoffmann: Shun Izawa
& Antonia's Father: Tetsuo Kaikawa

Right: Spallanzani: Maylen Tleubaev
& Artists of National Ballet of Japan

A celebration of Peter's work is planned for July 24th at St Hilda's College in Oxford

Peter Darrell's short life was brim-full of 'firsts' – one of these is **'House Party'**, celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2024, it was the first ballet commissioned for television in 1964, with music from Les Biches by Francis Poulenc, while his **'Mods and Rockers'**, 1963, is widely regarded as being the first ballet to be set to contemporary rock (The Beatles); but not forgetting, choreography for Hammer Horror films, and for the elephants in Billy Smart's Circus!

In this seminar we will explore what made his work unique – the link between his choreography, and his passion for storytelling, inspiring generations to come, including Matthew Bourne. Darrell trained at The Royal Ballet School alongside dance luminaries John Cranko, Kenneth MacMillan and Peter Wright – a real crucible of dance creativity. Here's a rare opportunity to see and hear about Darrell's work:

Screening of **'House Party'**, introduced by Jane Pritchard, Dance Curator from London's V&A Museum, followed by Q&A with members of the original cast (Hazel Merry and Oliver Symons), chaired by Emeritus Professor Sue Jones, St. Hilda's College Oxford, Scottish Ballet alumna, Advisor to the Peter Darrell Trust.

More information on how to book your free tickets will follow.

Economy in Straitjacket but Still Room for Movement

We are also excited to tell you that the MA Dance students at Roehampton University have been learning **'Economy in Straitjacket but Still Room for Movement'** and will be showing the work in May 2024. Choreologist Kristin Johnson has been teaching the students and we would like to thank Dh Lalitarāja Chandler, Senior Lecturer and MA Dance Practice and Performance programme lead at Roehampton (former Scottish ballet dancer) for wanting to revive the work. **'Economy in Straitjacket'** was created on the Scottish Ballet Workshop in 1978 and then Peter reworked it for the main company for the Perth Festival of the Arts in 1987. It was also performed by the Curve Foundation in 2005. This challenging ballet takes its title from a financial headline in The Times. A provocative and satirical piece.

"An overt protest against public funding body interference" - Geoffrey Baskerville

"No doubt this raised a few political hackles - but why not" "I can still do it - can't I? - I can still shock?" - Peter Darrell 1987.

If you would like to see a performance of **'Economy'** at Roehampton University in May you will be able to reserve your free tickets via Eventbrite - we will send a link soon.



Left: Kristin Johnson teaching students at Roehampton University - photo: Katherine Spence.

Right: Scottish Ballet dancers in performance 1987 - photo: Alan Crumlish

Robin Anderson 1931-2023



It is with great sadness that we report the death on 29th June 2023 of Robin Anderson, one of the trustees of the Peter Darrell Trust. Robin spent almost twenty years as a pharmacist in London and Edinburgh before taking the plunge and starting a new and late career in theatre management.

Obtaining a bursary from the Arts Council he worked in several theatres in England including the Phoenix Theatre in Leicester and Harrogate Theatre before getting the call to interview for the General Administrator post with the newly formed Scottish Theatre Ballet, which had developed from the Western Theatre Ballet and, under Director Peter Darrell, relocated to Glasgow in 1969.

Robin remained in his key post with the Scottish Ballet for the rest of his professional life only returning, after a refresher course, to become a locum pharmacist once again as a semi-retirement part-time job! He is greatly missed by the Trustees.

To keep up to date with our news and for more information on Peter and his ballets why not visit our website at: www.peterdarrell.org. You can also follow us on Facebook where we are back online after a long break. If you would like to share any of your memories with us please do so here:

<https://www.facebook.com/peter.darrell.3/>

EMAIL AND DATA PROTECTION: If you receive a printed copy of the newsletter but could receive it by email, please get in touch with your details. The Peter Darrell Trust will only use your email or address to contact you with information about the Trust and will not release your details to any third parties. If you don't want to receive our Newsletters and updates, please email and we will remove you from our database.

Administration: 33 Ulundi Road, Blackheath, London SE3 7UQ; Website: www.peterdarrell.org; Email: peterdarrelltrust@outlook.com

The Peter Darrell Trust, A Scottish Charity No: SC023011