



FOOTNOTES

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CHARLESTON BALLET TO PRESENT GISELLE

GISELLE was created for the Paris Opera's newest star, Carlotta Grisi, in 1841. The choreography was attributed to Jean Coralli, but he was most likely assisted by Jules Perrot, Grisi's husband. It was Perrot's reworking the ballet in St. Petersburg with Marius Petipa that allowed the ballet to survive. Petipa coached Anna Pavlova in the title role and it became one of her most popular ballets. The composer of *GISELLE*, Adolphe Adam, wrote many works for the Paris Opera. *GISELLE* epitomized many of the artistic developments of early 19th century Europe. Rejecting conventional Classicism, the Romantic period turned more to human concerns. Love, death, spiritual solace became the subjects. *Giselle* extends themes of dualism, duplicity, and destiny to create the emotional impact of the story. *Giselle's* passion for dancing is established at the beginning of the ballet, preordaining her fate. The peasant girl *Giselle* is first human and then spirit. Her death is brought on by Albrecht's deception.

ACT I opens to a village scene celebrating the annual wine harvest. Hilarion, a local gamekeeper, is in love with the peasant girl *Giselle*. Albrecht, the Duke of a distant castle, emerges with his squire, Wilfrid. Although Albrecht is betrothed to the Duchess Bathilde, he loves *Giselle* and has disguised himself as a peasant named "Loys". Hilarion observes Albrecht knocking on *Giselle's* door and she appears from her house. Even though *Giselle* has rejected Hilarion's love, he declares it again, but Albrecht dismisses him. The villagers return and dance a waltz with *Giselle* and Albrecht. *Giselle's* mother reminds *Giselle* of her weak heart and the legend of what happens to girls that die before they wed. Sounds of huntsmen are heard in the distance and the Duchess Bathilde and her father enter the village. They ask for food and wine, which *Giselle* and her mother serve. Bathilde and *Giselle* talk of their pending marriages. When the royal party of hunters are refreshed they continue the chase. A lively march ensues as the villagers return and her friends call *Giselle* from the house. At the conclusion of a gallop, Hilarion rushes in with a sword – a symbol of high rank - that he has found in the nearby shed. He insists that *Giselle's* lover is no peasant, nor is his name Loys. Albrecht and Hilarion come to blows and, in the commotion, Bathilde and her father return to the village. They are surprised to see Albrecht's peasant attire. *Giselle*, distraught at this revelation, loses her reason and begins a grotesque dance reenacting various incidents of the morning. She dies of heartbreak and despair.

ACT II begins in a moonlit clearing in the forest. A cross marks *Giselle's* tomb and Hilarion mourns her death. According to legend, the woods are haunted by *Wilis*, the spirits of young betrothed girls who died before their wedding days. They find no rest in their graves and rise at night to dance until daybreak. If any man chances to witness their rites, he is condemned to dance with them until he dies from exhaustion. Myrtha, Queen of the *Wilis*, appears, and summons her followers to rise from their graves. She gathers them around the grave to welcome a new maiden to their midst. With her magic, she releases *Giselle* from her entombment. The *Wilis* depart with the approach of Albrecht, who has come to mourn *Giselle*. When Albrecht sees the ghostly form of *Giselle*, he takes her in his arms and they dance together. She disappears into the woods and he follows her. Meanwhile, Hilarion, who returns to the woods, is discovered by the *Wilis* and is forced to dance wildly with them. They taunt him until at last they whirl him into nearby waters, where he drowns. Albrecht, like Hilarion, is also ordered to his death. *Giselle*, instead leads him to the cross, knowing that this will protect him from Myrtha's power, but he leaves the safety of the cross to be with her. Myrtha commands the *Wilis* to ensnare Albrecht, but *Giselle* begs for him to be spared. She refuses and Albrecht is drawn into a fateful dance. Just as he is about to collapse, distant bells chime the hour of sunrise when the spirits must return to their graves. They vanish like the mist releasing Albrecht from the spell. He takes his last embrace of *Giselle* who must return to her tomb, leaving him alone in despair.

REFLECTIONS OF A DANCER

BY
BRITTANY GREEN JAVINS

Looking back on my own history with the Charleston Ballet, I realize that it was a part of my life long before I could have ever chosen for it to be. I was born into this way of life – literally: my mom was in ballet class on Monday; I was born the following Wednesday. And just as the Charleston Ballet has been an inevitable facet of my own life, it has proven to be the same for many others throughout the past fifty years as well. In fifty years, the Charleston Ballet has seen several generations of company members, backstage workers, volunteers, guest artists, audience members, and more. We all have a connection with the Charleston Ballet that we cannot deny, and for many the connection is similar to that of a family. And really, that's what it is – a family. It's not just a family of ballerinas, either; it is a family of the audience, the children of the school, the parents, the stage crew, the volunteers, the guests, the supporters, and anyone else that makes the Charleston Ballet what it is. So, in this fiftieth season, as we honor all of those in the past who have contributed to the success of the Charleston Ballet, especially Andre and Maggy Van Damme, let us honor ourselves as well and the entire extended family of the Charleston Ballet. Without the dedication of the past and present, the Charleston Ballet would not be where it is today, and this leaves us only to imagine what it will grow to in the future. Fortunately, based on the past fifty years, we have the comfort of knowing that the Charleston Ballet will continue to grow with the support of its family, and its family will grow as a part of it as well.

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TO THE POINTE

The first annual **FUN FOR THE FAMILY** event was a great success raising \$8,800.00 for the Charleston Ballet. Our special thanks to Gus Hamrick and his family for hosting and planning this event.



THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY SEASON

The Charleston Ballet will celebrate its 50th anniversary season of performances beginning this fall with dramatic and humorous ballets in classical and contemporary styles. A wealth of talented and creative dancers, guest artists and choreographers will collaborate on this celebration of 50 years of dance with the Charleston Ballet.

The entire season will be dedicated to its late founder, Andre Van Damme, and to his widow, Maggy Van Damme, who died June 18, 2005.

On Oct. 28–29, the company will bring its lavish production of **Giselle** to the Maier Performance Hall at Clay Center to open this 50th season. This ballet is the epitome of romantic works. It premiered in 1841 and has captivated audiences since then. A beautiful combination of drama and dancing, magic and mystery, it is one of the truly classic stories of love and forgiveness. This full-length performance, choreographed to the wonderful music of Adolphe Adam, will be an event that truly showcases the talents of the company and many guest dancers. Featuring Kim Pauley and Olivier Wecxsteen in the title roles, Bob Schwarz of the Charleston Gazette says, “These are moments dance fans live for . . . This is dance served up better than we have any right to expect in a town this size.”

The Charleston Ballet’s immensely successful collaboration with the West Virginia Symphony for the holiday spectacular of **The Nutcracker** will be held this year on Dec. 16-17 in the Maier Performance Hall at Clay Center. Journey through the snow with Clara and her Nutcracker Prince to the Kingdom of the Sweets. A holiday tradition for many families, this ballet is one beloved by young and old, and the only West Virginia production with live music.

On March 24-25, 2006, the Charleston Ballet will present **A Look Back: Celebrating 50 Years** at the Charleston Civic Center Little Theater. This weekend of special performances will look back at some of the most exciting ballets presented by the company. Each day’s program will be as different and unique as the ballets themselves and the dancers who created them. A special reception will be held to honor all the former and present dancers, crew members and designers who will be invited to attend this reunion celebration . Highlights will include a performance of Ravel’s **Bolero**, a recreation of the very first ballet, **Rehearsal At Ten**, premiering in 1956, and excerpts from audience favorites through the years. Guest artists for this weekend will be Olivier Wecxsteen and flamenco dancers Margarita Bruce and Luis Montero. Make sure you are a part of this historical event and we will make sure that it is something you will not forget.

Tickets to **Giselle** and the **The Nutcracker** performances may be purchased through the Clay Center ticket office at 561-3570. Tickets to all other events may be purchased at the Charleston Ballet office, 342-6541, and later at the Civic Center Box Office and Backstage Bodywear.

I am so pleased to be writing as the President of the Charleston Ballet in the midst of the organization’s 50th season. Although I have been acting President for almost a year, being elected for an additional

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

one-year term is truly an honor. I’d like to thank the Board and Artistic Director for your confidence in leading this organization into the next 50 years.

It has been an exciting few months for us at the “Official State Ballet” starting with the dedication of MC Workshop in May. We were pleased to have members of the Montclair String Quartet, Mark Davis, and the Charleston Ballet perform, with Rick Cochran from WV Radio Corporation as MC, and remarks from Richard Ressimyer, Director of Arts from the WV Commission on the Arts. Without state funding, it would be difficult to function as a leading arts organization in the community. Thank you to all that participated.

We also had an inaugural Fundraising Event, hosted and organized by Gus Hamrick and his family. This “Fun for the Family” event was extremely successful. I’d like to acknowledge the time, effort, and dedication put forth from the Hamrick family and the board members. We hope to make this an annual event.

On behalf of the board and artistic director, I’d like to thank Milton Koslow for his ongoing commitment and dedication to the organization. His years serving as secretary on the executive board can be counted as one of the many reasons why the Charleston Ballet is able to celebrate 50 years of existence. I’d also like to thank Martha Newman for her service as Executive President and Vice-President. Thank you Martha, especially grooming me for the position of president.

Lastly I’d like to publicly welcome several new members to the board. Cheryl Vega, Jeff Wood, Al Eastman, Scott Jackson, and Gus Hamrick are new members that have all been voted into service this year. Each of you serves a unique purpose on the board. You bring skills and leadership, as do all our current members. I thank all members for they’re past commitment and time and ask that you remain devoted to the organization as we begin a truly exciting season!

Sincerely,
Carolyn Poston, Executive President.

GETTING TO KNOW CARA BOYLE

Pet Peeve: Elbows. Yeah, it may sound weird but I am scared of elbows. Everyone knows I am scared of them so when people stick them in my face I get real annoyed.

Most Important Item in my Dance Bag: Deodorant. I hate feeling stinky and gross after class. I also have massive amounts of fluff (cotton) for my toes.

Favorite TV Shows: Sex and the City. I love my Sex and the City nights with the girls.

What do you do in your off time? I hang out with friends and go to movies. I’m usually very lazy on my days off.

Most Memorable Performance Experience: Doing Little Red Riding Hood in SLEEPING BEAUTY. I had a lot of fun with the role. When the wolf threw me over his shoulder, I got scared and accidently screamed on stage! Very embarrassing!

Future Roles: Anything in FLAPPERS, I also love the Romanian Dances. I love SWAN LAKE as well.

Other Interests: Painting, eating, bowling and just having some fun.

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Charleston, WV 25301

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Celebrating 50 Years



October 28 - 29, 2005 8:00 p.m. Maier Performance Hall
at the Clay Center **GISELLE**

December 16, 2005 7:30 p.m. **December 17** 2:00 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Maier Performance Hall at the Clay Center **THE NUTCRACKER**
with WV Symphony

February 2006 Valentine Raffle Fundraiser

March 25-25, 2006 8:00 p.m. Civic Center Theater
A LOOK BACK: CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

May 26, 2006 7:30 p.m. Civic Center Theater
American Academy Ballet Recital