ST. PETERSBURG BALLET THEATRE

The Saint Petersburg Ballet Theatre company regularly gives performances to packed audiences not only in its home town and on the stages of the prestigious Mariinsky and the Hermitage theaters, but in Moscow and many other major cities throughout the country. They have also toured in more than 50 countries with great success to sold-out audiences. When the company performed in the famous Pompidou Center in Paris, *Le Parisian Libere* observed that “Its fame does not seem to be exaggerated. The revelation of this choreography treasury is one of the most important recent events in the art of dance.”

Nearly all of the company’s teachers, coaches, and dancers have studied and graduated from the revered Vaganova Ballet Academy which has produced the greatest ballet artists of all times. This Ballet Academy, highly esteemed both nationally and internationally, ensured that the carefully selected students were given every opportunity to develop their own potential and bring acclaim to the country. Every dancer in the company has received the finest balletic training in the world. The art, therefore, this company is bringing to its audiences is rooted in the great events that evolved on the stage of the Mariinsky Imperial Theatre – the Kirov Ballet – and is closely connected with the founding and opening of the world-famous Russian School of Classical Dance. In this theater all ballet artists demonstrate the rare combination of technical excellence and nobility of style. Their performing art is distinguished with utmost expressiveness and provides a unique opportunity to experience the richness and variety of Russian Ballet at its best.

The Saint Petersburg Ballet Theatre, founded in 1966, was the first “Theater of Ballet” of its kind in Russia under the management of the famous artist of the old Kirov, Professor Peter Gusev. In 1969, the post of Artistic Director and Manager was occupied by the prominent choreographer, outstanding ballet master, and Honored Artist of Russia, Leonid Jacobson. Since then the Company has become one of Russia’s most internationally toured ballet ensembles dancing a wide range of Classical and Modern ballet repertoire.

Like Mikhail Fokin, the famous Russian choreographer and reformer of the ballet, Jacobson demonstrated a mastery of different epochs and theatre styles, producing numerous imaginative original ballets called “miniatures” to a wide variety of themes starting from ancient monuments to romantic ballets and finally to spontaneous expressiveness. For the performances of his miniatures, Jacobson wished to have a company in which any of 55 actors could become a soloist. The choreographer himself said about these artists: "All of them are real, profound and very subtle professionals. They are masters of different styles. Just dancing, even good dancing does not automatically lead to communication. Thousands of people finish ballet schools and dance brilliantly, but very few speak to the audience through the language of dance. Our artists can.”

In 1976, according to Leonid Jacobson’s will, his close friend and favorite dancer, Askold Makarov, star of the Kirov Ballet, Honored Professor of the Arts and Ballet, and People’s Artist of Russia, became his successor as Artistic Director and the Chairman of this prestigious Ballet Theatre. Mr. Makarov preserved Jacobson’s principle of competition for choreographers and selection of true artists. During 22 years of Mr. Makarov’s management, more than 17 ballet masters known throughout the world worked with the company’s ballet artists. The list of choreographers active after Jacobson is unusually long for any of Russia’s Ballet Theaters, and it includes not only the great talents of choreography, but beginners and experienced masters, traditionalists and innovators, dance creators and drama supporters as well.

Yuri Grigorovich, the great artistic director of the Bolshoi Ballet, said about this company:
“Today Makarov’s Theatre occupies the first and the best place among those who represent the contemporary ballet in Russia. All the dancers are not just highly technically trained, but also have the great academic knowledge characteristic of true artists - most important - all of them can speak the language of choreography.”

Current Artistic Director Yuri Petukhov continues this tradition with successful performances at home and international touring.

YURI PETUKHOV
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Artistic Director of the Saint Petersburg Ballet Theatre, People’s Artist of Russia, State Prize Laureate of Russia, and Laureate to International Ballet competition, Yuri Petukhov was born on November 06, 1953. After finishing the Perm choreographic school (teacher Y.I. Plaht), he began working in 1972 at the Perm theatre. He debuted in the role of Franz, and created numerous roles: as Germann’s double (Three Cards, 1973); Truffaldino (The Servant of Two Masters, 1976, choreography by N. N. Boyarchikov), and Adam (Creation of the World, 1974, choreography by M. M. Gasiev). Since 1979 he has danced at the Maly Opera and Ballet Theatre. He also created roles in ballets by Boyarchikov: Geral, Franz (Robbers, 1982); Macbeth (Macbeth, 1984); and the choreographic compositions by L. S. Lebedev: Two Dances in Style Gagaku (1988), Illusion (1989), Vii (1990). His ability to create contrast and emotional images and masterly technique garnered him all the leading roles of both the classical and modern choreographic repertoires. He performed the following leading roles: Albert (Giselle); Siegfried (Swan Lake); Kolen, Peter (Halt of Cavalry); Boris (King Boris); Podkolesin (Marriage); Grigoryi (Silent Don); Foreman (Foreman and Margarita); Snake-charmer (Kleopatra); Vision of a Rose (Vision of Rose); Basil, Desire, Prince (Nutcracker); Romeo, Mercutio, Benvolio (Romeo and Juliet); and Orpheus (Orpheus and Euridice). Being one of the most interesting performers of modern choreography he continues to create new works as well. After graduating in 1989 from the Leningrad Conservatory as a balletmaster, he has staged ballets at many theatres: Fly Cranes (1985, Maly Theatre); Don Quixote (1987, Estonia); White Knight (Maly Theatre); Carmen (Valencia); Cinderella, The Nutcracker (Tokyo) and the small ballets: Picture, Drama Three and many others. Yuri Petukhov has received first prize for best choreography and three first prizes as a balletmaster from international competitions throughout Russia and abroad.

PRINCIPAL DANCERS

MARIA IAKCHANOVA
Maria Iakchanova graduated from the Vaganova Ballet Academy in 1993 and was accepted in the St. Petersburg Ballet Theatre by competition. The talented ballerina has high professionalism, musicality, and taste. In her repertoire: Chopiniana - Mazurka, 7th waltz, 11th waltz; Giselle - Giselle, Zulma, Myrta; Shurale – Suimbike; Swan Lake - Odette/Odille, Pas de trio; Don Quixote - variation of 4 acts, Pas De Deux; Le Corsaire - Pas de deux; Canteen Keeper - Pas de six, Pas de Quatre; Waltz of D. Shostakovich and others. She participated in the international ballet competition "Maia" and two Sergei Lifar International Ballet Competitions, winning both the gold and silver medals.
LIoudmila Minostseva
After graduating from the Byelorussian Choreographic School in 1997, she was invited to join the St. Petersburg Ballet Theatre by Askold Makarov, where she has become one of the leading classical ballerinas of the company. She possesses great dance technique which is dynamic and full of temper and expression as well as ease in performing. Her creativity grows with each role. She shows strong professional preparation and a keen sense of musicality. Having toured the world with great success, she performs in the following ballets in the company’s repertoire: Swan Lake, Giselle, La Vivandière, Paquita, Chopiniana, Scheherezade and concert ballets such as: Merry Quartet, Female Variations, Passione and many others.

Anastasia Shmakova
Ms. Shmakova graduated from the Vaganova Ballet Academy in 1990. From 1990 to 1993, she performed with the State Opera and Ballet, State N. Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatoire. From 1993 till 1997 she worked in the Ballet Theatre of V. Ganibalova. In 1998 she was invited to join the St. Petersburg Ballet Theatre headed by Askold Makarov and is now one of the leading dancers of the company. She has musicality and charm. Her performing has received critical praise both at home and abroad. Her repertoire includes roles in Swan Lake, Giselle, Chippolino, Chopiniana, Etudes about the Foreman, and concert ballets: Exercise XX, Vienna Waltz, Merry Quartet, Village Don Juan, Russian Souvenir, Female Variations, The Snow Maiden and many others.

Vera Ziganova
Vera Ziganova graduated in 2001 from the Vaganova Ballet Academy and in the same year was accepted to the St. Petersburg Ballet Theatre. A young and talented ballerina, she has bright creative individuality and musicality. Her dancing is always feminine and artistic, and her creativity grows with each role. She is engaged in all classical repertoire of the theatre and in all programs of the troupe. She performs the following parts in the company’s repertoire: Swan Lake, variation from Paquita, Exercise XX and others.

Elena Onegina
Recently graduated from the Vaganova Ballet Academy (in 1998), she has since performed many solo parts in the following ballets. She is a young ballerina who possesses a high level of technique and classical lines and forms. Her repertoire includes: Scheherezade – Scheherezade; large swans, Hungarian dance - Swan Lake; Grand Pas from Paquita; Etudes about the Foreman; Eternal Idol; and many others.

Nicolai Semenov
Graduating from the Vaganova Ballet Academy in 2001, he was accepted into the St. Petersburg Ballet Theatre. He has won the reputation of a hardworking and talented performer. He is a young and gifted dancer who possesses the highest level of dance technique. In his repertoire are: Insert, Mazurka - Swan Lake, Exercise XX, and others.

Azamat Nabiullin
Having graduated the Ufa choreographic school he was accepted in the Bashkir Opera and Ballet State Theatre. In 2001 he was accepted into the St. Petersburg State Ballet Theatre. He is considered to be a young talented classical dancer and has fine temperament, artistry and a high level of technique. Having
toured many countries with great success, his repertoire includes: Prince Siegfried, Spanish dance - *Swan Lake*, *Eternal Idol*, *Exercise-XX*; and others.

VIKTOR DEMIDOV
Graduating from the Saratov choreographic school in 1982, from 1982 to 1990 he worked in the Sverdlovsk Opera and Ballet theatre, and from 1990 till 1991 in the theatrical association "Pirouette". From 1991 to 1996 he was principal dancer in the Eifman Ballet. He has been a member of the St. Petersburg Ballet Theatre Company since 1996. He currently performs all the major male roles of the company’s repertoire, with a specialty in the more modern, free form works of the young Soviet Choreographers of the 70’s and 80’s. He is talented dancer, and an expressive and emotional actor. His repertoire includes: Rotbarth, Spanish dance - *Swan Lake*; Shah - *Scheherezade*; Gans - *Giselle*; Tomat - *Chippolino*; Spartacus – *Spartacus; Dances for the Queen*; and many others. For many years he has represented Russian ballet choreographic art in many countries of the world with great success.