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*Alexander*

**ROY**

London Ballet  
Theatre

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**Alexander Roy** is of French-Polish origin and began his career at the State Opera in East Berlin. He became Principal Dancer at the Komische Oper under Walter Felsenstein's direction and was offered a scholarship for further study in Moscow. He opted however for the West and was able to join the American Festival Ballet then on tour in Western Germany. He danced principal roles in the classical repertoire and made his first encounters with modern American choreography and jazz. Seasons followed with the Amsterdam Ballet and the Netherlands Dance Theatre and engagements as Guest Artist in Germany, France and Italy. After a London season in a concert programme with Christina Gallea he was offered a position as Principal Dancer with the London Dance Theatre for whom he created his first major work *Circuit. What's On in London* wrote at the time: »Roy is a choreographer to watch«. Alexander Roy has created over 30 ballets for his own company; powerful dance-dramas and satirical comedy being his favourite themes. He also mounted ballets for the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the Scapino Ballet in Amsterdam and the Royal Ballet of Flanders. During his career, Roy has worked with teachers such as Asaf Messerer, Nora Kiss and Stanislaw Idzikovsky and choreographers Leonide Massine, Kurt Joos, Walter Gore and John Butler. In 1987 Alexander Roy returned to the Komische Oper in Berlin to introduce his Company to Berlin audiences. The resounding success of his visit was underlined by *A Midsummer Night's Dream* being televised by the German TV. The Company has now returned to Berlin with each new production and since 1988 Roy's ballets have been performed to even wider audiences stretching from California to Caracas and from Miami to New York.

**Christina Gallea** was born in Australia and started her career with the Australian Theatre Ballet, directed by the leading British choreographer, Walter Gore. She came to Europe for further study, working in London with Audrey de Vos and Idzikovsky and in Paris with Nora Kiss. Gore invited her to the Company he was then directing at the Frankfurt Opera House, and from there she moved to Holland to dance with the Amsterdam Ballet and the Netherlands Dans Theatre. An opportunity to join the American Festival Ballet followed and there she met Alexander Roy and began the partnership upon which the present company is based. Christina Gallea danced with British ballet companies and as a Guest Artist in France, Italy and Germany. During her international career as a leading dancer, she danced principal roles with choreographers including Gore, Massine, Hans van Manen, Rudi van Danzig as well as dancing a wide range of leading roles in the classical repertoire. She also created numerous roles for Alexander Roy, including The Woman in »A Smile at the Bottom of the Ladder« and Titania in »A Midsummer Night's Dream«. Miss Gallea has been Associate Director of the **ARLBT** since its inception and is also engaged in the costume and lighting design in many of the company's productions. No longer a performer, she is now the company's chief administrator and responsible for organising the Company's many national and international tours.



# The Repertoire 1992 - 1993 - 1994

## FIGARO, FIGARO

*based on the works by Beaumarchais  
music by Boccherini, Rameau & Vivaldi*

Alexander Roy's most recent full-length production, "Figaro, Figaro", is based on the stage works by French playwright, Beaumarchais, mirroring the exploits of that famous Barber of Seville with the extraordinary life of his creator. Drawing inspiration from the Commedia dell'Arte, Figaro's often hilarious exploits bring him together with those characters already well-known from Rossini and Mozart's operas, Suzanna and Rosine, the Count Almaviva and Cherubin. Figaro is the centre of an unusual ballet, beneath the fun and the frivolity there are rumbles of a revolution only a few years away, but with his resourcefulness and his energy, Figaro is, above all, a survivor.

## THE MAGIC FLUTE

*after Emmanuel Schikaneder  
music by W.A. Mozart*

This full-length ballet was premiered in 1988 and was an instant success, being performed continually since then and playing an important part in the 1991 world-wide celebration of Mozart and his works. The ballet has been performed throughout Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and also in the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Italy and the USA.

»This is a creation overflowing with that special pleasure to be derived from movement fired by keen imagination, and effected with physical beauty of form and line.«  
Eastern Daily Press, UK

»Une chorégraphie originale, des artistes de talent, des décors de rêve, des costumes extraordinaires, le tout sur une musique fabuleuse.«  
Nice Matin

»Das Zusammenspiel von Bühnenausstattung und pompösen, extravaganten Kostümen, das ausgefallene Miteinander von Mozarts Musik mit moderner Ballett-Bearbeitung macht Roy's Zauberflöte zu einem Erfolg.«  
Rheinische Post, Köln

## LA RONDE (DER REIGEN)

*based on the play by Arthur Schnitzler  
music by Jacques Offenbach*

Schnitzler's play, written over 80 years ago, provoked riots in Berlin, uproar in Vienna and even brought the author to trial. Today's audiences are not likely to be so shocked by this satire of Viennese society and Offenbach's sparkling score provides the perfect accompaniment to this evocation of the charm and vitality of the play.

»This piece provided the most innovative and creative choreography with highly energetic and precise dancing. Set backstage at some generic theatre, the dancers take the audience on a hilarious foray into the world of love and attraction.«  
World Herald, USA

»Die Liebe, mal mit dieser, mal mit jener, wurde ironisch, lebendig, aber niemals peinlich dargestellt. Langer Beifall verabschiedete die Tänzer.«  
Wuppertaler Zeitung

## A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

*based on the play by William Shakespeare  
music by Giacchino Rossini*

The first British production of Shakespeare's play as a full-length ballet, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" was premiered in 1980 and remains an acclaimed success. The ballet has been performed in Britain, France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Malta, India, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia, Borneo, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Aruba, the Virgin Islands, Canada and in almost 100 cities across the United States of America. The ballet has been filmed by German TV and has been shown throughout Germany, Russia, Poland and a number of European countries.

»This Dream is really quite an achievement.«  
The Times, London

»Mr. Roy has applied choreographic proficiency to the creation of dance sequences through which the technically accomplished company move with spirited elegance. This production achieves an atmosphere of enchantment.«  
The New York Times

»Si le plaisir des yeux et des oreilles, si la dégustation d'une musique éclatante de joie de vivre, si l'envoie de l'imagination sur les rêves les plus fous sont pêchés, alors oui! les spectateurs du Théâtre Romain ont gravement pêchés, mardi soir! Mais avec quels délices!«  
Le Var Matin, France

»Eine derart homogene, engagierte, ausgefeilte Ensembleleistung ist bei uns nicht allzu oft zu genießen.«  
Neue Züricher Nachrichten



**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM**



Photo: Linda Rich



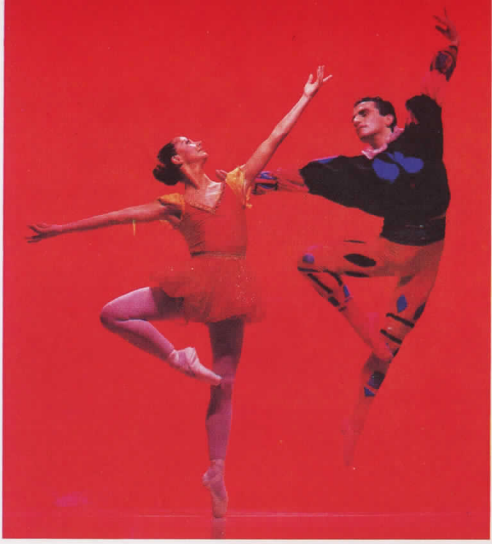
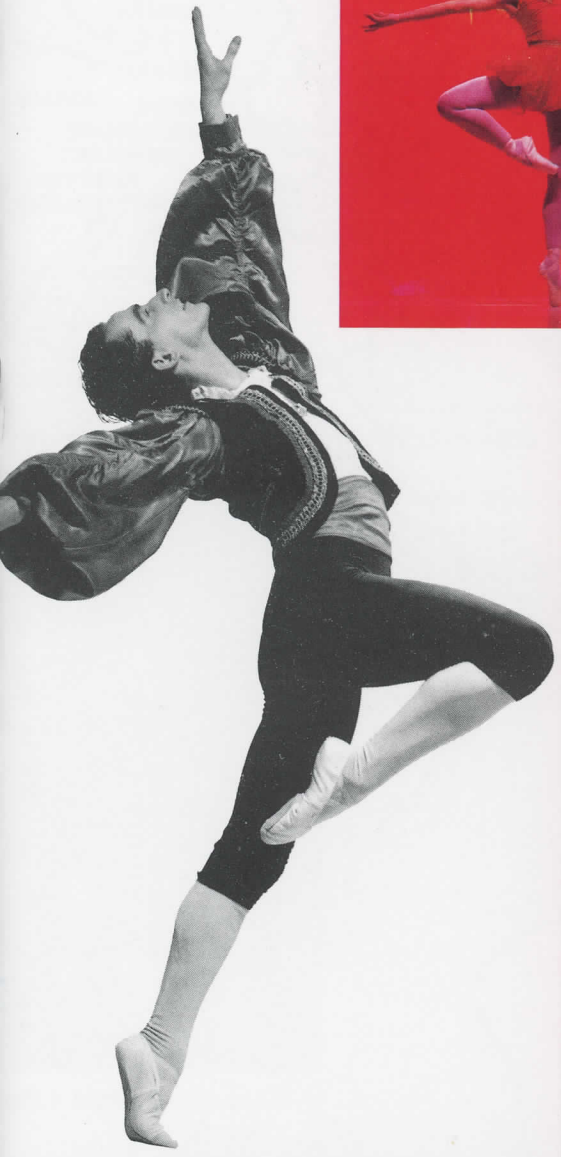
**THE MAGIC FLUTE**

Photos: Dabney Forest



# FIGARO, FIGARO

Photo: Anthony Crickmay

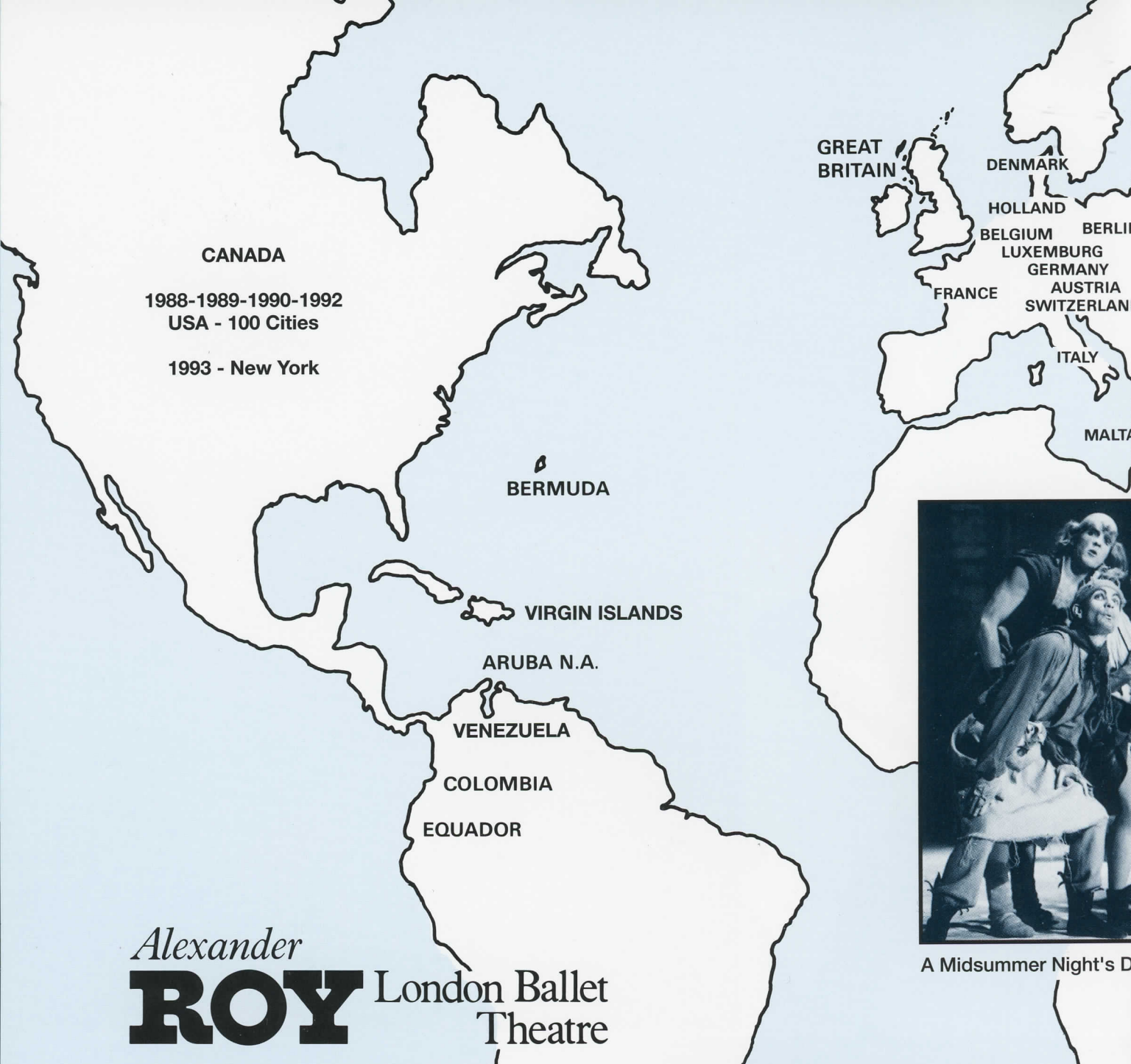


# LA RONDE

Photos: Linda Rich, Roy Round







CANADA

1988-1989-1990-1992

USA - 100 Cities

1993 - New York

BERMUDA

VIRGIN ISLANDS

ARUBA N.A.

VENEZUELA

COLOMBIA

EQUADOR

GREAT  
BRITAIN

DENMARK

HOLLAND

BELGIUM

LUXEMBURG

GERMANY

AUSTRIA

SWITZERLAND

ITALY

MALTA

*Alexander*

# **ROY** London Ballet Theatre

Based in London, **ALEXANDER ROY LONDON BALLET THEATRE** is Britain's most international touring ballet company. The Company spends half the year touring abroad, as far afield as South East Asia and North and South America. **ARLBT** also gives regular seasons in London, tours throughout Great Britain and has visited almost every country in Western Europe including regular appearances in Paris, Berlin, Brussels and Geneva.

The Company's artistic policy is both intelligently forward-looking and soundly based on its considerable classical expertise. As one critic puts it - "academic dance moving towards a well-judged modernity" (La Suisse,

Geneva). In 1980, the Company produced its first full-length ballet, Alexander Roy's »A Midsummer Night's Dream«. The happy mixture of humour, dramatic action and fairy tale magic proved an instant success and is perhaps the perfect vehicle for Roy's choreographic style and the versatile, accomplished Company. This was followed by more full-length productions, »Beauty and the Beast« in 1983, »La Ronde« in 1985, »The Magic Flute« in 1988 and »Figaro, Figaro« in 1992. The repertoire also includes a wide variety of one-act ballets from the sparkling »Le Bœuf sur le Toit« to the surreal »Voices« and the powerful dance-drama »A Smile at the Bottom of the Ladder«.



A Midsummer Night's D

**"THE COMPANY HAS AN AIR OF DISTINCTION"** - Richard Buckle, The Sunday Times





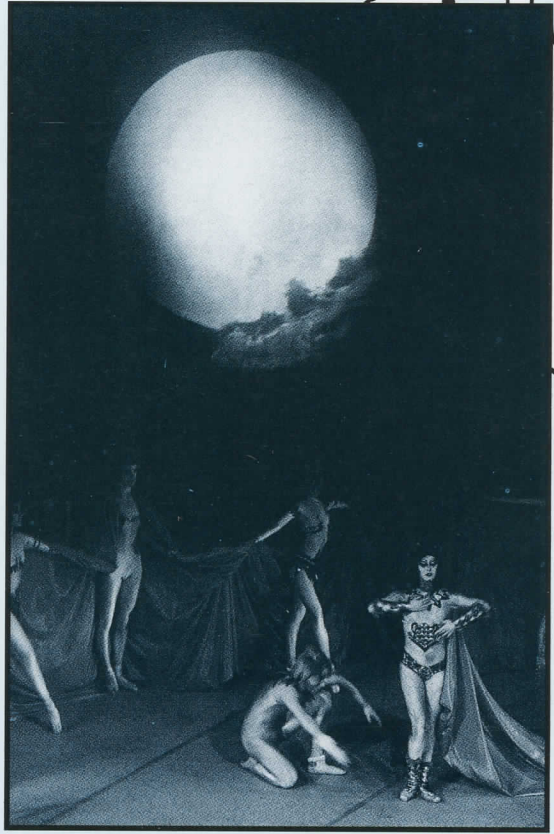
Figaro, Figaro



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La Ronde



The Magic Flute





*Alexander*  
**ROY** London Ballet  
Theatre

**Directors:** Alexander Roy  
Christina Gallea

**Company Offices:** North House, 69 Eton Avenue,  
London NW3 3EU  
Telephone: 071 - 586 2498  
Fax: 071 - 722 9942



# Alexander Roy London Ballet Theatre

Formed in 1965 by Alexander Roy and Christina Gallea, this superb troupe of 12 dancers is Britain's most internationally toured ballet company, performing regularly throughout the United Kingdom, Europe, Southeast Asia, and the Americas.

**A Midsummer Night's Dream** (full-length production)  
Production and Choreography by Alexander Roy  
Music by Giacomo Rossini

First performed in Plymouth, this ballet is based on Shakespeare's play, one of the most beautiful and magical of all his works. It is the story of two pairs of lovers, a story which, in the true Shakespearean tradition, is full of misunderstandings and mistaken identities. The ballet follows the plot of the play and describes the fantasy world in which fairies meddle in the affairs of mortals -- often with humorous and touching results.

"This 'Dream' is really quite an achievement." -The Times, London

"London Ballet Theatre's presentation, the first full-length British production, has some very special qualities, a magic of its own. It encompasses all the charm and humor of the Shakespearean play with subtly imaginative strokes." -The Echo, Liverpool

"The choreography was varied, fresh and imaginative, full of surprises and little welcome human touches. More than any other that I have seen, the set, a dream-like sylvan fantasy in pale green, caught the atmosphere of this Shakespeare play."

-The Morning Star, London

"This 'Dream' is a real delight." -Mid-Ocean News, Hamilton, Bermuda

"Elegant subtlety and wonderful choreography combined to offer Alexander Roy's ballet production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' a high degree of success. The gifted company delighted a highly appreciative audience with a series of truly exquisite performances. A perfect combination of humor, grace, and delicacy helped to retain a shimmering bubble of fantasy which was essential."

-The Evening News, Manchester

"Titania and Oberon are light and lyrical and there is a spirited and well-sustained quartet of lovers who dance with stylish fluency and an excellent sense of situation." -The Daily Telegraph, London

"Fantasy and delight reigned in the Victoria Theatre. 'Midsummer Night's Dream' was sheer magic, a buoyant entertainment that invited you to laugh and be happy. Tender, dramatic, and comic by turns, it offered marvelous dancing and plenty of fun. It was a ballet to send you floating homeward on a cloud of euphoria."

-The Straits Times, Singapore

"The Alexander Roy company makes the most of the ballet's potentialities, delivering a presentation suffused with magic and joie de vivre. Meticulous and elastic dancing marked the entire performance."

-The Royal Gazette, Hamilton, Bermuda



**"Figaro, Figaro,"** a new full-length ballet production choreographed by Alexander Roy will premiere in 1992.

The duality of the title suggests not only the many-sided talents of that lovable Barber from Seville, but also the extraordinary character of his creator, the Frenchman, Beaumarchais.

Beaumarchais was, at various times or simultaneously, artisan, courtier, musician, financier, diplomat, merchant, and ship-owner, army contractor, secret agent, publisher, litigant and controversialist on the grand scale. He knew the extremes of success and failure, wealth and poverty, popularity and neglect, the intense life in Paris leading up to the French Revolution, the frustration of exile, the freedom of palaces, and the constraint of jails.

At all times he was a man of ideas and one to whom ideas involved action. Glimpses, reflections, echoes of all his activities occur and re-occur in the plays. Their enduring interest lies in the degree in which they mirror the age, the society of which and for which they were written, and the way they evoke the love of life, restless energy unflagging gaiety, audacity, resources, and resilience of their author.

It was said of Beaumarchais that he had but one character - himself. Of Figaro, it was said that he epitomized all the virtues of the man who created him.

**"Figaro, Figaro"** is choreographed to the music of Luigi Boccherini and Manuel de Falla. Alexander Roy draws inspiration from the Commedia dell'Arte and includes in the action Figaro's obvious predecessors, Pulcinella and Harlequin. Figaro, then, is surrounded by those characters already well known from Mozart and Rossini's opera: Rosine and Suzanna, the Count, the Countess and Cherubin.

Figaro is also the center of a most unusual ballet, for beneath the fun and the frivolity there are rumbles of a revolution only a few years away. With his energy and vitality, Figaro is above all, a survivor.

**"Figaro, Figaro,"** as a ballet, offers numerous opportunities both for brilliant dancing and powerful interpretations from a cast of internationally hand-picked dance soloists.



# 'Midsummer Night's Dream' mixes best of ballet, comedy

By RICK de YAMPERT

News-Journal Entertainment Writer

DAYTONA BEACH — Puck, the mischievous, spell-casting fairy of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," was born to dance.

The Bard himself would have been delighted if he had witnessed the kinetic, frenetic Puck and company in the London Ballet Theatre's production of Shakespeare's comedy, staged Saturday night at Peabody Auditorium.

Choreographed by company founder Alexander Roy in 1980, the LBT production features an enchanting blend of classic dance, classical music, dance parody and Shakespeare's comic tale.

It's no wonder that Roy's ballet has become a perennial, international favorite for his troupe. With Shakespeare's comic tale of fairies, star-crossed young lovers and lowly commoners all confounded by the errant magic of Puck, Roy recognized a grand opportunity to weave a panorama of dance into one production.

The young court-bred lovers provided graceful, classic, if not daring ballet. The commoners, with their exaggerated, buffoonish movements — as much antics as dance — resembled actor Danny Kaye in one of his classic fits, or the Marx Brothers spending a night at the ballet.

The fairies gave the audience a cross of the mortal realms — majestic dance with the playful antics of Puck providing surprises, comedy and a modestly avant-garde spice.

Gina Long was a delight as Puck. With gossamer wings and horns protruding from her head, the truly sprite-sized Ms. Long scurried about to the music of Rossini sonatas. Unencumbered by the tradi-



News-Journal photo by Brian Myrick

A band of commoners hams it up during a humorous scene from the London Ballet Theater's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.'

## REVIEW

tional ballerina toe shoes, she tumbled, turned cartwheels, pranced with dainty steps and wove her arms in serpentine movements to cast her spells. Ms. Long brought the theater aspect of the troupe to life, bowing her head to show repentance to her master, Oberon, King of the Fairies, or tossing her head from side to side to show surprise at the results of her spells.

The ballet also proved to be a wonderful medium for the Bard's work in other characters and scenes.

Under Puck's magic, Titania, Queen of the Fairies, is driven to be with the common laborer Bottom, who finds his head turned into a jackass by Puck's spell. The

pathos inherent in the "beauty and the beast" myth was enhanced a hundredfold by their pas de deux.

The humor provided by the play-staging commoners in Shakespeare's play survives in Roy's translation, particularly when the audience is treated to Bottom hamming it to the hilt (literally) during a suicide scene.

Though some ballet purists might complain that Roy's choreography short-changes the traditional side of dance, the energy of Puck and the humor of the commoners make his production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" a charmer that will please many tastes.

The London Ballet Theatre is touring North America with the production, performing in Vero Beach on March 24 after stops in Ohio and Ontario.



# Shakespeare set elegantly to dance

By HERBERT PEREZ-VIDAL

Special to The Palm Beach Post

**PALM BEACH** - The Alexander Roy London Ballet Company brought its production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to the Society of the Four Arts on Wednesday evening. Based on William Shakespeare's comedy, the fanciful dance version was enchantingly delightful.

The group of 12 dancers tours more than any other ballet company in Britain. Based in London since 1974, the troupe was founded in 1965 by Alexander Roy and Christina Gallea. Roy is the company's director and principal dancer while Gallea is the associate director.

The work is set to Giacchino Rossini's music — *Sonatas I to VI* and *Sonata for Double Bass and Cello*. The flowing music and action of the ballet melded into a pleasing ensemble. It was as though the music had been scored for the ballet rather than the other way around.

Though narrated in some parts, the excellent pantomime by the dancers carried the complicated story of crossed lovers, the subplot of a play within a play and fairies thrown in for good measure.

As Puck the fairy messenger, Katyana Appleton stole the show. Her impressively sharp dance movements and elevation in her

leaps were outstanding.

In the principal role of Hermia, Verity Byrne was beautiful. Feather light on her feet, she seemed to defy gravity in her leaps and proved her excellent talent blending the contemporary and classical steps. Though she slipped and fell coming out of a turn, her recovery was so fast that it was almost imperceptible. Matthew Skilton, as her lover, Lysander, was exemplary.

As the King and Queen of the Fairies, Darius James and Deborah Weiss were statuesque.

The ballet exemplified the creativity of Roy's style by marrying the classical ballet forms and contemporary dance into a lively ensemble and doing it beautifully.



## THE ALBANY HERALD

# Standing Ovation For London Ballet

By MAUDE EVELYN MURPHY

Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream" was a "Midwinter Night's Delight" for the large Albany audience who saw the London Ballet Saturday night at the Municipal Auditorium.

"All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players," said the famous English bard. We'd like to rephrase that quotation. "All the world's a stage, and many men and women are fantastic dancers." This was proven by Alexander Roy's international company.

From the moment the curtain opened on the ethereal woodland scene to the final wedding celebration, the audience was under the magical spell of the Fairies.

Was it only a dream? Or did we really see the exquisite London Ballet on stage at the new auditorium?

Combining Shakespeare's drama with mime, flawless ballet technique and the haunting music of Rossini's string sonatas, the company provided an evening of enchantment. What a delightful way to step back in time and watch the world of fantasy where storybook characters really exist.

The leaps were high in elevation but not a sound was heard when the

dancers descended. This magical touch is only the result of endless hours of practice striving for perfection.

Ballet offers a discipline that no other art has. Those who persevere are filled with an ecstasy. The dedication which successful dancers must have helps with every phase of life.

"A winner never quits. A quitter never wins." This quotation is not Shakespearian, but he would have agreed.

The opening attraction for the Albany Concert Association should keep the Good Life City on its toes. A gala season is anticipated if the other performances follow in the footsteps of this one.

Together Christina Gallea and Alexander Roy make beautiful music together. Music is only complete when accompanied by Dance. No, I'm not prejudiced.

"All's well that ends well."

You can't argue with spontaneous standing ovation!

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Maude Evelyn Murphy is director of Murphy Dance Studio and a ballet dancer in her own right.



# Dancers delightful beyond words

By Miriam Smith  
News Journal

MANSFIELD — Virtually no one had a better grasp on language than William Shakespeare.

But the Alexander Roy London Ballet Theatre needed no words to interpret his comic love tale, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Friday night at the Renaissance Theatre — just splendid dancing.

In a kingdom abounding with fairies casting their love spells, the dancers captured all the romance and mysticism of the classic play with their fluid, sensuous motions.

The set, designed by Alexander Roy, beautifully conveyed the mystique of the woods where most of the fairies' antics took place.

The story revolves around Hermia, danced by Charlotte Sibley, who is in love with Lysander, danced by Ben Tyrell. But Hermia's father, Egeus, wants her to marry Demetrius, danced by King, who also is

## Review

King of the Fairies, danced by Darius James, and Titania, Queen of the Fairies, danced by Debbie White, were having a lover's spat.

Oberon orders the mischievous fairy, Puck, danced by John Broome, to give Titania a few drops of love potion in her sleep, so she will wake up immediately in love with the first person she sees. He also instructs that the potion be used for Demetrius so that he will fall in love with Helena.

But as is common with Shakespeare's comedies, things didn't exactly go according to plan. Despite the twisted love antics of Shakespeare's script, the dancers used

their flawlessly graceful movements and animated facial expressions to convey their love-stricken emotions.

Ballet is not normally thought of as a medium for comedy, but the company also was talented at bringing out the humor of the play. Mark Longthorn as Bottom was especially funny as the bumbling actor who, as a result of Puck's spell, became a miserable but hilarious half-moon, half-ass.

All the dancers were magnificent, but John Broome as Puck, Serena Cundari as Titania and Darius James as Oberon were fabulous.

The ballet drew a full house to the Renaissance Theatre, which gave the company an enthusiastic ovation for their magical performance. And rightfully so.

Jackson, Michigan

November 5, 1990

# 'Midsummer Night's Dream' and sonatas an ideal blend

By Terry Pow  
Special Writer

Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" lends itself so naturally to a dance treatment that the author seemed to have anticipated this possibility.

In the original play, Bottom, awaking to discover he's no longer shouldering an ass's head, exclaims:

"I have had a dream past the wit of man to say what dream it was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballet of this dream. It shall be called, 'Bottom's Dream,' because it hath no bottom."

While no record exists that Peter Quince ever composed such a ballet (poor Quince burned out early with "Pyramus and Thisbe"), others have made the attempt over the years.

Among them is choreographer Alexander Roy, whose production

## REVIEW

of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" for the London Ballet Theatre brought enchantment to the Potter Center Music Hall on Saturday night.

All the play's essential elements were there — the confusions of the pairs of lovers, Bottom's "translation," the tiff between the fairy King and Queen, Puck's mischievous interventions — but expressed solely through dance and music.

Well, almost solely. In a couple of places, Roy couldn't resist slipping in another kind of music: Shakespeare's verse.

As well as the fairy stuff, the ballet also has delicious fun with the rude mechanicals — Bottom, Quince, Flute, Snug and Starveling — and their clumsy efforts to

cobble together a play to show before the Duke.

My big surprise, though, was the music. Mendelssohn, who composed incidental music for the "Dream," would have been an obvious choice.

Instead, Roy used string sonatas and a sonata for double bass and cello by Rossini. Again and again, I was struck by how well the Rossini worked in this alien context, a tribute to the choreographer's skill in matching music to movement and mood.

If I had to single out performers from a uniformly excellent troupe, I'd mention Mark Longthorn (Bottom), John Broome (Puck), and Charlotte Sibley and Verity Byrne, as Hermia and Helena.

Bathed in pastel greens and russets, the ballet also is a dream to look at.



## Living

## London troupe in charming 'Midsummer' ballet

By M. RENEE TAYLOR

With only a dozen artists and some minor double casting, Alexander Roy London Ballet Theater presented Tuesday night a charming full-length classical ballet of Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream." The emphasis was, however, clearly on theater at the University of Connecticut's

**Review**

Jorgensen Auditorium. Between an offstage narrator's half dozen excerpts of the immortal Bard's comedic prose, elaborate mime convincingly told the tale of frivolous fairies and foolish mortals caught up in misadventure, magic spells and mistaken identity.

Alexander Roy, the producer, choreographer and set designer of the troupe, is also prominent as the ludicrous Bottom, a cloddish rustic transformed into a half-beast that mesmerizes the spell-bound fairy queen. His tireless antics of exaggerated gestures and symbolic actions provided the chief contrast to the agile vitality of John Broome's mischievous faun, Puck. Since Roy's ensemble choreography of even-tempered running steps and postures lacks sustained pointwork and technical difficulty, especially in his several too brief, anticlimatic pas de deux of lovers, Broome's arresting entrances and supple solos steal the show. He smoothly combines angular poses, fetal positions and insinuating slithering with wry attitudes as he pounces into low crouches backward somersaults and cartwheels.

Roy's forte is the staging of groups for arresting visual tableaux, especially in humorous scenes involving the bumbling "low" characters and the amusing rejection of young lovers of each other. Charlotte Sibley's lyrical Hermia suffered such a fate opposite Kevin Horn's dewy-eyed Demetrius and Philip Hargrave-Smith's staunch Lysander. Nicole Walmsley, as a legato Helena, accepted the fickle devotion of those lads with nubile exultation. She and Sibley displayed their most demanding dance in an early pas de deux that celebrated their friendship in pointwork and crossing arabesques before all the bickering began.



Puck in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'

Giacchino Rossini. While this music reflects the mood of the action, dancing and especially mime scenes are sometimes out of synchrony with its rhythm.

Disturbing casting of Darius James as Oberon, King of the Fairies, allows his sinister manner to fizzle with his overturned, angled spins and stiff jumps of low elevation. He is most supportive when partnering with the majestic Caroline Heming as Titania, Queen of the Fairies. Her elegant, assured lines and flair in lifts — as in a particularly dramatic Act II, pose, known as the "Bird" — revealed too briefly an underutilized talent.

Ancient Rome is simply suggested with a ruin of an archway and a bright white setting of cloth

panels and backdrop. Sketches of skeleton trees are visually boring by Act II despite varied lighting easily accepted by the neutral scenery. Purple for Puck, green for fairies and amber lighting for humans complements the chiffer pastels of ladies' dresses and neutral coloring of men's costumes. Sequined head-to-toe skirts and layered filmy batwings constantly set aflutter were imaginative sheaths for the fairies while Puck's athletic build was emphasized with a flesh-toned leotard and a crown of two tiny horns to which he was forever directing your admiration.

*M. Renee Taylor reviews musical events for the Journal Inquirer.*

New London, Connecticut



## THE ARTS

Midsummer Night's  
Dream

## John Percival

put on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as a two-act ballet is bold enterprise at any time; when you have a company of only 10 dancers, it appears possibly foolhardy. But, with some doubling of roles and a firm refusal to acknowledge bounties of sex, Alexander Roy carries it off surprisingly well. His new production for his London Ballet Theatre.

Roy has avoided odious comparisons by an unexpected choice of music: Rossini's String

Sonatas Nos 1 to 6 and his Concerto for cello and double bass, with a few of Shakespeare's words, on tape, occasionally between movements. It makes a pleasant accompaniment, but only when Puck was putting the lovers to sleep could I hear any compelling reason for choosing these particular pieces.

One positive advantage of the score, however, is that the available music has led Roy to provide an early dance for Lysander with Helena, showing their friendship before the doubles begin and thus putting their quarrel in context. Perhaps because of that, the lovers' story proves the most successful of the ballet's three strands, with Glenda Nicholls particularly affecting Helena.

For a small touring company this *Dream* is really quite an achievement.

## Alexander Roy Ballet

ELEGANT subtlety and wonderful choreography combined to offer Alexander Roy's ballet production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* a high degree of success at Chester's Gateway Theatre.

The gifted company of the Alexander Roy London Ballet Theatre delighted a highly appreciative audience with a series of truly exquisite performances.

Much of the mischief stems from the attempts of Oberon, the fairy king, to sweeten the ill humour of his wife Titania, by placing a few drops of enchanted flower on her eyes to induce renewed love.

Unfortunately Puck, the mysterious fairy messenger, complicates the issue by placing the drops on the

eyes of a human called Lysander who forgets his true love Hermia, and falls for her friend, Helena, who in turn loves Lysander's rival Demetrius.

The ensuing highly ordered Shakespearean turmoil gives Puck, played by the fragile but irrepressible Prue Sheridan an opportunity to enhance the audience with her irresistible antics.

Clair Symonds, who plays Queen Titania, also gave a stunningly graceful and elfin performance which was perfectly offset by the comically earthy, yet powerful presence of Bottom, played by Alexander Roy.

A perfect combination of humour, grace and delicacy helped to retain a shimmering bubble of fantasy which was essential.

BATHED in the subtle green translucent light of the woods, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* came to life as a ballet at the Gateway Theatre this week.

The Alexander Roy London Ballet Theatre conveyed the essence of the play without Shakespeare's words.

The humour of the clownish "low" characters, Bottom, Quince, Flute and Snug, was represented in actions more reminiscent of medieval tumblers than dancers. The rustic background of these characters emerged in their deliberately clumsy actions, which brought approving laughter from the audience.

The glamorous Titania, Queen of the Fairies, danced by Clair Symonds, was both beautiful and ethereal, the

perfect combination for a fairy. She was an admirable counterpoint to the more stern Oberon (Alpo Pakarinen).

The humans present most of the ballet's dramatic impact with a tangled web of love and misunderstanding between two couples. Natalie Mai, Jonathan Rant, Harmen Tromp and Tania Fairbairn made the confusions intelligible, leaving the audience in no doubt as the eventual happy ending.

The most memorable performance came from Prue Sheridan as Puck, the fairy messenger. She brought a devilish aspect to the character and a sense of wicked fun in confusing the human couples. A most energetic and acrobatic performance which stole the show.

The set was simple, a few skeleton trees and a broken

archway to suggest the court. Emphasis was on the dancers, in much the same way as Charles Marowitz dramatic production put emphasis on the words. There were no white boxes and trapeze swings here, but subtle lighting effects to suggest scene changes from court to wood, and between parts of the woods.

Music was provided by the ballet's own ensemble; and as Shakespeare couldn't be kept out there were short narratives taken from the play.

This is the first company to perform the full *Midsummer Night's Dream* as a ballet, in Britain, and it was adapted by Alexander Roy as their first full length ballet. It can only be described as a major success, distilling the Shakespearian humour, drama and pathos into ballet movements.

**IT IS a "Dream" with a difference for ballet fans at the Wimbledon Theatre this week. The Alexander Roy company has made its own version of Shakespeare's most magical comedy, not a bit like the familiar productions of "A Midsummer Night's Dream".**

There is much respect for the classical tradition, but Alexander Roy's choreography is decidedly present day.

He is openly influenced by the theatre-narrator Cherry Gilliam gives chunks of the original poetry before key scenes. And the white-bright set surrounded by green-ribbon, painted trees echoes the famous Peter Brook stage production for the Royal Shakespeare Company last decade. There were other similarities, too. Where Brook's cast performed Japanese gymnastics, the dancers in this ballet go in for stylised somersaults and judo throws.

Nevertheless, this "Dream" is definitely in Ancient Greece. Action revolves around a picturesque ruined arch, and Puck is a mischievous faun. On the opening night Prue Sheridan never flagged in the demanding antics the part demanded. The lovers are pretty, with the girls in graceful chiffon and the men all wild eyed and romantic with cloaks and dishevelled hair-do's.

Natalie Mai is a dynamic Hermia, whilst Tania Fairbairn is perfect casting as the willowy Helena. As usual it is harder for Lysander and Demetrius to develop individuality.

Jonathan Rant and Gerard Pook refused to be mere foils to the contrasted ladies. Their dancing is athletic and personality-packed.

The humans in Roy's ballet are soft and slightly foolish. The fairies are glittering, rather dangerous creatures in silver green skins and filmy wings. Oberon, Alpo Pakarinen, is an exotic monarch with heavy make-up and a ruthless line in dancing. Clair Symonds as Titania also goes in for imperious movement.

Alexander Roy is a superb Bottom, hilariously dignified. The music is by Rossini; string sonatas, plus concerto for double bass and cello.

J.E.



ALEXANDER ROY LONDON BALLET THEATRE PERFORMED IN 'GIFHORN'  
( 10 November 1992) " FIGARO, FIGARO "

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The Gifhorn audience was offered something of a special cultural event last Friday. Alexander Roy, no longer unknown to Gifhorn Balletomanes, brought his London Ballet Theatre to perform in the Cultural Centre. They presented ' Une Journée Folle' ( subtitle of 'FIGARO, FIGARO') to music by Jean-Phillipe Rameau and Luigi Boccherini.

For experts of classical ballet, Alexander Roy is classed as a choreographer of world-class. First Principal Dancer at the Komische Opera in Berlin, seasons with the Amsterdam Ballet and Nederlands Dans Theater, Principal dancer with the London Dance Theatre and appearances throughout the world have led him on his way to the peak of his career. As a choreographer he has created more than 30 ballets for his own company, whereby powerful dance-dramas and satirical comedy are his preferred themes - as indeed in Friday evening's performance.

The play by Pierre-Auguste Caron de Beaumarchais, written in the 18th Century, and which has already inspired Mozart's opera, formed the basis for the newest of Alexander Roy's ballets: Figaro, valet to Count Almaviva is to marry Suzanne the Countess's maid. Suzanne, however, is bothered by the Count who is making overtures to her and Figaro is threatened by Marcelline, the elderly Housekeeper, whom he once promised to marry in return for a loan of some money. Cherubino, the page, is also having a troubled love life. Having been caught flirting with one of the maids, the Count now discovers his infatuation for his wife, the Countess and threatens to send the boy away to the army.

With Robert Clarke who appears as the Count and Stephen Brennan in the role of Figaro, the audience were able to appreciate not only expressive dancing but also the subtle humour of the piece, showing a wide spektrum of love and attraction. Through the successful mixture of dance, music and scenery the audience is itself involved in the intrigues and jealousy, the yearning and hopes of this play around love. In attractively colourful costumes, the cast won over the enthusiastic audience. The work combined humour and coquetterie, elegance and impressive choreography forming a totally enjoyable theatre experience.



# This 'Dream' is a real delight

The Mid-Ocean News, Friday, November 6, 1967 Hamilton, Bermuda

THIS is the week that the globetrotting London Ballet Theatre came to town, Bermuda being a four-night/two-program-me whistle stop en route between — would you believe? — Aruba and a five-week tour of Germany.

For their visit here the Company is comprised of 10 dancers only, just four short of their regular complement.

Yet despite their depletion in ranks and a strenuous repertoire that includes

Shakespeare's 26-or-more character *A Midsummer Night's dream*, the Company continues to function exceedingly well. Looking around, who would know for instance, that some of the newly recruited members have yet to make their Ballet Theatre debut east of the Herring Pond?

And indeed, a delightful rendition of *The Dream* it was that they offered at Wednesday's first night to an almost full City Hall house.

Though now pared to a mere 14 characters, this version by the Company's co-founder and principal choreographer Alexander Roy, seldom falters, and if indeed the production is not as you like it then blame the Bard and not Mr. Roy's reading of the text, for the faults go with the territory.

The most drastic and surprising omission from the production is that of the Duke and his betrothed, for whom Bottom and his anxious-to-please fellow rustics spend so much time rehearsing *Pyramus and Thisbe*.

I say "surprising" because in the theatre this pared pair frequently portray the roles of Oberon and Titania as well, and these do appear in this version.

With so much doubling going on, their absence is somewhat conspicuous, yet on certain levels the work tends to succeed without them.

The most notable doubling however is that of the suitors Demetrius (Paul Payne) and Lysander (Nicholas May) who alternate the roles of Quince the carpenter and Starveling the tailor respectively, in some lightning-quick changes.

The stage set (again of Mr. Roy's design) also plays many parts in its time and serves as both Athens and its environs, and a of leafless trees and a ruined arch — clearly "Emily was here".

It is basically white as Peter Brook's famed version was, but is prettily lit by Christine Galles — the remaining co-founder and costume co-designer.

It is to the choreographer's credit that although the ballet was showy the plot was never sacrificed for effect, and was as inventive as Shakespeare's comedy would allow.

Thus, if Oberon dances just one or more solos too many, I suspect an equivalent monologue is to be located within the text.

One notable addition by Mr. Roy that works beautifully is the initial duet for Helena (Antoinette Goodfellow) and Hermia (Rachel Field). It not only reflects their devotion to each other, but is neatly con-

trasted by their "spiky" approach later when they quarrel. It is as good as notion as Kenneth Macmillan's introduction of Rosaline in *Romeo and Juliet*.

One must also acknowledge the pace of the production — so swift came the dance narrative that I feared this pint pot might overflow with plot before its time.

But no, Mr. Roy was clever enough to end Act I with Puck pacifying (by magic) the troubled and confused lovers, and with Act II being filled with reconciliation, celebration and revelry.

There were further causes for celebration on this night: as someone remarked how splendid it was to see male dancers at City Hall again.

I agree and would celebrate equally the high quality of performance by both male and female Company members.

Both the aforementioned men and Sylvain Boniface as Oberon were exemplary, with John Broome — the pride of the fleet and the audience — making a lithe, joyous and ever whirling Puck.

As Titania, ex-Royal Ballet Sadler's Wells dancer Sheila Styles glimmers as she presents a very precise and diamond sharp portrayal of the Fairy Queen.

Which leaves us with the role that the indefatigable Mr. Roy has fashioned for himself as Bottom the weaver, which in time will probably be as memorable as Stanley Holden's and Alexander Grant's Widow and Alain in the Royal Ballet's *La Fille Mal Gardée*.

One would expect him to weave some starry creation for himself, yet he is content to let this dance tapestry to be viewed as a complete ensemble canvas.

Also appearing in a variety of roles were Julianne Ruce-Oxley and Alister Temba, two very welcome newcomers.

Under the auspices of the Bermuda Ballet Association, the Company will dance to-night and Saturday Acts I and II of *Coppelia* featuring students from local dance schools, and *La Ronde*. Tickets are available at the Visitors Service Bureau: 296-1727.



# EVENT REPORT

ASSOCIATION OF PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTERS

## LONDON BALLET THEATRE in A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Gary Lindsey Artist Services:

October 6, 1989/Sangamon State University/Springfield, IL

John Dale Kennedy reporting

**Audience:** 1101 in 1951 seat hall

**Response:** Outstanding

**Quality of Mgmt. PR:** Outstanding **Tech:** Very Good

**Comments:** Light ballet, lots of nice Rossini music. Easy setup. The dancers are uneven, but Puck is worth the price of admission. Able to see new video.

October 7, 1989/Fermilab Arts Series/Batavia, IL

Tammy Kikta reporting

**Audience:** 718 in 830 seat hall

**Response:** Very Good

**Quality of Mgmt. PR:** Very Good **Tech:** Good

**Comments:** Although we've presented many dance companies at Fermilab, this was the first time we've done a full-length ballet as opposed to a repertory program. The ARLBT's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was just beautiful—dancing, costumes, set, etc. The simplicity of the set was perfect for a theater with limited technical capabilities such as ours, and magical moments were created with lighting. The members of this company—directors, dancers and tech—were a delight to work with, and were extremely patient as we experienced some technical difficulties in our theater.

## LONDON BALLET THEATRE in A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Gary Lindsey

November 10, 1989/Raritan Valley Community College/Somerville, NJ

Charles Miller reporting

**Audience:** 660 in 1,000 seat hall

**Response:** Very Good

**Quality of Mgmt. PR:** Outstanding **Tech:** Outstanding

**Comments:** Because this was not a typical ballet, it took the audience a while to warm up; but once they did, the audience loved the show. My tech director couldn't say enough good things about the tech staff. I would recommend for a dance series.



## Gary Lindsey Artist Services

2700 15th Avenue, San Francisco, California 94127

(415) 759-6410 Fax (415) 681-9801

Alexander Roy LONDON BALLET THEATRE  
North American Touring Engagements 1988-1993

Menominee, MI	Sept. 21, 1988	*Helena, AR	Oct. 14, 1990
Iron Mountain, MI	Sept. 22, 1988	Wilmington, NC	Oct. 16, 1990
Ironwood, MI	Sept. 23, 1988	*Chattanooga, TN	Oct. 19, 1990
Calumet, MI	Sept. 24, 1988	Albany, GA	Oct. 20, 1990
Ishpeming, MI	Sept. 25, 1988	Savannah, GA	Oct. 21, 1990
Moorhead, MN	Sept. 27, 1988	Sumter, SC	Oct. 22, 1990
Sylvania, OH	Sept. 30, 1988	Troy, AL	Oct. 25, 1990
Akron, OH	Oct. 1, 1988	Mount Kisco, NY	Oct. 28, 1990
Warren, OH	Oct. 2, 1988	*Dubuque, IA	Oct. 31, 1990
Warren, PA	Oct. 3, 1988	Mansfield, OH	Nov. 2, 1990
Helena, AR	Oct. 5, 1988	Jackson, MI	Nov. 3, 1990
Mobile, AL	Oct. 7, 1988	Niagara Falls, ON	Nov. 5, 1990
Meridian, MS	Oct. 9, 1988	Erie, PA	Nov. 6, 1990
Valdosta, GA	Oct. 11, 1988	*Cookeville, TN	Feb. 21, 1992
Concord, NH	Oct. 14, 1988	Norcross, GA	Feb. 22, 1992
Bellingham, WA	Oct. 15-16, 1988	Dothan, AL	Feb. 25, 1992
Corvallis, OR	Oct. 18, 1988	Palm Beach, FL	Feb. 26, 1992
Modesto, CA	Oct. 20, 1988	Kingsport, TN	Feb. 27, 1992
Bakersfield, CA	Oct. 21, 1988	Wayne, NJ	Feb. 29, 1992
Sn Luis Obispo, CA	Oct. 22, 1988	Easton, MD	Mar. 1, 1992
Visalia, CA	Oct. 23, 1988	Kerrville, TX	Mar. 3, 1992
Grove City, PA	Oct. 26, 1988	Springfield, MO	Mar. 6-7, 1992
Ames, IA	Oct. 28, 1988	Lake City, FL	Mar. 10, 1992
Omaha, NE	Oct. 30, 1988	DeLand, FL	Mar. 11, 1992
Storrs, CT	Nov. 1, 1988	Fort Myers, FL	Mar. 12, 1992
Atlantic City, NJ	Nov. 2, 1988	Orlando, FL	Mar. 13, 1992
Millersville, PA	Nov. 3, 1988	Daytona Beach, FL	Mar. 14, 1992
York, PA	Nov. 4, 1988	Youngstown, OH	Mar. 18, 1992
Hagerstown, MD	Nov. 5, 1988	Kingston, ONT	Mar. 21, 1992
Scranton, PA	Nov. 6, 1988	Vero Beach, FL	Mar. 24, 1992
Kenosha, WI	Oct. 4, 1989	Key West, FL	Mar. 26-27, 1992
Springfield, IL	Oct. 5-6, 1989	Boca Raton, FL	Mar. 28, 1992
Dubuque, IA	Oct. 8, 1989	Santa Rosa, CA	April 1, 1992
Davenport, IA	Oct. 9, 1989	*Aruba, Antilles	April 3, 1992
Lamoni, IA	Oct. 10, 1989	St. Croix, VI	April 4, 1992
Cedar Falls, IA	Oct. 11, 1989	St. Thomas, VI	April 11-12, 1992
Mt. Pleasant, MI	Oct. 13, 1989	Fargo, ND	March 3, 1993
Auburn, AL	Oct. 15, 1989	Morris, MN	March 5, 1993
Salem, VA	Oct. 17, 1989	Brooklyn, NY	March 10-13, 1993
Charlotte, NC	Oct. 18-19, 1989	Potsdam, NY	March 16, 1993
Chattanooga, TN	Oct. 20, 1989	Salem, OR	March 20, 1993
Cookeville, TN	Oct. 21, 1989	Richland, WA	March 23, 1993
Fairbanks, AK	Oct. 24-25, 1989	Pella, IA	March 25, 1993
*Bellingham, WA	Oct. 27, 1989	East Peoria, IL	March 26, 1993
Boise, ID	Oct. 29, 1989	Downers Grove, IL	March 28, 1993
Bremerton, WA	Nov. 1, 1989	Corning, NY	April 3, 1993
Olympia, WA	Nov. 3, 1989	Blacksburg, VA	April 6, 1993
Spokane, WA	Nov. 4, 1989		
Walla Walla, WA	Nov. 5, 1989		
Durango, CO	Nov. 7, 1989		
Somerville, NJ	Nov. 10, 1989		
Greenville, NY	Nov. 11, 1989		
Riverhead, NY	Nov. 12, 1989		
DeKalb, IL	Oct. 4, 1990		
Tiffin, OH	Oct. 6, 1990		
Las Vegas, NV	Oct. 9, 1990		
Fresno, CA	Oct. 11-12, 1990		

\* = return engagements



*"Fantasy and delight reigned. Sheer magic!"*

—The Straits Times, Singapore

*"Truly exquisite performances!"*

—The Evening News, Manchester

*"Quite an achievement!"*

—The Times, London



Alexander  
Roy  
London Ballet Theatre