

## **RAD Vice Presidents**

### **David Bintley CBE**

Born in Huddersfield, David trained at the Royal Ballet School and joined Saddler's Wells Royal Ballet in 1976. In 1978 he created his first professional work for the company, *The Outsider*. As a dancer his roles include Widow Simone and Alain in *La Fille mal gardée*, Bottom in *The Dream* and the title role in *Petrushka*, for which he was awarded the 1984 Laurence Olivier Award for Dance. Other accolades include, a Manchester Evening News Award for Dance, a coveted South Bank Award and a Barclays TMA Award for the staging of a Balanchine mixed programme.

He was appointed Company Choreographer for Saddler's Wells Royal Ballet in 1983 and in 1986 transferred to the Royal Ballet where he was resident choreographer until 1993. In August 1995, he succeeded Peter Wright as Director of Birmingham Royal Ballet and since then has created many works for the Company. David was awarded a CBE in June 2001.

### **Li Cunxin**

Li Cunxin began dancing aged 11 when he was selected to join Madame Mao's Beijing Dance Academy. Graduating in 1979 he took part in a cultural exchange visit to the US and - after a well-documented defection - found a home with the Houston Ballet, becoming principal dancer and staying there for 16 years. Over his career, Li has performed with some of the most prestigious ballet companies in the world, winning medals in several international competitions, and eventually becoming principal artist with the Australian Ballet.

When he retired as a dancer Li embarked on a second career; taking a detour into the world of finance where, for several years, he worked as a senior manager at Bell Potter, one of the top stockbroking firms in his adopted home of Australia.

In 2005 Li returned to dance with an appointment to the board of the Australian Ballet and in 2012 became the Artistic Director of Queensland Ballet. That same year sat on the judging panel for the Final of the Genée International Ballet Competition in Wellington, New Zealand. His 2003 autobiography, *Mao's Last Dancer*, is an international bestseller and in 2009 it was made into a critically acclaimed feature film.

Li is a motivational speaker and mentor and has recently been nominated as a finalist for the Australian of the Year Award.

### **Dame Beryl Grey DBE DMus DLitt DEd FRSA**

Beryl Grey began ballet at the age of four. At ten she was given a scholarship to the Vic-Wells Ballet School, joining Sadler's Wells Ballet within four years. In 1957 she made ballet history, dancing Odette/Odile with the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow, and Giselle with the Kirov Ballet in Leningrad. She continued to dance as a guest ballerina with companies throughout the world until the mid-1960s.

In 1966 she became director general of the Arts Educational School, and governor of London Festival Ballet, where she was later artistic director. As well as numerous honorary

doctorates, Beryl Grey was awarded the CBE in 1973 and created a Dame of the same order in 1988.

### **David McAllister AM**

A graduate of The Australian Ballet School, Perth-born David McAllister joined The Australian Ballet in 1983. He was promoted to Senior Artist in 1986 and to Principal Artist in 1989. In 1985 he won a Bronze Medal at the Fifth International Ballet Competition in Moscow, which saw him invited to return to the USSR as a guest artist where he made numerous appearances with the Bolshoi Ballet, the Kirov Ballet, the Georgian State Ballet

and other companies. In 1989 David was guest artist with The National Ballet of Canada, dancing John Cranko's *Romeo and Juliet* as well as *Etudes* and *The Four Temperaments*. David has worked as a guest teacher with The Australian Ballet School, The Dancers Company, the RAD, the Cecchetti Society, Australian Institute of Classical Dance and various summer schools. David danced for the final time in *Giselle* on 24 March 2001 at the Sydney Opera House and became Artistic Director of The Australian Ballet in July 2001. He was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2004.

### **Wayne Sleep OBE**

Wayne Sleep won a scholarship to The Royal Ballet School at the age of twelve and later became a Senior Principal of The Royal Ballet. Numerous roles were created for him by distinguished choreographers including Frederick Ashton, Kenneth MacMillan, Ninette de Valois, John Neumeier, Gillian Lynne and Rudolf Nureyev.

His musical theatre credits include: *Cats*, *Song and Dance*, *The Point*, *High Society*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and *Cabaret*. As an actor: *Twelfth Night*, *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Servant Of Two Masters* and *She Stoops To Conquer*. Films: *The First Great Train Robbery*, *The Virgin Soldiers* and *The Tales of Beatrix Potter*. In television he was the subject of: *This Is Your Life*, *The South Bank Show* and appeared in *The Hot Shoe Show*, *The Royal Variety Shows*, *The Soldier's Tale*, *Big Ballet* and *The Real Marigold Hotel*. His concert tours include: *Magic of the Musicals* with Marti Webb and *Hollywood and Broadway* with Lorna Luft. He created, choreographed, directed and appeared in a revue DASH which incorporated for the first time all dance genres (including ballet, jazz, tap and contemporary), which after many London seasons, toured internationally.

He has honorary degrees from the universities of Exeter, Teesside and Plymouth and was appointed OBE. He is a Vice-President of the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD), a Patron of many institutions including British Ballet Organisation and is the recipient of many awards including The Carl Alan Award (International Dance Teachers Association) and Show Business Personality of the Year (The Variety Club of Great Britain,) and has two entries in The Guinness Book of Records. He has been on the judge's panel for the RAD Genée International Ballet Competition as well as a dance judge on the ITV series *Stepping Out*. His charity, The Wayne Sleep Foundation, helps students who have successfully gained a place at a performing arts vocational college. He continues to pass on his knowledge through private tuition and workshops for all ages.

### **Sir Peter Wright CBE DMus DLitt FBSM**

Peter made his debut as a professional dancer with the Ballets Jooss during World War II and in the 1950's appeared with several dance companies, including the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. In 1959 he was appointed Ballet Master to the Sadler's Wells Opera and teacher at The Royal Ballet School. In 1961 he went to Stuttgart as Teacher and Ballet Master to the company being formed by John Cranko; there he choreographed several ballets.

During the 1960s he also established himself as a successful producer of television ballets and choreographed various West End musicals and revues. In 1969 Peter returned to The Royal Ballet as Associate to the Directors and then became Assistant Director and Associate Director. In 1977 he was appointed Director of Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet, taking the Company to Birmingham in 1990 when it became Birmingham Royal Ballet. He had the title Director Laureate conferred on him in 1995 by Princess Margaret on his retirement

from the Company. Peter received the Evening Standard Award for Ballet in 1981, and in 1985 was made a CBE.

In 1990 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Music from London University, the title of Special Professor of Performance Studies from the University of Birmingham and he was presented with the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Award from the RAD. In 1991 he was made a Fellow of the Birmingham Conservatoire of Music. He also won the 1991 Digital Premier Award, which he used to commission a new ballet for the company. He was awarded a knighthood in the 1993 Queen's birthday honours list, an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from the University of Birmingham in 1994 and the Critics' Circle Award in 1995 for Distinguished Service to the Arts.