Romeo and Juliet
American Ballet Theatre
February 8-11, 2018
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American Ballet Theatre is a co-presentation with University Musical Society

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Michigan Opera Theatre
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**ROMEO AND JULIET**

**Romeo and Juliet**
Ballet in Three Acts

*Choreography by*
KENNETH McMILLAN

*Music by SERGEI PROKOFIEV*

*Scenery and costumes by*
NICHOLAS GEORGIADIS

*Lighting by THOMAS SKELTON*

**SYNOPSIS**

**ACT I, Scene 1**

**The market place**
The scene is Verona. Romeo, son of Montague, tries unsuccessfully to declare his love for Rosaline and is consoled by his friends Mercutio and Benvolio. As day breaks the townspeople meet in the market place, and a quarrel develops between Tybalt, a nephew of Capulet, and Romeo and his friends. The Capulets and Montagues are sworn enemies, and a fight soon begins. The Lords Montague and Capulet join in the fray, which is stopped by the appearance of the Prince of Verona, who commands the families to end their feud.

**Scene 2**

**Juliet’s anteroom in the Capulet house**
Juliet, playing with her nurse, is interrupted by her parents, Lord and Lady Capulet. They present her to Paris, a wealthy young nobleman who has asked for her hand in marriage.

**Scene 3**

**Outside the Capulet house**
Guests arrive for a ball at the Capulets’ house. Romeo, Mercutio and Benvolio, disguised in masks, decide to go in pursuit of Rosaline.

**Scene 4**

**The Ballroom**
Romeo and his friends arrive at the height of the festivities. The guests watch Juliet dance. Mercutio, seeing Romeo is entranced by her, dances to distract attention from him. Tybalt recognizes Romeo and orders him to leave, but Lord Capulet intervenes and welcomes him as a guest in his house.

**Scene 5**

**Outside the Capulet house**
As the guests leave the ball, Lady Capulet restrains Tybalt from pursuing Romeo.

**Scene 6**

**Juliet’s balcony**
Unable to sleep, Juliet comes out on to her balcony and is thinking of Romeo when he suddenly appears in the garden. They confess their love for each other.

**Intermission**

**ACT II, Scene 1**

**The market place**
Romeo can think only of Juliet, and as a wedding procession passes, he dreams of the day when he will marry her. In the meantime, Juliet’s nurse pushes her way through the crowds in search of Romeo to give him a letter from Juliet. He reads that Juliet has consented to be his wife.

**Scene 2**

**The chapel**
The lovers are secretly married by Friar Laurence, who hopes that their union will end the strife between the Montagues and the Capulets.

**Scene 3**

**The market place**
Interrupting the revelry, Tybalt fights with Mercutio and kills him. Romeo avenges the death of his friend and is exiled.

**Intermission**

**ACT III, Scene 1**

**The bedroom**
At dawn the next morning, the household is stirring and Romeo must go. He embraces Juliet and leaves as her parents enter with Paris. Juliet refuses to marry Paris, and hurt by her rebuff, he leaves. Juliet’s parents are angry and threaten to disown her. Juliet rushes to see Friar Laurence.

**Scene 2**

**The chapel**
Juliet falls at the Friar’s feet and begs for his help. He gives her a vial of sleeping potion that will make her fall into a death-like sleep. Her parents, believing her dead, will bury her in the family tomb. Meanwhile, Romeo, warned by Friar Laurence, will return under cover of darkness and take her away from Verona.

**Scene 3**

**The bedroom**
That evening, Juliet agrees to marry Paris, but next morning, when her parents arrive with him they find her apparently lifeless on the bed.

**Scene 4**

**The Capulet family crypt**
Romeo, failing to receive the Friar’s message, returns to Verona stunned by grief at the news of Juliet’s death. Disguised as a monk he enters the crypt. Finding Paris by Juliet’s body, Romeo kills him and, believing Juliet to be dead, drinks a vial of poison. Juliet awakes and, finding Romeo dead, stabs herself.

**PRODUCTION HISTORY**

*Romeo and Juliet* was first performed by The Royal Ballet at the Royal Opera House on February 9, 1965. It entered the repertory of American Ballet Theatre on January 3, 1985, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C. with Leslie Browne and Robert La Fosse in the leading roles.

Kenneth MacMillan was assisted in the original staging of *Romeo and Juliet* for American Ballet Theatre by Monica Parker.

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American Ballet Theatre’s performances of *Romeo and Juliet* are generously underwritten through an endowed gift from Ali and Monica Wambold.
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Stella Abrera
South Pasadena, California
Joined ABT 1996
Principal since 2015
Sponsored by
Mary Jo and Ted Shen

Hee Seo
Seoul, South Korea
Joined ABT 2005
Principal since 2012
Sponsored by
Pamela and David B. Ford

Isabella Boylston
Sun Valley, Idaho
Joined ABT 2006
Principal since 2014
Sponsored by
Linda Allard,
Andrea and Ken Brodlieb

Daniil Simkin
Novosibirsk, Russia
Joined ABT 2008
Principal since 2012
Sponsored by
Sharon Patrick

Jeffrey Cirio
Springfield, Pennsylvania
Joined ABT 2015
Principal since 2016
Sponsored by
The Mathey Family,
Donna Calamari

Cory Stearns
Mattituck, New York
Joined ABT 2005
Principal since 2011
Sponsored by
Howard S. Paley

Misty Copeland
Kansas City, Missouri
Joined ABT 2001
Principal since 2015
Sponsored by
Valentino D. Carlotti

Devon Teuscher
South Burlington, Vermont
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Principal since 2017
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Herman Cornejo
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Ask ABT:

BY ERICA HOBB

American Ballet Theatre has been performing at the Detroit Opera House since the theater’s opening in 1996. Since then, the company has danced Swan Lake, Don Quixote, The Merry Widow, Le Corsaire and, most recently, 2016’s The Sleeping Beauty on the Opera House stage.

While the movements seem effortless, the life of a professional ballet dancer is one of dedication, sacrifice and discipline, as they continually strive to perfect their art form. Dancers typically begin their training as young children in preparation for a competitive career that begins as a teenager.

Below, five members of American Ballet Theatre’s corps de ballet talk about their experiences as professional ballerinas, including what it takes, why they do it, and how bad it really hurts to dance on their toes.

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**How did you get into dance?**

*My grandma got me into ballet. She is a pianist and made me fall in love with music. She drove me to all my ballet classes and even taught me how to do the polka around the house!*

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**Anabel Katsnelson**

**Age:** 20

**Rockland County, New York**

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**What is a typical day like for you as a ballet dancer?**

*A typical day for me starts with a 7:30 a.m. wake-up call, because I love to do Pilates or some other light exercises in the morning to get my body moving. Then I always have breakfast and get ready for class at 10:15 a.m. Some days are more intense than others, but we usually finish at 7 p.m., after which I go home to cook dinner and unwind. I am also working towards my bachelor’s degree with an online college so I try to squeeze some school in every night! I also try to see a performance every week, whether it is dance, theatre, music, or any other live art!*

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**What are the best aspects of being a professional dancer?**

*The best part of being a professional dancer at ABT is that I can watch the amazing dancers that I idolize every day in the studios and on stage. Watching others dance is not only a joy, but it is also the most important learning tool. There is so much that can be learned from observing how other dancers use their bodies, interpret the music, and emote onstage.*

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**What is something people would be surprised to know about ballet dancers?**

*People would be surprised by how much dancers eat! We constantly need to refuel because we are so active.*

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**What are the best aspects of being a professional dancer?**

*One of the best things about being a professional dancer is how much we get to travel. Touring is one thing ABT has been known for. In my short time with the company I have already gotten to explore some of the most exquisite places in the world.*

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**What are the challenges of being a professional dancer?**

*A challenging part would be learning multiple ballets at once. During a performance day for example, we might be rehearsing Romeo and Juliet, Firebird, and Swan Lake in the span of five hours. And after five hours of rehearsing those different ballets, you have to get ready for a show of The Nutcracker you have that night. It takes a lot of focus and mental stamina to stay sharp with all the choreography.*

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**What is it like dancing on your toes? Does it hurt?**

*Dancing on our toes takes years of practice, strengthening, and learning the correct technique to dance in pointe shoes. The first time I went up in my pointe shoes I felt like I was a prima ballerina! My teachers had to pry the shoes off of me! Now that I’m older I have gotten used to the thrill of it. And yes, pointe shoes can be painful. Wearing them for hours and hours on end can cause some pretty bad blisters, corns, and numbness.*

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**What else should people know about being a professional ballet dancer?**

*Being a dancer is a lifestyle for sure. It takes sacrifice to make it in a company. When you have a passion for this art form, it doesn’t even feel like a job. I feel so grateful to be doing what I love and getting to express myself as an artist everyday.*
What was your journey like to becoming a professional ballet dancer?
When I was 15, I won second place at the Youth America Grand Prix NYF ballet competition and received a full scholarship from the American Ballet Theatre Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School. In 2012, I joined the ABT Studio Company. After four months, I became an apprentice with ABT, and I joined corps de ballet in 2013.

What is it like dancing on your toes? Does it hurt?
Yes, we get lots of blisters and corns. But dancing on pointe is definitely my favorite part of ballet.

How did you get into dance?
Being former dancers themselves, my mom and grandmother both directed my ballet school growing up. They always told me I could pursue any activity or extracurricular I wanted, but ultimately I fell in love with ballet!

What was your journey like to becoming a professional ballet dancer?
I trained with my mom and grandmother and at several summer intensives until I was 16, when I moved to New York City to attend the American Ballet Theatre Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School. The transition to JKO was quite smooth because the ABT Curriculum paralleled nicely with the Cecchetti curriculum in which I was trained growing up. The JKO School was very formative to my technique in the later years, and the ABT Studio Company was a bridge that helped develop individualism and artistry before joining the company.

What are the challenges of being a professional dancer?
Being a driven and never-satisfied person makes me restless. I want to keep pushing myself. Sometimes I have to remind myself that patience is an asset as I wait for the opportunity to do a part with growth.

What is something people would be surprised to know about ballet dancers?
We are not always silent on the stage. While the orchestra is playing we may be greeting each other, laughing at ourselves or saying something crazy that helps us create our on stage mood or character.

What is it like dancing on your toes? Does it hurt?
We work very hard for years to strengthen the whole foot before we start dancing en pointe. With proper training we learn to carry our weight, not just through the toes, but through the support of our pointe shoes as well. I do get sore after a long day of work, but it is minimized by properly preparing my feet with tape and padding before putting on my shoes. An ice bath or warm Epsom salt soak are great before bedtime to get the feet ready for the next day.

What are the best aspects of being a professional dancer?
It truly is a gift to be able to get to do what you love every day. Beyond that, it’s an art form, one with so much incredible history that I can share with the rest of the world. [ABT dancer] Julie Kent once spoke to my class about the importance of beauty in humanity, how it is truly a responsibility and how beauty can save the world. That is a thought that gives me purpose and passion.

What is a typical day like for you as a ballet dancer?
A typical day for me always includes morning class from 10:15-11:45 a.m., then from noon to 7 p.m. we have varying rehearsals and breaks. On days with extensive breaks, I typically cross train at the gym or pool. I always try to include Pilates and stability exercises throughout my day as well.

What are the best aspects of being a professional dancer?
As a young child I felt awkward, out of place and without a voice unless I was dancing. It seems that all dancers have had similar feelings. In a way being a dancer is like being a member of a village of people from all over the world who speak one language...dance.
Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra – Romeo and Juliet

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Eliot Heaton  
Concertmaster+
Laura Roelofs  
Assistant Concertmaster+
Emily Barkakati+
Molly Hughes+
Bryan Johnston+
Velda Kelly+
Beth Kirton+
Andrew Wu+
Ran Cheng
Jenny Wan

Violin II
Victoria Haltom  
Principal+
Anna Bittar-Weller+
Henrik Karapetyan+
Daniel Stachyra+
Jacqueline Nutting
David Ormai
Yuri Popowycz
Melody Wootton

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John Madison  
Principal+
Scott Stefanko+
Barbara Zmich+
McClellan+
James Greer
Catherine Franklin
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Daniel Thomas+
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Stefan Koch
Irina Tikhonova

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Al Ayoub
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Harp
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J. William King+
Lisa Raschiatore

Tenor Saxophone
Joseph Lulloff

Bassoon
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Principal+
Gregory Quick+
Susan Nelson-Contrabassoon

Horn
Andrew Pelletier  
Principal+
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Bryan Pokorney

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Michigan Opera Theatre

Nederlands Dans Theater

Paul Lightfoot, artistic director
Friday-Saturday, March 23-24 // 8 pm
Power Center

Program
Lightfoot/León  
Shoot the Moon
Pite  
The Statement
Lightfoot/León  
Singulière Odyssee

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If you are hearing about our volunteer programs for the first time and you would be interested in joining us, please give us a call. Volunteering is a great way to meet other interesting and involved patrons. Membership information is located on the MOTVA web page at MichiganOpera.org/working-with-us/volunteer/ or call Christina Wagner at 313.237.3236. Christina will be happy to speak with you and connect you with a volunteer opportunity to meet your needs.

I offer my sincere thanks to all of our current volunteers. You are THE BEST!

Sincerely,

Terry Shea, President, MOTVA

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Doctors and parents are advised to leave their seat location (located on ticket) and our emergency number, (313) 237-3257, with their service or sitter in case of an emergency. Please observe the lighted exit signs located throughout the theater. In the event of an emergency, please remain calm and walk - do not run - to the nearest exit. Our ushers are trained to lead you out of the building safely. A trained Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) is onsite during most events. Please see an usher or staff member to contact the EMT.

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Ladies’ restrooms are located off the Ford Lobby (Broadway Street entrance), down the stairs, and on the third floor (Madison Street entrance) - press “3R” on the elevator to reach this facility. Gentlemen’s restrooms are located under the Grand Staircase and also on the third floor (Broadway Street side) - press “3” on the elevator to reach this facility. All third floor restrooms are wheelchair accessible. A unisex, wheelchair accessible restroom is located in the Cadillac Opera Café.

NO SMOKING
The Detroit Opera House is a smoke-free facility.

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