

Northern Ballet

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NORTHERN BALLET



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Front cover: Rachael Gillespie and Harris Beattie in *The Nutcracker*. Photo Bill Cooper.
Inside: Northern Ballet dancers in *The Nutcracker*. Photo Kyle Baines.



Federico's welcome

Reflecting on the end of my first season as Artistic Director of Northern Ballet, I am proud to have led the Company on such a successful season, reaching wide audiences across the UK. In a particularly busy period, our Company found itself in Leeds, London and Newcastle simultaneously in October – a testament to the dedicated work of everyone at Northern Ballet.

After a summer filled with rehearsals, our autumn tour had a particularly exciting start with the première of the dynamic triple bill *Made in Leeds: Three Short Ballets* opening at Leeds Playhouse and going on to tour at the Royal Opera House's Linbury Theatre.

We captivated audiences with our much-loved *The Little Mermaid* and then returned to the Stanley & Audrey Burton Theatre with our family favourite children's ballet *Ugly Duckling*. It was wonderful to see so many families join us, many experiencing ballet for the very first time.

As 2022 drew to a close, we were excited to be touring our festive favourite *The Nutcracker*.

As many of you will be aware, our esteemed Chief Executive Mark Skipper DL retired after 35 years with the Company. Mark leaves with my utmost gratitude and huge appreciation of everything he achieved for Northern Ballet, and I know you will join me in wishing him all the best for the future.

With my first full season nearly complete, I look forward to 2023 with great excitement, beginning with our glittering production of *The Great Gatsby* in the spring. I hope to see you there.

As ever, I would like to thank you for your generous support and for welcoming me with open arms.

If you ever require any assistance, please do get in touch with Jennifer, Zoë, Richard or Laura in the Development team, who will be very happy to help.

Best wishes,

Federico Bonelli

Artistic Director



Jennifer Young
Director of
Development



Zoë Walker
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Laura Kelly
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Our autumn 2022 season

It has been a very busy autumn for Northern Ballet with the première of *Made in Leeds: Three Short Ballets*, performances of *The Little Mermaid*, *The Nutcracker* and our children's ballet *Ugly Duckling*. We have loved sharing these productions with audiences across the country and it was wonderful to have so many of you join us for a performance.



Made in Leeds: Three Short Ballets - Nostalgia
Photo Kyle Baines.



Made in Leeds: Three Short Ballets - Wailers
Photo George Liang.



Made in Leeds: Three Short Ballets - Ma Vie
Photo Kyle Baines.



Made in Leeds: Three Short Ballets - Ma Vie
Photo Emma Kauldhar.



The Little Mermaid
Photo Bill Cooper.



The Nutcracker
Photo Bill Cooper.



Ugly Duckling
Photo Emily Nuttall.

In conversation with Dickson Mbi & Kenny Wing Tao Ho

In May this year we released *Ma Vie*, a Northern Ballet original dance film by renowned hip hop choreographer Dickson Mbi. Such was the success of the film, Dickson was commissioned to make an adaptation for stage as part of our autumn mixed programme *Made in Leeds: Three Short Ballets*.

We sat down with Dickson and his associate choreographer Kenny Wing Tao Ho to find out more about their experience of working with Northern Ballet.

Tell us about yourselves and how you came to work together

Dickson: I was born in Cameroon and came to London aged 12. I started dancing around 2005 when I met a girl who went to Pineapple Dance Studios, so I decided to go down and see what I could do. I wasn't good but when I walked out of the studio I met a group of guys outside who were dancing a style called popping, and when I saw what they could do I was like 'Wow! This is what I want to do.' So popping and street dance is my first love and where I began, and after a few years of winning competitions and building a bit of a name for myself I decided to go to college and learn contemporary dance.

Kenny: I'm from Chesterfield in Derbyshire and I started dancing when I was around 13 when I saw a film called *You Got Served*. I took that home and started learning all the moves, and then one day I saw some guys on a bandstand in the park and I thought okay, let me show you my moves, and that's how I met my crew. So then we trained together, we went to competitions and did breakdancing, all of which led me to London where I met Dickson.

Dickson: We trained together at London Contemporary Dance School from 2010 and we've been close friends ever since, and Kenny's supported me a lot since I started choreographing in 2015.

How have you found working with Northern Ballet? Have you needed to adapt your style?

Dickson: I don't think we've adapted our style, we don't want to compromise on what we're trying to do with the movement and the quality but I guess what's changed for us is just how we communicate and how we give information to the dancers. I know that in the ballet world there's a sense that you want to do everything quite frontal - everybody needs to see what you're doing and it's all about the shape and I guess what we really try and work on is more about feeling - if it feels right then it must look right. It's been a good challenge and it's good to learn those things from each other because the more you learn the more you grow.

Tell us about *Ma Vie*

Dickson: So we started off with the film when I had a conversation with Kenneth Tindall (Northern Ballet's Associate Director for Digital) and he presented this concept of doing something based on the story of *Casanova*. At the time I'd heard of Casanova but I'd never really looked into his story, so when I read into it I found that this guy was a different sort of guy and there were so many things in that story which I felt could be really interesting to explore. Everything that I looked at online, all the films that I saw, were all about him being a womaniser or someone that would have orgies or sex with different people and that's what was always put out.



I wasn't really interested in that, and that's been done so many times, I was more interested in what got him to that place. How was his relationship with his lovers? Why did he never finish what he started? Why was he so scared to commit?

Kenny: Part of what we're interested in is the humanness of him - what he's afraid of, why he did what he did - and I think that's what we're really trying to find in the work.

Dickson: The stage piece is a loose adaptation of the film. There are some visual aspects from the film which we thought were really interesting and we wanted to bring to the stage version and some things that practically we can't do on stage because you can't stop and start in a live performance.

The film also focusses more on the relationship between Casanova and the church and that's not something that's in the live version. The stage version is more about the relationship between Casanova and different people in his life who were controlling him and which led him to control other people.

I think a lot of people can relate to that at some point in your life - you might feel like you're being controlled by your partner to do certain things, or your boss trying to control you, or are you controlling someone else? There are so many different relationships that we all encounter in our life that you might feel

like you're in someone else's movie and they're the ones pressing stop/start/fast-forward.

'Ma vie' in French means 'my life' and although the piece is about this specific character we felt that really Casanova's story could be anybody's story when you look deeper into the fears and emotions within him. That's what we hoped to get across in both the stage and film versions.

[Watch Ma Vie online now](#)



Introducing our new chair

Guy Perricone

Guy Perricone joined us as Chair of the Board in July 2022. He has been Chair of the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) since 2015 where his successful tenure has included significant fundraising, including a £19.5m project to build a new state of the art headquarters. His extensive experience in the arts and education sector, which includes leadership roles at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and the National Army Museum will be invaluable in guiding the future vision for Northern Ballet with Federico Bonelli as Artistic Director, and David Collins as incoming Executive Director. Guy told us about his involvement with the Company and why he's so excited about what's to come.

How did you become involved with Northern Ballet?

I have of course been aware of Northern Ballet and their work. However, my awareness sharpened up when I first met David Nixon CBE: David became a trustee of the Royal Academy of Dance where I have been Chair for several years. Through him, I became much more familiar with the work, seeing it live and on TV. I remember being particularly excited when David choreographed *The Three Musketeers* – one of my absolute favourite books, which turned out to be a brilliant ballet as well.

It's an exciting time in the Company with the appointment of yourself, Federico and David – what are you most excited about going forward?

I couldn't agree more! It really is an exciting time. We are incredibly fortunate to inherit a rich and strong legacy from David Nixon and Mark Skipper who led Northern Ballet so well for many years. They have given us a tremendous platform on which we can now build. And that is what is so exciting: to be able to take what we have inherited from



David and Mark and create a new vision and direction for the Company moving forward. Northern Ballet is renowned for its ability to tell stories in dance and I'm sure that this is a tradition that Federico will want to continue, with his own artistic vision and ambitions. I'm very excited to see what he has up his sleeve!

David Collins has been appointed the incoming Executive Director – can you tell us a bit about what David will be bringing to the Company?

What struck me immediately about David was his intelligence and thoughtfulness. There is no denying that we have a number of challenges to face in the next year or two, but I am very confident that David will have exactly the kind of experience and expertise to steer Northern Ballet through these. Clearly, his understanding and appreciation of the arts and culture will be a tremendous asset for us, especially from his time at Opera North. But I also think it is important to have someone who is rooted in the community and understands the role that Northern Ballet must play in Leeds, locally, and nationally. In creating a partnership with Federico, I am also sure that the two of them will be able to work very well together to the enormous benefit of Northern Ballet.

Upcoming events

Patron events

18 March 2023, *The Great Gatsby* Matinee, Leeds Grand Theatre

18 March 2023, *The Great Gatsby* Evening, Leeds Grand Theatre

18 May 2023, *The Great Gatsby*, London Sadler's Wells

To RSVP for one of these events, or if you would like to take up your complimentary Patron ticket at a different tour location, please contact Richard Cross at richard.cross@northernballet.com

Benefactor events

Details of our Benefactor events around *The Great Gatsby* will follow early in the New Year!

To RSVP for any of these events, please contact Richard Cross at richard.cross@northernballet.com

Alternatively, the full performance dates are available on our website. We have Benefactor tickets on hold for every performance and we will book your tickets for a date of your choice.

Company class dates

18 March 2023, Company Class, Leeds Grand Theatre

25 March 2023, Company Class, Sheffield Lyceum Theatre

20 May 2023, Company Class, London Sadler's Wells

As a working ballet company, all events remain subject to change. Bookings for Company Class will open in the New Year.

Dancer update

Amber Lewis and Jackson Dwyer have both recently joined the Company from Hong Kong Ballet. We found out how they've been enjoying their time with Northern Ballet so far.

How has the transition been from Hong Kong to Leeds?

Jack and I were both born in English speaking Commonwealth countries, Canada and Australia respectively, so while there are certainly some differences and things to learn, much more is familiar. However, on occasion a handful of the UK's local accents have had us asking "sorry, come again?".

What has been more of an adjustment is the number of shows, particularly on tour, that Northern Ballet does. And let's not forget to mention dancing on raked stages, a first for both of us.

Why was Northern Ballet an exciting prospect for you?

Of course, there are several factors and considerations behind our move, but the main draw was Federico. When we heard about his appointment to Artistic Director, we were immediately interested in the possibility of working under his guidance.

What has been your favourite thing about dancing with Northern Ballet so far?

The number of shows the company performs! Don't get us wrong, it's a marathon and because of the size of the Company it's likely you'll be on stage in one role or another almost every night. However, it also means that when you're performing a leading role in a production, you're afforded a healthy number of shows. As a result, there's a reduced sense of pressure on any single show and there's more time to develop in that role and to take more risks.

If you could choose, which ballet or role would you most like to perform from Northern Ballet's repertoire?

When you walk into our Quarry Hill home one of the first things you notice are the many production posters lining the balcony above the lobby. It's evident the Company has a rich unique repertoire but one we aren't yet fully familiar with. We're excited to learn more about them all and we're also interested to see how Federico will expand on the existing repertoire.

Amber and Jackson are sponsored by Linda & John Topott.

It's been a busy autumn season and in addition to welcoming Amber and Jackson, we're pleased to also have had the following dancers join the Company in recent months.

[Kaho Masumoto](#) is from Tokyo, Japan and trained at Kishibe Ballet Studio in Japan and English National Ballet School. She was a semi-finalist in the 2022 Prix de Lausanne.

[Stefano Varalta](#) is from Verona, Italy and trained at Balletto di Verona. He graduated in Zurich and joined a Trainee Programme in Amsterdam.

[Jun Ishii](#) is from Tokyo. He trained at the State Ballet School Berlin. He previously danced with Staatbellett Berlin.

Jun is sponsored by Neil Eckersley.

[Mackenzie Jacob](#) grew up in the Southwest of England and began his dance training at TLW Dance. He successfully gained a place at Elmhurst Ballet school in Birmingham in 2017 and graduated in 2022.

We also wish Junior Soloist, Miki Akuta, the best of luck on her future endeavors as she retires from her dance career and returns to Japan.



Amber Lewis



Jackson Dwyer



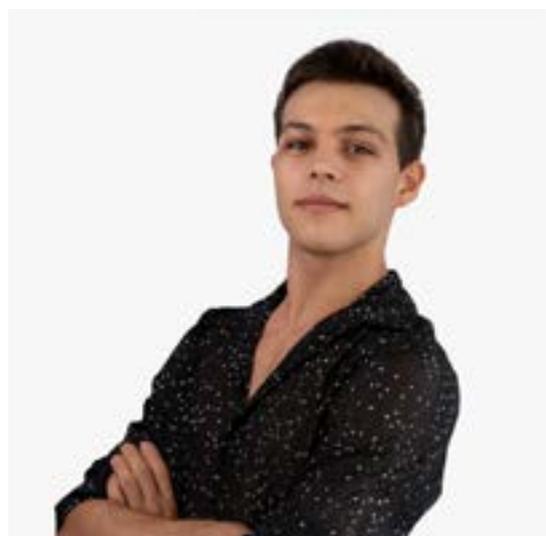
Kaho Masumoto



Mackenzie Jacob



Jun Ishii



Stefano Varalta

Inside the Wig Room

This year Northern Ballet has been able to expand the Wig Department and hire our first Deputy Wigs and Makeup Manager, Lizzie Fraser.

Lizzie joined the team in August and has since hit the ground running on our autumn tour throughout the UK. Prior to Lizzie joining the company, our Wigs and Makeup Manager Harriet Rogers had been doing the job on her own, prepping the shows at base and then managing them out on tour.

Lizzie started a few months ago and she has already helped prepare multiple wigs for *The Little Mermaid*, along with handmaking all the 18th Century hairpieces for the *Made in Leeds: Three Short Ballet* piece, *Ma Vie*. She has also made ten brand new headdresses for the children appearing in *The Nutcracker*, as these costumes had been updated and needed a fresh new look.

The impact this has had on the department has been huge as Harriet tells us “The extra resource has been so positive already in such a short time. I’ve been able to create so many more hairpieces, headdresses, and wigs in house. Having an extra pair of hands to achieve this has meant that more time can be spent on them, elevating the standard of what appears on stage for the audience.”

Harriet also pointed out that ballet casting works slightly differently to the casting for a musical or play: “For every show the casting changes with multiple dancers cast in specific character roles. If those characters require any wigs, special effects makeup or tailor-made headdresses, then these need to be multiplied and adapted to fit everyone appearing in these roles. This is great as it means that the dancers get the amazing opportunity to perform in these roles, but for a long tour this can double the workload for myself and the Wardrobe Department in fitting and preparing all the costumes and wigs for all the characters.

For example, in *The Nutcracker* there are five different male dancers performing in the role of Uncle Drosselmeyer, all with different hair

textures and head sizes which means that the past wigs won’t fit all of them. Previously I’ve had to adapt or purchase wigs in the hope that they fit or make wigs quickly while out on tour in between performances. Now, with Lizzie’s help managing the touring show, I can take the time to make our wigs in house.

This process starts by taking a mold of the dancers’ head, carefully marking their hairline, then making a wig foundation out of wig lace to match this mold, and finally hand knotting the hair covering the foundation. This is finished off by knotting individual strands of hair along the hairline, so the wig looks as natural as possible. This means that the wig will fit the dancer more closely and more resemble their own hair, or at least look a lot more natural.”

Being able to adapt and make the wigs in house ensures that not only do the dancers feel more comfortable, but also the audience doesn’t lose the magic of the show by realizing that someone is wearing something that doesn’t look right. For Harriet “there’s nothing more distracting than a dodgy wig on stage.”

With the expansion of the department, Harriet is excited to create even bigger and bolder looks for any future projects and to produce even more magic for our audiences. Looking forward to spring’s *The Great Gatsby*, Lizzie and Harriet will be updating these wigs for 2023 and working with the individual dancers in those roles to make sure they feel comfortable and confident as the character.

"[Gatsby] is a very busy show with lots of period hair styling. With it being set in the 1920s the style of the time was very short hair for women. Some of our dancers jump at the chance to cut all their hair short for this production but for others that is a big ask. On our last run I made multiple new Daisy and Myrtle wigs for the principal dancers performing these roles. The 20s style is very short and is quite a tight finger waved style, a look that is hard to achieve on all hair types in a limited time frame at the top of the show.

In the run up to opening the show we'll also teach the female dancers in the Corps how to style their own hair into a finger waved hairstyle. They always do a fantastic job, and I love that we get to collaborate with them on their own individual 20s look. It's all about the attention to detail with this production."



THE NUTCRACKER

spotlight

The Nutcracker is a festive, winter staple and one of the world's most loved and famous ballets. Our Artistic and Learning Assistant Pippa Moore MBE and Assistant Rehearsal Director Ashley Dixon share with us behind the scenes secrets, fond memories of dancing the production for Northern Ballet throughout their dance careers, and what makes our production different from other companies' productions.

Pippa: Our production of *The Nutcracker* premiered in Manchester in 2007. The role of Clara, the protagonist, was created on me and it was a huge privilege to be in the original cast. I danced Clara and various other roles in the ballet for many years.

The last time we performed *The Nutcracker* in 2018, having outgrown my Clara pigtails by then, I performed as Clara's mother and also her grandmother - which is very rare to have danced all three generations of the one family!

Ashley: In the première cast of *The Nutcracker* in 2007 I was lucky enough to dance a multitude of roles in one show. I started the show as the young boy, Frederic's best friend, then on to one of the mice, and then into the Chinese dance in the second act. Since then, I have been very fortunate to dance almost every male role in this production including the Nutcracker Prince. This is a very special role that has meant a lot to me. It was one of the first principal roles I danced and is probably the role I have danced more than any other during my career.

Pippa: As Northern Ballet's Artistic and Learning Assistant I am fortunate to be able to pass on my experience to the next

generation of dancers. Together with Ashley, who was my Nutcracker Prince from 2010, we have coached a new cohort of Claras and Princes for this season passing on details and intentions of the original choreography to ensure that the essence and the precision of the production lives on.

A key element to the ballet is the strong sense of family and families sharing their time at Christmas - both the audiences and the characters in the story. This extends to the use of children in the show, who dance alongside the professionals in certain scenes, playing party guests, mice and fairy attendants.





Pippa: For our touring venues, Ashley and I were asked to visit local dance schools to audition children and teach the repertoire. In Leeds, the children are selected from our Academy of Northern Ballet.

Ashley: As Pippa mentioned, we first danced this ballet together in 2010. We went on to dance this ballet together for many years until Pippa, as she puts it, “outgrew her Clara pigtails”.

This year’s restaging was very interesting, as we had a number of Claras and Princes to teach and rehearse. It’s always great to pass on what you have learnt from a role, point out the tricks to make certain things easier or little things to look out for when performing. Moreover, making sure they maintain the precision, intention and spirit of the choreography.

Pippa: One of my favourite scenes is the snow scene. The white costumes with layers of net use silver thread and sequins to highlight the glistening of water and spiky headdresses that represent ice.

In the choreography there are the swirling movements of snowfall and blizzards but the formations the dancers make are reminiscent of the actual structure of snowflakes themselves. It’s a very beautiful scene but not without its challenges - 50kg of paper confetti is used to create the snowfall which then must be swept up at the end of the show and used again for the next performance.

We learnt very quickly to keep our mouth firmly closed during this scene, as during the dress rehearsal when the snowfall was first tried, we came off stage feeling like we’d ingested most of the 50kg!

Ashley: The difficulty of the Nutcracker Prince is that your first entrance is in a very large, heavy head with limited vision, not a lot of breathing space and walking down a wooden ramp. I remember the first rehearsal I had wearing the head, I fell down the ramp. It's a lot harder than it looks! Dancing in the head forces you to amplify every movement you do to make it read to the audience, which can be scary when you can't see much. At the end of the battle scene, you have the fight with the Mouse King. He is also in a large head with limited vision, making this a difficult opening scene, but a very rewarding one when you hear the audience's reaction.



Pippa: The large heads worn by the Nutcracker Prince and The Mouse King are very effective but take some getting used to. For the male dancers, jumping and turning in them with the weight in-balance and restriction to their peripheral vision, it can be quite disorienting at first. Look out for the Mouse King on top of the huge chunk of cheese as he surveys the marching toy soldiers...this improvisation is individual and intentionally humorous so between the various casts it gets quite competitive to see who has the most entertaining freestyle!



Pippa: Backstage, in Act 1 particularly, there are some very quick changes for the cast. With no time to go back to the dressing rooms, parts of the wings and any available space are designated 'Quick Change Areas' where party guests suddenly transform into soldiers, mice or snowflakes in the blink of an eye!

Pippa: David Nixon was inspired to set the ballet in the Regency period. Although different to other versions, it is very fitting, as it was in this era that E.T.A Hoffman wrote the story *The Nutcracker*.

The Napoleonic war of the time is referred to in the ballet, particularly in the battle, the toy soldiers' jackets are red, as were worn by the British army in the 1800's.

Pippa: Oriental influences were happening in England at that time in both art and architecture, so when Clara is taken on a magical journey through the land of snow, eventually reaching an exotic garden, the design is a huge red oriental pagoda. You may notice it is created with the red toy box of Act 1 but there are now four with a big balcony on top and minarets that create the look of a mini palace. Everything in the dream world is bright with vibrant colours contrasting the pastel shades of Act 1.



Ashley: This has always been one of my favourite productions, not only because of the wonderful dancing involved, but because of what this production means to the audience. It's a Christmas family favourite. There is always such a buzz in the audience and after the performance you see hundreds of people leaving the theatre smiling and talking about the show.

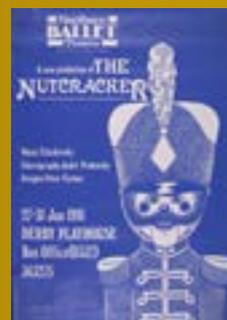
Pippa: I absolutely loved performing Clara and a little secret I don't often share is that as a child I was absolutely convinced my toys came to life at night as in *The Nutcracker*. Many years later you could say I was somewhat proven right with the added bonus of dancing with them on stage!

Do you remember the first time you experienced the magic of *The Nutcracker*?

Generations of ballet lovers have experienced the joy of seeing *The Nutcracker* performed live on stage.

By leaving a gift of any size in your Will you can share your passion for ballet with the next generation and give future audiences the chance to experience magical performances for years to come.

For more information about remembering Northern Ballet in your Will, or to have a confidential conversation, contact Zoë Walker, Head of Development at zoe.walker@northernballet.com | t: 0113 220 8000. Or visit northernballet.com/legacies.



Academy update

Leah Allen is one of our Academy programme dancers who has recently been out on tour with the Company. Leah received a bursary to help with the costs of her training, and this support has allowed Leah great development opportunities. We caught up with Leah to find out about her experience on tour.

You've had the opportunity to dance the Ugly Duckling role this season in our children's ballet – how did you feel about dancing a lead role of a production?

It was an honour and privilege to get the opportunity to dance the lead role in the company's production of *Ugly Duckling*. Having just started the programme three months earlier, I never thought this chance would present itself so soon, and I am so grateful it did. As we started rehearsing the production soon after joining, it gave me valuable time to get to know the teaching and rehearsal staff, and of course, for them to get to know me more as a dancer. As it is a children's ballet there is a lot of acting involved, so, I was coached on both the dancing and acting sides of the role. This was invaluable and I have learnt so much about portraying a character whilst also focusing on dance technique.

What have you learnt from your most recent performance experiences with the Company?

Every performance has a new audience and every performance allows us to tell our story through dance, so we need to give our best every time. This is what professional dancers strive for, and to connect and reach out to everyone in the audience and to make it a memorable performance for them. I do believe that if you love what you are doing this joy will be portrayed to the audience. It is about showing up every day and being willing to learn and improve – no matter how many years of experience you have under your belt.

What do you enjoy most about being part of the Academy?

I would definitely say the teachers and staff. They are 100% committed to the dancers and helping them reach their full potential. Their



teaching experience, and knowledge they share, is helping us improve and combine all we have learnt over our years of training to become our own unique individual dancer.

The other wonderful aspect of being at the Academy is being exposed to the Company and being included in some of their productions and rehearsals. We also get insight on how ballet companies run their wardrobes and even learn a little about the technical side of the productions. It is a privilege to be able to dance in the wonderful studios and feel a part of the Northern Ballet community.

I have also had the opportunity to be involved with Student Support for Northern Ballet's Centre for Advanced Training programme. It has been lovely to meet and engage with other dancers, and most enjoyable are the young ones, who have such enthusiasm for this art form – it's such fun to see, to learn and improve – no matter how many years of experience you have under your belt.

Leah's bursary was kindly supported by Benefactors Jane and Alan Foale.

Learning update

Burberry Inspire

From September 2018 to July 2022, our Learning Team has worked in partnership with The Burberry Foundation on a four-year schools programme to measure the impact of an immersive arts and cultural education curriculum for pupils aged 11-14. Alongside Leeds Playhouse, Leeds Young Film and The Hepworth Wakefield the project worked with eight schools across Yorkshire to inspire young people to develop their own creativity.

The programme was delivered through Artists in Residence at each school, offering high quality workshops and insights into the sector in addition to cultural experiences, residencies, and performance opportunities. Pupils had the opportunity to work with choreographers, filmmakers, set and costume designers in their own classrooms, as well as seeing Northern Ballet productions at Leeds Grand Theatre and taking part in a celebratory performance at Leeds Playhouse in July 2022 to mark the end of this incredible project.

The Covid-19 pandemic threw some obstacles our way, but we used this unique situation to work with pupils remotely, even reaching across the Atlantic to collaborate with American Ballet Theatre, where pupils from Yorkshire choreographed work which was developed and performed by professional dancers. You can watch some of the work here:



The programme was created in close partnership with the Ideas Foundation, and the impact was studied by researchers from the Policy Institute at King's College London, who have examined how cultural and creative education can help young people to overcome challenging circumstances, widen their horizons, and realize their aspirations. To find out more, read the celebration Burberry Inspire Report or watch this short film:

Celebrating four years of [Burberry Inspire](#)

Leeds Creative Skills Festival

For one week in November, the Leeds Creative Skills Festival took over the city to shine a light on the wide range of creative careers and training options available in Leeds and surrounding areas. As a region, we are so lucky to host a wide range of creative and cultural organisations; not only is Leeds the only UK city outside of London to host both a ballet and opera company, we also boast companies like Channel 4 and a wide range of education and training institutions, with several universities with strong creative subject offers and Conservatoires in dance, music and performance.

We went along to speak to young people in the city and hosted a workshop with set and costume designer Emma Williams, where pupils had the opportunity get hands on and be creative. Northern Ballet staff also engaged in the festival by taking part in a panel discussion, talking about their careers and the pathways to them.

What's on

Ugly Duckling

Touring nationally spring 2023

The Great Gatsby

8 - 18 Mar 2023

Leeds Grand Theatre

21- 25 Mar 2023

Sheffield Lyceum Theatre

16 - 20 May 2023

London Sadler's Wells



Registered charity no. 259140. Company registration no. 947096. Northern Ballet Limited registered in England and Wales. Company limited by guarantee and share capital. Harris Beattie in *The Nutcracker*. Photo Bill Cooper.