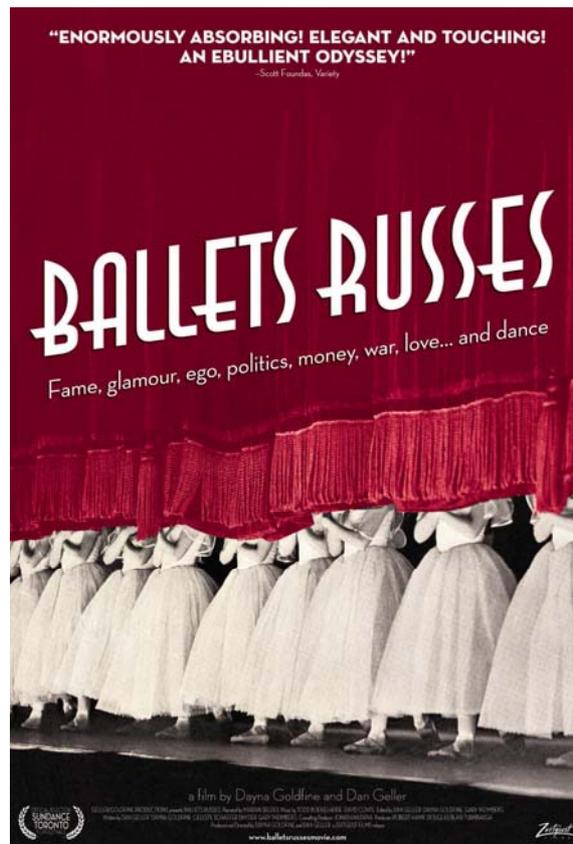


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presenteren / présentent:

BALLETS RUSSES



EEN FILM VAN / UN FILM DE DAYNA GOLDFINE & DAN GELLER

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BALLETS RUSSES- synopsis (NL)

Een schitterende documentaire over een revolutionaire dansgroep die bekend staat als het Ballet Russe. De groep is ontstaan uit een groep Russische vluchtelingen die nooit in Rusland hebben gedanst en splitste zich later op in twee rivaliserende dansgroepen: de 'Original Ballet Russe' en de 'Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo'. De documentaire begint bij de oprichting in 1909 door de befaamde Serge Diaghilev, beschrijft de oprichting van de Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo na de dood van Diaghilev in 1929, het ontstaan van een tweede Ballets Russes groep, de voorspoedige jaren '30 en '40 toen het Ballet Russe door Amerika toerde, tot de ondergang in de jaren '50 en '60 door stijgende kosten, groeiende ego's, competitie van buiten en intern wanbeleid.

Niet alleen choreografen als Balanchine en Massine, maar ook schilders als Matisse, Dali en Picasso werkten voor de revolutionaire Ballets Russes. Om over componisten als Claude Debussy en Igor Stravinsky nog maar te zwijgen. Wereldsterren als Alicia Markova, Irina Baranova en Marc Platt halen herinneringen op. Velen van de Ballets Russes dansers van weleer zijn nu tachtig of negentig, maar zijn nog steeds actief in de balletwereld.

De sappige anekdotische interviews met de voormalige sterren geven de moderne kijker een unieke glimp van de twee legendarische balletgroepen. In de documentaire wordt de ontstaansgeschiedenis van het moderne ballet verteld. Ballets Russes zal meer dan alleen balletliefhebbers aanspreken, want dans is hier immers totaalkunst.



BALLETS RUSSES

118 min. / 35 mm / Kleur en zwart/wit / Stereo SR / Engels gesproken / VS 2005

Kijkwijzer: 

Nederlandse theatrale distributie: Cinemien

Belgische theatrale distributie: ABC Distribution

DVD uitbreng : Homescreen

BALLETS RUSSES- synopsis (FR)

Un documentaire brillant au sujet d'une troupe de danseurs révolutionnaire, connu comme le Ballet Russe. Formée de réfugiés russes qui n'ont jamais dansé en Russie, la compagnie a évolué au point de créer deux troupes rivales distinctes. Le documentaire commence par la fondation en 1909 par le réputé Serge Diaghilev, décrit les années prospères entre 1930 et 1940 quand le Ballet Russe a fait un tour en Amérique, jusqu'au déclin dans les années '50 et '60 à cause des coûts à la hausse, des égos envahissants, d'une nouvelle rivalité extérieure et d'une gestion interne incompétente.

Non seulement des chorégraphes comme Balanchine et Massine, mais aussi des peintres comme Matisse, Dali et Picasso ont travaillé pour la troupe révolutionnaire les Ballets Russes. Pour ne rien dire des compositeurs comme Claude Debussy et Igor Stravinsky. Des étoiles du monde comme Alicia Markova, Irina Baranova et Marc Platt retirent des souvenirs. La plupart des danseurs des Ballets Russes ont maintenant plus de quatre-vingts ou quatre-vingt-dix ans, mais ils sont encore actifs dans le monde du ballet.

Les interviews anecdotiques savoureuses avec les anciennes étoiles donnent le spectateur moderne une vue unique sur le groupe de ballet légendaire. Ballets Russes s'adressera non seulement aux amateurs du ballet, car la danse est étalée ici comme un art total.



BALLETS RUSSES

118 min / 35mm / Couleur et noir/blanc / Stereo SR/ dialogues en anglais/ les états unis 2005

La sortie théâtrale aux Pays-Bas: Cinemien
La sortie théâtrale en Belgique: ABC Distribution
La sortie sur DVD : Homescreen

BALLETS RUSSES - crew

Regie / réalisation	: Dayna Goldfine & Dan Geller
Scenario / scénario	: Dayna Goldfine, Dan Geller, Gary Weimberg & Celeste Schaeffer Snyder
Director of Photography	: Dan Geller
Muziek / musique	: Todd Boekelheide & David Conte
Geluid / son	: Dayna Goldfine
Geluidsmixage / montage de son	: Philip Perkins
Montage	: Dayna Goldfine, Dan Geller & Gary Weimberg
Producent / producteur	: Dayna Goldfine, Dan Geller, Robert Hawk & Douglas Blair Turnbaugh
Consulting producent / producteur	: Jonathan Dana
Associate producent / producteur	: Celeste Schaeffer Snyder
Consulting editor	: Nathaniel Dorsky
Additional editing	: Elizabeth Finlayson
Additional writing	: Susan Stern
Writing consultant	: Tucker Malarkey
Additional research	: Jason Snyder
Photo retouching	: Heather Shirkey

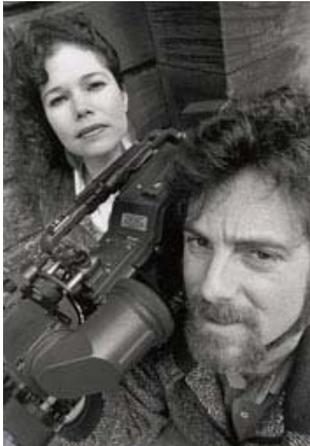
BALLETS RUSSES - cast

Verteller :

Dansers:

	Marian Seldes
Dame Alicia Markova	Wakefield Poole
Frederic Franklin	Rochelle Zide
Nathalie Krassovska	Alan Howard
Tatiana Riabouchinska	Mia Slavenska
George Zoritch	Yvonne Craig
Irina Baronova	Raven Wilkinson
Tamara Tchinarova Finch	Yvonne Chouteau
Maria Tallchief	Marc Platt
Nini Theilade	Tatiana Stepanova
Miguel Terekhov	Nina Novak

BALLETS RUSSES - over regisseurs / sur les réalisateurs Dayna Goldfine & Dan Geller



De regisseurs **Dan Geller** en **Dayna Goldfine** hebben tijdens hun zestienjarige samenwerking documentaires gemaakt waarin verschillende karakters centraal stonden. In deze documentaires worden de individuele verhalen van de hoofdpersonen samengevoegd zodat er een samenhangend portret ontstaat over 'menselijke ervaring'. **Ballets Russes** is een documentaire geworden die het publiek zowel emotioneel als intellectueel aanspreekt; een film die niet alleen dansliefhebbers maar ook een breed publiek interesseert.

Dan Geller studeerde Geschiedenis en daarna documentaire productie aan Stanford University. Dayna Goldfine heeft een graad in vrouwenstudies en heeft haar filmopleiding afgerond aan het De Anza College in Cupertino, California.

Les réalisateurs **Dan Geller** et **Dayna Goldfine** ont réalisé plusieurs documentaires dans lesquels des caractères différents étaient centraux au cours de leur coopération de seize ans. Les récits individuels des protagonistes sont joints dans ces documentaires pour qu'un portrait cohérent surgisse au sujet de « l'expérience humaine ». **Ballets Russes** est devenu un documentaire qui s'adresse au public émotionnellement et intellectuellement en même temps; un film qui intéresse non seulement les amateurs du ballet mais aussi un public plus large.

Dan Geller a étudié la Histoire et la Production des documentaires à l'université de Stanford. Dayna Goldfine a un degré dans les Etudes de femme et elle a achevé sa formation de film au De Anza College à Cupertino, California.

Filmografie / filmographie:

- 2005 BALLETS RUSSES
- 1999 NOW AND THEN: FROM FROSH TO SENIORS
- 1996 KIDS OF SURVIVAL
- 1994 FROSH: NINE MONTHS IN A FRESHMAN DORM
- 1989 ISADORA DUNCAN: MOVEMENT FROM THE SOUL
- 1986 SUNDANCE: A MATTER OF PROCESS

BALLETS RUSSES - production notes Dayna Goldfine en Dan Geller

In January 2000, our Co-Producers, Robert Hawk and Douglas Blair Turnbaugh, came to us with the idea of filming what they described as a once-in-a-lifetime event. The event was the first ever official reunion of Ballets Russes dancers, and it was to be held that June in New Orleans, Louisiana.

At the time, neither of us knew very much about ballet, but we were intrigued for a number of other reasons. Our last three documentaries had been about groups of young people in their teens and early 20s, and we were excited by the opportunity to make a film about people at the opposite end of the age spectrum. We were also taken with the thought of spending time with a group of people who had lived their lives so fully in the arts - many of the Ballets Russes dancers were still actively engaged in the art of dance well into their 70s, 80s and even 90s. And, finally, after a decade of working in the cinema verite style, and we thought it would be fun to tackle a historical project - to go back to our roots as it were, given that our first documentary experience as a team was making the history and performance-based ISADORA DUNCAN: MOVEMENT FROM THE SOUL (1988).

We figured that at the very least we should film a handful of preliminary interviews with some of the Ballets Russes dancers who were planning to attend the reunion. Then based on these interviews we could decide whether we had the makings of a film on our hands. So, in March 2000, we cashed in some frequent flier miles and took our camera and sound package to New York where many of the dancers now lived. It only took a few interviews to convince us that we did indeed have the subject of our next documentary: on that first morning, Raven Wilkinson walked into the room with her gripping story of breaking the color barrier as the first African-American woman to dance in a major ballet company. And, the next day we met Frederic Franklin, possibly the most active octogenarian we'd ever encountered and certainly one of the most fabulous raconteurs.

We were hooked. We spent a week filming in Los Angeles, where we met the feisty and glamorous Mia Slavenska as well as Tania Riabouchinska - one of the three "Baby Ballerinas", who in the 1930s and '40s, had captured the hearts of audiences around the world and who invited us to film the daily ballet class she taught. And, then it was off to New Orleans for the Reunion - four jam-packed days of reliving Ballets Russes experiences with nearly 100 former Ballets Russes dancers who had flown in from places as far away as Australia, Brazil, Venezuela and Denmark, and who for the most part, had not seen each other for more than 40 years.

By the end of the Reunion we'd interviewed 40 of the dancers, and felt sure that among them we had found our principal subjects. From there we arranged trips to several of their homes where we continued to film. Among many places, our travels took us to: Dallas, Texas, where Nathalie Krassovska still runs her school of dance in a studio at the back of her house; Salina, Oklahoma, where Miguel Terekhov and Yvonne Chouteau now live; and, London, England, where at age 92

Dame Alicia Markova still coached young dancers at the London Studio Centre. We also spent a lot of time in Cincinnati, Ohio filming Frederic Franklin as he set Ballets Russes choreographies on the Cincinnati Ballet and danced character roles in that company's performances. During those first two years of the production we found ourselves falling more and more in love with ballet. What had started as a mere curiosity about a world that was previously unknown to us, had become a passion, and we found ourselves spending night after night watching performances of the San Francisco Ballet, here in our home town.

By the end of 2001, we'd completed most of our filming and preliminary research. The next challenge was to figure out how to bring the dancers' stories to life in a dramatic and visually evocative way. And so began our search for archival materials. This exploration took us first to Chicago and Ann Barzel, who was one of the first dance critics in America and an early pioneer in dance cinematography. Starting in the early 1930s, Barzel filmed the Ballets Russes companies using a wind-up 16 mm camera while standing in the wings, the balcony and at the foot of the stage. The result was nearly 20 hours of privileged footage, sometimes a bit shaky and grainy, but exquisite nonetheless. At 94, Barzel was spending her days cataloguing her footage for donation to the Newbery and Chicago Public Libraries and she more than generously gave us access to all of it.

Another rich source of archival motion picture footage was uncovered in Australia after an exhaustive internet search. Beginning in the mid-1930s, the Ballet Russe company run by Col. Wasily de Basil had toured regularly through Australia, and two men (Dr. Ringland Anderson and Ewen Murry-Will) had followed along on these tours, between them shooting over 30 hours of astonishing 16 mm footage - much of it in color and often capturing backstage antics, as well as performances. Today all of this footage (most of it never before seen by a public audience) is housed at ScreenSound, an archive in Australia, and after much back-and-forth, we were able to have access to it. The Dance Collection at the New York Library for the Performing Arts and Jacob's Pillow also generously made their archival motion picture catalogues available to the project.

Perhaps the most unexpected and delightful archival footage, however, came from the Ballets Russes dancers, themselves. Miguel Terekhov gave us his 8mm footage, which captured the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo's bus tours of the 1950s. Mia Slavenska contributed several hours worth of 16mm performance and backstage footage shot by her husband in the 1940s and '50s. And, a fabulous and forgotten stash of 1950s performance footage shot by Glenn Olsen, one of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo's corps dancers, was discovered by Olsen's boyfriend, after Olsen's death in 2002.

In addition to the archival motion picture footage, Ballets Russes features more than 400 archival stills. The vast majority of these came from the private collections of the dancers we interviewed. But many were found through years of daily eBay searches, which turned up nearly every Ballets Russes program published between 1933 and 1962, as well as countless magazine articles, books,

ticket stubs and other memorabilia. Some of the most beautiful stills were taken by Maurice Seymour, a gifted dance photographer. Seymour's son, Ronald, a talented photographer in his own right, generously provided these to the production.

Once the interviews and supporting verite scenes were shot and the archival materials gathered, we began an editing process that ultimately lasted more than two-years - far longer than any edit we had ever before been involved with. This process proved to be a daunting, but thrilling experience as we slowly felt our way towards fusing the rich history of the Ballets Russes companies with the idiosyncratic stories told by the Ballets Russes dancers during their interviews - stories that were by turn funny, poignant and very revealing. Throughout this process we were acutely aware of a responsibility to capture and honor an important artistic heritage that was in danger of disappearing. The surviving Ballets Russes dancers spoke often of their wish to pass on their legacy to the next generation of dancers, and we hope that by making this film we have done our part to ensure that this happens.

BALLETS RUSSES - Crew

Douglas Blair Turnbaugh is internationaal erkend als autoriteit betreffende de Ballets Russes. Daarom is zijn keuze om de documentaire (mee) te produceren niet verwonderlijk. Tegenwoordig is hij lid van de *Conseil International de la Danse* - UNESCO en is hij voorzitter geweest van de Ballets Russes Reünie/Jubileum in 2000. Hij was regisseur van de *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Foundation*, was de eerste die dans recenseerde voor het *New York Magazine* en schrijft regelmatig bijdragen voor verschillende kunstpublicaties. Turnbaugh is bovendien auteur van verschillende boeken, waaronder *Diaghilev*, *Kochno*, *Lifar* (wordt nog gedrukt). Hij studeerde ballet bij leraren van het Ballet Russe in Seattle, Mexico Stad, Parijs en op de *School of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo* in New York.

Douglas Blair Turnbaugh est reconnu internationalement comme une autorité concernant les Ballets Russes. Aussi son choix de (co-)produire le documentaire n'est pas étonnant. Maintenant, il est membre du *Conseil International de la Danse* - Unesco et il a été le président de la réunion/le jubilé des Ballets Russes en 2000. Il a mis en scène le *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Foundation*, il a été le premier à écrire des critiques de la danse pour le *New York Magazine* et il écrit fréquemment des contributions pour différentes publications artistiques. Turnbaugh est en outre l'auteur de plusieurs livres, parmi lesquels *Diaghilev*, *Kochno*, *Lifar* (en train d'être imprimé). Il a étudié le ballet chez des professeurs du Ballet Russe à Seattle, Mexico City, Paris et au *School of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo* à New York.

BALLETS RUSSES - Crew

Marian Seldes heeft de voice-over ingesproken. In 1974 maakte ze haar Broadway debuut in de productie MEDEA van John Gielgud. Vanaf deze jaren is ze uitgegroeid tot een gevierde actrice die in dertig Broadway en Off-Broadway shows heeft gespeeld, waaronder haar bekroonde optreden als Julia in A DELICATE BALANCE van Edward Albee. Ze heeft vier nominaties voor de Tony Award (de belangrijkste musicalprijs in de Verenigde Staten) ontvangen voor haar optredens in FATHER'S DAY (1971), DEATHTRAP (1978), RING ROUND THE MOON (1999) en DINNER AT EIGHT (2003). In 1996 werd ze opgenomen in de *Theatre Hall of Fame*. Daarnaast is Seldes een succesvol actrice en acteerde zij in onder andere MONA LISA SMILE, THE HAUNTING, AFFLICTION en HOLLYWOOD ENDING van Woody Allen. Seldes studeerde vele jaren ballet en maakte haar debuut in 1942. Ze trad op als danseres in de productie PETROUCHKA van het Amerikaanse Ballet Theater. Ze werkte er samen met verschillende BALLETS RUSSES dansers waaronder Alexandra Danilova, Alicia Markova, Irina Baronova en Leonide Massine.

Marian Seldes a fait le voice-over. En 1974, elle a fait son début à Broadway dans la production MEDEA de John Gielgud. À partir de ces années, elle s'est développée jusqu'à devenir une actrice célèbre qui a joué dans trente spectacles Broadway et Off-Broadway, parmi lesquels sa performance couronnée comme Julia dans A DELICATE BALANCE d'Edward Albee. Elle a reçu quatre nominations pour le Tony Award (le prix pour musicals le plus important aux États-Unis) pour ses performances dans FATHER'S DAY (1971), DEATHTRAP (1978), RING ROUND THE MOON (1999) et DINNER AT EIGHT (2003). En 1996, elle a été reprise dans le *Theatre Hall of Fame*. En plus, Seldes est une actrice réussie et elle a joué entre autres dans MONA LISA SMILE, THE HAUNTING, AFFLICTION et HOLLYWOOD ENDING de Woody Allen. Seldes a étudié le ballet pendant plusieurs années et a fait son début en 1942. Elle a dansé dans la production PETROUCHKA du Ballet Theater américain. Elle y a travaillé avec plusieurs danseurs des BALLETS RUSSES parmi lesquels Alexandra Danilova, Alicia Markova, Irina Baronova et Leonide Massine.

BALLETS RUSSES - Cast

Dame Alicia Markova (1910 - 2004).



Markova is widely considered to be one of the greatest British ballerinas of the 20th century, and certainly one of the most famous Giselles of all time. In 1924, Sergei Diaghilev discovered the then Alicia Marks taking lessons in a London studio and hired her for his Ballets Russes on her 14th birthday. She was renamed Alicia Markova and remained with Diaghilev's company until it disbanded with his sudden death in 1929. Markova returned to London where she danced with the Vic-Wells Ballet and Ballet Rambert before co-founding the Markova-Dolin Ballet in 1935 with Anton Dolin. In 1938 she joined Leonide Massine's new Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Markova left the Ballet Russe for Ballet Theatre in 1941, where she danced until 1946. Markova spent the next four years guest starring with companies around the world and then, in 1950, she co-founded (again with Anton Dolin) the London Festival Ballet, which is now the English National. When she retired from the stage in 1963, she became the director of the Metropolitan Opera Ballet in New York. Markova returned to London in 1974 and continued to teach and give master classes there until well into her 90s. Her death on December 2, 2004 truly marked the end of an era - Alicia Markova was the last surviving member of Diaghilev's Ballet Russe.

Frederic Franklin, CBE (born 1914)



Franklin was born in Liverpool and made his debut as a dancer in Paris in 1931 in a show starring Josephine Baker. He returned to England where he joined the Markova Dolin Ballet in 1935. While dancing with that company, Franklin was discovered by Leonide Massine who hired him as premier danseur for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1938. During his first season with the Ballet Russe Franklin was cast as the Baron in Massine's *Gaite Parisienne*, where he partnered Alexandra Danilova for the first time. Thus was launched one of ballet's most legendary partnerships - a partnership that lasted for nearly 20 years. In 1952, Franklin took a break from the Ballet Russe to form the Slavenska Franklin Ballet together with prima ballerina Mia Slavenska. The most important work to come out of this partnership was the ballet version of Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, choreographed by Valerie Bettis, and in which Franklin danced the role of Stanley Kowalski. Franklin returned to the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1954, and stayed until 1956 as maitre de ballet. He directed the National Ballet of Washington from 1963 to 1974 and the Cincinnati Ballet from 1984 to 1986. Franklin returned to the stage in 2000 to perform character roles with both American Ballet Theatre and the Cincinnati Ballet. He continues to appear with these companies in the roles of Madge the Witch in *La Sylphide*, the Tutor in *Swan Lake* and Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*. Franklin was named Commander of the Order of the British Empire in June 2004 at the age of 90. He currently lives in Manhattan but still travels the world setting Ballets Russes choreographies.

Mia Slavenska (1914 - 2002)



Slavenska was born in Yugoslavia and was a child prodigy, making her stage debut at the Zagreb National Opera House in 1921. She joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo as a ballerina in 1938, already having made a name for herself by touring Europe as a soloist, winning the gold medal in the 1936 Berlin Dance Olympics and starring in the film *La Mort du Cygne*. Slavenska stayed with the Ballet Russe for four seasons and then continued to dance with the company on and off as a guest artist through the 1950s. In 1952, she co-founded the Slavenska-Franklin Ballet (along with Frederic Franklin) and became famous in the role of Blanche in that company's production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* (choreographed by Valerie Bettis and based on the play by Tennessee Williams). Slavenska was on the dance faculty at UCLA from 1969 to 1983, and also taught at California Institute for the Arts.

Nathalie Krassovska (1918 - 2005)



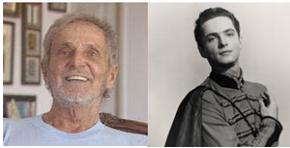
Krassovska came from a family of dancers - her grandmother was a soloist with the Bolshoi Ballet and her mother danced with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. She studied alongside the "Baby Ballerinas" Irina Baronova and Tamara Toumanova at Olga Preobrajenska's school in Paris, and then danced with George Balanchine's Les Ballets 1933. Krassovska joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1935 as a soloist and soon was promoted to ballerina. After leaving the Ballet Russe in 1950, she danced with the London Festival Ballet until 1960. In the early 1960s she settled in Dallas, Texas where she ran the Krassovska School of Ballet Jeunesse at which she taught until she passed away on February 8, 2005.

Tatiana Riabouchinska (1917-2000)



Riabouchinska was one of the three famous "Baby Ballerinas" (along with Irina Baronova and Tamara Toumanova), who was discovered by George Balanchine in 1931 in a Paris dance studio. She was 15 when she joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1932. Riabouchinska remained with the Ballet Russe until 1942 and then became a guest ballerina with major companies all over the world including Ballet Theatre, the London Festival Ballet, the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas and Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires. In 1943, she married the dancer and choreographer David Lichine and together they became one of the ballet world's most beloved couples. Riabouchinska and Lichine were involved in two major Walt Disney projects: as the models for Hyacinth Hippo and Ben Ali Gator in *Fantasia* (1940); and, as the dancing silhouettes in *Make Mine Music* (1946). In the 1950s they founded a dance school in Beverly Hills, where they trained actors and actresses as well as dancers. In fact, Riabouchinska trained Anne Bancroft for her role as the prima ballerina in the film *The Turning Point*. Riabouchinska continued to teach at a studio in West Hollywood until the day she died.

George Zoritch (born 1917)



Zoritch studied with Olga Preobrajenska alongside the “Baby Ballerinas”, Irina Baronova and Tamara Toumanova before joining the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1935. Zoritch rose from soloist rank to become premier danseur and danced with the Company from 1935 - 1940 and again from 1957 - 1962. He also was a star with the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas. Zoritch danced in several Hollywood movies during the 1940s and 50s - most notably in the Begin the Beguine sequence of Night and Day. After retiring from the stage, Zoritch opened a school in Los Angeles. In 1973 he joined the dance faculty of the University of Arizona at Tucson, where he established the ballet program. Zoritch currently lives in Arizona.

Irina Baronova (born 1919)



Baronova was one of the three famous “Baby Ballerinas” (along with Tatiana Riabouchinska and Tamara Toumanova). She was discovered by George Balanchine in 1931 in the Paris dance studio of Olga Preobrajenska (the great prima ballerina of the Russian Imperial Ballet). Baronova was not quite 13 when she joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1932. She danced with various Ballets Russes companies between 1931 and 1941 and also with Ballet Theatre and Leonide Massine’s Ballet Russe Highlights. Baronova starred in four films: Florian (1940), Yolanda (1943), Train of Events (1949) and A Toast to Love (1951). She also appeared in the musical Bullet in the Ballet and the comedy Black Eyes (both in London in 1946). Irina Baronova now lives in Australia where she is writing her memoirs, which are slated for publication in late-2005.

Tamara Tchinarova Fincht (born 1919)



Tchinarova Finch studied alongside the “Baby Ballerinas” Irina Baronova and Tamara Toumanova in the studio of Olga Preobrajenska, and joined the de Basil and Blum Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo as a soloist during its first season in 1932. She danced with the Ballet Russe until 1939 when she chose to remain in Australia at the close of the Company’s tour there. Tchinarova Finch danced with several Australian ballet companies and is credited with making a significant contribution to the development of ballet in that country. While in Australia, she met and married the actor Peter Finch and worked with him on a number of films before leaving Australia to make her home in England. Tamara Tchinarova Finch currently lives in London where she is a dance writer.

Maria Tallchief (born 1925)



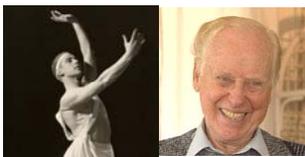
One of the greatest American ballerinas of the 20th century, Tallchief joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo as a member of the corps in 1942. From the Osage Tribe, she was another of the five American Indian ballerinas from Oklahoma to dance with the Ballet Russe. Tallchief soon rose to soloist rank and was spotted by George Balanchine, who almost immediately asked her to marry him. The two did marry in 1947 and Tallchief left the Ballet Russe to dance with Balanchine's Ballet Society (soon to become the New York City Ballet). Under Balanchine's tutelage she became legendary for her starring role in his *Firebird*. And although her marriage to Balanchine ended in 1952, Tallchief remained with the New York City Ballet as its prima ballerina until 1965. After leaving the stage, she became director of the Chicago Ballet. Maria Tallchief currently lives in Chicago.

Yvonne Chouteau (born 1929)



Chouteau was one of five American Indian ballerinas from Oklahoma who danced with the various Ballets Russes companies. When she was 12 years old, she left Oklahoma for New York City, where she was given a scholarship to the School of American Ballet. In 1943, at age 14, she joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo where she rose from the corps de ballet to ballerina. Her first solo role was *Prayer in Coppelia* (1945), for which she was coached by the great ballerina Alexandra Danilova. She married Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo soloist Miguel Terekhov in 1954 and together they established the first fully-accredited dance department in the United States at the University of Oklahoma, Norman (1962). Yvonne Chouteau is retired and lives in Oklahoma.

Marc Platt (born 1915)



Born Marcel Le Plat, he became one of the first Americans to dance with the Ballet Russe, after being discovered by Leonide Massine as a teenager in Seattle. LePlat's name was quickly Russianized to Marc Platoff and he soon rose from the corps to soloist rank, dancing roles such as King Dodon in *Coq d'Or*. In 1939, Platt became the first American to choreograph for the Ballet Russe with his *Ghost Town* (music by Richard Rodgers). Platt remained with the Ballet Russe until 1942, when he left for a career on Broadway and in the movies. His most famous Broadway role was as the "Dream" Curly in the original cast of *Oklahoma!* (1943). Platt's many film roles include Dan in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, as well as star turns in *Tonight and Every Night* and *Down to Earth* (both with Rita Hayworth). In 1962, he became the director of the ballet and producer at Radio City Music Hall. Marc Platt now lives in Santa Rosa, California.

Tatiana Stepanova (born 1924)



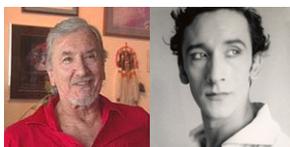
Stepanova joined Col. De Basil's Original Ballet Russe in 1939 at the age of 15, after studying with Olga Preobrajenska in Paris. She rose to become one of its star ballerinas during the War years as the company toured exhaustively throughout Latin America. She retired from dancing in 1946 to marry a long time admirer. Tatiana Stepanova currently lives with her husband in Boston.

Nini Theilade (born 1916)



Theilade was born in Java, Indonesia. Considered a child prodigy, she embarked on a series of solo recital dance tours in Europe and America at the age of 14. Theilade was discovered at one of these recitals by Max Reinhardt, who cast her as Queen of the Fairies in his film, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Theilade herself created some of the choreography in this film, most notably the pas de deux that she danced with Mickey Rooney. Theilade joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1938 and danced leading roles in Leonide Massine's *Nobilissima Visione*, *Bacchanale*, and *St. Francis*. She left the company during the war to return to Europe, where she continued to dance and choreograph. Theilade is credited with introducing symphonic ballet to Denmark. Nini Theilade lives in Denmark where she teaches at a university dance department.

Miguel Terekhov (born 1928)



Terekhov joined Col. de Basil's Original Ballet Russe in 1943 at the age of 14 while the company was on tour in his native Uruguay. He remained with the company until 1947. Terekhov later joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and danced with that company until 1958. In 1956, he married Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo ballerina Yvonne Chouteau. Together they founded the first fully-accredited dance department in the United States at the University of Oklahoma, Norman (1962). Miguel Terekhov is now retired and lives in Oklahoma.

Wakefield Poole (born 1936)



Poole grew up in Jacksonville, Florida and was one of the many young dancers who travelled to New York in the mid-1950s with the dream of joining the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. In 1957, he won a coveted spot in the Ballet Russe corps, but the difficult Ballet Russe bus tours (with their incessant one-night stands) soon left Poole pining for New York. He returned there in 1960 to become a dance captain on Broadway. In 1971, with the release of his landmark gay porn film *Boys in the Sand*, Poole's career took a new turn. His numerous adult gay films were known for their visual artfulness and use of classical music. Poole's post-film career included a stint as executive chef for Calvin Klein. He lives in Florida.

Yvonne Craig (born 1937)



Craig joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1954 at the age of 16 and danced in the corps and then as a soloist until 1957. After leaving the Ballet Russe she went to Hollywood, where she appeared in 16 films and over 60 television series. She is perhaps best known for her role as Batgirl in the *Batman* television series. Other notable television appearances include the Green Woman in *Star Trek* and *Dobie Gillis*. During her film career she co-starred in two movies with Elvis Presley: *It Happened at the World's Fair* (1963) and *Kissin' Cousins* (1964). Yvonne Craig currently lives in Southern California.

Raven Wilkinson (born 1936)



When Wilkinson was accepted into the corps of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1954, she became the first African American woman ever hired as a permanent member of a major ballet company. Wilkinson rose to soloist during her second season and stayed with the company for six years. Ultimately she was forced to give up her position in the Ballet Russe when increasingly hostile racism made it impossible for her to tour in the South. After leaving the company, she joined a convent for 8 months before deciding to return to dance. Finding that no other American ballet companies would hire her, Wilkinson went to Holland, where she danced as a soloist with the Dutch National Ballet. In 1974, she returned to America to perform character roles with the New York Metropolitan Opera. Raven Wilkinson lives in New York City and continues to perform with the Opera.

Rochelle Zide (born 1938)



Zide joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo corps in 1954 on her sixteenth birthday and was soon promoted to soloist. She stayed with the company until 1958, when she left to become a principal dancer and ballet mistress at the Joffrey Ballet. Zide later became a prima ballerina at New York City Opera Ballet, artistic director of the Netherlands Dance Theater, director of the ballet program for Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, professor of dance at Adelphi University, director of the New Zealand School of Dance, and professor of ballet and dance history at Butler University. Rochelle Zide currently lives in Tucson, Arizona.

Alan Howard (1931 - 2003)



Howard joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1949 as a corps member. He rose to premier danseur in 1954 (becoming one of the first Americans to attain that rank) and remained with the company until 1960. Howard founded the Pacific Ballet in San Francisco in the early 1960s. Between 1973 and his death in 2003, Alan Howard trained numerous dancers in both Europe and the United States.

Nina Novak (born 1927)



Novak studied at the School of the Warsaw Opera House as well as under Bronislava Nijinska. She joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1948 and was promoted to ballerina at the end of her first season with the company. She remained with the Ballet Russe until 1962, serving as ballet mistress on top of her roles as ballerina. Nina Novak now lives in Caracas, Venezuela where she founded and continues to run Ballet Classico.

BALLETS RUSSES - Press quotes

The New York Times

A. O. SCOTT:

"Ballets Russes" tells a marvelous story of midcentury show business, encompassing both the most exalted expressions of pure art and the sometimes grubby commerce that sustained it. The filmmakers, who spent years gathering rare clips and artifacts, triumphantly demonstrate the almost magical power of archival documentary. Dance is, axiomatically, the most ephemeral of art forms, expiring the moment it comes into being. But here it achieves at least a virtual immortality, as the remarkable accomplishments of dancers, choreographers, and costume and set designers come alive, briefly and sometimes blurrily, on the screen.

VARIETY

SCOTT FOUNDAS:

Breathlessly canvassing the six-decade history of the various companies that danced under the Ballet Russe moniker, Dayna Goldfine and Dan Geller's expertly crafted, years-in-the-making docu takes viewers on an ebullient odyssey from Russia to Australia to whistle-stop America, populated by a cast of charismatic, eternally young-at-heart ballet vets.

The Hollywood Reporter.com
CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

SURA WOOD:

Emmy-winning filmmakers Daniel Geller and Dayna Goldfine integrate stills, rare archival footage of performances and on-camera interviews with former dancers, now in their 70s or older, for an engaging slice of cultural history that should appeal to dance enthusiasts and pique the curiosity of the uninitiated.

