

Veronica Tennant, C.C. Prima Ballerina Bio & Resume

Veronica Tennant, during her illustrious 25-year career as Prima Ballerina with The National Ballet of Canada - won a devoted following on the international stage as a dancer of extraordinary versatility and dramatic power. Born in London England, Veronica Tennant started ballet lessons at four at the Arts Educational School, and with her move to Canada at the age of nine, started training with Betty Oliphant and then the National Ballet School. While she missed a year on graduation due to her first back injury, she entered the company in 1964 as its youngest principal dancer. Tennant was chosen by Celia Franca and John Cranko for her debut as *Juliet*. She went on to earn accolades in every major classical role and extensive neo-classical repertoire as well as having several contemporary ballets choreographed for her. She worked with the legendary choreographers; Sir Frederick Ashton, Roland Petit, Jiri Kylian, John Neumeier, and championed Canadian choreographers such as James Kudelka, Ann Ditchburn, Constantin Patsalas and David Allan.

She danced across North and South America, Europe and Japan, with the greatest male dancers of our time, including Erik Bruhn (her mentor), and Rudolf Nureyev, Anthony Dowell, Peter Schaufuss, Fernando Bujones and Mikhail Baryshnikov (immediately after he defected in Toronto, 1974). She was cast by Erik Bruhn to dance his *La Sylphide* with Niels Kehlet when Celia Franca brought The National Ballet of Canada to London England for the first time in 1972; and was Canada's 'first Aurora' dancing in the premiere of Rudolf Nureyev's *Sleeping Beauty* September 1, 1972 and at the company's debut at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, 1973. Tennant gave her parting performances in her signature role in *Romeo and Juliet* dancing with Raymond Smith in February 1989; and in a subsequent tribute Gala where she danced excerpts from *Giselle* with Frank Augustyn, *Washington Square* with Charles Kirby, *Canciones* with Kevin Pugh, and *Masada* with Rex Harrington; as well as the final pas de deux from *Onegin* with Raymond Smith - and - a surprise first and last time performance of the pas de deux from Cranko's *Taming of the Shrew* with Richard Cragun.

Her farewell gala November 21 in 1989 was called – *A Passion For Dance – Celebrating the Tennant Magic*. Veronica Tennant was the first dancer in Canada to be made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1975, and was elevated in 2004 to the rank of Companion, the country's highest honour.

GUEST BALLERINA PERFORMANCES include:

1989	<i>Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux</i> , (Balanchine), with Henny Juriens, <i>Four Last Songs</i> , (van Danzig) with Henny Juriens, Royal Winnipeg Ballet
1989	<i>Giselle Pas de Deux</i> , <i>Villanella</i> , (Allan) with Anthony Randazzo, Bermuda Festival
1988	<i>Court of Miracles</i> (Earl, Kudelka, Randazzo) Toronto Dance Theatre
1985	<i>Stars and Soloists of the Canadian Ballet</i> , (David Allan), Italian tour
1984	<i>Giselle</i> , with David Peregrine, Royal Winnipeg Ballet
1982	<i>Flames of Paris</i> , <i>Les Sylphides</i> , with Johann Renvell, Miami Ballet
1982	<i>Giselle</i> , <i>La Sylphide</i> , with Fernando Bujones, Ballet Caracas
1983	<i>Liebestod</i> , (Patsalas), Festival D'Aquila, Italy
1980	<i>La Sylphide</i> , with Fernando Bujones, American Ballet Theatre, New York
1978	<i>Pas de Quatre</i> , (Dolin), Les Grands Ballets Canadiens
1976	<i>Giselle</i> , <i>Coppelia</i> , with Ivan Nagy, New Orleans Ballet
1973	<i>Fetes Polonaises</i> , (Kirby) with Jeremy Blanton, Jacob's Pillow

ORIGINAL DANCE ROLES include:

Catherine Sloper, *Washington Square*, (James Kudelka)
Isabelle Marie, *Mad Shadows*, (Ann Ditchburn)
Thea, *Hedda*, (James Kudelka)
The Hostess, *A Party*, (James Kudelka)
Cinderella, (Celia Franca)
Kraanerg, (Roland Petit)
The Newcomers, (Brian Macdonald)
Whispers of Darkness, (Norbert Vesak)
All Night Wonder, (James Kudelka)
Liebestod, (Constantin Patsalas)

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ORIGINAL DANCE ROLES cont.:

Portrait of Love and Death, (Vicente Nebrada)
Realm, (David Earle)
Bolero, (Constantin Patsalas)
Canciones, (Constantin Patsalas)
Masada, (David Allan)
Villanella, (David Allan)
Botticelli Pictures, (David Allan)

TEACHING includes:

Master Classes: The National Ballet School, Richmond Academy of Dance, University of Michigan Dance – Ann Arbor, Cecchetti International Summer School LA 2000, University of California, Irvine, The Sarasota Ballet, Marin Ballet, Alberta Ballet Co. & School, Halifax Dance, Vancouver Ballet Society, The Cecchetti Society of Canada /BC, Alberta Dance Association, The Academy of Performing Arts, Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Ballet Co., The Quinte Dance Centre, Riverside Ballet Theatre, York University Dance Department, University of Toronto, theatre programme.

Coaching: The National Ballet of Canada, The National Ballet School

Lectures: Dance History: York University, University of Waterloo, University of Toronto Drama program, Residency, Department of Dance/Film, University of California, Irvine – November 15-27, 1998
Chancellor’s Distinguished Fellowship, University of California, Irvine – October 15-23, 2005

HIGHLIGHT PERFORMANCES WITH THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA include:

1964 *La Sylphide* (Bruhn)
1965 Debut, Juliet, *Romeo and Juliet*, (Cranko) with Earl Kraul
1965 *The Nutcracker*, (Franca), Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal
1966 *Romeo and Juliet*, Washington DC, Mexico City
1966 *Pulcinella*, *Triptych*, (Strate); *Les Rendezvous*, (Ashton); *Solitaire*, (MacMillan)
1967 Debut, Swan Queen, and Neapolitan Dance, *Swan Lake*, (Bruhn);
The Lesson, (Flindt) with Flemming Flindt and Celia Franca
1968 Premiere performance, *Cinderella*, (Franca), Toronto; *Romeo and Juliet*, with
Edward Villella, Toronto, Ottawa
1969 Created leading role *Kraanerg*, (Petit) – opening of The National Arts Centre,
Ottawa; *Le Loup*, (Petit) with Jean-Pierre Bonnefous
1970 Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Le Loup*
1972 Premiere performance, London, England – *La Sylphide*, (Bruhn) with Niels Kehlet,
and National Ballet Co. premieres in Paris, Stuttgart;
Swan Lake, in Monte Carlo, Prince Rainier and Princess Grace
1972 Premiere performance as Princess Aurora with Rudolf Nureyev in his
Sleeping Beauty, Ottawa, and subsequent Sol Hurok tour in the U.S. major Capitals
1973 Premiere performance for National Ballet in New York at the Metropolitan Opera
House - *Sleeping Beauty* with Nureyev
1973 Premiere performance *Les Sylphides*, (Mazurka & Pas de Deux), restaged by
Erik Bruhn and Celia Franca
1974 *La Sylphide* with Mikhail Baryshnikov, Toronto, following his defection,
Giselle with Nureyev, New York
1975 Premiere, Swanhilda in Erik Bruhn’s *Coppelia*, Toronto; and with Rudolf Nureyev
for his debut as Franz, and with Erik Bruhn as Dr. Coppelius in New York
and London, England

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HIGHLIGHT PERFORMANCES WITH THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA cont.:

- 1976 *Romeo and Juliet* with Frank Augustyn at NBC's 25th Anniversary, Toronto
- 1978 Premiere performance, *Washington Square*, (Kudelka) with Peter Schaufuss
- 1979 *La Fille Mal Gardee*, (Ashton) with Peter Schaufuss, Covent Garden, and
Mad Shadows, London, England
- 1980 *Le Corsaire Pas de Deux* and *La Fille Mal Gardee* with Peter Schaufuss,
Nervi Festival, Italy
- 1981 *Napoli* with Peter Schaufuss, NBC's 30th Anniversary; *The Dream*, (Ashton) with
Anthony Dowell, Toronto and Palm Beach
- 1984 *Canciones*, (Patsalas) with Kevin Pugh, Stuttgart, Munich
- 1985 Debut, Tatiana, in *Onegin*, (Cranko) with Raymond Smith, Ottawa
- 1986 *Villanella*, (Allan) The Metropolitan Opera House, New York
- 1987 *Merry Widow* (Hynd) with Tomas Schramek, Kennedy Center; created leading
role, *Masada*, (Allan); *Washington Square* (excerpt), NBC 35th
Anniversary; *Serenade*, (Balanchine), London, England
- 1988 *Forgotten Land*, (Kylia) with Frank Augustyn, Toronto
- 1989 *Onegin*, Metropolitan Opera House, New York;
Farewell performances: *Romeo and Juliet*, with Raymond Smith;
A Passion for Dance - Celebrating the Tennant Magic. Gala Tribute,
O'Keefe Centre, Toronto, November 21, 1989