

# UPSTAIRS BULLETIN

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## STUDENT NEWS

Maria Murphy is living it up in Madrid, Spain with her daughter Michelle, who is dancing with the Carmen Motas Company in Retiro Park at the Salon of Florida Park. Michelle was a Ballet pupil who went to Spain and fell in love with "Spanish Dance" (very easy to do) and has been in one or another Company ever since. She has a Spanish name, which I have forgotten, having a hard enough time remembering students' married names. My first introduction to serious dance was Spanish and how I envy them both living in that wonderful city with the fabulous Prado Museum — who could ask for anything More?

Our Dear friend Leonard Sorkin had a kidney removed some months ago and has recovered in great style and is back doing what he does best — playing Brahms. Daughter Naomi is now in Paris, France rehearsing for an appearance at La Scalla with the "Lindsey Kemp Company". She will also be dancing "Facade" and the Karsavina role in yet another Nijinsky story. We hope she fares better than Leslie Browne — but then, Naomi has a stronger and more positive character to deal with the situation.

Being in or out of Favor depends a great deal on your own behavior — or what you have to give and how you distribute this talent. Being too sure of your own importance can be death. I'm afraid this had happened to a couple of our special people. Having made a top movie can be death to a ballet dancer — look what happened to Moira Shearer after "Tales of Hoffman". The problem many aspiring artists run into (in fact they all do) is — are they in love with love — in love with another human being — or what is most important, are they married to their Art? It is as simple as that — there is no alternative.

We were very sorry not to meet Ethan Brown at the recent Ballet Theatre engagement — the youngest son of our beloved Kelly Brown.

This year's Ballet Theatre engagement was a disappointment with little or no glitter of what we have come to expect from what was once a very great company. Again, it is those ghosts of the past and every time something is missing — what do you get, but another — Balanchine Ballet — they are a dime a dozen. We in Chicago are not so brain-washed.

Father John Walsh brought John Neumeier to us on March 13th of 1958 asking us if we would consider him for a Scholarship. As we had great regard for Father Walsh, certainly we would. John was a student in our school and a member of our Ballet Group up until March of 1962 when he left for Europe — where he studied for a very short time at the Royal Ballet School in London. In all his publicity much is made of his association with Sybil Shearer — who does not teach. This also was of short duration. I mention this only to establish him as a student of our school with some previous training with Sheila Reilly, once our Assistant teacher ... at Marquette University in Milwaukee.

What was important was the performances he did with the Stone Camryn Company. Below is a list of what he appeared in:

- May 8, 10 — 1959... "Like a Weeping Willow".  
with an original score by Norman Curtis.  
Choreography by W. Camryn, a 40-minute ballet.
- May 8, 10 — 1959... "Alice in Wonderland".  
Music by Rossini, choreography by Walter Camryn. Neumeier danced the parts of Tweedle Dee, the Mock Turtle and the Knave of Hearts.
- May 15, 1960, Dec. 11, 1960 and May 1961.  
"In My Landscape" with an original score by Lora Aborn with narration spoken by Neumeier. 45 minute ballet choreography by Walter Camryn.

- Feb. 16, 1961 - "Hansel and Gretel". He was Hansel to Karen Krych's Gretel. 40 minute ballet choreography by Walter Camryn.
- May 1961. "In Whom I Live Dying" to the music of Schumann and narration from the poetry of Maurice Sceve. Choreography by Walter Camryn.
- Nov. 1961. "Les Biches" to Poulenc music and choreography by Bentley Stone
- Nov. 1961. "Pavanne Pour une Infante Defunte" to music of Maurice Ravel and choreography by Bentley Stone.

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### ON DANCE IN CHICAGO

Note: if my personal reminiscing on Chicago Dance presents a conglomerate group of names, it might presumeably be due to the broader experience of dancers of our day than of those today who are extremely limited (and talk only in exaggerated terms like saying they had appeared in the Bolshoi Ballet when they only supered). We, on the contrary, had appeared in Opera, Ballet, festivals, musicals, plays, reviews, recitals, concerts, cantomimes, Movie houses, night clubs, floor shows, progams with Symphony orchestras, Vaudeville and the beginnings of TV and many, many paegents. In the depression days no one was snobish about dancing in a circus. (Nor should they be today — they may just come to it too.) Every experience makes for a more complete artist.

Many of the dancers mentioned in this article have since had brilliant years in Ballet Russe, American Ballet Theatre, Modern Dance companies' Musicals, Movies and TV and a large percentage are doing great work as teachers from here to Hell and back.....carrying on what Harry Bernstein (formerly of Adelphia College) speaks of as the "Chicago School of Dance".

The following article was written in the late 40's or very early 50's. Parts of it may have appeared in an article called "Names" about that time. Keep in Mind 1940!!!

A recent exhibit at the Chicago Public Library entitled "Chicago Dances" gives an infinitesimal idea of all that has come to pass in the local dance scene. It would be interesting to know why the City so niggardly lacks appreciation and support for its local talent who

had to leave for more appreciative fields. The truth remains - the City is notorious in supporting the highly advertised exports from other cities - even when inferior. Irving Kolodin of the Saturday Review of Literature recently wrote that Chicago needed either a publicity agent or a new Mayor to let the world know what it had right here at home.

The 'come lately' teachers, writers and dancers who know nothing of Chicago's past are inclined to berate it and intimate that they are pioneering dance in the wasteland of Mid-America. A City that can boast of having had as teachers such names as — Adolph Bolm, Alexandra Maximova, Marcel Berge, Veschlav Swoboda, Muriel Stuart, Laurent Novikoff, Anatole Bourman and Mascagno have nothing to be ashamed of. There are indeed many others who have made their imprint on the City's cultural life. Pavley-Oukrainsky were not the best possible teachers, but they probably did more to popularize ballet at a time when it was most needed.

In the past the Opera had some of the great names of Dance on its directorial staff. From 1910-13 Luigi Albertieri, a foster son of Enrico Cecchetti, was the Ballet Master and Director of the Opera. He was followed by V. Romeo, another Italian (1913-14) and a Frenchman, Francoise Ambrosin (1914-17). They were before the advent of the Russian Ballet Masters: Andreas Pavley, Serge Oukrainsky, Adolph Bolm, Veschlev Swoboda and Laurent Novikoff. These were the important years in the development of dance in Chicago (1918-36) and the ballet was vastly more successful on the Opera Companies' transcontinental tours than in its own hometown. From those years almost up to the present, Ruth Page has had the Ballet and contributed enormously to this rich background. Many of the Standard Classical Ballets you see today were done at the Opera by those Ballet Masters and have all been mentioned many times in the Upstairs Club Bulletin.

Chicago has been a great training ground for dancers, and this too has never been publicized as it should be. Our dancers appear in great numbers in New York and around the world. The first accepted American ballerina in Europe was none other than Chicago's Anna Ludmilla. Because there is little opportunity here for work in dance, more time is spent in the studio learning their craft, so the dancers are better prepared when they leave.

In the early schools we find the names of Mary Wood Hinman (Doris Humphrey's first teacher; Madeline Hazlitt (Edna McRae's first teacher; Mabel Wentworth (Teacher of Anna Ludmilla and Edna Lucille Baum); Marie Landry (who started Marie Veatch and Mary Vandas); MMe Marie Young and the Kretlow family . . . all contributing their share of pioneering dance to the city.

With the advent of Pavley-Oukrainsky and Adolph Bolm Schools, Chicago began in earnest to train dancers. Dancers that came out of those two school were numerous and very influential. Out of Pavley and Oukrainsky came Portia Mansfield, Maria Nemeroff, Paul Batchelor, Iva Kitchell, Edris Milar, Julian Francesco, Edward Caton and Zenia Zarina. Edna McRae, Merriel Abbott and Ruth Austin were on their teaching staff. Under the Bolm regime came Anna Ludmilla, Ruth Page, Thalia Mara, Celeste Holm, Harriet Lundgren, Josephine & Hermene Schwartz, Vincenzo Celli, Mark Turbyfill, Julia Barashkova and a host of others. In my own period at Bolm's were Elise Reiman, Berenice Holmes, Jorg Fasting, Marcia Preble, Lee Foley, Ann Barzel, Florence Voss, Grace Cornell, Boris Volkoff, Alta Warshawska, and Eleanor Block. All were names that meant a great deal at that time and some are still in the teaching profession.

The Pavley-Oukrainsky Ballet toured extensively over the states, through Mexico and South America with popular success. They extended themselves too far by opening too many schools in other cities and gradually faded out of the picture.

In 1924 Bolm was one of the artists who helped organize the Chicago Allied Arts, one of the earliest attempts at a serious Chicago Company. Bolm brought two world famous artists to perform in his ballets - Tamar Karsavina and Ronny Johansson. When that failed, he had his own "Adolph Bolm Ballet In Time" which toured and had as its stars Agnes DeMille, Vera Mirova, Berenice Holmes and Elise Reiman. In 1926 Bolm did the first performance of "Appollo Musagetes" at the Library of Congress in Washington with a cast of Chicago dancers (Page, Holmes, Reiman). Bolm's background as one of the great male dancers was a great inspiration to many dancers here and most people came under his influence at that time. He was the first to dance the role of "Prince Igor" and was also famous for his

"Pierrot" and "Petrouchka" characterizations with the Diaghileff Ballet. Present day teachers studying in the school at that time were Edna McRae, Edna L. Baum, Marie Veatch, Berenice Holmes, Elizabeth Werblowsky, Mark Turbyfill, Florence Voss, and Jorg Fasting. Bolm also gave his students the advantage of studying with famous guest teachers. Of those I remember....Veschlec Swoboda, Marcel Berge, Jose Alvarez and Maria Montero.

When Bolm left Chicago for California Laurent Novikoff took over the local scene and all of our generation profited by study in his school. Of the younger generation that came under his tutelage were Helen Cramer, Teresa Rudolph, Vida Brown, Robert Padgen, Richard Reed, Kenneth McKenzie, Betty Gour, Kitty Andrews, Marina Novikova and Raymond Weamer. All were prominent in the Dance and Theatre world without performing much in their home town. Teresa Rudolph became one of the foremost trainers of figure skaters in the world.

The Comiakoff Russian School of Ballet flourished for a time and had a number of students from other schools who eventually went far in the dance world. To name a few -- Loyd Tygett and his brother Jack Tygett, Joseph Kaminski, Jane and Charles Bockman, Etta Buro and a bit later on, John Prinz.

Over a period of years most Chicago dancers have been in several schools -- the main progression being from Bolm's - to Novikoff's - then on to McRae's or Stone/Camryn. But almost every school has had it one or half dozen students that went beyond in the profession. Hazel Sharpe, a pupil of Albertieri who was one of the earlier excellent teachers, put out some very well trained girls. Albertine Vitak and Albia Kavan were fine examples. Albia was a soloist in the American Ballet Theatre and Albertine became a well regarded critic. McRae started Carol Lawrence, Alan Howard, Stanley Herbertt, Patricia Klekovic, Kenneth Johnson and Orin Kayan, as well as a host of other professionals who benefited by her stern discipline. John Petri, an off-shoot of Pavley and Oukrainsky, was the teacher of Rosiko Sabo, a soloist in Ballet Theatre along with George Verdak and Richard Franz. Edna L. Baum maintained a thriving school, famous for her version of baby work. However, out of that came Ruth Ann Koesun, Loretta Rozak, Alfred Floyd, Marion Finholt and Turner Lundgren.

Berenice Holmes had a group in the 30's that included Sona Osato, Kenneth Johnson, Harry Bernstein, Edith Allard, Aaron Girard (now a well known teacher in Sweden), and Fred Strobel, once of the Washington Ballet.

While Sybil Shearer is now thought of as a Chicago dancer, she is not. One of her earlier teachers was Doris Humphrey. Other Moderns who began and danced here were Pearl Lang, Kathryn Dunham, Talley Beatty, Eloise Moore, Nik Krivitsky, Gary Roberts, Ertha Kitt and the first, (but really a Duncan Dancer) was Diana Hubert. The best Modern teachers were Berta Ochsner, Inga Weiss (Wigman Pupil) and Pat Boyer. In the late 30's Eleanor Block made the last concerted effort to get a group of good moderns together, among them Leyah Lucatsky and Ann Port.

What Chicago has needed more than anything in the world was writers and on this score we have been sadly neglected. Ann Barzel stands almost alone in her support of local talent. Selma Jeanne Cohen, another writer from Chicago, has devoted herself entirely to the New York scene. In the past we had Albertina Vitak, Marion Schillo and Marya McAuliffe who did contribute some.

In the choreographic field, Bob Fosse stems from Chicago. While here he was a hoofing partner of Charles Grass and had one summer in our school. Much younger John Neumeier has had considerable success in Europe in much more serious ballet choreography. Others in this line were Loyd Tygett, Charles Bennett and John Sharp.

It might seem vain to mention all the dancers who came from under our influence, so will refrain and only mention a few that we think Chicago should be as proud of as we are. on the feminine side — Ruth Ann Koesun, Bonnie Mathis, Dolores Lipinski, Naomi Sorkin,

Alexis Hoff, Karen Krych, Karen Tims and Judith Svalander. On the male side — John Kriza, Kelly Brown, Charles Bennett, John Neumeier, Ronald Frasier and Charles Schick.

It is not easy to know when to stop mentioning Chicago dancers — but so many very important people are being forgotten. For instance, Mildred Prechl (who recently died at age 87), where John Kriza and Elsie Stigler began to dance out in Berwyn. Many of us worked for Dick and Edith Barstow, Dorothy Dorben, Dorothy Hild, Fred Evans and Rasset, who was one of the Poles in the Pavlova Ballet Company. Back in the 30's, the following local dancers had substantial careers in other areas — James Jamieson, Janice Rule, Jack Warner, Dorothy Hill, Helene Constantine, Muriel Grey, Barbara Atkins and Louise Glenn — all very excellent dancers and performers.

The Chicago Theatre in the 30's maintained a ballet with ballet Masters Anatole Bourman, Val Rasset, Fred Evans, Dorothy Hild and now and then, Muriel Abbott directed these presentations. Local dancers appeared in the corps, and as soloists. Mona Dell, Bentley Stone, Ruth Pryor, Teresa Rudolph, Dorothy Burke, Jose Alvarez and I worked as soloists.

Many of the dancers mentioned in this article have had brilliant careers — OUTSIDE OF CHICAGO — in Ballet Russe, Ballet Theatre, Modern Dance companies, Musicals, Movies and TV. A very great percentage are now teachers scattered from coast-to-coast, from border-to-border with their own schools — carrying on what Harry Bernstein, formerly of Adelphia College, speaks of as "THE CHICAGO SCHOOL OF DANCE".

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