Spring Performances Top Notch

Last May, HARID’s young dancers brought down the house with another outstanding and varied series of performances at the Countess de Hoernle Theater. The Morris and Elfriede Stonzek Spring Performances were held May 25–27, and included classical standards as well as contemporary ballet. HARID always strives to present a solid and enjoyable evening of dance, but this program was heightened by the performances of two exceptionally gifted graduating seniors (Cavan Conley and Amanda Prates Dos Santos) and an elegantly crafted new work by resident choreographer, Mark Godden.

During the rare treasure that is a HARID performance, it is often difficult to remember that the performers are high school students. Never has this been truer in recent memory than during the opening ballet, Excerpts from Le Corsaire, expertly staged and rehearsed by Victoria Schneider, Svetlana Osiyeva, and Bertha Valentin. From start to finish, this piece showcased how the mastery of classical technique can be used for the purpose of refracting artistic and musical brilliance.

The Greek Dance featured the sparkling Itzel Hernandez, a graduating senior who gave strong performances throughout her time at HARID. The Pas de Trois was the spectacle of the evening, however, due to the virtuosic performances of Amanda Prates Dos Santos and Cavan Conley. Dos Santos embodied the regal elegance of Medora, while Conley demonstrated a mature balance between the masculinity and subservience of Ali. John Abenanty was also notable in the role of Conrad, both for the strength of his partnering and the attack he showed in his variation.

The second half of the program opened with Glitter pas de deux, followed by the White Swan pas de deux from the second act of Swan Lake (performed by guest artist alumna Jenna Johnson and her husband Daniel Precup), and the premiere of Godden’s Corazón de la Llama.

The White Swan pas de deux was something to behold. Johnson, a 1993 HARID graduate, brought to the stage the maturity, artistic depth, and physical fluidity required to make this piece a sublime success. Her lithe physique and grace made the entire pas de deux feel like one long, deep breath.

Of all the works Mark Godden has created for HARID, Corazón de la Llama stands out for its purity, vibrancy, and sensuality. The most outstanding movement is a trio, entitled Jota, in which Godden created an architecturally perfect structure that represents the physical embodiment of the composer’s score.

When done well, the beauty of ballet creates moments that take your breath away. HARID’s 2012 Spring Performances provided an abundance of such moments.
2012–13 Academic Year Sets Enrollment Record

Over the years, enrollment at HARID during the academic year has averaged about forty students. This is due partly to preferred class sizes, but also to the fact that HARID’s admission criteria are probably the most stringent among such schools anywhere in the country. Nevertheless, the faculty is thrilled to have such a “robust” group of talented students to work with this year.

There are currently thirty-two American students enrolled—nine of whom are from Florida; five students from Brazil; and others from Ecuador, Italy, New Zealand, England, and Japan. Despite higher enrollment, however, HARID’s Class of 2013 will be among the smallest ever, with just six seniors expected to graduate in May.

Student Awards Presented

HARID was pleased to recognize six students with special awards earlier this fall:

- Nicholas Rose, from Palm Beach, Florida, received a Rueger Family Award, given in honor and memory of Edith and Bob Rueger.
- Mackenzie Drozdz, from Wheeling, Illinois; Wayne Ellis, from Brooklyn, New York; Vanessa Lai, from Kowloon, Hong Kong; and Hannah Wood, from Alpharetta, Georgia, each received generous assistance from the Ruth Nelson Kraft Awards Foundation.
- Stefan Goncalves, from Sao Paulo, Brazil; and Vanessa Lai were presented with Rudolf Nureyev Education Fellowships, generously funded by the Rudolf Nureyev Dance Foundation.

Celebrate the Holiday with HARID

HARID’s Winter Performances will be held on December 15 and 16 at the Countess de Hoernle Theater. Both performances will begin at 3:00 p.m.

This year’s program will include Carnivale in Venice, staged by faculty member Svetlana Osyjeva; Moldavian Dance, staged by HARID’s character-dance teacher, Bertha Valentin; La Mer, a modern-dance piece choreographed and staged by Danielle Armstrong; and HARID’s holiday tradition, Divertissements from The Nutcracker, Act II.

Tickets are just $28 and $22 (half price for children and full-time students), and are available at 2285 Potomac Road in Boca Raton (9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. weekdays), or by telephone at 561-998-8038. The Countess de Hoernle Theater is located on the campus of Spanish River Community High School, 5100 Jog Road, just north of Yamato Road.

Please join us at HARID’s Winter Performances!

Presidential Debates

HARID’s students showed considerable interest in the recent election, especially since the fourth-and-final presidential debate was held next door at Lynn University on October 22. On the day of the debate, the dancers stood outside and waved as the candidates’ motorcades drove by, en route to the Wold Performing Arts Center. Later that evening, HARID’s Honor Society hosted a debate party during which the students watched the televised debate, indulged in various (healthy) snacks and drinks, and cheered their favored candidate.
Meet the Dancers Luncheons

Are you looking for a unique, informative, and thoroughly entertaining afternoon activity for your group? HARID’s Meet the Dancers luncheon program will exceed your expectations.

For business, community, service, social, alumni, and other groups, The HARID Conservatory provides an enjoyable and inspiring afternoon program that includes a catered, sit-down lunch, an informative talk given by the director, and an opportunity to sit in and observe the school’s talented young dancers in their daily ballet class.

Meet the Dancers luncheons begin at 12:15 p.m. and conclude no later than 2:30 p.m. Reservations are available weekdays throughout the academic year (some restrictions apply). For more information or to reserve a luncheon for your group, please contact Annabel Russell at 561-997-2677.

Student-Outreach Performances

Generously Underwritten by JPMorgan Private Bank

This year, JPMorgan Private Bank has generously underwritten HARID’s Student-Outreach Performances, to be held on December 12 and 13. More than 3,000 fourth- and fifth-grade children from Palm Beach County schools will have the opportunity to enjoy HARID’s production of The Nutcracker, Act II. The performances, four in total, will be presented at the Countess de Hoernle Theater in Boca Raton.

“I am delighted that JPMorgan Private Bank has partnered with HARID to present this year’s student-outreach performances,” commented HARID director Gordon Wright. “The positive response from children and their teachers has been overwhelming; it’s abundantly clear that we are fulfilling a cultural need in the community. JPMorgan’s support will ensure that we can continue offering this valuable program free of charge to both the students and their schools.”

Summer School Recruiting to Begin in January

HARID’s ballet faculty and director will visit eighteen cities in January and February as part of the school’s recruitment drive for 2013–14. Summer School auditions will be held in the following locations:

Charlotte NC, January 11
Atlanta GA, January 12
Memphis TN, January 13
Houston TX, January 18
Tulsa OK, January 19
Richardson TX, January 20
Broomfield CO, January 25
Minneapolis MN, January 26
Kansas City MO, January 27
Chicago IL, February 1
Pittsburgh PA, February 2
Louisville KY, February 3
Boston MA, February 8
New York NY, February 9
Washington DC, February 10
Boca Raton FL, February 16
Tampa FL, February 16
Orlando FL, February 17

Distinguished Alumnus Visits HARID

On October 23, HARID’s students enjoyed a day-long visit from Marcelo Gomes, a 1996 graduate of the school. Gomes is a principal dancer with American Ballet Theater and is currently considered one of the world’s foremost male dancers.

For the past several years, a film crew has been shadowing Gomes, gathering video footage and interviews for a new documentary to be named, MARCELO GOMES: Anatomy of a Male Ballet Dancer. The film is scheduled for completion and release in 2013. Because HARID played a pivotal role in Gomes’ training and development as a dancer, the filmmakers brought him to the school to shoot video and conduct interviews for inclusion in the documentary. Gomes took class with the students, spoke about his time at HARID, posed for photos, and signed autographs. It was a very exciting day for the young dancers!
HARID’s Class of 2012

Last year’s graduates have wasted no time pursuing their goal of becoming professional dancers:

Asia Bui is dancing with Houston Ballet II  
Cavan Conley has joined Tulsa Ballet II  
Diogo da Silva is dancing in Brazil  
Alef de Sousa is dancing in Brazil  
Amanda Dos Santos is a Joffrey Ballet trainee  
Diana Figueroa has enrolled in the dance department at Point Park University  
Itzel Hernandez is dancing in Cuba  
Jiani Li is a Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre trainee  
Kristen Patrick is a Joffrey Ballet trainee  
Ransom Wilkes-Davis is also a Joffrey Ballet trainee  
Jason Yeung has joined Tulsa Ballet II

Dance Teachers’ Week

February 11–15, 2013 will be Florida Dance Teachers’ Week at The HARID Conservatory. During this time, HARID’s director and faculty will host several luncheons for Florida’s dance teachers. Following each luncheon, guests will be invited to tour the facilities and observe the school’s talented students in their ballet classes. Immediately following the classes, visiting teachers will be invited to join in open discussions with HARID’s faculty and director about ballet methodology and other matters of mutual interest.

Dance Teachers’ Week luncheons will be held on Wednesday, February 13, and Friday, February 15, beginning at 12:00 noon. Interested dance teachers may call Janet Trivino at 561-997-2677 for more information.

New HARID Website Soon to be Launched

HARID’s redesigned and soon-to-be-launched website will have a number of added features, including online ticket sales for performances! Please watch for our new site at www.harid.edu and take it for a test drive. (You will also be able to make your HARID annual-fund contribution online.)

So Dança, the Preferred Shoe of The HARID Conservatory

HARID is very pleased to have renewed its partnership with So Dança, a leading manufacturer and retailer of dance shoes and clothing. Located in Deerfield Beach, So Dança provides HARID with ballet slippers and other shoes for its students. In addition, the company generously offers its pointe shoes to the school’s female dancers at wholesale prices, saving their families hundreds of dollars each year.

Annual-Fund Campaign

Please help us achieve this year’s annual-fund campaign goal of $100,000. Your gift will be used to provide financial assistance for students whose families cannot afford the fees associated with room and board at the school. Over the years, hundreds of gifted young dancers have relied on such assistance in order to complete their studies at HARID. It is vital that we continue our tradition of helping where help is needed. Annual-fund contributions are tax deductible.

We hope you have enjoyed reading HARID’s Fall Newsletter. The next issue will be published in March.