Joseph Carman
Nov. 21, 2013 09:46PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The New DTH

Photography by Quinn Wharton

When Dance Theatre of Harlem made its comeback last April at Jazz at Lincoln Center, the company and its admirers exhaled a collective sigh of relief. “Having that behind us gives us a level of confidence,” says DTH artistic director Virginia Johnson. The company broke even with the New York engagement, and went on to tour from Maryland to Izmir, Turkey. Johnson views their second season as “a time to solidify, to refine, to build the amplitude.”

To bolster the repertoire and nurture DTH’s 18 dancers, Johnson is adding three ballets: Ulysses Dove’s *Dancing on the Front Porch of Heaven*, which, Johnson says, “will require the dancers to reach a higher technical level and also to get inside a work”; Thaddeus and Tanya Wideman-Davis’ *past-carry-forward*, a ballet about the persistence of the Harlem Renaissance; and Frederic Franklin’s version of Petipa’s *Pas de Dix*. “These are not works for a black audience or a white audience,” says Johnson. “They’re for an audience that needs to know who we are as Americans.”

As the company moves forward, there are still some hurdles. Fundraising remains tough in a fragile economy. There is also the challenge of developing dancers of color, especially keeping them engaged through adolescence when they start thinking about becoming professionals. Nonetheless, DTH has an impressive tour schedule ahead: 15 weeks have already been scheduled. And its second season at Jazz at Lincoln Center in Manhattan runs April 23–27, 2014.

features

Comments

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Chava Lansky
Jan. 04, 2019 04:51PM EST

News →

Check Out These Two YAGP Live Streams This Weekend

Courtesy VAM Productions

Raise your hand if you're excited for competition season! Youth America Grand Prix Regional Semi-Finals are well underway, leading up to the much-awaited New York Finals April 12-19. Even better, they're live-streamed, meaning you now have the perfect excuse to spend your weekend at home, watching ballet (while sewing your pointe shoes and stretching, of course).

This weekend features semi-finals in Seattle, Washington and Tampa, Florida. To see the full schedules and set up streaming, click here. Streaming starts at $13.99. Packages of 2, 4, 6 or 12 total viewing hours are available, and viewers can log in and out as often as they like.

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Claudia Bauer
Jan. 04, 2019 12:02PM EST

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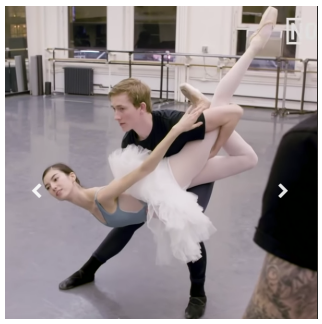

What to Watch: Inside the Life of an ABT Studio Company Dancer

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Win a 2019 Wall Calendar Featuring Your Fave Dancers (and Dogs)

Breaking the Binary: Trans, Gender-Fluid and Other Nonbinary Artists Are Seeking Equal Opportunity in Classical Ballet

Chase Johnsey (second from right) in English National Ballet's production of *The Sleeping Beauty*. Elliot Franks, Courtesy In The Lights PR.

George Balanchine famously said "Ballet is woman." He should have added that ballet is man, too, because it has long been defined by the traditional male-female binary. A formal challenge to the paradigm was launched in June, when Chase Johnsey was offered the opportunity to dance female corps roles in English National Ballet's *The Sleeping Beauty* in London.

"I am a classical ballerina," says Johnsey, a freelance dancer who identifies as gender fluid and uses he/him/his pronouns. His ENB performance (in the mazurka and as a marchioness in the hunt scene; he also understudied a nymph) made headlines around the world and turned him into an activist for the cause—not to change classical ballet, but to open its doors to artists across the full spectrum of human gender. By hiring Johnsey, ENB artistic director Tamara Rojo put ballet's gender-exclusiveness on notice. "Our work and our company should reflect the world we live in," she stated via email. "Ballet should have no barriers; it's for everyone, everywhere."

Johnsey isn't alone. Jayna Ledford and Scout Alexander, two young transgender dancers, are training hard to break into the professional ballet world. We spoke with them about the dreams, achievements and challenges of nonbinary artists in the intensely gendered world of ballet.

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Rachel Hellwig
Jan. 03, 2019 02:15PM EST

Ballet Stars →

Our 2018 Cover Stars Share Their New Year's Resolutions (Plus, What They've Been Up To)

All photos by Jayme Thornton for *Pointe*

From marriage to career transitions to injuries, our 2018 cover stars have had a busy year.

Find out what they've been up to since they graced the cover of *Pointe* and what they're aiming for in 2019.

American Ballet Theatre's Betsy McBride

Photo by Jayme Thornton for *Pointe*

New Year's Resolutions: School and Self-Care

My New Year's resolutions are to complete my Associate of Science degree, sleep more, and slow down from time to time to appreciate the little things in life.

Life Updates: Star Studded Performances

Since appearing on *Pointe*'s cover, I performed in the New York Ballet Stars Gala in Cape Town, South Africa in honor of Mignon Furman. I also performed in a very exciting Balanchine Tribute Festival at City Center with American Ballet Theatre alongside Joffrey Ballet, The Mariinsky Ballet, Miami City Ballet, New York City Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, The Royal Ballet and San Francisco Ballet.

McBride also recently got engaged to longtime boyfriend and former ABT dancer Simon Wexler.

You can read our February/March 2018 cover story on Betsy McBride here.

Sponsored By The School Of Pennsylvania Ballet
Dec. 17, 2018 05:35PM EST

popular →

What Do School Directors Look For At A Summer Intensive Audition?

We sat down with James K. Payne, School Director of The School of Pennsylvania Ballet, to hear his thoughts about students auditioning for summer intensives this winter. We think you'll be very interested in what he has to say.

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Marissa DeSantis
Jan. 02, 2019 06:06PM EST

News →

ABT's Melanie Hamrick Is Choreographing a Ballet With the Help of the Rolling Stones

Melanie Hamrick for Flexistretcher, via @flexistretcher

ABT corps dancer Melanie Hamrick will be taking a leave of absence from the company's spring season, but for the best reason possible: She's working on her own ballet. Her piece is set to premiere in March, and will feature music curated by Hamrick's longtime boyfriend, Rolling Stones frontman Mick Jagger (cue the moves like Jagger puns).

Keep reading...

Lauren Wingenroth For Dance Magazine
Jan. 02, 2019 11:38AM EST

Ballet Stars →

Sono Osato, Boundary-Breaking Japanese-American Dancer, Dies at 99

Sono Osato, Screenshot via YouTube

Sono Osato, a trailblazing ballet and musical theater dancer, passed away last Wednesday at her home in New York City.

Best known for originating the role of Miss Turnstiles in Jerome Robbins' hit *On the Town*—one of Broadway's first non-segregated musicals—Osato got her start at 14 as the youngest member of the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, and as the troupe's first Japanese-American performer. She went on to dance for Ballet Theatre (now American Ballet Theatre), where she found success in New York City but was banned from touring in Mexico and California because of her Japanese background. For a brief time, Osato went by her mother's maiden name, Fitzpatrick, in an effort to escape the World War II-era anti-Japanese sentiment. During the war, her father was confined under military guard in Chicago as an enemy alien.

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Gavin Larsen
Jan. 02, 2019 12:30PM EST

Trending →

Turnout 101: Where Does It Come From, And How Can You Get More?

International performer Joy Womack balances flexibility and strength to maintain her turnout. Photo by Quinn Wharton for *Pointe*.

Turnout is one of the defining characteristics of classical ballet and the foundation of your technique, but the deceptively simple concept of external rotation can be hard to execute. For those born with hip joints that don't naturally make a tight fifth position, it's tempting to take shortcuts in the quest for more rotation, but you'll end up with weaker technique and a higher risk of injury. We asked top teachers and physical therapists to break down the meaning of turnout and offer safe ways to maximize your range.

Keep reading...

Margaret Fuhrer
Dec. 31, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: ABT's Isabella Boylston and James Whiteside in "Harlequinade"

Boylston and Whiteside brought charm and technical brilliance to *Harlequinade*. Photo by Alan Alejandro Sánchez, Courtesy ABT.

Alexei Ratmansky's reconstruction of Marius Petipa's *Harlequinade*, which debuted this spring at American Ballet Theatre, felt as fizzy and decadent as a glass of champagne. Though resplendently designed and lovingly assembled, the ballet relied on the personal charms of its Harlequin and Columbine to buoy its all-too-poppable bubble of a plot. And nobody brought more charm, or technical brilliance, to the leading roles than the opening-night cast, James Whiteside and Isabella Boylston. The charismatic duo perfectly understood the lightweight fun of the ballet, relishing the beauties of its coloratura choreography while keeping the extended mime passages *just* to the right side of camp. Their offstage best-friendship—they're known to their Instagram fans (including Jennifer Garner) as "the Cindies"—lent a special warmth to their onstage partnership, especially in the ballet's surprisingly tender climactic pas de deux. Audiences floated out of the theater afterward, pleasantly intoxicated.

Harlequinade
www.youtube.com

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Rachel Hellwig
Dec. 31, 2018 09:00AM EST

Viral Videos →

Ring In the New Year With These Gorgeous Ballet-Meets-Ballroom Videos from Vienna

Vienna State Ballet first soloists Olga Esina and Roman Lazik, via YouTube.

Vienna really knows how to ring in the New Year with its annual concert by the Vienna Philharmonic, filled with the waltzes of the Strauss family and other composers. The best part? Broadcasts of the event (shown in the U.S. on PBS) also include interludes of ballet. On January 1, catch dancing from the Vienna State Ballet on PBS' Great Performances' "From Vienna: The New Year's Celebration 2019" (check local TV listings). In the meantime, here is a collection of gorgeous videos from New Years' past.

Keep reading...

Pointe Magazine
Dec. 30, 2018 05:00PM EST

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The Top 10 Pointe Stories of 2018

Happy New Year! Photo by rawpixel via Unsplash

2019 is almost here—can you believe it? As you tend to your *Nutcracker*-sore bodies and prep your resolutions, take some time to curl up with a mug of hot chocolate and delve into 10 of 2018's best ballet stories.

Keep reading...

Check out our videos on YouTube

Chava Lansky
Dec. 30, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: NYCB Principal Sterling Hyltin in Robbins' "Afternoon of a Faun"

Hyltin in Jerome Robbins' *Afternoon of a Faun*. Photo by Paul Kolnik, Courtesy NYCB.

New York City Ballet's Robbins 100 Festival last spring included 19 Jerome Robbins ballets performed over the course of two and a half weeks, requiring extreme stamina and versatility from the company's dancers. No one rose higher to the occasion than principal Sterling Hyltin. The festival showcased the breadth of her range, yet Hyltin shone brightest in Robbins' 1953 *Afternoon of a Faun*. From her first entrance through the door of the gauzy studio set to the end of the 11-minute pas de deux, Hyltin's embodiment of the role was complete; each movement expressed the naiveté and ethereal sensuality of her character. Her leggy, lithe physique is reminiscent of Tanaquil Le Clercq, the NYCB ballerina on whom the work was made and is now dedicated.

Keep reading...

Courtney Escoyne
Dec. 29, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: The Joffrey Ballet in Alexander Ekman's "Midsummer Night's Dream"

A madcap solstice celebration: The Joffrey Ballet in Alexander Ekman's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Photo by Cheryl Mann, Courtesy Joffrey Ballet.

During Alexander Ekman's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, a singer croons: "By morning the dancers/Will start to wonder/Had it all been a dream?/Had it all been a blunder?" While The Joffrey Ballet's performances of Ekman's 2015 full-length last April were most certainly the former, they could not have been further from the latter.

Ekman's 'Midsummer Night's Dream' | Official Trailer

www.youtube.com

Keep reading...

Josephine Lee
Dec. 28, 2018 05:00PM EST

Viral Videos →

Pro Pointe Shoe Hacks From Shelby Williams and Her Alter Ego, Biscuit Ballerina

Biscuit Ballerina, aka Shelby Williams. Photo by Nicha Rodboon, Courtesy Williams.

Master pointe shoe fitter Josephine Lee of the California-based The Pointe Shop interviewed Royal Ballet of Flanders dancer Shelby Williams and her Instagram-famous alter ego, Biscuit Ballerina. First, watch Biscuit turn the tables and (hilariously) find the perfect pointe shoes for Lee. Then check out Williams' tips on customizing pointe shoes for advanced students and pros.

Pro Pointe Shoe Hacks From Biscuit Ballerina

youtu.be

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Lucy Van Cleef
Dec. 28, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: Stuttgart Ballet in Christian Spuck's "Lulu"

Alicia Amatriain in the title role and Roman Novitzy as Dr. Schöning in Christian Spuck's *Lulu. A Monstre Tragedy.* Photo Courtesy Stuttgart Ballet/

It's not every day that a company presents a work so original, both in concept and execution, with dancers so well suited to its unique strengths, as Stuttgart Ballet in Christian Spuck's revival of *Lulu. A Monstre Tragedy*. Spuck, now artistic director at Zurich Ballet, choreographed the ballet while resident choreographer of Stuttgart Ballet in 2003.

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Steve Sucato
Dec. 27, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: BalletMet's Grace-Anne Powers in "Giselle"

Powers with William Newton in Edwaard Liang's *Giselle*. Photo by Jennifer Zmuda, Courtesy BalletMet.

While its minimalist costuming and sets gave Edwaard Liang's new *Giselle* for BalletMet a nontraditional look last February, there was nothing spartan about Grace-Anne Powers' performance in the title role. Powers' radiant smile, warmth and happy disposition made Giselle's betrayal by Albrecht (danced by William Newton), and her subsequent death of a broken heart, a real tearjerker. She had you believing that an entire village could, indeed, love her.

Keep reading...

Amy Brandt
Dec. 27, 2018 08:00AM EST

Health & Body →

Ask Amy: How Can I Stay in Shape After Nutcracker Ends?

Photo by oldskool photography/Unsplash

My dance program goes on a two-week break after *Nutcracker* performances. I'm worried about staying in shape and hate not having regular class. What can I do on my own, and how much should I be doing? —Emma

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Claudia Bauer
Dec. 26, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: Lonnie Weeks in Christopher Wheeldon's "Bound To" at San Francisco Ballet's Unbound Festival

Weeks, a newly promoted SFB soloist, in Christopher Wheeldon's *Bound To*. Photo by Erik Tomasson, Courtesy SFB.

If a dancer is very lucky, and very prepared, one performance can transform their career. Lonnie Weeks was that dancer on the opening night of San Francisco Ballet's Unbound Festival in April. Chosen by Christopher Wheeldon for the emotionally wrenching final solo in *Bound To*, Weeks, 27, went onstage as a superb but largely unsung company artist. When the curtain came down 30 minutes later, he was, rightfully, a star.

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Amy Brandt
Dec. 26, 2018 08:00AM EST

Trending →

Good Luck Charms and Makeup Must-Haves: Inside 3 Ballerinas' Dressing Rooms

San Francisco Ballet principal Frances Chung with her dressing room pal, Iggy. Photo by Erik Tomasson, Courtesy SFB.

A dancer's dressing room is often her "home away from home." We went backstage with Boston Ballet principal Lia Cirio, San Francisco Ballet principal Frances Chung and Richmond Ballet dancer Cody Beaton to see how they personalize their space and get performance-ready.

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Kathleen McGuire
Dec. 25, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's Corey Bourbonniere as Bernardo in "West Side Story Suite"

Bourbonniere as Bernardo in Robbins' *West Side Story Suite*. Photo by Aimee DiAndrea, Courtesy Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre.

When Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre corps de ballet dancer Corey Bourbonniere arrived onstage in the company's production of Jerome Robbins' *West Side Story Suite* last May, he wore the role of Bernardo like a custom-made leather jacket. Bourbonniere's Bernardo was puckish and sly, with a command and subtle likeability that made him the most delicious of anti-heroes. He shone brightest during the "Mambo" scene, where he deftly partnered his Anita (principal Julia Erickson) without missing a beat.

Keep reading...

Marissa DeSantis
Dec. 24, 2018 05:00PM EST

Just for fun →

6 Dancers Serving Up Major Cold Weather Style Inspo

San Francisco Ballet soloist WanTing Zhao adds a pop of color to her winter wear. Photo by Quinn Wharton.

Winter weather is here, and since it's not going away anytime soon, we're embracing the cold and bundling up in style. If you're looking for a new coat to throw on over your leotard and warm ups or some every day clothing inspiration for your (limited) life outside of the studio, these pros have got you covered. Check out some of favorite street wear ensembles—winter edition.

American Ballet Theatre Principal James Whiteside

Photo by Kyle Froman for *Pointe*

Proof that neutral colors don't have to be boring, James Whiteside pairs a crisp, white turtleneck with a dark peacoat and pleated pants. We're also totally behind wearing sunglasses in the winter.

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Amy Brandt
Dec. 24, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: Ballet Nacional de Cuba's Corps de Ballet in "Giselle"

Ballet Nacional de Cuba's corps de ballet performs *Giselle*'s famous arabesque chugs. Photo by Carlos Quezada, Courtesy The Kennedy Center.

During the Ballet Nacional de Cuba's tour to Washington, DC's Kennedy Center earlier this year, the company brought longtime artistic director Alicia Alonso's *Giselle*. And while the production was admittedly well-worn and the style of dancing old-fashioned, the dancers rose to the occasion, led sensitively by longtime BNC star Viengsay Valdés in the title role.

Keep reading...

Nancy Wozny
Dec. 23, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: Houston Ballet's Nozomi Iijima in Stanton Welch's "Just"

Iijima with Cuhan Wai Chan in Stanton Welch's *Just*. Photo by Christopher Duggan, Courtesy Houston Ballet.

Houston Ballet first soloist Nozomi Iijima transformed into a Zen goddess in the pas de deux for Stanton Welch's *Just*, commissioned specially for Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in August. Partnered by Chun Wai Chan, Iijima moved as if in a dream state, casting a deliciously hypnotic spell. It was as if she was literally pouring her weight from one movement to another. Welch's sculptural choreography brings out her most mesmerizing abilities. Even though the ballet is completely fluid, tension slowly builds to a crescendo until finally we feel the pain of loss that memory holds. Her stoic but powerful performance held the audience captive—it was the kind of dancing that you don't want to exhale during.

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Laura Cappelle
Dec. 22, 2018 02:00PM EST

Ballet Stars →

The Standouts of 2018: Mariinsky Ballet's Olesya Novikova in "The Sleeping Beauty"

Novikova in *The Sleeping Beauty*. Photo by Natasha Razina, Courtesy Mariinsky Theatre.

The luminous Olesya Novikova has become one of St. Petersburg's best-kept secrets. Pushed into leading roles early, the 34-year-old has been out of the limelight in recent years, partly because she has given birth to three children with husband Leonid Sarafanov. Last March, however, for the bicentenary of Marius Petipa's birth, she was tasked with leading a revival of Sergei Vikharev's landmark reconstruction of *The Sleeping Beauty*, first performed in 1999.

Keep reading...

Marissa DeSantis
Dec. 21, 2018 04:34PM EST

News →

This Dancewear Brand Is Helping Dancers Affected by the California Wildfires This Holiday Season (& You Can, Too)

The aftermath of the wildfires at the studios of Northern California Ballet. Photo courtesy of SteelCore.

The holiday season is all about giving, and if you're looking for a way to help someone in need this year, dancewear brand SteelCore is hosting the perfect initiative. The brand's founder (and former New York City Ballet dancer) Marisa Cerveris launched project #DisplacedDancers this winter to help northern California-based dancers in the Paradise, Chico and Malibu areas, whose lives were affected by the wildfires that recently devastated parts of the state.

Keep reading...

Check out our videos on YouTube

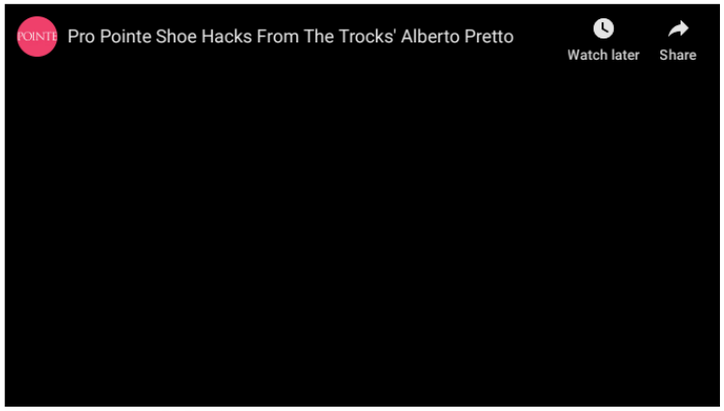
Chava Lansky
Dec. 21, 2018 10:58AM EST

Ballet Stars →

Inside Trocks Dancer and Self-Proclaimed "Bag Lady" Alberto Pretto's Dance Bag

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo's Albert Pretto. Items from left: Victoria's Secret bag, practice skirt ("I got this at a boutique in SoHo"), Deuserband resistance band, AlbyPretty biketard, hand-knit legwarmers, AlbyPretty t-shirt and skirt, Ballet Maniacs bag ("It has pockets on the side for pointe shoes and it's big enough for practice tutus"). Photo by Quinn Wharton for *Pointe*.

Alberto Pretto, a dancer with the all-male comedy troupe Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, keeps his two dance bags stuffed with extra practice clothes, tutus and props. "I'm a total bag lady," he says. While rehearsing as his Trocks alter ego, Nina Immobilashvili, it's crucial for Pretto to get into the character's mind-set by wearing the right-length tutu for *Giselle* or practicing with his *Esmeralda* tambourine. "It's important with partnering to feel the same way that you would in a costume," he says. Switching his clothes during the day also leaves Pretto feeling refreshed, and it gives him a chance to model his newest creations for his dancewear line, AlbyPretty. "Sometimes it's good to bring a little color into the studio."



Pro Pointe Shoe Hacks From The Trocks' Alberto Pretto

youtu.be

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Chava Lansky
Dec. 20, 2018 07:17PM EST

Ballet Stars →

Remembering Raven Wilkinson, Trailblazing Ballerina

Raven Wilkinson in *Les Sylphides*. Photo Courtesy Wilkinson.

Ballerina Raven Wilkinson passed away on Monday at her home in New York City at age 83. Wilkinson is best known as the first African American woman to dance full-time with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and as a cherished mentor to Misty Copeland.

Raven Wilkinson presenting Misty Copeland with the Dance Magazine Award in 2014. Photo by Cherylynn Tsushima for Dance Magazine.

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