

*Before Jaered Glavin left Wellington on the RNZB's Australian tour, Wellington Friend Judith Doyle talked to him about his dance background and the astonishing waves he has been making on the Internet with his zany dance tribute to Lady Gaga, Queen of Pop.*



Jaered Glavin is only 21 years old but has been dancing nearly all of those years. He started to learn at the tender age of two. A bit premature? When you're a lively youngster, bent on mischief, and your elder sister is learning ballet, well why not — so his busy mother decided. He still remembers how much he loved it. Straightaway.

Nor was dance a short-lived wonder. By nine years old, he was serious about it and at 11 he was accepted into the Elmhurst Ballet School in Surrey. At first he was annoyed to be placed in the musical theatre course but after a year he was transferred to where he wanted to be — in the ballet course, with a scholarship, as he had improved so much! He studied there for three years and then, joy oh joy, he was accepted into the Royal Ballet School. From the third year onwards students dance in the corps of the Royal Ballet and Jaered danced in *La Bayadere* and *Sleeping Beauty*. "It was amazing to watch the dancers — and learn from them." He developed a great interest in choreography and won second prize in the school's choreographic competition in 2007.

After five years at the school plus being a finalist in the Young British Dancer of the Year competition, he was ready to join a company. He sent his CV round to various companies, the Royal New Zealand Ballet included.

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**The Friends of the Ballet are thrilled to welcome Sir Jon Trimmer as their newest Partner a Dancer**

Sir Jon has been a mainstay of the Royal New Zealand Ballet for 52 of the company's 57 years. He has performed with Dame Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev, Erik Bruhn and many of the world's top dancers.

He is already an Honorary Life Member of the Friends of the Ballet and joins Friends' other partnered dancers Abigail Boyle and Qi Huan.



*Sir Jon is welcomed by Friends of the Ballet National President Debbie Tangen*

Later this year you can see Jon as the Matron in *The Nutcracker*. Jon jokes that these days he mainly plays "old ladies and witches". He is a keen gardener, painter and potter and enjoys spending time at home on the Kapiti Coast.

***The RNZB is lifting the lid on what happens off-stage in a new television series on TV3 commencing 8pm Tuesday 31 August – The Secret Lives of Dancers.***

The series goes behind the glitz and the glamour and into the dressing rooms, hotel rooms and even the dancers' homes to expose the grueling training schedules, the fierce competition for roles, and the devastation an injury can bring for a dancer. See how a major production comes together, from the choreography and rehearsals, to the costuming and the sets, and the logistics of touring around the country.

He met artistic director, Gary Harris, who was in London at the time, and found him "so exciting and exuberant" that he decided to join the RNZB. In September 2008, he flew into Wellington on a beautiful calm day, wondering what all the wind warnings were about! His first impression of Wellington was its quietness but he began working in the company the day after he arrived, so life hasn't seemed too quiet since.

Jaered danced the role of the Sun King in *Peter Pan*; danced in the Triple Bill, *From Here to There* and then landed the rock-star role as Escamillo, in *Carmen*. This he absolutely relished. "It was a dream role, character-wise," he enthused. Francesca Horsley in the *NZ Listener*, called his performance "a dazzling display of virtuoso dancing" .

He also revealed in that role, his ability as an actor and his flair for comedy. He is attracted to comic eccentricity with a bit of wackiness thrown in, which is partly why he is a fan of American pop queen, Lady Gaga.

"I like her eccentric personality and her outrageous weird costumes. It's performance art really, rather than just being a pop singer. It's a 'Show in One', which I like," he said.

So when searching for an idea for this year's RNZB choreographic workshop, Jaered hit on Lady Gaga as his inspiration. He wanted to do something that was fun, modern but still classical ballet — and to make a tribute to the pop star.

The music starts the process. He chose her track *Bad Romance* (the Starsmith Remix because it was the right length, he said). He had a general concept which he gradually developed. Then he followed up different ideas with the dancers who sometimes "add their little bits of magic" as he puts it. The final routine of 6½-minutes took about 12 hours of rehearsals.

It wasn't only the music that Jaered used. He also took her zany approach to life and represented it in dance. He fused traditional ballet moves with Gaga's distinctive pop style. It's clever, quirky and humorous. The dancers' costumes follow weird Gaga style also. They are two-piece and made with shiny black gaffer tape (as used by photographers). With these black outfits, the dancers wear blonde-gold wigs, gold pointe shoes and the most wonderfully outlandish sunglasses.

As with his Escamillo, you can see that Jaered had enormous fun producing his tribute to Lady Gaga. And his Gaga-ettes — Lucy Balfour, Clytie Campbell, Katherine Grange, Antonia Hewitt, Katie Hurst-Saxton and Maree White — did too.

Then came the flash of inspiration that turned it into an Internet sensation. Colleague Brendan Bradshaw video'd the piece and it was uploaded onto YouTube where an incredible ¼ million people have watched it. The Gaga video was also referenced on Facebook, Twitter and the RNZB website, which gave it a further boost.

This area of social media is certainly a young person's world — YouTube itself is only five years old. It was created as a sharing site for videos. It is now the world's third most visited website after Google and Facebook.

So Jaered Glavin may have only been with the company precisely two years but he has certainly made a few waves in that time. And what does he like to do in his spare time? Why, he goes out dancing!

You can see Jaered's tribute to Lady Gaga at [youtube.com/watch?v=22Zjnw22mdk&feature=search](http://youtube.com/watch?v=22Zjnw22mdk&feature=search)

## Pointes to Note

- For information about events in your area during **The Nutcracker**: [www.nzballet.org.nz/community](http://www.nzballet.org.nz/community)  
There will be a **Forum** in Wellington (Saturday 16 October, 1.30-2.30). There will be **Q & A** sessions in Wellington (Saturday 6 November), Christchurch (Saturday 20 November), and Auckland (Saturday 4 December).  
**Warm Up, Curtain Up** will take place in Palmerston North (Wednesday 24 November).
- **National committee members** elected at the 2010 AGM & Conference are: Debbie Tangen (Wairarapa) National President, Lee Patrice (Hawkes Bay) Vice President, Christine Connor (Wairarapa), Peter Cowley (Wellington), Celia Davison (Auckland), Heather Gribble (Auckland), Maria Hammond (South Canterbury).
- At the AGM, Friends of the Ballet **Honorary Life Membership** was awarded to retiring RNZB artistic director Gary Harris in recognition of his outstanding "friendliness" to the Friends during his 9 years with the company.
- **Friends partnered dancers: Qi Huan** has returned after time out to recover from knee surgery. He joined the tour to Australia where he danced the role of Romeo in *Romeo & Juliet*. **Abigail Boyle** received much acclaim for her recent role as the sexy and manipulative Carmen.

## NATIONAL RAFFLE RESULTS

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Prize</b>	Margaret Brown, Auckland
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize</b>	Ross Pettigrew, Wellington
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize</b>	Mary-Jane Johnson, Auckland

**Tickets to a Royal New Zealand Ballet performance:** Sandra Cromarty, Deb Stantiall, Helen Carter, Jane Wilberfoss, Raewyn Steadman, D & J Stewart, Mark Robinson, Chris Jackson, Bev Robinson, Fran Dixon

A very big thank you to all our Friends who bought and sold tickets - your support is greatly appreciated.