

DANCER OF THE WEEK – Chris Trenfield *Fri 22 July*

Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* arrives very soon in Singapore and since the show left Seoul, South Korea, many of the cast and crew have been traveling around Southeast Asia. Nick Kyprianou, our Audience Engagement Coordinator got the chance to speak to Chris this week.

Chris has been with New Adventures since 2009, first seen in *Swan Lake* as The Swan. He has played many principal roles for the Company and is currently performing as Leo and King Benedict in *Sleeping Beauty*. You can also catch him in cinemas as Luca in the 2015 film recording of *The Car Man*.



When did you start taking dance classes?

My older sister danced from an early age and I used to go along to watch her. When I was 5 I started “jigging around” at the back of the class and the teacher suggested I joined in... and I am still jigging around today!

Where did your formal training take place?

Laine Theatre Arts, Epsom.

What drew you to the Company?

I had seen *Swan Lake* and *The Car Man* on DVD when I was studying at college and thought they were so different, dark and exciting. As an audience member I was on the edge of my seat, and they looked like amazing shows to do, from a performer's perspective.

I auditioned for the Company in 2008, where I learnt part of the *Swan Lake* waltz, as well as the “boxing” material from *The Car Man*, and instantly fell in love with the styles and freedom of movement.



Chris as Gavroche in the 1997 UK tour of *Les Misérables*

What's it like being on tour and in a different place every week?

I think it can be something we take for granted on tour. It's amazing how, for such a small country, there is so much variety and diversity within the UK. Each city has something different to offer - culturally, historically architecturally and even culinary. We are only usually in one place for a week at a time, so there is always something new to find on every return visit.

Do you have a favourite venue to perform at?

Birmingham Hippodrome has to be my favourite venue for a few reasons. Birmingham was where I grew up as well as the Hippodrome being the first professional theatre I performed in. At the age of 9, I played Gavroche in *Les Misérables* and have lots of memories there. The audiences are always fantastic too and being the home of the Birmingham Royal Ballet there is a particularly massive dance following in the city.

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Do you have any hobbies/interests outside of dance?

I enjoy all sports and try to get out on the golf course when I can. When I'm on the road, I always take my camera with me, as I enjoy photography, which also helps to show the family what I've been up to. When I'm at home I like spending time in the garden, as well as getting experimental in the kitchen!

In many of Matthew Bourne's shows the dancers have to learn more than one role, performing several tracks in one show and *Sleeping Beauty* is no exception. How do you remember more than one role?

I don't really find the remembering of more than one role too challenging. At college I trained in musical theatre, and we often had to learn multiple roles in swing projects. I try to learn each scene as a series of images or floor plans, trying to picture where everyone is, not just my roles. Also, I think performing multiple roles helps keep the show fresh for not just yourself, but also for other cast members, and more importantly the audience too.

Do you have a favourite costume you've worn during your time with New Adventures so far?

The Swan legs are by far the most comfortable costume I have worn in any production, EVER! However, my favourite is Luca's "White Trash" or cowboy costume at the start of Act II in *The Car Man*.



Chris as The Swan in Swan Lake (photo: Helen Maybanks)

What's your favourite role that you have performed as so far, in the Company, and is there another New Adventures production that you would love to take part in?

I am very fortunate to have performed some of the most coveted and iconic roles in New Adventures' productions. Each one has been special and a privilege. The Swan/Stranger is (in my opinion) the ultimate role for any male dancer. It is physically, technically, and emotionally the most demanding role I have ever done, and I am honoured to have had the opportunity to explore it and make it my own.

As a performer there are always roles you would like to do despite knowing you probably aren't best suited to them, for whatever reason. However, the one I would love to perform is The Pilot in *Cinderella*, it's a great role and an incredible score. I would also love the chance to perform in *Spitfire* one day.

You are able to follow Chris on Twitter (@christrenfield) and Instagram (@christrenfield) for a further insight into his world!