

## DANCER OF THE WEEK – Dominic North *Fri 5 August*

Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* is in Singapore this week at the Esplanade Theatre before heading to Shanghai, China next week. Nick Kyprianou, our Audience Engagement Coordinator got the chance to speak to Dominic this week.

Dominic has been with New Adventures since 2004 and has generated quite a following worldwide, performing in many principal roles for the Company. He was first seen in *Swan Lake* as a Swan and is currently performing as Leo in *Sleeping Beauty*.

You can also catch Dominic as Angelo in cinemas worldwide in the 2015 film recording of *The Car Man*. Later this year, Dominic will also be playing the role of Julian Craster, who leading lady Victoria Page falls in love with, in the World Premiere of Matthew's production of *The Red Shoes*, inspired by the Powell and Pressburger film.



*A young Dominic being jazzy!*



### ***When did you start taking dance classes?***

I started dancing when I was about 9 I think. My twin sister was already taking classes, then this new girl joined the school and started dancing in the same class as her. I fancied her and thought that dance was a good way in. The relationship ended when we went to different secondary schools, it was very sad – haha!

### ***Where did your formal training take place?***

I was at the Nydza School of Dance in Bingley, just outside of Bradford, from when I started dancing until I was 18.

I then auditioned for full time dance courses at Laines Theatre Arts, Bird College, Central School of Ballet and Northern School of Contemporary Dance. I got accepted into all of them but chose Central, this was because they taught all styles of dance, but also they helped out the most with funding my studies. Without a scholarship, bursary fund and grant I would never have been able to study in London.

### ***What drew you to the Company?***

I knew of the Company's work but had never seen anything live and when I came to London I studied Matt's *Swan Lake* for A level dance. I then managed to see *Play Without Words* and *Nutcracker!* and in them both were people I knew from college, including my mates Richard Winsor and Sam Plant. I was really drawn to the work and Sam told me how great the company was.

I started with the Company in 2004. I had done company class while on tour with Ballet Central and had to get up at 5am to go from Dorset to London, then back again to perform that evening. A few weeks later Scott Ambler called me and asked if I would like to audition. They were looking for a medium swan for the next *Swan Lake* tour. Of course I said yes and went along to the audition at The Place, London and met Matt and Etta. We learnt the waltz from Act 2 and the royal waltz from Act 3 - I loved it. At the end of the audition I spoke to Matt and told him that I had already been offered another job and need to let them know, but that I'd rather work with him. He luckily said he thought they'd be offering me the contract. Thinking about it, it was quite cheeky of me but it was well worth it!

# NEW/ADVENTURES RE;BOURNE

## ***Do you have any hobbies/interests outside of dance?***

I love film, TV, music and sport. I also like going to watch plays, musicals and other dance companies. When I have time off I try to see my friends and family.

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

I love touring and have gotten quite good at it. Nice digs are a must and I now know where all the Nandos and Wagamamas are across the UK! Also, as I have family everywhere they get to see the show AND I get to see them. The reactions to the show are so different around the world!

## ***Do you have a favourite venue to perform at?***

I have a few favourite venues - the Sydney Opera House is so iconic, then there's Sadler's Wells and City Center, New York, which has so much history and where so many stars of dance have performed. Also, the Bradford Alhambra, which is the closest we play to Leeds and my hometown, where I get a lot of support.

## ***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?***

It's fine learning different roles, you get used to it. I'm sure if you have to learn loads that are very similar that could trip you up. When I used to do four different swans in one week I would totally forget which I was. I'd just hold back and fill the space that was left.

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

As many of my fellow dancers have already said, it has to be the Swan pants in *Swan Lake* as they are so comfortable and easy to dance in. I also particularly remember having to change into jeans, boots and a vest for the garage scene in *The Car Man* in just five minutes! And then there's the Edward Scissorhand's suit and hands, which took a long time to get changed into but looks so amazing. My costume for *Spitfire* was also interesting, just a tight, white vest and y-fronts and then there's just being naked in *The Car Man* and *Dorian Gray* with my family watching, which was truly memorable.



Dominic as Ralph in *Lord of the Flies* (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?***

It's impossible for me to choose a favourite role, they're all so different! Edward, from *Edward Scissorhands* is one role that I learnt the most from about how to perform. I had the most fun ever on stage playing Fritz, in the *Nutcracker!* and playing The Prince in *Swan Lake* is epic, as you go through a real journey with the character. And then there's Leo, in *Sleeping Beauty* and Ralph, in *Lord of the Flies*, which are amazing roles that I was lucky enough to help create. Playing Angelo, in *The Car Man*, was also a real highlight of my career.

The shows I would like to do are the two I haven't been in, *Play Without Words* and *Highland Fling*. They also happen to be two of my favourite shows. But, saying that I love going back to shows I've already done. Returning to *Edward Scissorhands* and *The Car Man* last year was one of the best years I have had. Last year we also held a gala in memory of Jonathan Ollivier and I performed an excerpt from *Swan Lake*, which made me realise how much I miss performing that show. It had been six years since I'd danced it and the music and emotion really got me.

**You are able to follow Dominic on Twitter (@dommynorth) for a further insight into his world!**