

DANCER OF THE WEEK – Kate Lyons *Wed 16 March*

This week *Sleeping Beauty* is gracing the stage at the Mayflower Theatre in Southampton and is home to cast member Kate Lyons, who is playing Ardor and Hibernia. Nick Kyprianou, our Audience Engagement Coordinator spoke to Kate about falling for New Adventures and enjoying the Italian sunshine.

Kate is very excited to perform at the Mayflower as she has never performed there before and of course it's her hometown! A New Adventures regular since *Cinderella* in 2010, Kate is also featured in the film recording of *The Car Man (2015)* as Rita (Lana's younger sister), which is currently being screened in cinemas worldwide.



When did you start taking dance classes?

I started dancing when I was nearly 3 at EmJay School of Dance, in Southampton. When I say dancing, at that age it's more crawling round being a cat, and doing 'good toes, naughty toes'. I love cats, so maybe that's what drew me to the classes, haha!

Where did your formal training take place?

I trained at Central School of Ballet in London, 15 years ago.

What drew you to the Company?

I first saw New Adventures on a school trip to see *The Car Man*. It was THE most exciting thing I had ever seen. I fell in love with the drama, and knew that's where I wanted to be. I ended up auditioning for the company several years in a row before I was eventually cast in a show.

Do you have any hobbies/interests outside of dance?

I have always been into fitness and it's great to have dancer Tom Broderick on tour with us again, as he is a great motivator. We have a Pilates regime that we do together before class in the mornings, to help strengthen and maintain our bodies. It's so much easier to do these things when you have your Pilates pals on tour to keep pushing yourself further!

I love travelling round the UK, I try to re-route between venues so I get to drive through the Peak District or something like that. We're so lucky with all the international touring as well. I can't think of a better way to live, but it's always nice to come home! Last week we stayed in a gorgeous cottage in Norwich, with an amazing family who bake homemade bread and they've got a cat. Sometimes it's nice to rent a flat with a few of the other dancers and sometimes we're in hotels. It's nice to mix it up.

I also enjoy meeting new people from all walks of life and hearing their stories.

Do you have a favourite venue to perform at?

I don't have a favourite venue but always love performing at Sadler's Wells because we're there for long stints and feels like home. I also love being in Ravenna, Italy because you can have the windows wide open, with the Italian sunshine pouring in, overlooking the piazza. But of course UK venues are always fantastic because the auditoriums are always so pretty.

NEW/ADVENTURES RE; BOURNE

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?

People always ask how you remember all the steps, and the only thing I can think of is that it's like learning a language. It's developing a muscle memory, and as soon as you hear the music, your body just knows the steps. I can still remember dances I did when I was 10 years old. You just have to put the music on and your body just does it!

I have heard stories on *Swan Lake* where the boys accidentally swapped swan tracks half way through the act and didn't notice they had done it till afterwards!!! I don't think anything like that has happened on this tour... yet!

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?

My favourite roles by far are Rita in *The Car Man*, and Aurora in *Sleeping Beauty*, both roles have such epic journeys throughout the pieces, and such great opportunities for both dancing and storytelling. Shows I'd like to do in the future are *Highland Fling*, and *Play Without Words*. I think probably ALL the dancers are hoping Matt will bring back *Play Without Words* at some point. So fingers crossed...

You are able to follow Kate on Twitter (@kate_lyons_) and Instagram (@kate_lyons) for a further insight into her world!