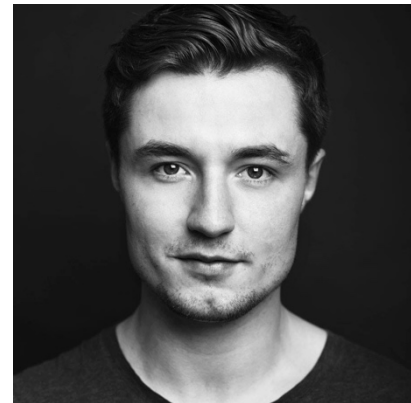


DANCER OF THE WEEK – Leon Moran *Fri 08 April*

Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* is halfway through its two-week stint at Newcastle Theatre Royal before heading to Nottingham. This week Nick Kyprianou, our Audience Engagement Coordinator spoke to Leon Moran about his Xbox and being a master of packing! This week he has been playing Autumnus and Viscount Aubrey.

Leon has performed with New Adventures since 2012, first appearing in *Nutcracker!* As well as performing in *Sleeping Beauty* at the moment you may spot him in cinema screenings of the 2015 film recording of *The Car Man*.



When did you start taking dance classes?

At around age 3 my mum put me into dance classes (ballet, tap and modern) at a local church hall. I made lots of friends there who I'm still close with now.



Leon in an early performance!

Where did your formal training take place?

I started at Centre Pointe Dance School, aged 14, followed by Northern Ballet Theatre Associates, aged 14-16, and then Central School of Ballet, aged 16-19.

What drew you to the Company?

I had watched *The Car Man* with my parents when I was younger and was blown away by every aspect of it. I loved watching such convincing characters and especially people who didn't look like your stereotypical ballet dancer. I would be lying if I said that *Billy Elliot* didn't influence my decision to pursue dance and watching that last scene taken from *Swan Lake* only encouraged me further. I knew that New Adventures was the company to aspire to be a part of, fellow Company dancer Christopher Marney came into choreograph for my 3rd year tour with Ballet Central and he suggested I take company class with them. He was extremely helpful to me and I started with the company in 2012 on *Nutcracker!* aged 19.

Do you have any hobbies/interests outside of dance?

Yes, I enjoy sport, I like watching and playing football and golf. I'm a big fan of cinema, TV and love playing my Xbox, which I tour round with me in a specially made case (made by a member of the wardrobe department)! I obviously like going on holiday and try to see as much of Europe as I can when I have a few days off, last week I visited Budapest.

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

It takes a while getting used to it but the more you tour the more you learn i.e. best places to eat/stay. I am now a master of packing, I like moving around and getting to see new places. If you get good digs then it makes the week so much more relaxing. We are so lucky we get to tour abroad and I'm looking forward to our Asia tour as I've never been before.

NEW/ADVENTURES RE; BOURNE

Do you have a favourite venue to perform at?

I loved performing at the Kennedy Centre in Washington DC, with *Sleeping Beauty* in 2013, the building is so huge and so iconic. I also enjoyed staying in New York and performing at City Centre.

It's always of course nice to come back to Sadler's Wells in London, we always do a long season there and it's lovely to have so many friends come and watch. Finally, The Lowry, as Manchester is my hometown where my family come to watch.

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 enjoy the challenge but can be quite confusing at times, especially with similar roles where the choreography is the same but reversed. Due to the nature of a touring company, injuries are unfortunately quite common which means we pick up shows for one another and occasionally learn new tracks to help them out. I am used to performing new roles with little rehearsal at the last minute, so far on *Sleeping Beauty* I have learnt and performed 6 roles!

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

Just a towel, in the garage scene in *The Car Man*. Also wearing the pumpkin boy costume in *Edward Scissorhands*.

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 don't have a specific favourite, I've enjoyed learning and performing several roles but Chad in *The Car Man*, Autumnus in *Sleeping Beauty* and Jim in *Edward Scissorhands* are highlights. I'd love to be in *Swan Lake*, I missed the chance in the last 5 years of being in the show due to being in other productions. There's something special about being in *Swan Lake* for a male dancer that I feel I want to experience having spoken to the other boys and obviously from watching it!

You are able to follow Leon on Twitter (@leonsenchak) for a further insight into his world!

