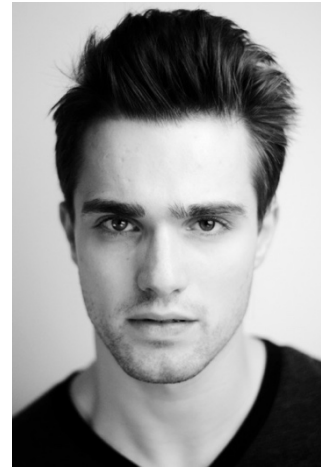


DANCER OF THE WEEK – Philip King Fri 27 May

Matthew Bourne's UK tour of *Sleeping Beauty* is coming to an end, with only three chances left to see the show at the Wycombe Swan, High Wycombe. Nick Kyprianou, our Audience Engagement Coordinator spoke to Philip this week about his short time with the Company so far.

Philip joined the Company in 2014 for the UK tour of *Lord of the Flies*. He is currently playing Autumnus, Bertie and Tantrum in *Sleeping Beauty*.



Philip in his first ever dance costume!

When did you start taking dance classes?

I started dance classes at about the age of 8 when my primary school offered ballet classes to the girls at the same time that the boys had football. My mum, being quite forward thinking, thought that it should also be offered to the boys as well so she went straight to the headmaster to ask if I could join in. I didn't know what to expect and went to class in my football kit, albeit minus my football boots!

Where did your formal training take place?

At Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance from 2006 to 2009.

What drew you to the Company?

I had always known about New Adventures and Matthew's work - you couldn't be an aspiring male dancer anywhere without someone mentioning his production of *Swan Lake*. I watched *Swan Lake* when I was quite young, probably 9 or 10 but it was when I watched his production of *The Car Man* back in 2007 that I really decided that I wanted to work for the company. I had never been so drawn to a dance show before and after watching it I was determined to dance for the company, and hopefully one day do that show. I joined the company in 2014 for the UK tour of *Lord of the Flies*.

Do you have any hobbies/interests outside of dance?

When I'm not dancing I love to cook! The rest of the Company seem to like it when I'm trying out new recipes, especially sweet things like brownies or cookies, because I'll bring a batch in to work for everyone to try they become my Guinea pigs! Simon Lacey, our Company Manager, asks me every day if I have brought any cakes in and Matthew particularly enjoys my Bakewell tarts!

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

It is great in many ways, we really do have a good time and it's fun exploring new cities or returning to places you have been before. Most people will have a favorite restaurant, cafe or bar they can recommend so you are always finding new places to eat and drink. We also quite often share digs with each other and you will sometimes end up staying with people you don't usually spend a lot of time with and getting to know them and having a great time. The hard part of touring is constantly living out of a suitcase and being away from home. I live with my girlfriend and we have a dog, I miss them both a lot when we are away for a few weeks.

Do you have a favourite venue to perform at?

I think, like many other dancers, I would have to say Sadler's Wells in London. It is such an iconic venue and a true centre for dance within Europe. That being said I also love the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff - it's such a beautiful building and has a huge stage!

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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?

A nightmare! I think it's the thing I found hardest in the show during the rehearsal process. However, it is something you get used to and we have all trained for it. We call each part we do a 'track' and it really becomes like that after a while - you couldn't accidentally steer off into another role because for that character there is only one way through the show. The other thing that is quite nice is when you realize you are on the other side of a conversation, or moment in the show that you usually see from your other track and you can play off that and decide how your different character reacts in the same circumstance.

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

It would have to be my fairy costume, in *Sleeping Beauty*, it's quite a challenge to dance with the wings and wig but it looks great and the attention to detail is amazing!

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 hard to say really, both the fairy roles that I perform in *Sleeping Beauty* are challenging and fulfilling and have some great dancing in them, but I also loved playing the role of Eric in *Lord of the Flies*, I think it is quite special to me as well because it was the first role I danced with the company. If I could only pick one show I would say *The Car Man*, although I could give you a whole list of New Adventures shows I would like to do!



Philip as a fairy in Sleeping Beauty (photo: Johan Persson)

You are able to follow Philip on Instagram (@philking58) for a further insight into his world!