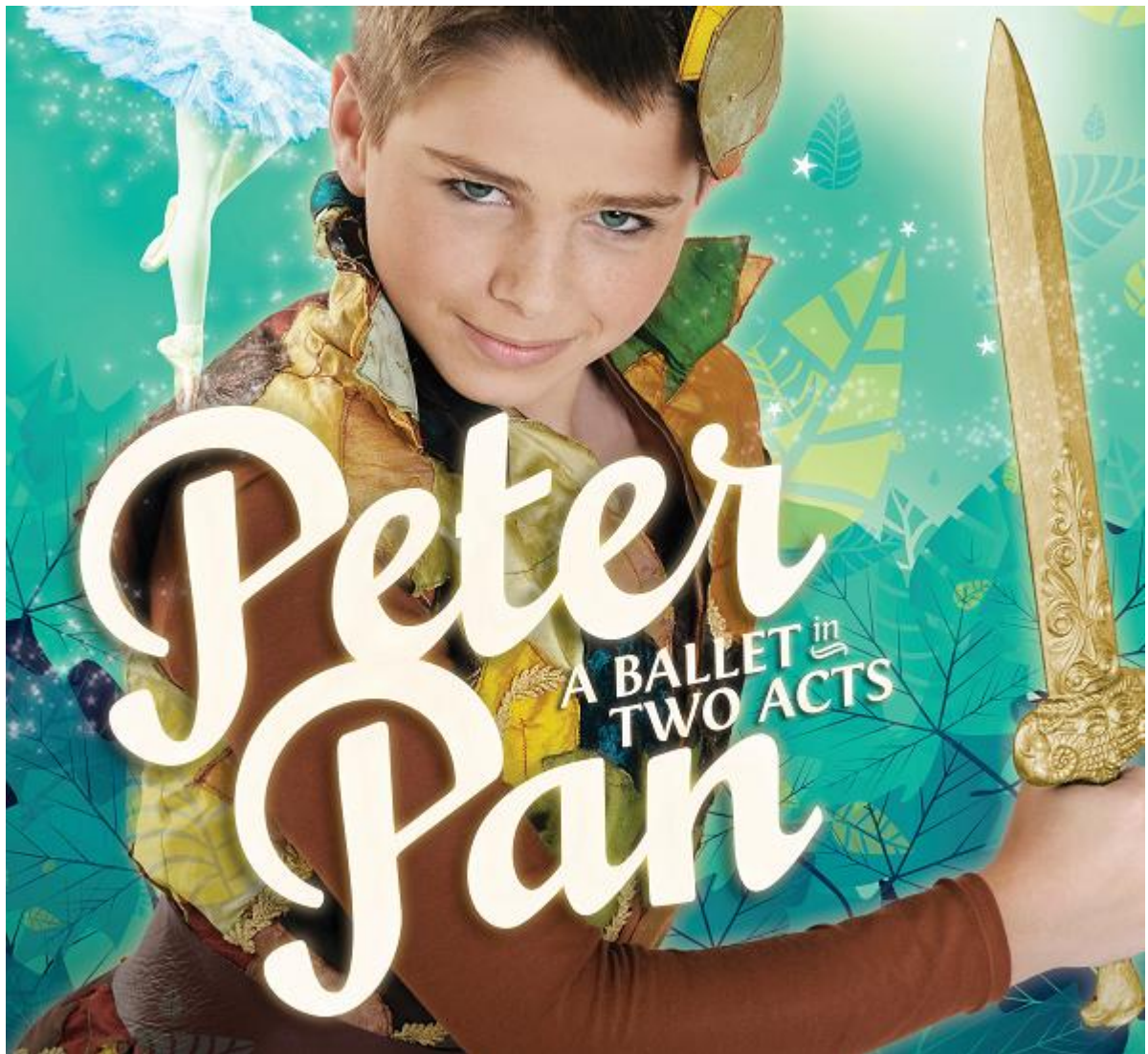


Peter Pan for Ballet Theatre of Queensland



By Rain Francis.

Earlier last year, Ballet Theatre of Queensland took an exciting new turn. The state's leading youth ballet company appointed not one but two new Artistic Directors, Timothy Brown and Libby McDonnell.

The passionate young leaders have been close friends and collaborators for many years. Between them they have a wealth of experience, as both performers and creators. This, combined with their youthful exuberance and vision, made them a perfect fit for the company, which has produced some of Australia's most renowned and acclaimed dancers.

After auditioning and assembling a new cast, Timothy and Libby's first project has been to create a brand new ballet, from one of the world's most beloved stories. Every Sunday since May 2012, this passionate pair has been working with some of Australia's most talented and

dedicated young dancers, rehearsing this exciting new ballet. *Peter Pan* will launch at the Playhouse, QPAC this January.



Timothy Brown and Libby McDonnell with senior BTQ cast members

When creating *Peter Pan*, did you start from scratch or work with an existing show?

The ballet plot is based on the original *Peter Pan* story written by J.M Barrie. However, the interpretation of the story (we have a few new twists), how it is told choreographically and how it looks and feels visually is our own, new work. We have carefully selected our music from many sources and created a never before heard compilation for BTQ's *Peter Pan*.

With such a wonderful story to work from, I'm sure there have been some fun moments during creation. Can you tell us a funny story from rehearsals?

During our intensive rehearsal week in the September school holidays, each day the dancers had a dress up in a fun theme. One of our dancers (on crazy hat/hair day) concealed a water bottle in her hair. It was the tallest beehive we have ever seen. She managed to wear it the entire day – it was an impressive effort.

Other great moments are rehearsing the sword fight scenes with our two guest artists Boris Bivona and D'Arcy Brasier – watching these two fight it out with our special rehearsal swords (made from foam) is pretty conducive to a belly laugh or two.

Our 'Lost Boys', some of our junior dancers, are a constant source of humour in the rehearsal studio... The list is really endless!

What can audiences expect from this production of *Peter Pan*?

Queensland's most talented young dancers performing a two act story book ballet. Stunning new costumes, on a gorgeous new set design. There will of course be imaginative choreography and many fabulous characters to fall in love with. It will be sprinkled with moments of beauty, laughter and adventure. Audiences will see our talented young company – through the magic of ballet – bring the story of *Peter Pan* to life. And you might just see a few fairies if you're lucky!

Peter Pan takes place from January 23 to 25, at the Playhouse, Queensland Performing Arts Centre. For tickets visit www.qpac.com.au or call 136 246.

Photo: Timothy Brown and Libby McDonnell with senior BTQ cast members.