

Timothy Brown Awakens The Sleeping Beauty

By Nicholas Ivanovic, 7th January 2015



BTQ senior company members

Ballet Theatre Queensland are staging their most lavish and inspired production of 'The Sleeping Beauty' yet, with some of the state's most talented young performers.

Artistic Director of 'The Sleeping Beauty', Timothy Brown, talks about his latest interpretation of the classic fairytale and the work that Ballet Theatre Queensland does to keep the art form alive:



Timothy Brown

Can you tell me about Ballet Theatre Queensland and what they provide?

Ballet Theatre is a very unique youth ballet company that provides opportunity for the very

talented young dancers of Queensland. These dancers unite and perform a full-length ballet at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

How has BTQ achieved so much while remaining non-for-profit?

With all our loyal friends and volunteers! We have a very passionate group of people who put in many hours at Ballet Theater. We have a production shed where we make our sets and costumes. Many mums, dads and family friends help out too. We also have a wonderful reputation for having a close and giving community in ballet that has sustained us each year to deliver a high quality sell out production.

How can performers get involved?

We audition each year. Please check out our website if you would like to be involved!



What is audition process like?

The audition is held as a ballet class. The dancers get to do their barre and center work. The seniors learn some pointe work and sometimes some repertoire from the up and coming production.

Can you tell me about the stage show 'The Sleeping Beauty' that you are bringing to QPAC?

We are creating a very vibrant and colorful production inspired by the traditional ballets staged by the big companies around the world. We have also been inspired by the powerful symbolism of a rose's beauty and innocence. We have traditional choreography as well as some new choreography especially made for our juniors and fun magical characters for the seniors.



How long does it take to put on a show of this scale?

We work every second Sunday, so it is a gradual process, however still a very challenging one. We have our intensive rehearsal periods in the September and January school holiday periods so the company can come together and work for a week, just like a professional ballet company!

Have your young performers gone on to become successful ballerinas after BTQ? Can you tell me some of the success stories?

Yes, many dancers from Queensland Ballet have been involved in BTQ before they commenced their formal training in full-time ballet schools. We have also had many successful BTQ Alumni become dance teachers that also move into contemporary and commercial dance careers.

Can you tell me about your role as artistic director and what it entails?

I have the pleasure of working very closely with the dancers to choreograph and rehearse the ballet. I also work with our resident set, costume and lighting designers to bring together a coherent vision for the work.



In an age where youths are increasingly looking at screens, would you say the need for an organisation such as BTQ is needed more than ever?

More than ever! It is so thrilling to see young people leap, turn and preform on stage rather than looking at a screen. While we can't avoid all those necessary screens it is very important and rewarding to learn and communicate through using the body and working as a team in a physical way.

What do you think captivates audiences when they watch a ballet?

The audience gets to escape to another world of fantasy and fairytales. Like watching a moving story book. The music is also an integral part of the experience. Working with the beautiful compositions of Tchaikovsky is captivating with sounds of softness and grandeur.

Can you tell me about your experience leading up to becoming artistic director?

I started as a ballet dancer and was able to take up opportunities to choreograph. I started choreographing small works about ten minutes long and over the years I have been able to develop my craft and collaborate with many other masters in the field. Also having mentors such as other Artistic Directors to work with and learn from has been so valuable. They have helped shape my developing career – expanding over 15 years.

Are there more plans for any more Queensland productions next year?

We will commence our next round of auditions early in 2015. I think I know what ballet I would like to create next... however I can't say yet! I know it will be a favorite just like 'The Sleeping Beauty' though!