

BALLET SAN JOSE

S I L I C O N V A L L E Y

PRESS RELEASE

Royal Danish Ballet honors Ballet San Jose School Director for lifetime achievement

(San Jose, CA)-- This month the Royal Danish Ballet announced that it is honoring Lise la Cour, director of the Ballet San Jose School, with its prestigious and rarely awarded lifetime achievement award named after the world-renown prima ballerina Margot Lander.

The lifetime achievement honor was established in 1879 by The Royal Danish Theatre. It later became known as the Margot Lander Lifetime Achievement Award after Margot Lander, the first prima ballerina from Denmark. Lander (1910-1961) made her mark on the world of ballet in the 30s and 40s, retiring in 1950.



“It is a great honor to be given an award named after such a legend in the ballet world,” la Cour said upon her return from a hastily arranged trip to Copenhagen to receive the award on December 9, 2007. “It is gratifying to be recognized in this way even after the spaces that time and geography have put between me and my days with the Royal Danish Ballet.

La Cour, a native of Copenhagen, trained in the Bournonville technique at the Ballet School of the Royal Danish Ballet from the age of nine. Her teachers included Erik Bruhn, Hans Brenaa, Stanley Williams and Vera Volkova. Joining the Royal Danish Ballet as a dancer at 18, she performed soloist and principal roles with such noted choreographers as Kenneth MacMillan, Jerome Robbins, George Balanchine, John Neumeier, Flemming Flindt and Roland Petit.

La Cour served as Associate Ballet Director of the Royal Danish Ballet from 1988-1995, during which time her attention became focused on children’s programs. La Cour’s extensive choreographic experience with the Royal Danish Ballet included, in particular, five children’s ballets based on the Hans Christian Andersen Fairy Tales. During this time, she also worked for the Royal Danish Opera and as a freelance choreographer. La Cour was made a Knight of The Order of Dannebrog by Queen Margrethe II of Denmark in December of 1989.

La Cour moved to San Jose to take the position of Director for Ballet San Jose’s school in 2002. She also currently provides choreography for Opera San Jose and other productions. The consummate worker, la Cour recently created a new

children's ballet based on the Grimm Brother's fairy tale, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." Its world premier, in San Jose on May 17-25, 2008, will be performed by her students at the Ballet San Jose School.

La Cour puts her heart and soul into the ballet school and really helps to nurture the dancers. "Ms. la Cour is my favorite teacher and makes me want to work hard," says a pro-division student of the Ballet San Jose School.

Her two sons, Nilas Martin and Ask la Cour, also could not help but be inspired to follow her footsteps into ballet -- they both danced with the Royal Danish Ballet and are now a principal and a soloist with New York City Ballet.

La Cour says her career focus now is her students. After flying out to Copenhagen on December 7 to receive her honor on Dec. 9th, Ms. la Cour was back in San Jose on Dec. 11th at the Nutcracker rehearsals helping her students prepare for their opening night of the annual holiday performance. Her students and former students pack the cast in roles from mice to company dancers.

Description of the School:

Ballet San Jose School provides classes for students from 4 years old to Adult with convenient schedules and a variety of classes for students of all ability levels. Classes range from beginning for four- and five year-olds, Pointe Technique & Partnering class for aspiring professional dancers, Bournonville Style, jazz and caractère dance, along with classes for Beginning and Intermediate Ballet for adults. Ballet San Jose School also offers an intensive four week summer program. Please see the [Summer Intensive 2008](#) brochure for more information.

Open Auditions for the school's Spring 2008 children's classes will be on January 12, 2008 at 2 p.m. for students age 8 and up at the Ballet San Jose Studios, located at 40 North First Street, San Jose. To enroll students age 4 - 7, or for more information about the audition, please contact the School Registrar at (408) 288-2820 x 223 or email the [Registrar](#).

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