

DANCE
EUROPE

Li Cunxin

VALENTINE COLASANTE

Jenna Lee

YAOQIAN SHANG

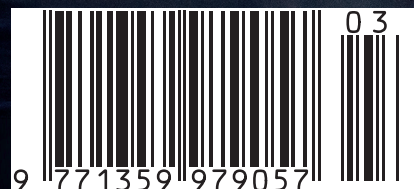
George Williamson

SLEEPING BEAUTY

Prix de Lausanne

GRAND
AUDITION

Austria 8.50€; Australia A\$9.99/13; Belgium 6.99€; Canada \$11.50; Denmark DKK 63.50; Finland 6.90€
France 5.99€; Germany 6.95€; Greece 5.90€; Hungary 1800 HUF; Italy 6.99€; Japan ¥1500; Netherlands 5.90€
New Zealand \$10.99; Portugal Cont 6.50€; Russia 400 rubles; Spain 6.50€; Switzerland Sfr 8.5; USA \$9.99





PRIX DE LAUSANNE

EMMA KAULDHAR admires young dancers participating in this year's competition

So how does a young dancer win the Prix de Lausanne? The formal criteria on which the jury make their decision are artistry, physical suitability, courage and individuality, an imaginative and sensitive response to the music, a clear grasp in communicating differing movement dynamics and technical facility, control and coordination – essentially to weigh up a candidate's potential as a professional ballet dancer. To this list, one might also add charisma and stage presence. Many very excellent dancers, both students and professionals, never fully engage with their audience and, however well they dance, will never capture our hearts. The audience needs to feel a connection with a dancer, an empathy – that is not to say that a dancer should grin inanely throughout a performance but rather be aware that there are human beings the other side of the footlights, watching them, willing them to succeed in their endeavours and seeking an affinity with them. Happily, this year's gold medallist in Lausanne has these qualities in spades.

Shale Wagman, who originates from Canada, is currently a student at the Académie Princesse Grace in Monaco and is no newcomer to ballet competitions. Search for him on YouTube and there he is, performing a *Corsaire* variation – aged 10. Seven years on, his skills have been developed and honed, and his *Don Q* in Lausanne sealed him the winner as soon as he stepped on to the stage. Not only does he nail all the tricks – a wicked side split at a blistering speed – he knows exactly who he is and where he is going. The latest news has him joining English National Ballet from the start of the new season.

For this year's Prix de Lausanne (it's now in its 47th year), 74 aspirants from 16 different countries were pre-selected from several hundred applicants. Whilst this makes it easier for judges and audience alike to assess the talent on show, and saves us the agony of watching those in pointe shoes who should not be wearing them, one wonders if some potential talent with an unfortunate video might have been passed by.

Shale Wagman. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Carolyn Galvao. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Miguel Angel David Aranda Maidana. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Xinyue Zhao. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



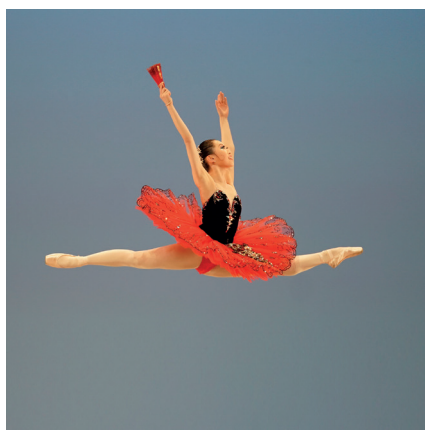
Aviva Gelfer-Mündl. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Finnian Carmeci. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



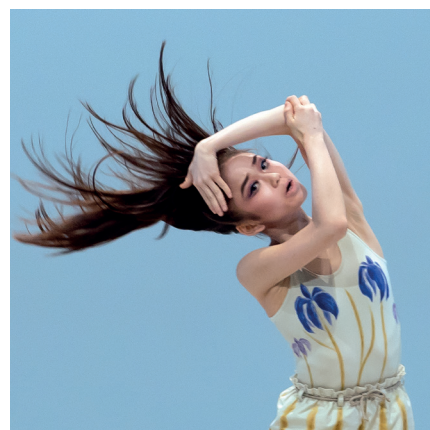
Lukas Bareman. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Su Jeong Lee. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Junsu Lee. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Shun Nagasue. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Wenjin Guo. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Ervin Zagidullin. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Mokin Choi. Photo: Emma Kauldhar



Hanna Park. Photo: Emma Kauldhar

The competitors, aged from 14 years six months to 19 years, are divided into two groups according to their age, and all are required to present both a classical variation chosen from a given list and one of the selected contemporary solos choreographed by Louise Deleur, Richard Wherlock, Jorma Elo, Mauro Bigonzetti or Wayne McGregor. Fittingly, in this age championing gender equality, some of these solos were deemed suitable for both girls and boys. Although the competition focuses primarily on identifying and nurturing professional ballet dancers, the candidates are also charged with getting to grips with contemporary work. In view of the versatility required of dancers today this is commendable, but clearly not all of the aspirants were comfortable grasping a new style and movement vocabulary after such a relatively brief period of study.

Wagman aside, some of the other young men who impressed included Ervin Zagidullin (Russia – Vaganova Academy) for his terrific jumps, Miguel Angel David Aranda Maidana (Paraguay – Brussels International Ballet School), Mikiya Kakehashi (Japan – Ballettschule Theater Basel) and Lukas Bareman (Belgium – Ballettschule Theater Basel).

As for the ladies, Hanna Park (South Korea – Sunhwa Arts), who won the Bourse Jeune Espoir, has feet to die for; and Wenjin Guo (China – Shanghai Dance School); Aviva Gelfer-Mündl (United States – V&T Classical Ballet & Dance

Academy) and Mokim Choi (South Korea – Sunhwa Arts High School) all caught the eye.

For the finals, on the second day of performances, 21 candidates were chosen by the jury headed by Dutch National Ballet artistic director Ted Brandsen as president. Each finalist presented both their classical and contemporary variation again, before the jury retired to debate and for scores to be tallied by computer. This interlude also served to showcase a new choreography, *Pulse*, created by Goyo Montero for 51 students from partner schools who are invited to Lausanne, independently of the competition, to participate in the Choreographic Project, and the pas de deux from Balanchine's *Diamonds* touchingly performed by two guests, Kristina Shapran and Xander Parish, from the Mariinsky Theatre.

Announced on stage, the main eight prizes take the form of either one year's scholarship at one of the partner schools, which include Central School of Ballet, English National Ballet School and The Royal Ballet School in the UK; Académie Princesse Grace and the Paris Opera School in France; Dutch National Ballet Academy; Hamburg Ballet School; Vaganova Ballet Academy and the New Zealand School of Dance; or, for candidates aged 17 years or older, a year's apprenticeship with one of the partner companies - an especially valuable prize in these days when seemingly more and more dancers are chasing fewer jobs.

The Finalists

Hanna Park - South Korea
Jingyi Xu - China
Irene Yang - Canada
Carolyne Galvao - Brazil
Ronger Teng - China
Xinyue Zhao - China
Chloe Misseldine - USA
Aina Oki - Japan
Wenjin Guo - China
Minji Name - South Korea
Aviva Gelfer-Mündl - USA
Shale Wagman - Canada
Finnian Carmeci - USA
Ervin Zagidullin - Russia
Takayuki Moriwaki - Japan
Miguel Angel David Aranda Maidana - Paraguay
Makani Yerg - USA
Davide Loriichio - Italy
Junsu Lee - South Korea
Lukas Bareman - Belgium
Eric Snyder - USA

The 21 finalists came from 10 different countries: United States - 5 candidates; China - 4 candidates; South Korea - 3 candidates; Canada - 2 candidates; Japan - 2 candidates; Belgium, Brazil, Italy, Paraguay and Russia each with 1 candidate.

The Winners

Shale Wagman
Hanna Park
Wenjin Guo
Junsu Lee
Xinyue Zhao
Miguel Angel David Aranda Maidana
Carolyne Galvao
Aviva Gelfer-Mündl

Other prizes:

Contemporary Dance Prize:

Junsu Lee

Audience Favourite Prize:

Carolyne Galvao

Rudolf Nureyev Foundation Prize:

Shale Wagman

Best Swiss Candidate Prize:

Lukas Bareman

Finalists who have not been awarded any prize receive the Finalist Award (a sum of CHF 1,000)