

THE PRIX DE LAUSANNE

LAUSANNE The Prix de Lausanne is not just a Competition. For all the young dancers selected to take part in the final it means coming face to face with internationally renowned teachers, receiving precious advice and at the same time getting the chance to be noticed for a professional contracts, regardless of what the jury's verdict might be. And so the 46th edition got underway, buzzing with international encounters and the excited anticipation of the grand final. 21 out of the 64 contestants made it to the Gala on 4 February and competed for the Prizes, performing at a packed Théâtre de Beaulieu. They were joined by 50 young dancers from academies around the world who did not take part in the Competition but were involved in a contemporary choreographic project with Goyo Montero. The idea came from the outgoing Prix director (on her way to manage the Pennsylvania Ballet) Shelley Power who gave Montero eight days to create in loco, which resulted in the choreographed piece *Pulse*. The audience was completely won over by the impact of the sheer numbers of the piece and the charisma of the young students. And the gala as a whole was full of virtuosity, stylistic refinement and great artistry, starting with the two guests from the Mariinsky Ballet, Kristina Shapran and Xander Parish, treasured performers who further enhanced the Balanchine limpidity of *Diamonds*. A moving moment came when a radiant Jean-Christophe Maillot, director of the Ballets de Monte-Carlo, was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award. The grand final, just as the Competition, was dominated by Asia with



China, South Korea and Japan being the most largely represented countries. And the prizes piled up for them, awarded by the jury led by Ted Brandsen. Awards went to the South Koreans Hanna Park and Lee Junsu, the Chinese Guo Wenjin and Zhao Xinyue as well as the Brazilian Carolyne Galvao (Audience Favourite Award) and the Paraguayan Mighel Angel David Arand Maidana. Gold medal and The Rudolf Nureyev Foundation Prize went to Canadian Shale Wagman, Luca Masala's student at the Académie Princesse Grace of Monte-Carlo. Seventeen years and nine months old, Wagman has an undeniable stage presence to which he adds surprising technical confidence; his performance of *Basilio* got the audience fired up, as did his interpretation of McGregor's *Chroma*. English National Ballet has now signed him so we'll be able to see him in action again soon. Inconceivably no prize was awarded to the very well prepared Ervin Zagidullin and the Italian Davide Loricchio, students from the Vaganova Academy; the former, in particular, demonstrated that he was able to enrich the *Paquita* Grand Pas with technical and expressive subtleties unlike any other competitor. [Maria Luisa Buzzi](#)



Above, Shale Wagman Golden Medal at Prix de Lausanne 2018. The guest stars from Mariinsky Ballet Kristina Shapran and Xander Parish in "Diamonds". "Pulse" by Goyo Montero (ph. Gregory Batardon).

