

Darcey Bussell CBE

Former Principal Dancer with The Royal Ballet, London

When Darcey Bussell was promoted to Principal Dancer of the Royal Ballet, London in 1988, she was the youngest ballerina to be given the honour. At just 19 years of age, her first performance as Principal was in Kenneth MacMillan's ballet *The Prince Of The Pagodas*.

Darcey Bussell continued as a Principal Dancer with the Royal Ballet London until her retirement in 2007, during which time she performed every major classical role numerous times and guested with the Kirov, Paris Opera, New York City Ballet, Australian ballet and Hamburg ballet amongst others.

Following her retirement, Darcey teamed up with the Welsh opera sensation Katherine Jenkins to perform a musical called *Viva La Diva*, which toured the United Kingdom. The performances were a sell out success, indeed tickets to the value of over two million pounds sold within two weeks of the first shows going on sale.

In addition to managing a highly successful dance career, Darcey has collaborated on a series of Magic Ballerina books for children, established an on line commercial enterprise and published the book *Pilates For Life*.

In 2008 Darcey Bussell, along with her husband Angus Forbes and two children emigrated from the U.K. to Australia.

During Darcey's meteoric rise to the very top of The Royal Ballet she faced numerous obstacles and personal challenges which makes for a story that is both enchanting and engaging.

More about Darcey Bussell:

Darcey was older than most when at 13 she won one of eight places in the Royal Ballet School at White Lodge, London. Although her cohort was technically more advanced, with resilience and passion, Darcey pushed on. She trained in her free time and engaged the legendary Svetlana Beriosova to teach her during her summer holidays. With commitment and hard work, Darcey achieved her goal and in 1985, aged 16, she was accepted at the Royal Ballet's Upper School



based in Baron's Court, West London.

It was a while she was at the Royal Ballet's Upper School that Darcey Bussell's exceptional technique was noted by the late Kenneth MacMillan who went on to give her the lead role in *The Prince Of The Pagodas*.

Darcey has appeared on many television galas including both *The Prince Of The Pagodas* and the Queen Mother's 90th Birthday Tribute, the Awakening pas de deux from *The Sleeping Beauty* and the full length ballet of *Sylvia* which was broadcast in the U.K. on Christmas Day 2005. She has appeared on *The Vicar of Dibley* as herself, been in several television commercials for American Express and Lloyds TSB, and has completed modeling assignments for international brands including Dunhills watches, De Beers Diamonds for Tatler and Mulberry. Darcey has featured on the cover of many magazines including GQ, Tatler and Harpers and Queen. She has been photographed by the likes of Testino, Snowden, Litchfield, De Martineau, Bryan Adams and Anthony Crickmay.

During an outstanding career in ballet, Darcey Bussell was recognised with numerous awards:

- In 1986 she won the Prix de Lausanne.
- In 1990, she was named Dancer of the Year by readers of the Dance and Dancers Magazine, she won the Variety Club's Sir James Garreras Award for the Most Promising Newcomer and received the Evening Standard Ballet Award.
- In 1991 she was selected as the joint winner of the Cosmopolitan Achievement Award in the Performing Arts category.
- She was created an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1995 and subsequently a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2006. Darcey has been honoured as one of Madame Tussaud's waxworks and a portrait of her hangs in the National Portrait Gallery, London.

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