

## National Ballet of Canada opens dazzling fall season

The National Ballet of Canada opens its fall season at Toronto's O'Keefe Centre this month, leading off with performances of John Cranko's *Romeo and Juliet*. A tale of star-crossed love, this is one of the company's most popular full-length ballets.

Originally choreographed by John Cranko for La Scala Ballet in 1958, *Romeo and Juliet* entered the repertoire of the National Ballet in 1964 and was continually performed until fire destroyed both sets and costumes in 1973. The production was revived in 1976 as part of the National Ballet's twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations.

Returning as guest artists for performances in *Romeo and Juliet* are National Ballet founder and former artistic director Celia Franca and American Ballet Theatre principal dancer Patrick Bissell, who will appear in the role of Romeo opposite leading dancer Karen Kain.

The second week of performances will feature a program of one-act ballets which includes two company *premières* and the world *première* of *L'Ile inconnue* by resident choreographer Constantin Patsalas.

Erik Bruhn's *Here We Come* is set to a selection of music by American composer Morton Gould and received its inspiration from the boys whom Mr. Bruhn



Andrew Oxenham

Karen Kain as Kitri in the National Ballet production of *Don Quixote*. The ballet was originally choreographed by Marius Petipa in 1869.

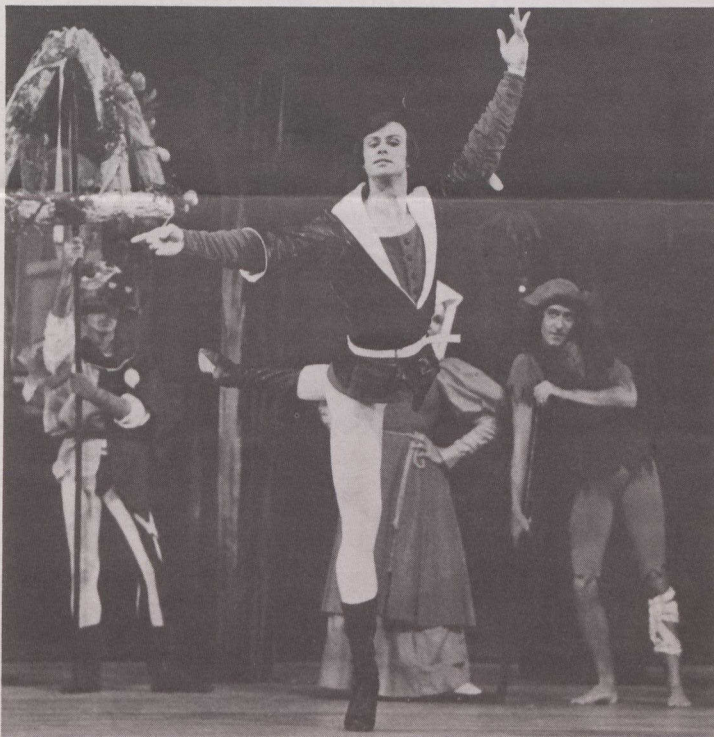
taught at the National Ballet School in 1978. The other *première* performance, the *Sylvia Pas de Deux*, uses the music which Léo Delibes composed for the full-length ballet created in 1876.

Resident choreographer Constantin Patsalas' newest ballet, *L'Ile inconnue*, is set to Hector Berlioz's *Nuits d'été, Songs for Mezzo-Soprano and Orchestra*, sung by Janice Taylor. The lyrics used by Mr. Berlioz were poems by the French romantic poet and journalist Théophile Gautier and include the famous *Le Spectre de la Rose*.

### Final selection

The final selection will be Kenneth MacMillan's colourful *Elite Syncopations*. The ragtime music of Scott Joplin and his contemporaries, the jellybean-coloured costumes designed by Ian Spurling and Mr. MacMillan's lighthearted re-creation of 1920s dancehall nightlife all combine to make *Elite Syncopations* an audience favourite.

The fall season concludes with performances of *Don Quixote*. The ballet was originally choreographed by Marius Petipa in 1869 and has since been produced by many choreographers for companies across the world. The National Ballet's production was staged by noted ballet master Nicolas Beriozoff in 1982 and is set to the music of Ludwig Minkus.



Frank Augustyn dances the role of Romeo in the National Ballet production of *Romeo and Juliet*.



Gizella Witkowsky and David Roxander in Kenneth MacMillan's colourful creation, *Elite Syncopations*.