

Waiting For a Miracle

In the fall of 2018, the beau monde of New York was shocked by the dismissal of Zachary Catazaro - the leading (principal) dancer from the world's leading dance company, the New York City Ballet. A crowd favorite, the famed dancer was fired for allegedly "engaging in inappropriate texting and exchanging explicit photos of ballerinas, in violation of the code of conduct that the NYCB expects from its employees." Harsh.

The outstanding ballerina and choreographer, the world famous Valentina Kozlova, also a former prima ballerina of the New York City Ballet became the choreographer and coach of the ballet. Not to mention that Timour Bourtasenkov, the teacher and choreographer of the American Ballet Theatre, Laureate of World Competitions also began working with Cleveland Ballet in the new season.

The conclusion is obvious: our Cleveland Ballet has become a desirable place for the

immediately offered her to dance the part of Odette-Odile, one of the most difficult parts in the history of ballet. The risk could not be overstated. But one can only envy the intuitions of Michael and Gladisa. They took this step and got a brilliant soloist, even if not yet crowned. There are many Odettes-Odiles in the ballet

Ana Sophia Scheller



Sydney Henson

and work on a bachelor's degree in aviation, and I fly airplanes to get a pilot's license." I don't know if Catazaro will change his profession after a time, but he can definitely delight fans with his flights over the stage for at least another three years.)

Cleveland Ballet also features a trio of famous Armenian dancers who worked in the best ballet companies in the United States. Among them is the brilliant Narek Martirosyan with his excellent physical form and artistry. And Gladisa molds him into the villainous sorcerer Rothbart. Again, high flying jumps, again athleticism in working with the partner. The dancer training gives the choreographer new opportunities, new colors, which were not seen in her previous works.

Another her of the new *Swan Lake* is the Jester, performed by Emmanuel Martirosyan. An unexpected decision? Without a doubt. Traditionally, the Jester is a minor role, a kind of "ninth swan in the fifth row." Guadalupe turns him in a kind of chamberlain, leading and bonding the action.

This is what happens when world-class dancers join the troupe. The performance becomes completely different.

world. Usually, recognized prima ballerinas are invited to dance this part. But here, for the first time, I saw how an exquisite young lady is played by an exquisite young lady. Touchingly, girlishly innocent and recklessly loving. I was lucky to see her dance. You will not see this, True, the announcements indicate that Sydney will perform a short part of the White Swan in the prologue to the ballet.

But let's move on the main topic. They gathered a powerful team. And now what? Now - the choreographer got their hands on a new and unique arsenal of tools, new opportunities.

Men capable of various and long lifts. The ballerinas immediately began to take off, to rise and soar in the air. With Catazaro, the powerful rocket-like jumps become an essential part of Prince Siegfried's part. And what powerful jumps - over half of the stage!

(I should clarify here that Zachary dreamed of flying since childhood. "The sky is the limit for me....," he said, "I decided to go to university

creativity of world-renowned dancers. And, to quote the unforgettable Ostap Bender, who knows, if it continues like this, the capital of the World Ballet will automatically move to our city.

I don't think I need to remind readers that the aforementioned New York City Ballet, created by the brilliant Georgian George Balanchine, is the best and richest ballet company in the United States. A single ticket to a New York City Ballet performance on a typical day costs up to \$975. Needless to say, the premiere dancers and directors of the company are akin to demigods worshipped by journalists and fans. But here they are, one by one, moving to Cleveland.

It is not difficult to guess who is the gatherer of these extraordinary creative forces. Artistic director and choreographer Gladisa Guadalupe and President of Cleveland Ballet, Dr. Michael Krasnyansky have a magical ability to find and attract world-class artists to their young ballet company.

And here is something else. We were told that the part of Odette in the performances of *Swan Lake* will be performed by Ana Sophia Scheller, who will specially fly in for the performances. But at the dress rehearsal, Odette and Odile were danced by Sydney Henson, and she danced exquisitely. According to Michael Krasnyansky, she is only 18 years old. The directors of Cleveland Ballet noticed her three months ago while working on the jury at the Valentina Kozlova International Ballet Competition. They invited her here and



Narek Martirosyan

The premiere of *Swan Lake* will take place on October 21-22.

Theatrical Cleveland is waiting for a miracle.

To be continued...

Zachary Catazaro



Catazaro's dismissal was appealed by the Musical Artists Guild of America, and soon thereafter, in April 2019, the New York Times reported that, by order of an arbitrator, the fired dancer should immediately be allowed to return to work. However, according to the New York Post, Catazaro, who had been with the ballet company for over 10 years, stated that he was "grateful and delighted that the arbitrator considered the sudden termination of my contract by the New York City Ballet to be unlawful and unfair; however, after considering the situation, he decided to respectfully decline his reinstatement, and not to return to NYCB." Zachary was banished from American ballet paradise but was immediately hired by Munich's Bayerisches Staatsballett.

Why am I laying out this crazy narrative? Because if it were not for this stupid and humiliating scandal, the dancer that enjoyed all the blessings, would hardly ever end up in Cleveland. I cannot tell you if this is a game of chance or a desire to return to his native harbor - after all, Zachary's roots are in Canton, a stone's throw away from Cleveland. Today, the world-class star **ZACHARY CATAZARO** is a soloist of the Cleveland Ballet! Moreover, he will dance the part of Prince Siegfried in the new *Swan Lake* ballet.

And this is where the whole intrigue kicks in. Because the part of Odette will be danced by the Argentinian dancer Ana Sophia Scheller, who also was a star of the New York City Ballet.