

raising the barre

A ROUNDUP OF
YOUNG DANCERS,
TEACHERS AND
SCHOOLS MAKING
NEWS.

Genée 2015

Hosted by the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD), the 2015 Genée International

Ballet Competition in London in September attracted 76 entrants from 16 countries, 12 of whom were selected to participate in the final, streamed live for the first time, held at Sadler's Wells on 19 September. The finalists

were: Lania Atkins (Australia); Sara Carver (Canada); Madison Cronin (New Zealand); Megan Gerber (South Africa); Makensie Henson (Australia); Uyu Hiromoto (Japan); Anatalia Hordov (USA); Honoka Ishihara (Japan); Paige Rochester (Australia); Drew Jackson (UK); Leroy Mokgatle (South Africa) and Robert van den Aardweg (South Africa). The gold medal was won by Leroy Mokgatle, 15, trained by Christopher Montague, Sayward Harris, Angelique Harris, Heidi



Genée gold medalist Leroy Mokgatle. Photo: Elliott Franks/Royal Academy of Dance.



Genée finalists. Photo: Elliott Franks/Royal Academy of Dance.

Wright and Angela Malan. Leroy was also presented with The Margot Fonteyn Audience Choice Award. The silver medal went to Lania Atkins, 15, trained by Mark Reily, Peta Frith, Tamar Arzoumalian and Julie Wells, while the bronze was awarded to Makensie Henson, 15, who studies with Prudence Bowen and Heidi Landford. The Choreographic Award for the best Dancer's Own variation went to Jana Baldovino, 15, trained by Paula Hunt and Helen Calman, whose winning piece *Fandango* was choreographed by herself and Hunt. The medalists also receive prize money of £5,000, £3,000

or £2,000. The final was judged by Chair of the Panel of Judges Dame Monica Mason, David Bintley CBE, artistic director of the Birmingham Royal Ballet, and David Nixon, artistic director of Northern Ballet. Founded in 1931, the Genée has served to help to highlight the potential of many talented ballet students, and former medallists include Lauren Cuthbertson, Steven McRae, Leanne Benjamin, Xander Parish and Francesca Hayward. During the evening, Lauren Cuthbertson and Federico Bonelli, principal dancers of The Royal Ballet, performed the Act 1 pas de deux from MacMillan's *Romeo and Juliet*, while Mariinsky Ballet soloist Xander Parish was interviewed for the live broadcast. The RAD's CEO, Luke Rittner, announced that the 2016 Genée will take place in Australia at the Sydney Opera House from 2-11 December.

Spaniard in Latvia

Gonzalo Preciado Azanza has made history by becoming the first Spanish dancer to join the Latvian National Ballet and is the only foreign dancer in the company who has not trained at any of the schools of the Russian Ballet style - the vast majority of the dancers have come through the company's own school, The Riga Choreography School which trained the likes of Mikhail Baryshnikov, Maris Liepa and Alexander Godunov. Based in the Latvian National Opera in Riga, the company has more than 70 permanent dancers, and expands its roster to 100 dancers for big productions. Born in Zaragoza in 1994, Preciado Azanza began his ballet training at the age of 7 years,