

American Ballet Theatre signs Encinitas dancer

Scout Forsythe returns to SoCal to dance in ABT's "The Sleeping Beauty"

By [Nina Garin](#) ([/staff/nina-garin/](#)) 5 p.m. March 3, 2015



Scout Forsythe *Courtesy photo*

Scout Forsythe is an Encinitas-bred beach girl who is now a Corps de Ballet dancer at [American Ballet Theatre](http://www.abt.org/default.aspx) (ABT) in New York.

The 18-year-old joined ABT's training program almost two years ago but has stayed on as an apprentice, and in January, she was promoted to a company dancer.

This week, Forsythe returns to Southern California to perform in ABT's "[The Sleeping Beauty](http://www.scfta.org/events/detail.aspx?id=11607)" at Costa Mesa's Segerstrom Center for the Arts. In the show, which runs through Sunday, Forsythe performs various roles, including a nymph and a garland couple.

Though she spends most of her time in New York, Forsythe comes home to Encinitas during long breaks. (Her father, William Forsythe, was a San Diego fireman for 36 years, and her mother, Lori Forsythe, played professional beach volleyball.) Forsythe, who formerly danced for San Diego Ballet, tells us about life as a professional ballerina.

Q: At what point did you realize you wanted to pursue ballet professionally?

A: I've always been dedicated, but I had my realization at 16. It was in Paris, after a Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) competition that I won first place in, and I was with my mom outside of the theater. I remember saying, "This is what I am doing with my life; this is what I want." It was a great moment.

Q: You've participated in various YAGP competitions. How did you do in them?

A: I have won multiple awards with YAGP. I have received the Grand Prix award in San Diego along with first place for pas de deux (dance duet). In Paris, I placed first in classical and contemporary. I have been to the New York finals three times and made it into the top 12 each time. YAGP helped me in so many ways. I was able to learn variations that I see on stage being performed by the world's best dancers. I was able to dance on stages that ballet dancers dream of. I was able to put myself out there (on stage) and grow artistically.

Q: What advice would you give to young San Diego ballet dancers inspired by your success?

A: Ballet is a never-ending journey. Absorb everything you can and don't be afraid to work on your weakness. Make it fun and stay inspired.

Q: What is the most difficult thing about being a professional dancer? What is your favorite part about it?

A: Not being afraid to try new steps and combinations that I might not be comfortable with in class. I also have to keep reminding myself to have patience. My favorite part is taking class with the dancers that I looked up to when I started ballet. Being able to take class with them is so inspiring.

Q: What have been some of your favorite roles to dance?

A: I had a great time last year in ABT's Studio Company (training program) performing "Raymonda" and "Great Galloping Gottschalk (GGG)." They are such different pieces. It was fun to discover the classical demand of "Raymonda" and the fun energetic acting of "GGG." As a corps member, my favorite ballet I have danced so far is "Swan Lake."

Q: Tell us about "The Sleeping Beauty." Why should San Diegans drive up to Orange County to see it?

A: I am going to be dancing in three of the four acts. I am a garland couple, nymph and Mazurka couple. There are so many reasons everyone should see this ballet. This production of "The Sleeping Beauty" represents a reconstruction of the Sergei Diaghilev and Nicholas Sergeyev 1921 production for the Ballets Russes. (ABT choreographer) Alexei Ratmansky has created this ballet using notation from the 1921 production. This reconstruction has never been done before. Also, (set designer) Richard Hudson ("The Lion King") has based his costume and set designs on (Ballets Russes artist) Léon Bakst's original designs. It will be a truly special show.

Q: What do you like to do when you're not training or dancing?

A: Sleep. On the weekends, I sleep a lot. It hits the reset button for me and helps me refuel for the coming week. I try to walk around in nature and enjoy the earth as well. When we are on big weeklong breaks, I always come home to California. I love to spend time at the beach surfing and swimming.

Q: What's the best advice you ever received?

A: My teacher in San Diego always used to say, "Your brain should be like a sponge, soak up everything you can." You can learn something from everyone you dance with. I am so fortunate to be at ABT and learn from the best.

Q: What is one thing people would be surprised to find out about you?

A: Ballet was never something I thought of doing as a kid. I was playing softball and volleyball before I danced. I didn't start ballet until I was 11 and I didn't go "en pointe" (on the tips of the toes) until a month before I turned 13.

Q: Please describe your ideal San Diego weekend.

A: Breakfast at Swami's Cafe, then going to the beach for a surf/body boarding "sesh," swim and relax with my friends. Then finish the evening off with a good home-cooked meal and a beautiful sunset.

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