

audience and the dancers (is what's important).

M: What's the difference between the choreographer and the artistic director?

J: Well, André (artistic director) pretty much oversees the whole production. It's quite stressful for him because he sits in the audience and he stresses about whether we're dancing well or if we're on the right marks on stage, if the lighting, the music, if everything is going well. That's up to him, and also he's taking notes, giving us corrections. The choreographer, Galina, is not with us this time. She will be on the next tour. She'll watch it from the technical and artistic point of view. And then the guest teacher again will give us more corrections and if something doesn't work he'll come help us and get us to fix it and get it ready for the next performance. Johnny Chang the ballet master is with us right now.

M: It's all part of the process.

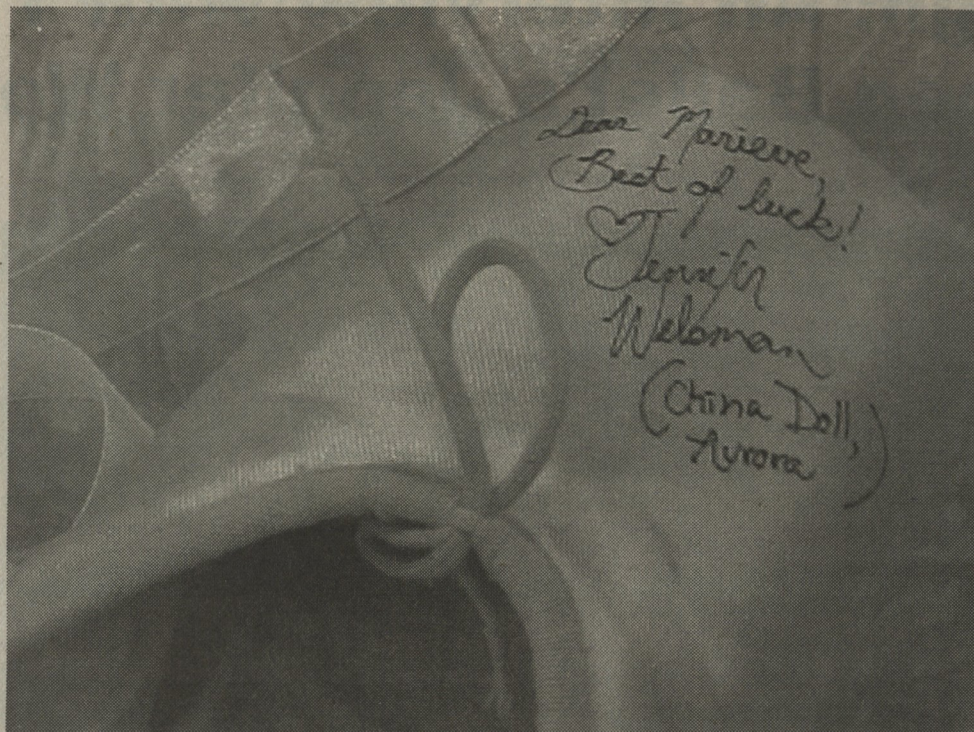
J: Exactly.

"Actually the Goblin is performing tonight as well, he's in the waltz."
-Jennifer

M: I was wondering what the difference was between principle, first soloist, second soloist, and corps de ballet? You yourself are a second



Jennifer Welsman



The pointe shoe

soloist and I always have the image of the principle dancers playing the principle roles.

J: Because we're such a small company we're very fortunate in the fact that even if you're a second soloist you get chosen to play a principle role. We only have two female principles right now, which on a tour is quite challenging. But it's great because even if you're in the corps de ballet you'll get to do a fairy variation and you get to be busy all the time. That's what I love, because I'll do Aurora tonight and then on the other cast I get to do a fairy variation. I prefer to be busy and keeping on stage, whereas with most companies, if you're a principle dancer, you'll do one out of every four shows. To try and keep your body in shape in class, it's just not enough.

"Arf! Arf!" -Elly (the dog)

"Haha, cute" -Mariève

M: Your company has travelled all over, but not so much to Africa. You've gone to Egypt, but are you planning to do more of Africa?

J: It's actually very funny that you mention that, because there's talks right now, it's very up in the air of us actually going to South Africa and Capetown. We're one of the most-toured companies in the world and that's another one of the most amazing parts of this job because I don't know

when I would have come out to the East Coast except for with dance, you know, we don't have that much time off. I think we're actually going to China again in the new year, it's in the talks as well.

M: What do you think of the Confederation Centre of the Arts' stage? Is it smaller than you're used to? How does it compare to what you're used to?

J: We were in Halifax last night and the wings here give you a lot more room to run on and off. When we were in Sackville, when we ran off the wings you could hear our tutus scrape against this board and it was not that pleasant but you have to manage. The space (here) looks really nice and we haven't been able to have our sets- in Halifax they couldn't have our set in the back because there wasn't anything to hang it from. I was looking at that (here) and it makes it that much better for production to have the full production.

M: Ok, you were the China Doll on [the children's show] Toy Castle.

J: (Laughing) I was wondering if that would come up.

M: So what was that like?

J: It's so different from dance. In dance, if you go to gesture at someone you actually look at them, but on TV you can't, because you can't see the character's faces, so you have to be very open to the camera. You're just

transformed into this doll on a set and it was such an amazing cast to work with. It's such a different world than the other world of dance.

M: It's unlike any other children's show that I've seen before.

J: It was so fun, it was so fun. The choreographer was so much fun to work with as well. There were long days but I wish I could do that again. There were actually talks of there being a movie, but... Yeah, it's as fun as it looks. Actually the Goblin is performing tonight as well, he's in the waltz. I wish we could do that again... Oh hey Tara.

M: And then a little dog walks in with principle dancer, Tara Birtwhistle.

Tara: Hello, Jen. Hello. Quiet Elly, quiet.

Elly: (while groping my leg) Arf! Arf! Arf!

M: Haha, cute. Anything else you would like to add? What is performing, to you?

J: It's amazing. Whenever I'm finished performing a role I'm ready to go out and do it again because I'm just ready to go again. It always goes by way too quickly.

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