

Transitions: In Memoriam, Moscelyne Larkin

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By Camille Hardy
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Moscelyne Larkin (1925–2012)

Co-founder of the Tulsa Ballet with her late husband, Roman Jasinski, Edna Moscelyne Larkin died in April in Tulsa.

Larkin was born in Miami, Oklahoma, to a Russian mother and a Shawnee-Peoria father. She was always proud of her mixed heritage. Though she began studying ballet with her mother, at 13 she traveled to New York City to work with an array of teachers, including Mikhail Mordkin. At 15, Larkin joined the corps of Colonel W. de Basil's Original Ballet Russe, which toured South America during World War II. And she met principal dancer Jasinski, whom she married in 1943 in Buenos Aires. De Basil Russified her name to Moussia Larkina.

Although the Jasinskis went to Europe in 1947 with Original Ballet Russe, the pair soon returned to the United States, appearing with Sergei Denham's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. With her name re-Americanized, Larkin was popular in such roles as the Waltz in Fokine's *Les Sylphides* and the Cowgirl in de Mille's *Rodeo*. In an interview in 2006, Frederic Franklin, premier danseur and ballet master of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, said of Larkin, "What a sparkler! She was our soubrette."

Upon retirement from performing, Miss Larkin—as she was known to generations of students—and Jasinski taught ballet and formed a student company in 1956. The group was so warmly received that it developed into the current Tulsa Ballet, a lively professional troupe. Recipient of many honors, Larkin shared with Jasinski a 1988 Dance Magazine Award, in praise of the couple's fostering "a dynamic bastion for classical dance in America." Tulsa Ballet will host a memorial celebration of Larkin's life in September. —Camille Hardy



Larkin with Jasinski in Paquita. Photo from DM Archives.