

Oliver Matz

was born and raised in Rostock. He received his ballet training at the Berlin State Ballet School (under Prof. Martin Puttke) and joined the German State Opera in 1980, serving the company as a leading soloist and international ambassador for 25 years.

Awards and Honours Oliver Matz's many awards and honours include the Youth Art Award of the German Democratic Republic. In 1983, he won the bronze medal at the Varna International Ballet Competition and first prize at the National Ballet Competition of the German Democratic Republic. A year later, he won a gold medal at the Helsinki International Ballet Competition and in 1986 a gold medal at the International Ballet Competition in Jackson (USA). In 1999, his interpretation of Siegfried in *Swan Lake* was nominated for the Prix Benois de la Dance. He has received numerous critics' choice awards for his interpretations of the leading parts in Wassiljew's "Macbeth," Cranko's "Onegin" and "The Taming of the Shrew," as well as for one of his most acclaimed classical roles, Basilio in "Don Quixote." In recognition of his outstanding artistic achievements, he was appointed Berliner Kammertänzer by the Berlin Senator of Culture in 1995, the first dancer ever to receive this highest honour. For his lifetime achievement, he was appointed Honorary Member of the German State Opera in 2004.

Repertoire His repertoire included the leading parts in the great classical narrative ballets, such as *Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, *Giselle*, *La Bayadère*, *La Sylphide*, *Raymonda*, *Don Quixote*, *Spartacus*, and *Macbeth*. He performed solo roles in works from the Balanchine repertoire, including *The Prodigal Son*, *Apollon Musagète*, *Symphony in C*, *Theme and Variations*, as well as *The Four Temperaments*. He earned great acclaim for his interpretations of the leading parts in John Cranko's *Onegin* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Internationally celebrated figures and choreographers like Ray Barra, Patrice Bart, Michael Baryshnikov, Maurice Béjart, Peter Breuer, William Forsythe, Pierre Lacotte, Hans van Manen, Rudolf Nurejew, Roland Petit, Uwe Scholz, Yuri Vamos, and Wladimir Wassiljev created roles for him or reinterpretations of classical narrative ballets.

Television and DVD Productions In 1997, he performed the role of Basilio in the live television broadcast of the Finnish National Ballet's performance of *Don Quixote*, one of the great classics. In 1999, he appeared together with prima ballerina Steffi Scherzer in the French television production of the *Grand Pas de Deux Don Quixote*. He featured as Prince Siegfried in the German State Opera Ballet's *Swan Lake* (1998) and as Drosselmeyer in its production of *The Nutcracker*. Choreographed by Patrice Bart and conducted by Daniel Barenboim, both productions were broadcast live on television and in cinemas and are available on DVD.

Guest Appearances Many guest appearances and gala events took him to all parts of the world, including performances with internationally renowned ballet companies like the American Ballet Theater in New York, the Bayerischen Staatsballett, the Teatro alla Scala in Milano, the Finnish National Ballet, the National Ballet of Canada, the Royal Ballet London, the Stuttgarter Ballett, and the World Ballet Festival in Tokyo. He has danced with famous international ballerinas like Eva Evdokimova, Isabelle Guérin, Sylvie Guillem, Evelyn Hart, Margaret Illmann, Alessandra Ferri, Ludmilla Semenjaka, and Steffi Scherzer.

Bidding Farewell to the Stage and Moving to New Pastures In 2004, Oliver Matz ended his artistic career and together with his partner Steffi Scherzer accepted an invitation from Zurich's University of Music and Drama (HGKZ) to establish professional stage dance education in Switzerland. Under their direction, Zurich Dance Academy (taZ), part of Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK), has become one of the most reputable dance education and training organisations in the world. Besides his duties and responsibilities as general director, he enjoys much success as a taZ faculty member, teaching male ballet classes. The best students are engaged at world-renowned companies and have won major international competitions. His professional expertise is internationally in great demand. He gives world wide master classes and has served as a jury member at acclaimed ballets competitions, including the Prix de Lausanne, Youth America Grand Prix, Japan Grand Prix, South African International Ballet Competition, Tanzolymp Berlin