

This thesis is presented for the degree of Master of Arts, Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Adelaide.

Joanna Priest: Her Place in Adelaide's Dance History.

Margaret Denton, B.A. (Hons.)

Awarded 1993

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any University, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material written or published by another person except where reference is made in the text.

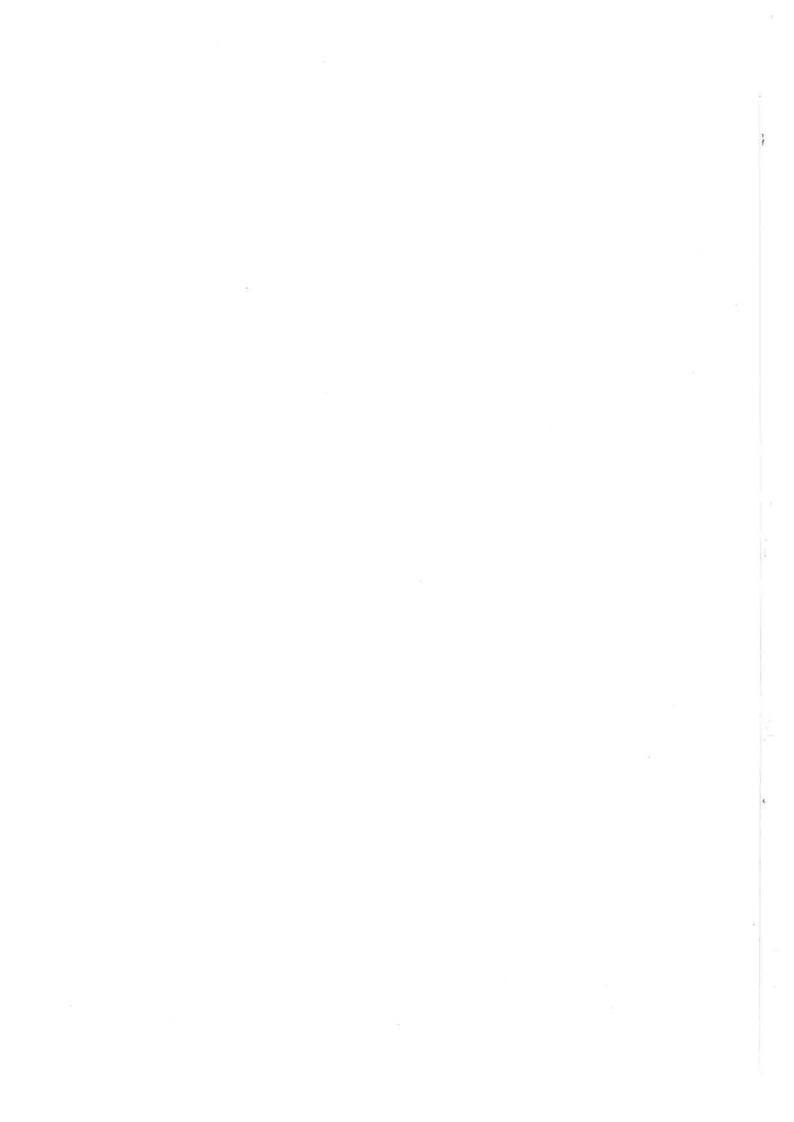
31/3/93

Abstract

Miss Priest opened her first dancing studio in Adelaide in 1932, and for nearly fifty years she taught ballet and ballroom dancing, as well as providing for her students classes in musical appreciation, art, handcrafts and drama. In 1939 she formed the South Australian Ballet Club, in 1954 she converted a former church into the Studio Theatre where she produced shows specifically for children as well as for adults, and in 1959 she began a children's television programme which ran for four and a half years. She was also a professional choreographer and producer of opera. This thesis explores her contribution to Adelaide's dance history.

I consent to this thesis being made available for photocopying and loan.

31/2/93



Acknowledgements

In collecting material for this dissertation I have been helped in many ways by many people. In addition to those whose names appear in different places throughout this book, I am grateful for the assistance given in various ways by Audrey Abbie, Bill Abraham, Len Amadio, Doug Anders, Anne Bartsch, Diana Bleby, Christopher Bleby, Sam Bor, Neville Bradley, Jean Cook, W. Alleyne Carter, Elizabeth Cornell, John Dowie, Michael Evans, Noel Fairweather, Mrs. Keith Forward, Cate Fowler, Lavinia Gent, Jim Giles, Bill Harrison, Peggy Hosking, Lorraine Irving, Mrs. Henry Krips, Beth McInnes, Margaret Morris, Tait Muller, Ron Parish, Jean Peters, Gwen Rees, Ian Rigney, Jan Seeger, Betty Siebert, Stella Sobels, Anne Somerville, Michael South, Kathleen Steele-Scott, Josie Sykes, Trevor Talbot, Geoff Taylor, Verdon Williams, John Worthley and Jan Yuncken.

Archivists and librarians who have answered many questions include the staff of the Australian Archives, South Australian Division; the staff of the South Australian Public Records Office; the staff at the Mortlock Library and Barr-Smith libraries, Helen James, Archivist of the Adelaide Children's Hospital (Now the Women and Children's Hospital), Geoff Harris, Document Archivist of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation; Peter Jackson, Programme Coordinator of Children's Television, ABC-TV; David de and Derid Cattree Horne^A of AGB; Paul Hammond and Edward Pask of the Australian Ballet Foundation, Sue Tronser, Federal Music Librarian; Verna Broadfoot, archivist of Perth College (where Joanna completed her schooling), James McCarthy of the National Film and Sound Archive, Simon Bailey of the Oxford University Archives, Ivan King, of the Perth Theatre Trust, Mary Vallentine of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra; Margaret Jennings, University of Adelaide archivist; John Moore, archivist of Pulteney Grammar School; Graeme Powell, National Library; Jane Pritchard, archivist of the Rambert Dance Company; Denise Collett-Simpson, librarian of the Royal Academy of Dancing in London, and Jo Kulchar at the Sydney office of the Royal Academy of Dancing; Frank van Stratten and Elizabeth Bernard at the Victorian Performing Arts Museum and Jo Peoples, Josephine Landsberg and Charles Barnard of the Performing Arts Collection of South Australia. I am also grateful to Lynn Fisher for help in various ways, and in particular for advising me about the deposition of Linley Wilson's papers in the Battye Library, Perth.

Former students and teachers at Joanna studios who have contributed their recollections are Maxine Aldrich, Norma Berry, Sarah Blunden, Natalie Bowen, Prudence Coffey, Jill Eve, Beverley George, Janet Jenkins, Jo Juchniewicz, Claudia Maddeford, Claire Mills, Margaret Monson, Fran Slattery and Elizabeth Stevens, as well as Gail Ellis, Helen George, Christine Sears and Lynette Tuck Howard who have been frequently pestered by telephone and in person to fill in some detail.

Lesley Cox, Adelaide eurythmics teacher and Joan Pope, of Perth, have given me a great deal of information about some of the early eurythmics teachers in Australia and Heather Gell in particular, Stella Stagg, of Barking, U.K. has provided information about the Priest family, Mem Brewster-Jones, (née Hodge), Joanna's cousin who lives in grandfather Jefferis' former home, "Yilki," and has entertained me in that house while we have discussed the Jefferis family, and Peter Perrin, one of Joanna's nephews, has supplied me with photographs of Joanna in earlier days.

Special thanks are due to Alan Brissenden and Robin Eaden for their advice and encouragement in the preparation of this work.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	5
Table of Contents	7
List of Illustrations	9
Introduction \ldots \ldots \ldots 1	1
Chapter 1. Early Life	1
Chapter 2. The Teacher	3
Chapter 3. The South Australian Ballet Club	4
Chapter 4. The Studio Theatre 13	0
Chapter 5. Southern Stars 16	5
Chapter Six. Choreographer and Producer	6
Appendix A	0
Appendix B	3
Plan of Bibliography 24	6
Bibliography 24	9

List of Illustrations

1. Rev. James Jefferis	22
2. The Brougham Place Church	26
3. <u>Yilki</u>	28
4. The Main Room at <u>Yilki</u>	30
5. Joanna's mother	34
6. Joanna's father	37
7. Death and the Maiden	44
8. Visit by Kirsova to the studio in Freemasons' Hall	50
9. The Bowman College Ballet	56
10. Vera van Rij	59
11. Mem Hodge	61
12. Joanna teaching in 1971	64
13. Walter Desborough and Mina Bauer	69
14. Patricia Hackett	72
15. The Second Torch Theatre	74
16. Joanna with some of her first students	84
17. Heather Gell	102
18. The Lady Augusta	107
19. Ted Shawn	113
20. Jooss's Pavane	115
21. Joanna in Berwick's Pavane	117
22. Programme cover for 1941 performance	120
23. Joanna's Studio Theatre	130

24. Map of North Adelaide	132
25. Tynte Street side of Studio Theatre	139
26. The Studio Theatre foyer	141
27. First production of <u>The Listeners</u>	144
28. <u>Ballerina</u>	146
29. <u>A Villanelle for Four</u>	150
30. Cecil Bates teaching in the Studio Theatre	153
31. First page of the Southern Stars book	174
32. Joanna's students folk-dancing	180
33. The cover of the Southern Stars book	185
34. Ratings of Children's Television programmes	189
35. "Ballet Rehearsal" by Dorrit Black	199
36. Winter Landscape	202
37. Second production of The Listeners	208
38. Joan of Arc	213
39. Joanna and Rob	222