



Lodge Scuba Academy meets the arts



In January, Lodge Scuba Academy had the privilege and honour to work with the Royal Ballet. As part of the Ashton 100 Celebrations, the ballet *Ondine* is scheduled to play in April and May 2005. *Ondine* tells the tale of a water spirit who falls for a human, with predictably tragic results. It stars Principle Dancers Jonathan Cope CBE, who joined the Royal Ballet in 1982 and was promoted to Principal in 1986, and Tamara Rojo, who prior to joining the Royal Ballet in 2000 danced with Scottish Ballet, Deutsche Opera Berlin, Nice Opera Ballet and ENB.



Lodge Scuba Academy was approached by the Royal Ballet to help with some underwater photography for the ballet's publicity. They wanted to mimic some of the dances and poses from the stage production, but under the water. The instructors invited them down to the Crystal Palace Dive Pit, where these world-class dancers and their photographer were introduced to the world under the surface.

The photography was challenging, requiring the dancers to hover in the water without the aid of BCDs, regulators, weights and all of the usual equipment divers take for granted. The shots were achieved by pairing each of the dancers and photographer with a diver teaching them to equalise and supplying them with air from the alternate air sources during the set up of each pose.

Something the divers learned from this experience is that dancers tend to be negatively buoyant and, therefore, do not need weights to stay under the water (unlike the rest of us!). When the dancers and photographer were ready, the divers moved away and the illusion of water spirits hovering in the water was captured.

For the ballet enthusiasts among the dive community, you will see the final outcome on the Royal Ballet posters, website and leaflets advertising this wonderful production.

For more information or to get training in underwater film and photography, contact Lodge Scuba Academy on 0208 765 1036.

