

Janet Karin OAM

For over 60 years Janet Karin has been a significant force in the world of Australian dance. She has been respected as a dancer, teacher, artistic director, mentor, researcher and academic and in each of those roles has shown a deep commitment to dance and an intelligent and searching approach to the growth of the art form.

She began her performing career with Laurel Martyn's Victorian Ballet Guild, danced with the Borovansky Ballet in its final season, and joined the Australian Ballet as a founding member in 1962. She was promoted to principal in 1966. Memorable roles with the Australian Ballet include those in *Melbourne Cup*, *Les Sylphides* and *Aurora's Wedding*, and she received exceptional reviews for her dramatic interpretation of Myrthe, Queen of the Wilis, in *Giselle* and Clytemnestra in Robert Helpmann's *Elektra*.

After retiring from the Australian Ballet in 1967 she moved to Canberra and, with her then husband Bryan Lawrence, established the Bryan Lawrence School of Ballet, later to be renamed as National Capital Ballet School. In Canberra she initiated the Karin System of Ballet Training, which presented dance as both a means of personal enrichment and as an art form. Above all, it was never a static method of teaching and learning but was constantly evolving in response to new developments in science and the arts and in teaching methodology.

In 1997 Karin left Canberra to work for Ross Stretton, a former student who had been appointed as Artistic Director of the Australian Ballet. With Stretton she worked to enable the expansion of the Australian Ballet's repertoire with new acquisitions from leading choreographers. Karin also taught at the Australian Ballet School from 2001 to 2016, in particular in the area of kinetic studies where she worked on the application of neuroscience principles to elite ballet training.

She has served on the Dance Committee of the Australia Council; the Board of the International Association for Dance Medicine and Science (IADMS); the Board of the Australian Society for Performing Arts Healthcare; and has published widely in internationally recognised journals. She was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1989; the Australian Dance Award for Services to Dance Education in 2014; and the 2015 IADMS Dance Educator Award.