

## Testimonials

"I am sure when Jorge Garcia choreographed Majisimo, he didn't anticipate that, in time, it would become an internationally celebrated and famous work. It has been performed all over the world, more than any other work by a Cuban choreographer. I was delighted to feature it in a programme that celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Birmingham Royal Ballet, in 2020. Performing Majisimo at that time was life-saving for the company and it definitely brought us and our audiences - 22,000 people watched it online - joy at a difficult time. Also Massenet's famous music had never been performed by the Royal Ballet Sinfonia before, and it was wonderful to give them this opportunity also."

**Carlos Acosta (United Kingdom)**

"Much has been said about Jorge Garcia's excellent work, which will last forever in the Portuguese dance. He was a highly demanding and very professional ballet master who, for many years at the Ballet Gulbenkian, transmitted to us his Cuban school mixed with the Russian Vaganova school. He had a unique style, very personal and of extreme quality in the "pointe technique" and in the various styles that he knew how to convey so well, especially to the female dancers. It was an enormous privilege to have him as a teacher for several decades and our friendship, in addition to our work at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, lasted until his last day. I will never forget the admirable Master and the great Friend I lost, nor the beautiful words he wrote me in letters and postcards. In one of them he sent me the following poem from the work Rubáiyát attributed to the Persian poet-astronomer-mathematician, Omar Khayyám (1048-1131):

*Ignore that yesterday you should have been rewarded and that you were not.  
Be happy. Don't regret anything. Don't expect anything. Your future is already  
written down in the Book of which the pages are turned, as if by accident, by  
the wind of Eternity."*

**Marta Athayde (Portugal)**

"After settling in Lisbon, at the invitation of the Gulbenkian Ballet, I worked in several dance companies, namely the Nacional Ballet of Portugal, the Lisbon Dance Company and the Portuguese Company of Contemporary Dance. But it was at the Escola Artística de Dança at the National Conservatory that I met Master Jorge Garcia, with whom I worked for 18 consecutive years. I am very proud to have participated in the training of many students who are now top professionals integrated in several national and foreign companies. The daily interaction with Master Garcia built a deep friendship, complicity, affection and love. It was a mutual apprenticeship over many years based on enormous admiration and respect. Our classes were often an explosion of emotions and, I am sure, he is missed and admired by all his students. Today, about a year and a half after his passing away, I miss him a lot, as we were in constant contact and our conversations were always very special.

Interestingly, we talked a lot about death, but when it happens we are never truly prepared to face such a challenge. I believe that one day we will meet again, but in the meantime, Jorge lives with me every day through my music and, therefore, he will always be present in my heart."

**Mercedes Cabanach (Portugal)**

"I knew Jorge Garcia for many years and we were the best of friends. Jorge came to Portugal and taught in my International Academy of Dance in Estoril. I loved him from his first class and took many classes from him all over Europe. I invited Jorge to be a teacher and coach for the Boston Ballet when I was director there and he recommended me to teach and coach the Ballet du Théâtre Français de Nancy, France. He always opened his door to me and I always stayed in his apt in Lisbon. He also choreographed on me and coached many ballets. His teaching was very clear and precise. We remained the best of friends to his last day and I miss him very much."

**Anna-Marie Holmes (USA)**

"Jorge was associated with many memorable moments in our careers. His production of Giselle in Lisbon, which was recompensed in the Osaka Ballet Competition, highlighted our collaboration with him and led to performing the second act pas de deux at the Paris Opera and around the world. Our partnership continued at Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo, where he was one of the most frequent teachers for over 20 years. His breathtaking critical eye that endlessly evolved and his profound passion for dance has guided us both, either directing the Pole National Supérieur de Danse Rosella Hightower in Cannes or staying to the essentials in researching dance science and medicine. Thank you, Jorge."

**Paola Cantalupo and Peter Lewton-Brain (France)**

I met Jorge Garcia in Rio de Janeiro when he came to Brazil to direct our Teatro Municipal. I soon realized that he was an excellent teacher, with a great classical dance methodology and a professional of the highest caliber. The combination of his school, of Cuban origin, complemented with the Russian ballet teaching, made him an expert in the art of Dance. His classes were extraordinary and he staged some classical ballets very well. Some of which he left to Brazilian artists. I have many good memories of him. Almost turning 100 years, I can say that dancers have a very short memory – they very quickly forget the people who pass in their lives – which is very unfair. Jorge Garcia, who left us an example of a good ballet “school”, seems to be a good exception as there are many people who seem to continue to follow his teachings."

**Tatiana Leskova (Brasil)**

"When I arrived at the Ballets de Monte-Carlo in 1992, I had the privilege of discovering Jorge Garcia, then the company's guest Ballet Master. I was immediately seduced by his technical skills and his fine knowledge of the classical ballet vocabulary. Added to them there was a form of detachment and constant good humor that characterized this character so well. Jorge Garcia was a character. Truculent, generous and incredibly talented... his presence, as Guest Teacher, was obvious to me and I felt it was my duty to keep this relationship throughout the wonderful years he spent in our company."

Jean-Christophe Maillot (Mónaco)

"Remembering Jorge Garcia, master, choreographer, director and friend made me open my heart and go back to the end of the 70s of the last century, when I was a baby ballerina and was in the end of the dance course at the Escola Estadual de Dança Maria Olenewa, in Rio de Janeiro. When I auditioned to join the Corpo de Baile of the Teatro Municipal, there was already some rumours about the possibility of the wonderful Cuban Maestro becoming the next director of the company. Many of us were aware of the importance of this appointment in the lives of the classical dancers. It was said that Mestre Garcia would completely remodel and renew the company from 1978 onwards.

With great optimism and some courage, I presented myself at the audition and, right away, I realized that he was going to bet on my career. Already in the company, he gave me the opportunity to do my first professional performance, in the piece *Modulações Concretas*, by the Brazilian choreographer Carlos Morais. This great generosity was part of Mestre Garcia's ethical and professional life. That work was a springboard for my life and career and, from then on, he always instilled courage and determination in me, advising me later to try to succeed in the world of dance in Europe.

I always remember Jorge Garcia with gratitude, respect and a lot of affection, because his precious teachings was a constant in my life. I will even say that I was lucky enough to receive his wise advice that greatly contributed to my artistic evolution."

Isabel Seabra (Itália)