



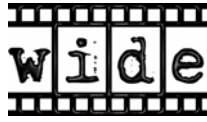
# BALLERINA



**A film by BERTRAND NORMAND**

**An Adesif Productions / Les Films du Tamarin coproduction**

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## BALLERINA

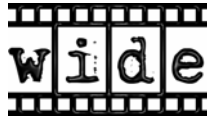
### Synopsis

Ballerina. Fascinating, enthralling, shrouded in mystery. Hers is a rare art. Her craft as demanding as an athlete. Her dancing life as brief as a butterfly. All to a vision of fragile beauty. A vision of what it is to be a woman.

And Russia, land of absolutes, of the cult of beauty, of immensities and of nostalgia where that feminine ideal is celebrated and held dear. Russia is *par excellence* the land of the Ballerina.

This film follows the destinies of five female dancers of the Kirov Ballet in Saint-Petersburg. Their lives weave together to tell the story of the Russian Ballerina of our time, from her beginnings as a child in dance school to the peak of her glory on the world stages.

In this intimate gaze at the lives, the courage, the disappointments and triumphs of these women, this film unveils the vitality and uniqueness of the Russian Ballerina today. We come to understand her lasting allure as we begin the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Ballerina, as old as Russian history, as new as today.

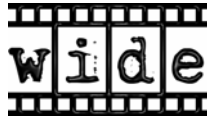


## Presentation

The classic ballerina is fascinating. She exercises an art that is becoming rare, a profession as demanding that it is badly known. She fascinates even more because her fate seems so fragile. But there is a country where it doesn't fail and go on shining. That country is Russia. Land of seek for absolute, of cult of beauty, wideness and nostalgia, also the land of a forgotten femininity: **Russia is by excellence the land of the ballerina.**

The author of the film, Bertrand Normand, director and lover of ballet, is impressed since a long time by the singularity of the Russian Ballerinas. He has left for St Petersburg looking for what makes these dancers unique and brought out the project of a film of great extent. Through his personal researches, he has found a new vision of classic ballet, its world and the power it exercises on the audience and that he wants to share with a large audience.

**BALLERINA will speak about his quest.** It's about going through the curtain which separates the audience from the artist on stage, but also the one the country is veiled with. This quest has got him to the Mariinski Theatre formerly called Kirov. This theatre has seen dawn for Centuries fantastic choreographers and interprets. He has met there Alina, Ulyana, Evgenia, Svetlana and Diana, who will be the principal characters of the film. Women with very different characters, young dancers beginning their careers or world famous stars, they illustrate together the steps and fundamental issues of a ballerina's life. **The author must follow them regularly for several months** and film them, on stage, during rehearsals or at home. He has already identified for each and one of them a challenge for the future. Whether it is the beginner leaving the school to enter a group, the hurt star who must do her comeback, the rising star leaving her theater to blossom somewhere else, her rival beginning a world career or even the young quadrille becoming a movie actress, they all contradict the line some people would like to draw for them with their fate's dynamism.



The author has brought out the main idea on which he will structure the architecture of his film. **The story of a ballerina is the story of a permanent metamorphosis.** Whether it is at different moments of her career or at different moments of the day, from the young girl suffering at rehearsals or the one who shines with grace on stage, or the one who goes back to a common social life, the ballerina changes constantly and her beauty appears in this transformation.

The art of ballet seems to be easy and light for the audience. It represents anyhow an exhausting and painful work for the dancers. **The film will put in parallels the hardness of the efforts that the artist must make and the grace and the beauty of the result.** Watching such artists, ballet becomes more than an art of aesthetic. It gives to the audience a deep emotion. This experience leads to a point, when the artist transcend the repertoire to create something new, never seen before. That's what happens when stars like Diana Vichneva, Svetlana Zakharova, and maybe even more Ulyana Lopatkina, are dancing.

But it is while filming young dancers like Alina Somova ou Evgenia Obraztsova evolving and growing that the director can show to the spectator the mystery of the blossoming of this woman representing metamorphosis in her life and in her art, this artist of body and stage called "ballerina".