

First India



City First



BELLES OF BALLET

Ballet is a beautiful art form, it is aesthetic, ethereal and lifts the soul of the Dancer and audience. City First peeks into the history of this dance form!



NEHAL NAYAR
nehal.nayar@firstindia.co.in



Ballet originated in the Italian Renaissance courts of the 15th century. Noblemen and women were treated to lavish events, especially wedding celebrations, where dancing and music created an elaborate spectacle. In the 16th century, Catherine de Medici began to fund ballet

let moved from the courts to the stage. The French opera *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* incorporated ballet elements, creating a long-standing opera-ballet tradition in France. By the mid-1700s French ballet master, Jean Georges Noverre rebelled against the artifice of opera-ballet, believing that ballet could stand on its own as an art form. He introduced the ballet d'action, a dramatic style of ballet that conveys a narrative. Early classical ballets such as *Giselle* and *La Sylphide* were created during the Romantic Movement in the first half of the 19th century. This movement influenced art, music and ballet. This is also the period of time when dancing on the tips of the toes, known as pointe work, became the norm for the ballerina. The romantic tutu, a calf-length, full skirt made of tulle, was introduced. The popularity of ballet soared in Russia, and, during the latter half of the 19th century, Russian choreographers and

composers took it to new heights. Marius Petipa's *The Nutcracker*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake*, by Petipa and Lev Ivanov, represent classical ballet in its grandest form.

Choreographer and New York City Ballet founder George Balanchine, introduced the neo-classical ballet, an expansion on the classical form. He also is considered by many to be the greatest innovator of the contemporary "plotless" ballet. With no definite storyline, its purpose is to use movement to express the music and to illuminate human emotion and endeavor. Today, ballet is multi-faceted. Classical forms, traditional stories and contemporary choreographic innovations intertwine to produce the character of modern ballet.

in the French court. Her elaborate festivals encouraged the growth of ballet de cour, a program that included dance, decor, costume, song, music and poetry. A century later, King Louis XIV helped to popularize and standardize the art form. A passionate dancer, he performed many roles himself, including that of the Sun King in *Ballet de la Nuit*. By 1661, a dance academy had opened in Paris, and in 1681 bal-

In India Ballet has not reached its full potential because we are so rich in our own culture of music and dance with so many different styles that exposure of Ballet has always been limited and there are not too many who are teaching it and performing it.

