



Indy's **alternative** voice

Butler Ballet's Cinderella at Clowes

by Rita Kohn – April 29, 2014



Christian Griggs-Drane and Micaelina Ritschl in Butler Ballet's Cinderella.

[Butler Ballet's](#) visually lovely *Cinderella* rounded out [Butler ArtsFest's](#) Encore Weekend with a production interweaving the festival's themes of Fables, Fairy Tales and Physics.

Sergei Prokofiev's opening music led us into a sense of flight, lightness and openness that Karl Kaufman captured in his minimalist, suggestive scenic design, which was further augmented by Anthony Bauer's lighting and Kathleen Egan's

costumes. With choreography by Marek Cholewa, Patrick Hinson, Stephan Laurent, Michelle Jarvis, Susan McGuire and Cynthia Pratt, the emphasis on clarity of mime richly enhanced the storytelling.

Zachary Kukla and Stuart Coleman as the contentious stepsisters, Skinny and Dumpy, gave the illusion of defying gravity as they slapstick'ed their way through every scene with flops and flips, slopes and slips along with a lot fine dancing. Audrey Robson embodied the Cat with endearing charm.

Katherine Currier illuminated with grace the essential qualities of kindness and gifts of seasons, along with Jourdan Morales as Spring Fairy, Micaelina Ritschl as Summer, Felicity Nicholson as Autumn and Sally Shenkman as Winter.

Erica Johnston conversely gave unkindness its chilly edge as Stepmother. Christopher Bokeko brought depth to being a friend to the Prince, who equally shows loyalty to his found-and-lost true love. Christian Griggs-Drane as the Prince and Margaret Carey as Cinderella melded beautifully as they move into the magic moments of swirling into love.

As always, the Butler Ballet Orchestra conducted by Stanley DeRusha, lent richness to the experience.

On April 25 the performance was preceded by a conversation between Mark Kesling, science educator and president of [The DaVinci Pursuit](#), and Cynthia Pratt, Butler professor of dance and choreographer. They brought us to conclude that there aren't even six degrees of separation between physics and dance.

Rather, "physics is at work with art," and an understanding of the laws of gravity and the mechanics of motion allows a dancer to bring depth and breadth to characterization and choreography. The April 26 performance was preceded by Jeff Gooch speaking about "Physics beyond Fairy Tales: Modern Projection Techniques for Dance and Theatre," which this reviewer did not attend.