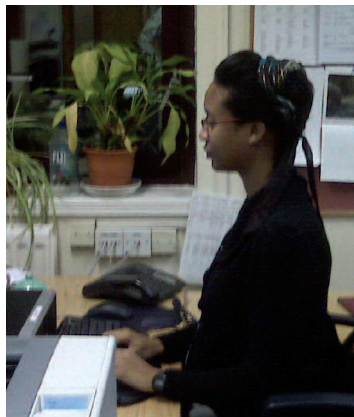


Meet the Company

Your chance to meet two of the many people who work behind the scenes at Birmingham Royal Ballet



Judy Taylor
PA to the Director

I work for the Director, David Bintley, and my job entails diary management, organising meetings, auditions, liaising with composers, technical staff and designers, as well as some general secretarial work for David. I also provide a point of contact for people needing to communicate with David when he is on

tour or working abroad. I particularly enjoy the role because it is so diverse – no two days are the same.

I started work at Birmingham Royal Ballet as a temporary secretary, for one week, and I'm still here seven years later! My background is in science, which is not a typical training route for a Personal Assistant. I studied for some secretarial qualifications and worked as a PA, mainly in the gas and electricity industries.

The first ballet I saw was David Bintley's *Arthur* part 2, and I've been hooked ever since. *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Orpheus Suite* are two of my favourites. I'm especially looking forward to seeing '*Still Life*' at the *Penguin Café* again in March next year. It can be very enjoyable seeing these works when you've been involved behind the scenes, or even been privy to their creation.

In my spare time, I study French for a Modern Languages degree with Open University, which I find challenging, but very worthwhile.



Michael Clifford
Shoe Supervisor

I trained at theatre school, on the technical side, rather than the performing side – lighting, design and the like. When I graduated I worked in wardrobe in the West End for a while before applying for a job at the Royal Opera House. It wasn't a ballet job – in fact I'd never seen a ballet – it was for mens' wardrobe with the

opera. As it turned out, they were also interviewing for a post with Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet. I missed the opera job by the skin of my teeth, but was offered a comparable job with the ballet. That was 1987. In 1991, I took over the role of Shoe Supervisor.

As part of my job, I have to order and dye shoes, work with choreographers and designers, and sometimes give advice about what will work with dance. I have 'shoe bibles' which tell me the style and colour of every shoe in each ballet. So, before each season, I'll have a fitting with each dancer and fit them with a suitable pair of shoes or boots, or order a new pair if nothing is available.

Just before we open, I'll set all the shoes in the dressing rooms and spend the rest of my time sorting out the inevitable problems! I also keep track of the shoes for all our ballets, order and maintain stocks of ribbons and pointe shoes, and work on any ballets which we are hiring out. Occasionally I have some spare time, in which I enjoy a bit of cooking and gardening!