

# LIFESTYLE

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Travis Spradling/Gazette Telegraph



# TURNING POINT

By Linda Terhune/Gazette Telegraph

Real ballerinas don't live on houseboats and fish for relaxation before hitting the stage. But Anne Adair, a real ballerina if ever there was one, did.

Adair chose the Long Island houseboat over a Manhattan apartment because she didn't want to live in the city while working with the American Ballet Theatre. And she resigned from the company, one of the best in the world, because she did want to live with her fiancé, Colorado Springs Symphony Orchestra music director Christopher Wilkins.

The ability to balance both her personal and her professional goals has become one of Adair's trademarks. But with her 30th birthday nearing, the petite and spirited dancer is at a crossroads. She's taking a close look at her profession, her personal life and her plans. And she's wondering how much longer she can keep juggling.

In Europe, ballerinas can dance into their late-30s. In America, ballet companies prefer dancers as young as 17, which leaves little room for the over-30s. Dancing is also hard on the body, and the older the body, the greater the toll.

Adair, for instance, still suffers from a

## Springs dancer at the crossroads of her career

lower back injury sustained years ago and aggravated by the American Ballet Theatre's rigorous rehearsal and performance schedule of 10-hour days. During her two seasons with the company, Adair managed the pain with regular cortisone injections and daily physical therapy.

The back injury figured in her decision to leave the company, but not as much as her desire to be with Wilkins.

"I was torn between working in New York and commuting to see Chris, and wanting to live with him and be his wife," she said.

Raised in Salt Lake City, Adair began dancing when she was 6. It was the activity of choice for girls in her neighborhood, she said, as natural as piano lessons one day a week and skiing another. Her younger sister, Alice, also took ballet lessons as a child, but chose to go into acting.

Alice Adair is married to Josh Brolin

of television's "Young Riders," and has appeared in "Beverly Hills Cop II" and "Miami Vice."

By the age of 12, Adair was serious enough about ballet to dance every day and to enroll in summer dance programs offered by the San Francisco Ballet and by Ballet West in Aspen.

She entered Canada's National Ballet School in Toronto in 10th grade, studying there for three years before joining the Royal Danish Ballet. At 22, she married one of the company's principal dancers, and lived with him in Copenhagen for six years. After three years of wrangling with international divorce laws, they were divorced last month.

The Danish company toured Europe and Asia and performed in New York and Washington, D.C. But after a few years, Adair no longer felt challenged.

"At the age of 24, I didn't feel like settling down. It was an important time in my life to push myself," she said.

But Adair never planned to move on to the American Ballet Theatre.

Still under contract to the Royal Danish Ballet, she was taking classes in New York

See ADAIR/D4

# Adair/Dancer takes hectic life in stride

From D1

during summer 1987 when Mikhail Baryshnikov, then artistic director of the American Ballet Theatre, saw her and asked her to join the company.

She joined the company that fall, and danced the "Bluebird" pas de deux in "Sleeping Beauty," the Shepherdess pas de deux in Baryshnikov's "Nutcracker" and a solo in "Don Quixote."

In Adair's second and final season with the company, choreographer Twyla Tharp created a ballet for her. "Everlast" is about the love triangle formed by a boxer, Adair as the boxer's shy and awkward girlfriend, and the woman the boxer really loves.

## Adair determined to be successful

Adair is far from shy in real life. Articulate and easy-going, she comes across as the friendly girl-next-door.

"She has a wonderful background and is a wonderful, very charming person, and that comes across on stage. We are very, very fortunate in having her," says Martin Fredmann, artistic director of the Colorado Ballet, with which she has danced this season.

A determined success in the dance world, Adair is equally determined to be successful in her personal life. She is forthcoming about her dedication to Wilkins, to whom her father, a Salt Lake City doctor, intro-

duced her in 1988. Wilkins, then associate conductor of the Utah Symphony, met Adair's father when he attended a chorale practice in which her father was singing.

Wilkins is equally forthcoming about Adair.

"She just has a real love of living," he said. "She has such brightness and radiance about her."

Wilkins and Adair moved to Colorado Springs in summer 1989, and she took a seven-month break from dancing, during which she toured Nepal and backpacked in Hawaii.

"I did what I had always wanted to do, but hadn't had the time to, because I was dancing," she said.

But it didn't take long for her to miss dancing.

Asked in late fall 1989 by a former American Ballet Theatre colleague to guest in a Ballet Chicago production of "The Nutcracker," Adair got a cortisone injection, and was soon back on stage, loving it. She began chiropractic treatments when she returned to Colorado Springs, and re-entered the dance world full time. She and Paul Fiorino, artistic director of the Pueblo Ballet, will perform excerpts from the ballets "Romeo and Juliet" and "West Side Story" on April 26 and 27 at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center in a concert presented by the Colorado Springs Dance Theatre for the annual Imagination Celebration.

## Best of intentions went slightly astray

Although Adair moved here so she and Wilkins could live together, their work schedules have been so busy, they've hardly had a chance to do so. And with Wilkins preparing to begin a second job as music director of the San Antonio Symphony in '92, Adair knows their life together will be hectic for at least several more years.

She takes the hectic in stride, though. She talks of wanting to have a baby and of a desire to begin working as a counselor for young dancers, helping them through the tremendous pressures they face.

"Young artists are pushed so hard at a young age," she said. "They break down or burn out, and are pitched into a corner. There is nobody there for them. (Ballet directors) are busy giving kids physical therapy and pumping them with pain killers and anti-inflammatories instead of taking them aside and saying, 'Calm down now.'"

Adair feels those pressures, but has learned to live with them.

In the fall she drove to Denver each morning for a four-hour dance class and rehearsal with the Colorado Ballet, then returned in the afternoon to teach beginning and intermediate ballet at Colorado College.

"She is really an exceptional artist," said Peggy Berg, CC as-

sociate dance professor. "One of the things she has been able to do . . . is instill some of the (professional) discipline that for college students is initially very difficult to understand. . . . I have seen a lot of improvement in the students. Her teaching has really had an impact."

Wilkins cites Adair's extraordinary energy level.

"She has no trouble at all keeping up with her schedule and . . . social roles (in Colorado Springs)."

Adair recently stopped teaching to devote herself to full-time work with the Colorado Ballet.

She is in company classes and rehearsal from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. six days a week, and Wilkins begins symphony rehearsals about an hour after she gets home. They are so busy, Adair says, that although she has worn a diamond engagement ring for a year, they haven't had time to think about a wedding or to find the time to pursue favorite outdoor activities, hiking and skiing.

As much as Adair loves dancing, and as much as she takes the pace in stride, the Adair/Wilkins schedule has left her with questions.

"I left the American Ballet Theatre to be with Chris," she said. "I don't want to leave Chris to dance with the Colorado Ballet. . . . He's the most important thing in my life and that's why I left the American Ballet Theatre. . . . As much as I love dancing, I don't know whether it's worth it."