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[Kelowna](#) posted February 17, 2016 by [Valaura Vedan](#)



## Canada's Prima Ballerina Helps Kelowna Students Shine

Dance students at the Canadian School of Ballet were treated to a very special treat on Monday evening. Chan Hon Go, former Principal Dancer of the National Ballet of Canada, arrived in Kelowna to offer up a class as part of her Canadian Masterclass Series. Beginning in 2014, Goh has embarked on an annual journey to cities across Canada, sharing her experience and wisdom with dancers aged 10 to 18. This year, Kelowna was one of eight stops in a whirlwind tour that sees Goh travel as far as Whitehorse in her quest to teach budding ballerinas.



*Photo Credit: KelownaNow*

**Ballet students at the Canadian School of Ballet participated in a masterclass with Prima Ballerina Chan Hon Goh.**

Chan Hon Goh is one of the world's most renowned and prolific ballet dancers, boasting a professional career spanning more than 20 years. In 2010, she became the Director of Goh Ballet, giving her the opportunity to share her knowledge and values with future generations of ballet dancers. She also serves as a jury member for several international dance competitions and is a founding member of Vancouver's Arts and Culture Policy Council.

“[The tour] a fabulous opportunity for me to see the level of training and dance progression across the country. For me, it's as much a learning experience as it is for the students because I am also meeting them for the first time,” said Goh, following her class at the Canadian School of Ballet. “I hope

very much that with my experience and my years of mentoring students that I can gauge where they're at and I'm able to give them components of artistry and some new thoughts so that they can take with them back to their everyday training.”



*Photo Credit: KelownaNow*

**Go works with a young student, making corrections to her technique.**

Thanks to a partnership with De Beers Jewellery, Ms. Goh's cross-country travel expenses are covered, allowing for more affordable classes, with most costs going towards the studio fees. Participating students are also considered for \$5,000 in scholarships, sponsored by the German Auto Import Network - Vancouver Island, to further their training. Scholarship recipients are selected based on artistic potential and technique.





*Photo Credit: KelownaNow*

The Canadian Masterclass Series is an intensive class, open to students aged 10 to 18 in cities across Canada.

This artistic potential is particularly important for dancers who wish to have a professional career. Goh believes that “charisma” is one of the key traits that separates good dancers from the truly great dancers. Unfortunately, charisma is difficult to teach, so Goh focuses on nurturing the charisma in her students, knowing that different dancers “shine” at different points in their career.

“A sense of musicality is also very important because I feel that on stage it’s about personifying the music,” explained Goh of another key trait of professional dancers. “If the music is dictating something heavy and sad and dark, you must be able to convey that tension and make it relatable and touch the audience.”

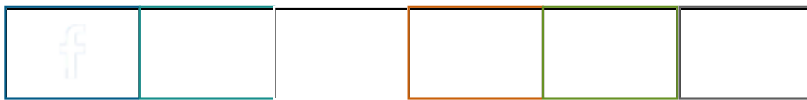


*Photo Credit: KelownaNow*

Kelowna ballet students pose for a group photo with Chan Hon Goh.

Throughout her hour-long masterclass in Kelowna, the students went through a series of exercises and routines as Goh circled the room, offering adjustments to technique that resulted in an immediate improvement in some dancers' form and performance. Goh says that it is these moments that make the Canadian Masterclass Series tour a special experience for both her and the students.

“It’s wonderful to see a certain correction, if I correct it in some way, and it changes the way that they are dancing. That sounds odd, like ‘How could one correction change them?’, but it is that one instant and that’s something that is treasured,” Goh said. “When you tell them to use their back differently or turn their head a different way and suddenly that dancer looks so different and polished. Those are the moments that I’m going for at different levels.”



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