

Dancers

Mischa Burlakov
Louise Lightfoot

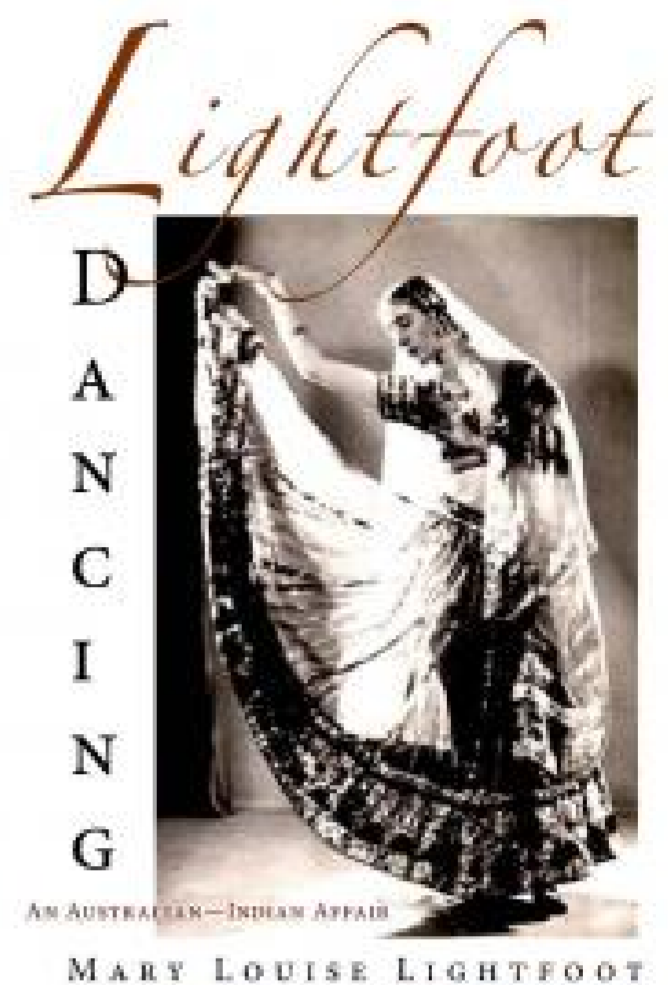


Mischa Burlakov (on left) as Franz in Coppelia

MISCHA BURLAKOV was born around 1884 in the Ukraine. He was a cabinet maker by trade. He arrived in Australia, via London, before World War I. He became involved with ballet around the late 1920s and in 1929 was offered a contract by the **J. C. Williamson** organisation to appear as Pedro in the Melbourne production of the musical Victory.

Burlakov established a dancing school in Sydney and co-founded, with **Louise Lightfoot**, the First Australian Ballet. When the First Australian Ballet disbanded in the 1950s, Burlakov continued to teach in Sydney until his death in 1965.

LOUISE LIGHTFOOT was a dancer, choreographer and impresario. Lightfoot was tall, slender and graceful, striking in profile, beautiful rather than pretty.



While still a student, she began a four-year apprenticeship in the innovative architectural office of **Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin**. Lightfoot was a companion and reluctant cook for Marion, as well as draughtswoman and designer, where she showed 'artistic comprehension and diligence'.

Encouraged by Marion Griffin, Lightfoot began to study Eurythmic Greek dancing. On **Anna Pavlova's** first tour of Australia, Louisa found her fusion of classical technique and romantic emotion a 'revelation'. Through the tour, Lightfoot met the character dancer Misha Burlakov and persuaded him to teach her the Russian Mazurka.



Louisa Lightfoot with the Griffins at Castlecrag