

# Catch "De-Lovely" Cole Porter classics at Artscape

 By [Debbie Hathway](#)

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Cape Town City Ballet (CTCB) ticks a lot of boxes with its upcoming production of *Night & Day*. Set to open at Artscape Theatre on October 26, it delights dance fans with entertaining choreography by Robin Van Wyk, Mervyn Williams, Kirsten Isenberg, Paul Johnson and Nigel Lucas.



What's more, the ballet is devised in a way that gives many company dancers the chance to shine instead of guiding the spotlight onto only a few. The Cole Porter tribute returns to Cape Town stages after seasons in Johannesburg and Somerset West, featuring what is described as "some of the cleverest, funniest and most romantic songs ever written" from the 1930s and '50s - such as "Let's Misbehave", "Too Darn Hot" and, of course, "Night and Day".

Look out for Jesse Milligan, a British artist invited by CTCB Artistic Coordinator Keith Mackintosh to join the company in January this year. Always searching for new talent to bolster the company's ranks, Keith spotted Jesse on a visit to Tring Park School for the Performing Arts, north of London, last year. Having signed a contract the day before to tour with Ballet Theatre UK, Keith had to wait for Jesse to fulfill his commitment before welcoming him to the Mother City.

Jesse's lean, lithe, six-foot frame and composed, surefooted style are difficult to miss. He was cast in the peasant pas de deux for CTCB's production of "Giselle" earlier this year and took the role of Robin in "Raymonda". Now, he'll perform the wonderful solo for Porter's lover, Vaslav Nijinsky, in "Night and Day" and appear in various group numbers. Jesse says one of his favourite pieces is "Just One of Those Things", as it plays to his strong points - turns and musicality. "Musicality is important to me. And the rapport you have as a dancer with the audience; how you make them feel..."

Pleased to be offered more roles, due to the opportunities presented by a smaller company like CTCB, Jesse says his

largely Cecchetti training gives him an edge. "The Cecchetti syllabus offers a lot that others don't. I feel it makes you a lot stronger, if you work strictly to it - technically, musically, movement-wise and in terms of upper body strength."

Jesse, who turns 20 on 29 October, achieved a distinction on his Enrico Cecchetti Diploma and has won several awards and scholarships. He is also a pianist and enjoys horse riding and scuba diving. Jesse was quite sporty at school, participating in football, rugby and cricket but, with his parents encouraging him to start ballet when he was four years old, he was "always more of a dancer".

"At the age of 12, my parents sent me to boarding school where I was able to study dance full-time. I did ballet, tap and jazz, and took acting and singing classes, until I reached the age when I decided that I could do this as a career. What swayed me was having the chance to work with the English National Ballet in productions of Swan Lake and Cinderella when I was nine years old."

*Ticket prices for Night and Day range from R100 to R250 and booking is through Computicket or Artscape Dial-a-Seat on 021 421 7695. Shows are at 8.15pm on Friday and Saturday October 26-27 and November 2-3; with 2.30pm matinees on each Saturday Seasons of Coppélia and The Nutcracker complete the year for CTCB so watch the press for details.*

## ABOUT DEBBIE HATHWAY

Debbie Hathway is an award-winning writer, with a special interest in luxury lifestyle (watches, jewellery, travel, property investment) and the arts.  
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