

Larissa Ponomarenko is a former principal dancer of Boston Ballet, who joined the company in 1993 and had been it's leading ballerina for 18 years. Her vast and incredibly versatile repertoire , ranging from classical and neoclassical productions to modern and contemporary works, included principal, title and lead roles in ballets by M.Petipa, A.Bournonville, J.Cranko, F.Ashton, K.MacMillan, G.Balanchine, A.Tudor, P.Taylor, J.Kudelka, B.Stevenson, S.Welsch, V.Caniparolli. As well as J.Kyllian, N.Duato, Twyla Tharp, M.Morris, L.Monte, M.Corder, B.Wells, M.Pink, L.Berdo .

Larissa originated roles in works by C.Wheeldon, H.Pickett, S.Baynes, D.Pelzig, V. Plotnikov, and became a muse for a Boston Ballet resident choreographer Yorma Elo, creating roles that involved speaking and singing on stage.

She was born in Odessa, Ukraine. She started ballet training in her home city under Vladimir Issaev, who dramatically changed her life by writing a letter of recommendation on Larissa's behalf and advising her to audition for Vaganova Ballet Academy in Saint Petersburg, Russia. After being accepted, Larissa spent 8 years living and studying ballet in Saint Petersburg, receiving a top training from highly distinguished teachers such as: N. Kurgapkina, T.Borovikova, I.Gensler, O.Sokolov, L.Komisarova, K. Sergeev, N.Serebrennikov, N.Dudinskaya, M.Daukaev, N.Yanani, T. Shmyrova, V.Korneev. For the duration of 8 years as a student, Larissa performed on the stage of Mariinsky Theatre (then Kirov ), as she was regularly used in all Kirov Ballet classical productions that involved children. Among many, she was chosen to represent the school, performing in the cities like Moscow, Paris, Amsterdam, Dresden.

In 1989 Larissa graduated under legendary N.Kurgapkina and for her graduation performance was honored to dance the pas de deux from Giselle with Kirov ballet principal dancer and star Marat Doukaev.

Larissa's first company was Donetsk Ballet in Ukraine, where she performed her first Giselle as a lead with Vadim Pisarev as her partner, also where she met her future husband Viktor Plotnikov.

Prior to joining Boston Ballet, Larissa and Viktor worked for Mississippi Ballet and Tulsa Ballet .

As a dancer, Larissa appeared in numerous international Gala Performances and Festivals, including Dance For Life in Toronto, 100th anniversary of Ballet Russes in New Orleans. Teatro Comunale of Florence Italy, English National Ballet of London, NBA Ballet Company of Tokyo, Opera Theatre of Rome.

In 2011 Larissa retired from dancing and joined Boston Ballet' artistic staff team and now continues to serve the company as ballet master and coach. Her first staging of the full length ballet Giselle was recently performed by the company in September 2019 to a great acclaim and exciting reviews.

Besides Boston Ballet, Larissa's coaching career as a guest Master Teacher presented her an opportunity to travel and teach for institutions like Washington Ballet, Harvard University, Yale University. Larissa had been a part of International Masterclass Workshops in Prague, Czech Republic, Essen and Dresden, Germany and Palermo, Italy . Larissa taught at Summer Intensive Courses for Schools including SLK Ballet San Francisco Ballet, Boston Ballet, CPYB, Atlanta Ballet, Kansas Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet, Colorado Ballet, First State Ballet Wilmington DE, Festival Ballet Providence School and Southland Ballet in California.