

FROM: **AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE**
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ANNA ANNI

Born not far from Florence in 1926, Anna Anni attended the prestigious Istituto d'Arte di Firenze and started out as a painter of murals. In the early 1950s she turned to the theatre, becoming costume assistant to Franco Zeffirelli, the latter then emerging on the international scene as a designer and director for opera and theatre.

Anni collaborated on the celebrated production of Rossini's *Cenerentola* during the 1952-53 season at La Scala, designed and directed by Zeffirelli. She stayed on as Zeffirelli's assistant for the next six years, working principally at La Scala and Venice's Teatro La Fenice on a variety of productions.

In 1959 she made her solo debut as a costume designer in the highly successful Fenice production of Handel's *Alcina* sung by Joan Sutherland. This led to many other operatic assignments, generally in collaboration with directors Mauro Bolognini or Sandro Sequi.

For Sequi, in fact, she designed costumes for productions of Donizetti's *The Daughter of the Regiment* (Covent Garden), Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* (Amsterdam), and Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (at the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon).

Anni returned to Zeffirelli to collaborate on the stage production of *La Lupa*, starring Anna Magnani, which subsequently traveled to London and New York. Again with Zeffirelli, she designed costumes for *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* at La Scala, the ballet *Swan Lake* at La Scala, the film version of *Otello* starring Placido Domingo, *Turandot* (1987 at the Metropolitan Opera) directed by Franco Zeffirelli, and Rudolf Nureyev's *Don Quixote* (1987 at La Scala).

When she wasn't engaged in an international production that took her far from home, Anni lived in her native Florence where she taught fashion design. Anni died in Florence on January 1, 2011.