

# The International Championships 2011

*Anna Mikhed Reports .....*



*photo by Andrew Miller*

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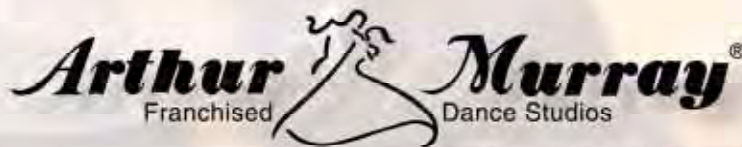
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# The International Championships 2011

Report by Anna Mikhed  
www.annamikhed.com

Photos by Andrew Miller  
www.dancefotoman.co.uk

Thursday October 13, 2011.. 5pm... I am walking up the stairs approaching the beautiful, majestic circular building in the center of London where I came every October for 8 consecutive years, The Royal Albert Hall in London. I enter the Door 1... and here I am heading towards the downstairs changing rooms... But wait!.. This year is different... I am here to spectate and admire the beautiful dancing... I just had two full days of sightseeing and exciting memories of Westminster Abbey, Tower of London and National Gallery... And now, I am here at the magnificent Royal Albert Hall to witness one of the biggest Ballroom Dance events in the world. This time, I get to go upstairs into the nice red velvet loggia... What a different feeling from being a competitor! I am looking forward to this new and exciting experience...

Here it is: the ballroom of the Royal Albert Hall... The floor is lit up, beautiful ladies and gentlemen in fancy gowns and tuxedos are taking their seats in the honorable chairs around the floor (those are the judges), orchestra seats are awaiting to be occupied by the musicians of Ross Mitchell's Dance and Listen Orchestra. The feeling of glamour and sophistication is in the air and surrounds everyone who enters this place...

5.45pm the announcement sounds and the Ball begins!

Couples from all over the world have come to attend this year's International Championships. The competitors in each category danced the qualifying rounds in Brentwood on the earlier days. They competed for the right to dance at the Royal Albert Hall and only the top 48 couples from each division will come back to perform here tonight..

The International Ballroom Amateur competitors started the evening with Waltz.

***"I am here at the magnificent Royal Albert Hall to witness one of the biggest Ballroom Dance events in the world."***



I usually look forward to watching amateur divisions, as they, in my opinion, represent the future of our dancing. The general impression I got watching the first round in this category was stiffness of ladies shoulder line and rushing on the man's part. As rounds went on it became less obvious but remained a common distinctive feature of this category on the night.

Two main candidates for the first place tonight stood out from the crowd immediately: Emanuel Valeri/Tania Kehlet from Denmark and Simone Segatori/Annette Sudol representing Germany. From the very beginning those two couples took the battle for the title into their hands. They were both focused, determined and absolutely clear in their intension to win. They clearly knew their strength and showed it off throughout the competition. Simone and Annette had such a purity, simplicity and sophistication in each move... Their dancing, their attitude and their grooming

tonight, - everything was portraying "CLASS". They were cool, calm, smooth and precise yet dynamic... they reminded me of what real ballroom dancing is and how easy and effortless it should look. Absolutely beautiful! Emanuel and Tania: strong, intricate, precise, passionate and intense yet soft when needed... They danced their hearts out and definitely won the hearts of the audience. In my opinion it was an extremely close battle and a beautiful rivalry between the two different styles... It came to the judges' preferences to determine the winner... Emanuel and Tania took the trophy! Congratulations!

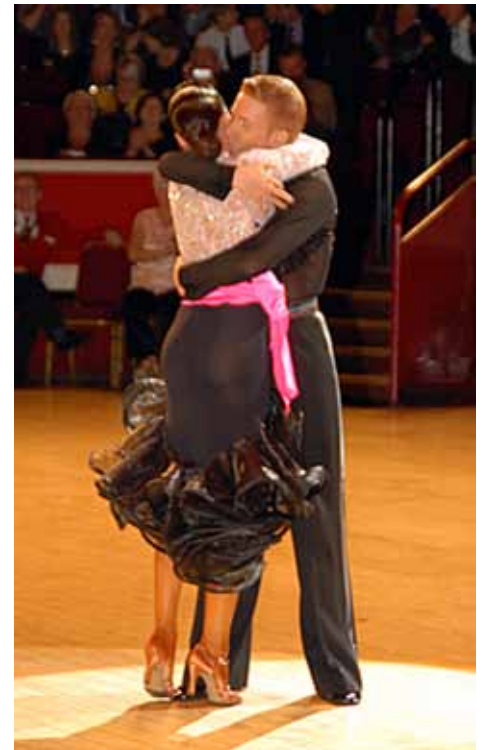
The third place went to couple from Poland Marek Kosaty and Paulina Glazik who danced well tonight and were excited to get this high, well-deserved placing. Fourth was a couple from China, Yang Chao and Tan Yi Ling, 5th - another duet from Poland Andrew Sadecki and Karina Nawrot, and 6th - Salvatore Todaro and Violeta Yaneva representing Bulgaria.

International Amateur Latin division. 1. Neil



Jones and Ekaterina Sokolova (England), 2. Martino Zanibellato and Michelle Abildtrup (Denmark), 3. Troels Bager and Ina Jeliaskova (Denmark), 4. Mirco Risi and Maria Ermatchkova (Italy), 5. Ferdinando Iannaccone and Yulia Musikhina (Italy), 6. Kirill Belorukov and Elvira Skrylnikova (Russia).

The leader in this division “sparkled” from the very first dance. Neil and Ekaterina had great control of their own bodies and choreography as well as over the audience and other competitors. The aura around these two was so strong that my eyes kept coming back to them throughout the dances. Clearness of every line and attention to detail was outstanding! Ekaterina’s dress for the earlier rounds was perfect!



## *Ballroom Photos this page:*

*Clockwise from top.*

*Emanuel Valeri & Tania Kehlet: Simone Segatore & Annette Sudol; Yang Chao & Tan Yi Lin; Andrew Sadecki Karina Nawrot; Savaltore Todaro & Violetta Yaneva: Marek Kosaty & Paulina Glazik.*

*Photo above: Neil Jones & Ekaterina Sokolova*

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1st



2nd



3rd

*Photos this page from the International Amateur Latin Championships*



6th



5th



4th

In general I have to say this category was the most exciting to watch of all the first rounds. Let me start by saying: GO USA!! 5 couples in

Couples danced to their maximum. They offered many different interpretations of the dancing and costumes. And this is always exciting. In the Final two more couples stood out for me: Martino and Michelle had put up a great fight for the first place and were obviously disappointed with the result... As well as Kirill and Elvira from Russia (who I thought should have been placed much higher). They are a very talented and promising couple, and the man is absolutely amazing to watch.

The Professional Ballroom division. 1. Arunas Bizokas and Katusha Demidova (USA), 2. Mirko Gozzoli and Edita Daniute (Italy), 3. Victor Fung and Anastasia Muravyeva (USA), 4. Andrea Ghigiarelli and Sara Andracchio (England), 5. Domen Krapez and Monica Nigro (Slovenia), 6. Valerio Colantoni and Yulia Spesivtseva (Russia).

*Bizokas/Demidova*

the Semi Final!! We definitely dominated that one! Mikhail Avdeev and Olga Blinova, Marat Gimaev and Alina Basyuk, Andrea Faraci and Iveta Pauryte as well as of course continuing into the Grand Final Arunas Bizokas and Katusha Demidova, and Victor Fung and Anastasia Muravyeva. Well done guys!

From the first round and through the announcement of the results I was convinced that tonight USA would be taking home Gold and Silver Medals. It did not happen, to my disappointment... but I am sure many people felt this way. Arunas and Katusha danced very well: confident, light, free, with an unbelievable ease of motion! They had absolutely no competition from their often times rivals Mirko Gozzoli and Edita Daniute who tonight did not touch me with their dancing. I had always considered Mirko one of the best competitors in ballroom dance history and have a great respect for him as a dancer, but tonight I was very much disappointed with his performance. Victor and Anastasia on the other hand looked very strong, focused and stayed consistent throughout all the rounds. They produced some of the best dancing I had ever seen from them particularly im-



Cocci/Yulia Zagoroujchenko representing the USA and Michael Malitowsky/Joanna Leunis representing England this time had many of us spectators in suspense. Riccardo and Yulia were on to-

night and dominated the competition from the first round. Dynamic and perfect in everything they do, very together, with their new exciting choreography they offered a wide range of merits for the audience to admire and for the judges to choose from. Towards the semifinal and particularly in the last round Michael and Joanna stepped up. They finally gifted the audience with what they do so well and what we all expect from them: their soul, genuine pleasure of dancing together and their musicality.. of course on top of immaculate execution of the details. Now the race got tighter. Either of the two couples deserved the trophy. It was only up to the judges' taste to decide the fate of the first place. Michael and Joanna won. Congratulations guys! The other placements in the final

pressing me with their Tango. Towards the very end of the competition, when Mirko and Edita finally decided to come out of their "cruising" mode and put up a fight, there was a hint of their former dynamics and power visible in Tango... but for me... it was too little too late. Victor and Anastasia had made their statement!

Overall it was a very strong final. Domen and Monica from Slovenia deservingly managed to keep their position in it. Two other finalists from the UK and Blackpool Championships this year Sascha and Natasha Karabey from Germany and Warren and Kristi Boyce from England had to give up their places as two new exciting finalists came into the picture: Valerio Colantoni/Julia Spesivtseva and Andrea Ghigiarelli/Sara Andracchio. I shall be looking forward to the next year's UK Championships to see how those couples evolve in their dancing and establish themselves in the Grand Final!

Also I would like to mention a new partnership representing America at this competition: Wiktor Kiszka and Agnieszka Kazmierczak. They had only been dancing together for a few months and immediately made the Quarter Final at this prestigious championship. They look wonderful and very comfortable dancing with each other which is always a good sign for a new partnership. I am convinced we will see some great dancing from this couple in the future and want to congratulate the USA Professional division on acquiring another great representative!



*Malitowski/Leunis*



*Cocchi/Zagoruychenko*

were as follows: 3. Sergey Surkov and Melia (Russia), 4. Andrej Skufca and Melinda (Slovenia), 5. Maurizio Vescovo and Andra Vaidilaite (Canada), 6. Stefano Di Filippo and Olga Urumova (Italy).

Amazing final that left the audience standing and clapping long after the last dance was over!! Everybody gave their best and we felt it. Another couple that had every right to be in the final but unfortunately did not make it: Justinas Duknauskas and Anna Melnikova-Duknauske. They captivated me with their pure enjoyment of dancing with each other. They did not push, they did not stress out.. they just danced.. It was precious. And Anna is an epitome of Femininity... Absolutely beautiful!

Another delightful event in the Ballroom Dance history, the 59th International Championships is over. It was a definite success and I am grateful I got to be in the audience and witness it!

## Winners from Brentwood



*Vezelis/Chatkeviciute - RS Ballroom*



*Surkov/Melia*



*Vescovo/Vaidilaite*



*Lukawczyk/Klein - Senior Ballroom*



*Skufca/Melinda*



*DiFillipo/Uromova*



*Novikov/Blinova - RS Latin*

# DTV German Championship Standard in Nuremberg



## *Benedetto Ferruggia & Claudia Koehler Reign Supreme and Win the Title*

*Report and photos by  
Helmut Roland*

[www.sportevent-photography.de](http://www.sportevent-photography.de)

The German Dancesport Federation (DTV) had invited all to “Meistersinger Halle” in Nuremberg to find the German Champion in the standard section on November 5th 2011.

Only seven days ago we saw the world championship standard in Moscow. This had not been a lucky day for Benedetto & Claudia. We saw a hard fight between the German couple, who had been World Champions in standard twice, and challenger Emanuel Valeri & Tania Kehlet from Denmark. There, Emanuel & Tania won the title.

So everyone was curious to see how Benedetto & Claudia would face down this debacle. The audience lived to see a couple that could demonstrate the absolute intention to win and their performance was outstanding without doubt. Benedetto & Claudia won the German championship standard with all forty-five 1st places the nine adjudicators had to give. I think, this was a very important signal for the couple to continue their successful career. I heard the commentary of some adjudicators after the competition. The tenor was: if Benedetto & Claudia would have performed in Moscow as they did in Nuremberg, Emanuel & Tania would not have had a chance to win.

We are looking forward to the next competition when Benedetto & Claudia will meet Emanuel & Tania at the floor. The next opportunity will be the Grand Slam Standard Final in Salou /Spain on December 3rd.

*1st*



By the way, it is not easy to become the German Champion in the standard section today. The most powerful competitors were Simone Segatori & Annette Sudol, who had become world champions in freestyle standard section in September 2011. And again they achieved 3rd place at the world championship standard in Moscow one week before. With forty-five 2nd places in five dances from five adjudicators there was no doubt about the result.

3rd place was won by Valentin Lusin & Renata Busheeva. We know the couple as German champions in 10-Dance in 2009 and 2010. Now they have achieved 3rd place in all five dances in the standard section. Last year they were set on 4th place behind Anton Skuratov & Alena Uehlin. We understand this was some revenge for losing the title of German Champions in 10-Dance to Anton & Alena this year.

Anton Skuratov & Alena Uehlin achieved 4th place in all dances at the German Championship Standard this year. The couple gave proof of their potential gaining 3rd place at WDSF International Open Standard in Shanghai one week later. The day before, the couple had started at the world championship 10-Dance in Shanghai and achieved 9th place.

Paul Lorenz & Ekaterina Leonova attained 5th place in all dances this year. Last year the couple had been set in 6th place just behind Steffen Zoglauer & Sandra Koperski. This year, Steffen Zoglauer & Sandra Koperski swapped the 6th place of last year to a 5th place ahead of Paul & Ekaterina.

The event was excellently hosted by TSC Rot-Gold-Casino Nuremberg, who acclaimed their

50th anniversary with this event. Chairman Michael Eichert, Sport Director of DTV, and speaker Heidi Estler, Vice President of DTV,

cared for a smooth course of the championship. DTV President Franz Allert congratulated the finalists and thanked all participants.



*See more pictures of the event at [www.sportevent-photography.de](http://www.sportevent-photography.de)*



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# Continued Coverage of the WDC AL Swiss Open

## Swiss Open Dance Festival Regensdorf 2011 – Under 21 Latin

*Report by Timothy Palmer*

*Photos by Andrew Miller [www.dancefotoman.co.uk](http://www.dancefotoman.co.uk)*

There are, as many organizers have discovered, great practical advantages to staging a dance festival actually inside a large and well-appointed modern hotel. Such are, and the spacious and well-appointed Regensdorf Movenpick where our festival was staged is no exception, self-contained communities with all the facilities on site which competitors, spectators, judges and coaches are likely to require, from hairdressing to internet access; and, who needs taxis, maps or wheeled bags when over-night accommodation is situated just yards from the competition floor? Hoteliers, of course, are universally welcoming, because they know that we are a community who can attend in large numbers, enchant fellow guests with our good manners and virtuosity and quite literally 'have a ball' with no negative impact whatever on the premises or general good order of the locality. In a world where such is sadly not universally the case, our youth at least are delightful beyond words: being beautiful, socially literate and totally focused. The warm welcome received at the beautifully appointed Movenpick for those attending the 2011 Swiss Open bore out this model of mutual advantage completely and the facilities left nothing wanting. Needless to say, our competitors once again made us proud of our art. We had reached the stage of the WDC Amateur League Swiss Open organized by Philip Banyer where it was time for some of these young folk to show their prowess in the Latin mode. We were not disappointed, as this section of the 'Swiss Open' again attracted some competitors of great ability who presented high-quality performances for the assessment of judges Jerry Abrate (Italy), Rene Barsi (France), Svyatoslav Vlokh (Ukraine), Alison Fulham (England), Lorna Lee (England), Yuriy Prochko (Ukraine) and Sergey Ryupin (Russia). A further test of the judges' powers of assessment was posed by the Open Amateur Latin event which followed.



### Swiss Open Youth U21 Latin

Final:

1: Jonas Kazlauskas & Jasmine Chan (Lithuania). Jonas and Jasmine, whose dress was in black encrusted with rhinestones, were placed first in all five dances. In fact, out of a total of thirty-five possible place marks, they received only three marks below first across all judges in this final, the three odd ones out all being seconds. This speaks for itself and it might perhaps therefore be deemed superfluous to comment that their dancing was superb. At his youthful years, Jonas is already a master showman and Jasmine is the perfect foil for that burgeoning talent. It is interesting to speculate what successes the coming ten years might bring this exceptional couple! High points came with some spectacular leaps in paso doble and a jive where Jonas's performed some startling drop-splits which made my eyes water!



2: Mattia Zini & Arantxa Zorzetto (Italy). Placed third in samba and second in all other dances, Mattia and Arantxa were firm runners-up, being recipients of two of the three missing firsts. Arantxa appeared in turquoise with gold trim for this final, where she and Mattia

showed immaculate poise to complement their lovely personalities on the floor. Mattia presented his lady well throughout but nowhere better than in a paso doble of color and atmosphere.

3: Nazariy Kosyuk & Yuliya Polygach (Ukraine). Nazariy and Yuliya, who wore pink in this contest, were second in samba and third in all other dances, receiving also the last of the missing first place marks from a judge in jive. They were clear third in this contest, but I thought nonetheless that their cha cha cha lacked, well...cha cha chas! Too many alternatives to the action which gave this dance its name marred their performance of it a little, in my view. I liked their rumba action though and particularly noted fine use of the arms in this dance.

4: Benjamin Hadorn & Livia Baumann (Switzerland). Benjamin and Livia were sixth in samba but fourth in all other dances. Pale orange was Livia's choice of dress for this competition. Cuban action and shape are developing in rumba and cha cha cha, and their jive was enthusi-



astic showing much personality in performance.

5: Weza Bombo & Fedrica Emulo (Switzerland). Weza and Fedrica came sixth in cha cha cha and fifth in all other dances. Fedrica looked cool in pale primrose on this warm Swiss summer's day. There was some good rhythmic interpretation in samba, if a general looseness in shape and body tone.

6: Fabio Del Giudice & Lara Canoci (Switzerland). Fourth in samba, fifth in cha cha cha and sixth in the remaining dances, Fabio and Lara acquitted themselves well in this final, Lara wearing white and pink for this performance. A nice feel for timing was apparent throughout.

7: Alessio Ciarmoli & Fabiola Kuhn (Switzerland). Alessio and Fabiola -fabulous indeed in a dress of black overlaid with silver spider's web - were seventh in all dances. Work to develop and strengthen basic action in the Cuban dances would be particularly worthwhile.

## Swiss Open Amateur Latin

Final:

1: Massimo Arcolin & Liobov Mustuck (Italy). Massimo and Liobov were placed first in all five dances, Liobov wearing black with silver trim for this final. Well-matched shaping and clever use of timing stood out in samba, whilst strong empathy between the partners brought out the character of their rumba.

2: Stefano Moriondo & Katia Krut (Italy). All the second places went to Stefano and Katia, who appeared in a white fringe dress with silver trim for this contest. Playful presentation enhanced a very rhythmic samba.

3: Jakub Mazuch & Michaela Gatekova (Czech Republic). Jakub and Mi-



chaela were third in samba and rumba, tied for third place in cha cha cha and were fourth in paso doble and jive. Michaela was strikingly dressed in a dress of purple tassels with red and silver trim on the bodice on this occasion. There was a very vivacious performance from this lady in the Brazilian dance particularly and a clever jive routine included some fast and complex leg actions from Jakub in particular.

4: Cyril Passerat & Lucie Jeanne (France). Cyril and Lucie achieved third placings in paso doble and jive, but were placed fifth in the remaining dances. Lucie wore leopard-skin and blue for this stage of the competition. A high-kicking jive was the most impressive dance in their repertoire, despite the downturn in placing.

5: Jonas Kazlauskas & Jasmine Chan (Lithuania). Jonas and Jasmine tied for third place in cha cha cha, were fourth in samba and rumba and fifth in the remainder of the dances. Jasmine favoured pale apricot with blue motifs for this



event where a cool and slick samba routine impressed most.

6: Yuri Rezepin & Veronika Rezepina (Italy). Yuri and Veronika were sixth in all dances, though they did pick up some individual marks as high as third. Veronika wore a dress in black with white tassels. A samba including some fast spins and a sequence of 'lady behind man' shadow reverse rolls followed by a lively jive were amongst their best moments tonight.

Semi-Final:

Artem Klimenov & Giulia Nuzio (Italy). Giulia appeared in black and white tonight. Their Latin action has developed since I last saw them. Hendrik Benninger & Eva Svobodova (Switzerland). Eva wore an interesting style of dress with magenta bands shading down to white. Good interplay in the partnership brought out the character of their rumba, though paso doble looked a little uncoordinated.

Taras Kamas & Yuliya Pokidko (Ukraine). Yuliya wore a pink two-piece at this stage of the competition. Good shaping and nice use of the hands was a feature of their performance tonight. Mattia Zini & Arantxa Zorzetto (Italy). Arantxa had a dress in turquoise and gold, which was most impressive. Clever use of delayed timing brought contrast to their rumba, though I thought their paso doble presentation a little too cheerful for the nature of the dance. Vincent Villat & Camelia Motataianu (France). Camelia wore black with a blue hem. Natural pivots in samba compromised Vincent's shoulder-line a little, but there was some good definition of the varying rhythms in this dance. Andre Boss & Ersilia Rotondaro (Switzerland). Ersilia wore black with a gold bodice. Well-matched arms and shaping gave class to their rumba. Daniel Raddi & Nadia Galli (Italy). Nadia wore black with a silver belt. Though, unfortunately, their jive broke down at one stage in this semi-final, they showed some generally well-rehearsed material overall.



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