



ROYAL  
OPERA  
HOUSE

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**ROYAL OPERA HOUSE ANNOUNCES THREE ROH  
LINKS ORGANISATIONS**

Following a thorough search process in collaboration with Arts Council England the Royal Opera House is delighted to announce that it will be partnering with three companies as part of the first year of the ROH Links scheme. The companies are Huddersfield's **Balbir Singh Dance Company**; **The Opera Group**, based in Windsor; and **Pavilion Dance South West** located in Bournemouth and operating across the South West of England.

ROH Links is one part of a broader scheme entitled ROH Connections which is offered by the Royal Opera House to arts organisations to support them by sharing knowledge, experience and skills. The other key element of the scheme is the ROH Board Bank.

**Tony Hall**, Chief Executive of the Royal Opera House, said:

“I am delighted to be entering into this new relationship with three very different organisations. We firmly believe that the Royal Opera House is a resource for the nation. Our knowledge and experience is already widely shared; advising and supporting organisations such as **Ballet Black**, and playing a leading role in initiatives such as the establishment of a **National Skills Academy for Creative and Cultural Skills** and the **Creative Jobs Programme**. With this new programme we hope we will be of real value to our new partners, and I know that we will also learn a lot from our time with them.”

**Joyce Wilson, Director of Combined Arts and Capital, Arts Council England** added,

“The Arts Council is pleased to support this new initiative from the Royal Opera House. During the first round of recruitment it was very clear that these partnerships will enable a real exchange of ideas and working practices that will benefit all of the organisations involved. We look forward to seeing the outcomes.”

**Balbir Singh, Artistic Director of Balbir Singh Dance Company**, said,  
“I am delighted to be working with the Royal Opera House on ROH Links. This exciting opportunity comes at a time when my work is gaining increased national and international recognition, with an intense period of diverse and challenging artistic activity planned for the next three years. As an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, the support provided by ROH will be of great benefit to BSDC's development, and we look forward to a fruitful collaboration on this scheme.”

**Frederic Wake-Walker, Artistic Director of The Opera Group**, said,  
“I'm really looking forward to working with the Royal Opera House at such an exciting time for our two companies and believe this will be a rewarding relationship for both of us. For The Opera Group - as a young team and a small company - it will be great to have this access to so much experience and expertise.”

**Deryck Newland, Artistic Director of Pavilion Dance South West**, added,

“This special opportunity comes at just the right moment for Pavilion Dance South West as we redefine our identity, grow our capacity and build our programme both on the south coast in Bournemouth and across the South West of England. Our unique regional role will enable us to pass on our learning and the other benefits we reap from this exciting relationship to our partners across the region.”

The Royal Opera House currently shares skills and best practice with other organisations through our Associate programmes, and through participation in industry bodies and arts consortia. This programme aims to build on the relationships we already hold with performing arts organisations, and will allow us to work with some Arts Council National portfolio organisations to build their sustainability and impact by sharing our expertise in a variety of disciplines.

ROH Connections consists of two main elements:

### **ROH Links**

We will connect small and medium-sized opera, dance and/or ballet organisations with expertise within the Royal Opera House over a one- or two-year period. This expertise will be based around arts management and/or technical areas, and will allow us to share more widely and formally the skills of our people so that we as an organisation can affect positive change.

### **ROH Board Bank**

The Board Bank is a database of Royal Opera House staff, from all departments and levels across the organisation, who have expressed willingness to act as a Board member, or a member of an advisory committee, for an arts or heritage organisation. This scheme is open to all arts organisations who are looking to grow the expertise of their Board, and who might value the input of a Royal Opera House member of staff.

-ENDS-

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **Balbir Singh Dance Company**

Its mission is to produce high quality, dynamic performance and education work through a synthesis of classical Indian Kathak, live music and contemporary dance styles. It creates and presents the work of Balbir Singh through choreography, creative commissions and collaborations, traditional solo performance and education and professional development work.

### **The Opera Group**

The Opera Group, based in central London, specialises in new opera commissions and contemporary works. It tours to mid-scale theatres and festivals across the UK and internationally, tailoring its projects to a variety of locations and contexts. It is developing its own distinctive approach to creating, rehearsing and producing opera - drawing on partnerships within the arts and beyond to explore new techniques and possibilities, and is passionate about reaching new audiences.

### **Pavilion Dance South West**

Pavilion Dance South West is Bournemouth's national dance centre supporting dance across the south west. Pavilion Dance South West aims to champion dance, be a regional hub for specialist dance services, expertise and opportunities, and offer a programme of local participation and engagement, which acts as a model of best practice regionally and nationally.

## **PRESS OFFICE CONTACTS**

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