



ROYAL
BALLET

JULY 2014

Promotions, joiners and leavers at The Royal Ballet

Kevin O'Hare, Director of The Royal Ballet, has made the following promotions for the forthcoming 2014/15 Season.

Akane Takada and **Valentino Zucchetti** have been promoted to First Soloists. **Francesca Hayward**, **Yasmine Naghdi**, **Tristan Dyer** and **Fernando Montaña** are promoted to Soloists, along with **Jacqueline Clark**, **Elsa Godard**, **Gemma Pitchley-Gale**, **Luca Acri**, **Nicol Edmonds**, **Kevin Emerton** and **Marcelino Sambé**, who are promoted to First Artists.

Joining the Company at the start of the Season will be **Calvin Richardson** from The Royal Ballet School in addition to Royal Ballet School Alumni **Mariko Sasaki** from Birmingham Royal Ballet and **Hannah Grennell** from Dutch National Ballet. All join as Artists. **Gina Storm-Jensen** and **Reece Clarke** joined the Company as Artists earlier in the Season and are both graduates of The Royal Ballet School. **Isabella Gasparini**, previously with Northern Ballet, has been working with the Company as an Artist since January and now joins permanently.

The Royal Ballet welcomes five dancers to the Company for the 2014/15 Season as part of the new **Aud Jebsen Young Dancers Programme**. The programme provides an opportunity for up to six recently graduated dancers to receive a year's contract to work alongside the corps de ballet of The Royal Ballet. In addition the dancers will be offered mentoring and coaching and have the opportunity to perform with the Company. This year's Aud Jebsen Young Dancers are **Grace Blundell** and **Grace Horler**, both from The

Royal Ballet School, **Ashley Scott** and **Ashleigh McKimmie** from English National Ballet School and **Maria Barroso** from Semperoper Ballet, Dresden.

David Navarro Yudes joins the Company as a **Prix de Lausanne Dancer** for the 2014/15 Season.

Soloist **Iohna Loots** left the Company mid-season, and Soloist **Kenta Kura** retires from the Company after 17 years to take up a new appointment as Boys' Artistic Teacher at White Lodge, the Royal Ballet Junior School. Kenta is a graduate of The Royal Ballet School's Professional Dancer's Teachers Course (PDTC).

First Artist **Sabina Westcombe** and Artists **Ruth Bailey** and **Claudia Dean** also leave the Company.

First Artist **Leanne Cope** will take a sabbatical for the 2014/15 Season to play the part of *Lise Dassin* in *An American in Paris*, directed and choreographed by **Christopher Wheeldon**, Artistic Associate of The Royal Ballet. *An American in Paris* receives its world premiere in December at the Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris and transfers to Broadway in spring 2015.

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