



ROYAL  
BALLET

PRESS RELEASE

## **BALLET WORLD PREMIERE: WOOLF WORKS**

**BY WAYNE MCGREGOR**

MONDAY 11 MAY – TUESDAY 26 MAY

*Woolf Works* is **Wayne McGregor**'s first full-length work for The Royal Ballet and is presented as a series of multi-sensory collages inspired by three of **Virginia Woolf**'s landmark novels; *Mrs Dalloway*, *Orlando* and *The Waves*, as well as a selection of her autobiographical writings.

Wayne McGregor is renowned for his ground-breaking choreography and collaborations and this new ballet reflects Woolf's modernist rejection of neatly ordered narrative, in favour of heightened, startling and poignant perspectives. Working with dramaturg **Uzma Hameed**, McGregor presents *Woolf Works* as a three act ballet; *I Now, I Then*, *Becoming's* and *Tuesday*, each act enmeshing themes from Woolf's novels with aspects of her famously eventful life. Former Royal Ballet Principal dancer **Alessandra Ferri** returns to the company to dance the roles of Mrs Dalloway and Virginia Woolf. Casting also includes Royal Ballet Principals; **Sarah Lamb**, **Natalia Osipova**, **Federico Bonelli**, **Steven McRae** and **Edward Watson**.

*Woolf Works* features a rare audio recording of Virginia Woolf taken from 1937 and Actress **Gillian Anderson** has also recorded Woolf's haunting suicide note for the final act. Set to a new score by acclaimed British composer **Max Richter** *Woolf Works* features lighting designs by **Lucy Carter**, film design by **Ravi Deepres**, costumes by **Moritz Junge** and make up design by **Kabuki**.

Wayne McGregor is Resident Choreographer of The Royal Ballet, *Woolf Works* is his twelfth work for the Company.

Ends

Generous philanthropic support from David Hancock, Randa Khoury, Linda and Philip Harley, Victoria Robey and an anonymous donor.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

### **Woolf Works Monday 11 May – Tuesday 26 May**

Monday 11, Wednesday 13, Thursday 14, Friday 15, Wednesday 20, Thursday 21 and

Tuesday 26 May at 7.30pm

Saturday 23 May at 12pm

## **BOX OFFICE:**

0207 304 4000

[www.roh.org.uk](http://www.roh.org.uk)

Tickets £4 - £65

**The Royal Opera House, London WC2E 9DD**

## **CREATIVE TEAM:**

Concept, Choreography and Direction	<b>Wayne McGregor</b>
Music	<b>Max Richter</b>
Designs	<b>Wayne McGregor, Ciguë, We Not I</b>
Costume Design	<b>Moritz Junge</b>
Make-up Design	<b>Kabuki</b>
Lighting Design	<b>Lucy Carter</b>
Film Design	<b>Ravi Deepres</b>
Sound Design	<b>Chris Ekers</b>
Dramaturg	<b>Uzma Hameed</b>

Conducted by **Koen Kessels** with the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House

## WOOLF WORKS IS A BALLET IN THREE ACTS

Act 1 I Now, I Then

Act 2 Becoming's

Act 3 Tuesday

### CASTING

11 / 13 / 15 / 20 / 23 (mat) May      Alessandra Ferri, Sarah Lamb,  
Natalia Osipova, Melissa Hamilton, Akane Takada,  
Beatriz Stix-Brunell, Francesca Hayward,  
Federico Bonelli, Steven McRae, Edward Watson,  
Gary Avis, Tristan Dyer, Paul Kay, Eric Underwood,  
Matthew Ball

14 / 21 / 26 May      Alessandra Ferri, Itziar Mendizabal,  
Olivia Cowley, Fumi Kaneko, Yuhui Choe,  
Yasmine Naghdi, Mayara Magri, Ryoichi Hirano,  
Alexander Campbell, Nicol Edmonds,  
Fernando Montaña, Calvin Richardson, James Hay,  
David Donnelly, Benjamin Ella

### VIRGINIA WOOLF

Virginia Woolf (January 1882 – 28 March 1941) was an English writer and one of the foremost modernists of the twentieth century. Woolf was a significant figure in London's literary society and a central figure in the influential Bloomsbury Group of intellectuals. Her most famous works include the novels *Mrs Dalloway* (1925), *To The Lighthouse* (1927), *Orlando* (1928), *The Waves* (1931) and the book-length essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929). Woolf suffered from severe bouts of mental illness throughout her life, thought to have been the result of what is now termed bipolar disorder and committed suicide by drowning in 1941 at the age of 59.

26 March 2015 marks the centenary of the publication of Woolf's first novel, *The Voyage Out*.

### ALESSANDRA FERRI

Italian dancer Alessandra Ferri is a former Principal of The Royal Ballet. She trained at The Royal Ballet School and entered the Company in 1980 and was promoted to Principal in 1983 aged only 19. She left the Company in 1985 returning in 2003 to dance Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* as a Guest Artist.

Her repertory with the Company included Juliet and Mary Vetsera (*Mayerling*), and role creations in ballets including *L'Invitation au voyage*, *Valley of Shadows* and *Different Drummer*. In 1985 she joined American Ballet Theatre on the invitation of Mikhail Baryshnikov and went on to form a dance partnership with Julio Bocca. From 1990 she appeared as a Guest Artist with leading

companies around the world and joined La Scala Ballet, Milan, as a Guest Principal in 1992, remaining with American Ballet Theatre as a Guest Principal.

Ferri temporarily retired from dancing in 2007 and the following year became Director of Programming at the Spoleto Festival. She returned to dance in 2013, starring in *The Piano Upstairs*, which she also choreographed. She was made a Cavaliere della Repubblica in 2006.

## **CASTING**

Full casting to be confirmed

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