



ROYAL
BALLET

**GLOBAL FIRST: FIVE WORLD-CLASS BALLET
COMPANIES, ONE DAY OF LIVE STREAMING ON
WEDNESDAY 1 OCTOBER**

www.roh.org.uk/worldballetday

**The Australian Ballet | Bolshoi Ballet | The Royal Ballet | The
National Ballet of Canada | San Francisco Ballet**

The first ever **World Ballet Day** will see an unprecedented collaboration between five of the world's leading ballet companies. This online event will take place on Wednesday 1 October when each of the companies will stream live behind the scenes action from their rehearsal studios.

Starting at the beginning of the dancers' day, each of the five ballet companies – **The Australian Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet, The Royal Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada** and **San Francisco Ballet** – will take the lead for a four hour period streaming live from their headquarters starting with the Australian Ballet in Melbourne. The live link then passes across time zones and cultures from Melbourne to Moscow to London to Toronto to San Francisco.

The live streaming will take viewers on a journey into the rarely seen backstage lives of ballet dancers. This unusual access will throw a spot light on the differences in style between the five companies as they follow a very similar routine but approach choreography and performance in the ways that have made them unique on the world stage. Starting with morning class to warm up the body with different exercises, moving on to rehearsals for their upcoming performances the day will be

a celebration of dance; the athleticism and unparalleled dedication of all those involved in creating a world-class ballet company.

Viewers will be able to engage and interact with dancers, choreographers and coaches who live and breathe ballet every day of their working lives, asking questions throughout the day as well as having the opportunity to contribute by submitting a film of themselves doing a pirouette wherever they are in the world. These will be edited into a film celebrating the worldwide appeal of dance.

The day's streaming will be repeated on **YouTube** in full so that viewers around the world can catch up on any parts of the day they missed. Edited highlights will then be made available for further viewing.

World Ballet Day is a development from Royal Ballet Live which was a nine-hour live streaming via YouTube and The Guardian website in March 2012. This unique event achieved 200,000 views of the live stream and repeat broadcast and a total of 2.5 million views of YouTube Royal Ballet Live material to date. It is, however, the first time that four of the five ballet companies are taking the cameras backstage to reveal the sweat and determination of these talented dancers.

Full details of the unique day's activities will be available in due course.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

The Australian Ballet

Founded in 1962, The Australian Ballet is one of the world's leading performing arts companies delivering unique experiences that inspire and entertain. It has been the face of ballet in the Asia Pacific region for over 50 years. Each year it performs works from the classical repertoire as well as contemporary works by major Australian and international choreographers, and new commissions that explore the development and future of this dynamic art form.

Led by celebrated Artistic Director David McAllister AM, The Australian Ballet is one of the busiest ballet companies in the world. The company annually presents

approximately 200 performances in cities and regional areas around Australia, in addition to regular international touring to cities including Paris, Manchester, Tokyo, Shanghai, Auckland, Cardiff and a season in London for which the company won the UK Critics' Circle award for Best Foreign Dance Company. Over the years, dancers and teachers have been welcomed from China, England, France, Russia, Spain, Sweden, the USA and the USSR. And new ballet school graduates from Asian, Latin American and European backgrounds are helping to make the company look like a snapshot of contemporary Australia. It is a company attuned to its time and place in the world.

Versatility, technical excellence and a warm, friendly style are the trademarks of The Australian Ballet; qualities that have earned both critical and audience acclaim.

Bolshoi Ballet

Bolshoi Ballet is a magic word for many ballet lovers all around the world. It is the largest company in the world consisting of 220 dancers, most of who have graduated from the Moscow Academy of Classic Ballet - one of the oldest and most prominent ballet schools in Russia. The Bolshoi is renowned for its unique style which combines true virtuosity with incredible stage presence. It has an illustrious heritage with dancers such as Galina Ulanova, Vladimir Vassiliev and Maya Plisetskaya, Ekaterina Maximova and Nikolay Fadechev, Natalia Bessmertnova, Maris Liepa, Liudmila Semeniaka and Irek Mukhamedov playing a vital role in its history and position on the world stage.

For more the 30 years Yury Grigorovitch was a powerful leader of the Bolshoi ballet company. As a repertory company, each year *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Don Quixote* and *La Bayadère* are performed alongside new work, keeping a fine balance between the historic legacy and new creations. Aleksey Ratmansky has created works including *Bright stream*, *Bolt*, *Flames of Paris* and *Lost illusions*.

Under the leadership of Sergei Filin, the Bolshoi Ballet now has among its stars Svetlana Zakharova, David Hallberg, Maria Alexandrova, Semion Chudin, Olga Smirnova, Michail Lobukhin, Evgenia Obraztsova.

In its 239th Season, the Bolshoi will bring back on its historic stage *Legend of Love* with choreography of Yuri Grigorovitch as well as perform two world premieres, *Hamlet* with music by Shostakovich and choreography by Radu Poklitaru, and a new ballet based on the Lermontov novel *Hero of our time* choreographed by Yury Posokhov and directed by Kirill Serebriyanikov, with a new score commissioned from Ilya Demutski.

The Royal Ballet

Based at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, The Royal Ballet is Great Britain's most prestigious ballet company and one of the great classical ballet companies of the world. Led by Director **Kevin O'Hare**, the Company has a wide-ranging repertory that showcases the great 19th century classics alongside heritage works including those of its two great 20th century choreographers **Frederick Ashton** and **Kenneth MacMillan**. In addition, The Royal Ballet performs new works by Royal Ballet Resident Choreographer **Wayne McGregor** and Royal Ballet Artistic Associate **Christopher Wheeldon**, two of the foremost international choreographers of today. The Royal Ballet continues to create and encourage new choreography and appointed **Liam Scarlett** as Royal Ballet Artist in Residence in 2012.

The National Ballet of Canada

One of the top international ballet companies, The National Ballet of Canada was founded in 1951 by Celia Franca. A company of 70 dancers with its own orchestra, the National Ballet has been led by Artistic Director Karen Kain, one of the greatest ballerinas of her generation, since 2005. Renowned for its diverse repertoire, the

company performs traditional full-length classics, embraces contemporary work and encourages the creation of new ballets as well as the development of Canadian choreographers. The company's repertoire includes works by Sir Frederick Ashton, George Balanchine, John Cranko, Rudolf Nureyev, Glen Tetley, John Neumeier, William Forsythe, James Kudelka, Jiří Kylián, Wayne McGregor, Alexei Ratmanský, Christopher Wheeldon, Crystal Pite and Aszure Barton. The National Ballet has toured in Canada, the US and internationally with recent appearances at Sadler's Wells in London, England, The Music Center in Los Angeles and Lincoln Centre's David H. Koch Theater in New York City.

San Francisco Ballet

As America's oldest professional ballet company, San Francisco Ballet has enjoyed a long and rich tradition of artistic "firsts" since its founding in 1933, including performing the first American productions of *Swan Lake* and *Nutcracker*, as well as the first 20th-century American *Coppélia*. San Francisco Ballet is one of the three largest ballet companies in the United States. Guided in its early years by American dance pioneers and brothers Lew, Willam and Harold Christensen, San Francisco Ballet currently presents more than 100 performances annually, both locally and internationally. Under the direction of Helgi Tomasson, the Company has achieved an international reputation as one of the pre-eminent ballet companies in the world. In 2005, San Francisco Ballet won the prestigious Laurence Olivier Award in the category of "Outstanding Achievement in Dance" and in 2006, it was the first non-European company elected "Company of the Year" in *Dance Europe* magazine's annual readers' poll. In 2008, the Company marked its 75th anniversary with a host of initiatives including an ambitious New Works Festival. In 2012, SF Ballet's ambitious tour schedule included London and Washington, D.C., plus first-time visits to Hamburg, Moscow, and Sun Valley, Idaho. In October 2013, the Company performed at New York's David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center, where *The New York Times* declared SF Ballet "a national treasure." In July 2014, the Company toured to Paris as part of Les Étés de la Danse Festival, marking the 10th anniversary of its inaugural engagement with the festival. At Théâtre du Châtelet, SF Ballet presented over 20 works by 15 choreographers over a gala evening and 17 performances. 2015 marks the 30th anniversary of Helgi Tomasson's tenure as artistic director of San Francisco Ballet.

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