



ROYAL
BALLET

OCTOBER 2015

PRESS RELEASE

**THE TWO PIGEONS: FREDERICK ASHTON'S
CLASSIC BALLET RETURNS TO COVENT GARDEN
AFTER 30 YEARS**

MONOTONES I AND II / THE TWO PIGEONS

Wednesday 18 November – Saturday 5 December 2015



The Royal Ballet presents the first of two mixed programmes this Season honouring its Founding Choreographer **Frederick Ashton**, celebrating not only his vast and impressive body of work but also the distinctive English balletic style he shaped.

Monotones I and *II* are arguably Ashton's most modernist and abstract creations. Set to the gentle sounds of **Erik Satie's** *Trois Gnossiennes* and *Trois Gymnopédies*, these otherworldly *pas de trois* move through serene patterns that mirror the harmonic and rhythmic shifts of the music. This Season features role debuts in *Monotones I* from Royal Ballet First Artist **Mayara Magri** and First Soloist **James Hay**.

In sharp contrast is *The Two Pigeons* – a romantic, narrative ballet which returns to The Royal Ballet repertory for the first time since 1985. Set in Bohemian Paris at the end of the 19th Century, *The Two Pigeons* is a fable about love and lost innocence.

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Supported using public funding by
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LOTTERY FUNDED

On bringing back the work to the Company's repertory, the Royal Ballet's Director **Kevin O'Hare** says '*The Two Pigeons* is a much loved ballet by Frederick Ashton that has not been staged by The Royal Ballet for 30 years. I feel it is the right moment for a new generation of dancers to enjoy the roles within this ballet and a new generation of ballet goers to fall in love with this beautiful and poignant work.'

A young painter, disillusioned with the life he shares with his fiancée briefly finds the enchantment he has been craving when a troupe of gypsies arrive in town. After a flirtation with a gypsy woman and contemplating a new life with the group, the painter sees the error of his ways and is reunited with his forgiving fiancée. Featuring touching *pas de deux* and group dances from the gypsy troupe, *The Two Pigeons* is also fondly known for its use of two live doves on stage to represent the central couple.

The Two Pigeons was originally created on **Lynn Seymour, Christopher Gable** and **Elizabeth Anderton**, and had its premiere at the Royal Opera House on Valentine's Day 1961. It was loosely based on a French fable by **Jean de la Fontaine**, which was first adapted into a ballet with choreography by **Louis Mérante** in the 1800s. Though Ashton reworked the story almost completely from this early version, he opted to keep **André Messager's** ravishing score as the accompaniment to his work.

Four casts will make their debuts during this run of *The Two Pigeons* – please see Notes to Editors for further information.

- ENDS -

The Two Pigeons – Generous philanthropic support from the Fonteyn Circle.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Monotones I and II / The Two Pigeons

Wednesday 18 November – Saturday 5 December

18, 19, 24, 27 November, 4 December at 7.30pm

5 December at 1.30pm and 7.00pm

Tickets £4 - £100

Orchestra of the Royal Opera House conducted by Barry Wordsworth

Box Office:

0207 304 4000

MONOTONES I AND II

Choreography	Frederick Ashton
Music	Erik Satie
Designs	Frederick Ashton
Lighting Design	John B. Read

THE TWO PIGEONS

Choreography	Frederick Ashton
Music	André Messager
Arranged by	John Lanchbery
Designer	Jacques Dupont

CASTING

MONOTONES I

18 Nov / 19 Nov / 27 Nov / 5 Nov (mat) / **Emma Maguire, Yasmine Naghdi, Tristan Dyer**

5 Nov / 24 Nov / 4 Nov **Romany Pajdak, Mayara Magri*, James Hay***

MONOTONES II

18 Nov / 24 Nov / 5 Nov (mat) / 5 Nov **Marianela Nuñez, Valeri Hristov, Edward Watson**

19 Nov / 27 Nov / 4 Nov **Christina Arestis, Nehemiah Kish, Ryoichi Hirano**

THE TWO PIGEONS

18 Nov / 24 Nov

Lauren Cuthbertson*, **Vadim Muntagirov***, **Laura Morera***, **Ryoichi Hirano***

19 Nov / 27 Nov / 4 Nov

Iana Salenko*, **Steven McRae***,
Fumi Kaneko*, **Fernando Montaña***

5 Nov (mat)

Akane Takada*, **James Hay***, **Mayara Magri***, **Valentino Zucchetti***

5 Nov

Yuhui Choe*, **Alexander Campbell***,
Itziar Mendizabal*, **Tomas Mock***

***Role Debut**

Image caption: Christopher Gable as The Young Man and Lynn Seymour as The Young Girl in *The Two Pigeons*, 1961 © ROH. Photograph by Donald Southern

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