

NEWS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET

For immediate release: Monday 14 August 2017



Artists of The Australian Ballet taking class on stage in Penrith. Photo Kate Longley

The Australian Ballet returns to Western Sydney for free outdoor event Ballet Under the Stars, with a dazzling excerpt from *The Sleeping Beauty*

The Australian Ballet will return to Western Sydney for its annual outdoor community program, **Ballet Under the Stars**, presented exclusively in Penrith at the Sydney International Regatta Centre, on Saturday 4 November 2017. The free performance is proudly supported by Strategic Sponsor Destination NSW, the NSW Government's tourism and major events agency. Ballet Under the Stars is further supported by Major Partners Celestino and Penrith City Council, and will feature highlights of The Australian Ballet's repertoire selected to showcase the company's dancers and delight audiences. It will include a special excerpt from The Australian Ballet's magical and highly acclaimed production, ***The Sleeping Beauty***, which has enjoyed sell-out seasons in 2015 and 2017.

Ballet Under the Stars has become a highlight in The Australian Ballet's annual calendar following last year's sell-out program, which attracted 6,000 attendees, 66% of whom had never seen the company perform.

Commenting on the program, **Executive Director of The Australian Ballet, Libby Christie** said "Our free Ballet Under the Stars performance is an important event in our company's calendar, enabling people of all ages to experience world-class ballet, many for the first time. As Australia's national ballet company, we are committed to reaching new audiences across the country and giving them the opportunity to enjoy the transformative power of ballet."

"Ballet Under the Stars is our chance to provide this community with a high-quality arts experience and we're thrilled to return to Western Sydney with this exciting new program in 2017," Ms Christie added.

Minister for the Arts Don Harwin said the event has been secured for Western Sydney until 2018 through Destination NSW.

"Set against the stunning backdrop of Penrith Lakes, Ballet Under the Stars brings world-class ballet to Western Sydney for locals and visitors to enjoy. This is a brilliant showcase for Penrith and I encourage visitors attending this spectacular event to spend the weekend exploring the fantastic community in Western Sydney," Minister Harwin said.

An excerpt from *The Sleeping Beauty* will be a highlight of this year's event. The classic story, which has been lavishly reimaged by The Australian Ballet's **Artistic Director, David McAllister** is sure to captivate audiences with its cast of royals and courtiers, fairies and wood nymphs, bluebirds and storybook characters performing in exquisite costumes designed by internationally renowned designer Gabriela Tylesova and accompanied by Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's enchanting score.

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McAllister said: "We're delighted to return to Western Sydney to perform an excerpt from *The Sleeping Beauty*. Dancing amidst the beautiful scenery of Penrith Lakes will be an extraordinary experience for all. Our Gala program will showcase the artistry, athleticism and beauty of our dancers."

"Ballet Under the Stars is a perfect family event and this year's free performance is sure to dazzle as the sun sets over this magical natural setting," Mr McAllister added.

EVENT INFORMATION

Ballet Under the Stars is a **free** event for everyone.

Full repertoire will be announced in September 2017.

Register Early. Due to high demand and limited capacity, we recommend you register on the waitlist to be the first to secure your free tickets. Tickets required to secure entry.

PRE-REGISTRATION: australianballet.com.au

Gates open at 4:00pm for a 7:30pm performance.

Further details to follow.

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