

NEWS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET

For immediate release: Monday 18 June 2018



The Sleeping Beauty, Kevin Jackson and Benedicte Bemet. Photo Justin Ridler

The Australian Ballet's ninth China tour marks international debut of David McAllister's lavish production of *The Sleeping Beauty*

The Australian Ballet today announced that the company will tour to Beijing, Nanjing and Shanghai in October 2018. The 2018 China Tour, The Australian Ballet's ninth tour to China, marks the international debut of Artistic Director David McAllister's dazzling production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, which is sure to enchant audiences in Beijing and Shanghai, while the company will present the delightful, enduring romance of Maina Gielgud's *Giselle* to audiences in Nanjing.

Announcing the tour at Parliament House today, Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield, Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate, Minister for the Arts and Minister for Communications confirmed Federal Government's support for this important tour, which will contribute funding of \$100,000 towards tour costs.

"This tour to China once again presents opportunities to showcase The Australian Ballet's position as a great cultural ambassador for Australia, highlighting the world class skill and talent of their artists and productions and many cultural exchanges that have been initiated as a result of the company's long association with China," said Minister Fifield.

"It will be very exciting to perform our newest production, *The Sleeping Beauty*, outside Australia for the first time and in China, the country that we have toured more than anywhere else in the world. I hope our Chinese audiences enjoy the journey of fantasy and wonder this production offers, featuring the magical world of Gabriela Tylesova's designs," said Artistic Director David McAllister. "I really wanted this production to be a showcase for the wonderfully talented dancers of The Australian Ballet, I'm

sure that The Australian Ballet and our Chinese audiences will build even closer friendships as we present these performances in Beijing and Shanghai."

In addition to the support of the Australian Government and The Australian Ballet's official airline partner Qantas, this tour is also supported by Major Tour Partner Australia Post, and tour partners La Trobe University and Morgan Stanley.

Embarking on such an international tour is not a simple exercise. Speaking at the announcement in Canberra, Executive Director Libby Christie noted that the project involved a touring party of 130 people, including dancers, musicians, wardrobe, medical, technical, production and support staff, along with 9 shipping containers comprising scenery and stage props, over 1,826 costume items and 450 pairs of shoes, including 300 pointe shoes.

The Australian Ballet has a long and proud history of touring to China. In 1980 it was the first international ballet company to visit China following the Cultural Revolution. Since then, The Australian Ballet has completed eight highly acclaimed tours to China, most recently in 2015. As a result, the company has developed strong relationships with resident Chinese ballet companies, including exchange programs for dancers and those working behind-the-scenes.

The Australian Ballet continues to celebrate its position as a cultural ambassador for Australia with a high profile history of international touring that has taken the company to 37 countries and 88 cities since it was founded in 1962.

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About *The Sleeping Beauty*

Princess Aurora is doomed from infancy to fatally prick her finger on her 16th birthday. When the day arrives, she is saved from the curse of vengeful Carabosse by her champion the Lilac Fairy, who lulls the kingdom into a deep slumber. When the lonely Prince Désiré learns of Aurora's fate, he comes to her rescue with a redemptive kiss of true love. The couple celebrate their wedding and coronation in the light and bustle of the revived palace, with a glittering masked ball attended by fairies, bluebirds and familiar friends from the pages of Grimm fairy tales

CREDITS

Choreography Marius Petipa
Production and additional choreography David McAllister
Music Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Costume and set design Gabriela Tylesova
Design associate Kat Chan
Dramaturge Lucas Jervies
Original lighting design Jon Buswell

About *Giselle*

The classic story opens with a vibrant grape harvest scene in a rural village. Innocent young Giselle meets the deceptive Count Albrecht, who has disguised himself as a peasant in order to win her love. When Giselle discovers he is betrothed to another, she goes mad and dies of a broken heart. Transformed into a spirit, Giselle roams a forest haunted by the ghosts of jilted women, the Wilis, who take revenge on the men who cross their path by forcing them to dance to their deaths. A remorseful Albrecht visits Giselle's grave in the forest one night, and in the ultimate act of forgiveness and love, she dances with him until the sun rises and the evil spirits fade; she saves his life and finds peace in the after-life.

CREDITS

Choreography Marius Petipa after Jean Corelli
Production Maina Gielgud
Music Adolphe Adam
Set and costume design Peter Farmer
Original lighting design William Akers

CHINA TOUR DATES

Beijing

11 to 14 OCTOBER
NCPA Opera Theatre

Nanjing

19 to 20 OCTOBER
JSCPA Opera Hall

Shanghai

26 to 28 OCTOBER
Shanghai Theatre Grand

MORE INFORMATION

australianballet.com.au

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