

## Back by popular demand, the magic of *Swan Lake* returns when Stephen Baynes' masterful interpretation tours to Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide in 2016



Artists of The Australian Ballet in *Swan Lake* Photos by Jeff Busby

One of the most hallowed works staged by the Company, Resident choreographer Stephen Baynes *Swan Lake* was created in 2012 to mark The Australian Ballet's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This visually beautiful production embodies the Company's quest to uphold heritage while striving to find new life in classic works. It opens at **Sydney Opera House 1-20 April**, then tours to **Adelaide from 26-31 May**, and **Melbourne from 7-18 June**.

*Swan Lake* has special significance for the Company: it was the first ballet ever danced by The Australian Ballet in 1962 at her Majesty's Theatre in Sydney. Fifty years later, the new *Swan Lake* by Baynes entered the company's repertoire in 2012. His beautiful, traditional ballet is the perfect counterpoint to Graeme Murphy's modern day *Swan Lake*, which was commissioned for the Company's 40th anniversary, and which has toured across Australia and around the globe over this decade.

This is the first time since 2012 that the Company has brought back the traditional and much-loved Stephen Baynes version of *Swan Lake* to Sydney and Melbourne, and the first time since 2013 that it has been staged in Adelaide.

The revival includes significant changes to the cast. The lead role of Odette and Odile will be performed by Principal Artists Lana Jones, Amber Scott, Ako Kondo, and Leanne Stojmenov. For the first time, it will also be played by Senior Artist Natasha Kutsch.

An ageless ballet that has enchanted audiences for centuries, Baynes combines grand scale and psychological intimacy. His treatment of *Swan Lake* is a reverential reimagining, respecting the traditions and techniques of classical ballet.

The powerful work is complemented by Hugh Colman's designs, which pit Edwardian glamour against the spectral beauty of the white acts. The celebrated costume and set designer showcases his love of the classics with this heritage production. His extravagant and lavish designs further heighten the drama of the tragic love story. From the festive Edwardian costumes of the court to the spectacular ice-blue tutus of 24 swans on the moonlit lake, this production will captivate audiences of all ages.

An integral part of *Swan Lake* is Tchaikovsky's score, one of ballet's most recognisable pieces of music. Commissioned in 1875, it reportedly took the Russian composer a year to complete. From the first yearning bars, the music takes audiences to another world. With its bewitched Swan Queen, doomed Prince, and velvety rich score, *Swan Lake* is the ultimate night at the ballet for seasoned ticket holders and newcomers alike.

*Swan Lake* made its debut in Moscow in 1877 and is one of the world's most performed ballets. This is the fourth interpretation to enter The Australian Ballet's repertoire. In its various incarnations, *Swan Lake* has been danced by the company 612 times, making it the most frequently performed ballet in the Company's history.

This is the 20<sup>th</sup> work that Baynes has created for The Australian Ballet and his third full-length ballet. Baynes studied at The Australian Ballet School before joining the company in 1976. He first experimented with movement in 1986, creating *Strauss Songs*, a piece that won an Australian Ballet choreographic competition.

### For all media enquiries, including interviews and images, please contact:

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## WHAT THE CRITICS HAD TO SAY:

*"An absolute must for any ballet fan, Swan Lake will haunt you long after you have left the theatre, in the most pleasant of ways"* – Australian Stage Online

*"Sit back and let your heart melt"* – The Daily Telegraph

*"Hauntingly moving"* – The Courier Mail

*"A spectacular production of a traditional favourite"* – ArtsHub

## THE STORY

Princess Odette, transformed into a swan by the evil von Rothbart, is able to regain her human form only at night. This cruel spell can only be broken by a vow of eternal love and fidelity. Lonely and disconsolate Prince Siegfried encounters Odette by a lake and swears his love for her.

The following evening a ball is held to celebrate Prince Siegfried's coming of age. Von Rothbart appears with the beguiling Odile. Captivated, Siegfried is seduced by Odile, thereby breaking his vow and condemning Odette and her fellow maidens to remain swans for eternity.

Siegfried flees to the lake to beg forgiveness from Odette but it is too late. As she transforms into a swan for the last time the Prince, bereft at the loss of his beautiful swan princess, drowns himself in the lake.

## CREDITS

## SWAN LAKE (2012)

*Choreography* Stephen Baynes

*Music* Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

*Costume and set design* Hugh Colman

*Lighting design* Rachel Burke

*Projections designed and directed by* Domenico Bartolo

## BOOKINGS

[australianballet.com.au](http://australianballet.com.au)

or call 1300 369 741

## PERFORMANCE DATES

## SYDNEY

1 – 20 April (21 performances)

Joan Sutherland Theatre, Sydney Opera House with the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra

## ADELAIDE

26 – 31 May (6 performances)

Festival Theatre, Adelaide Festival Centre with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

## MELBOURNE

7 – 18 June (14 performances)

Arts Centre Melbourne with Orchestra Victoria

## SPECIAL EVENTS

## Q&amp;A

Stay behind after the show for a special Q&A with Artistic Director David McAllister and a panel of artistic staff.

**SYD 11 APR**

**ADE 30 MAY**

FREE

## Behind the Scenes

A unique behind-the-scenes look at the life of a dancer. Watch the Company take their daily morning class, and then see two lead dancers in a private coaching session.

**MEL 16 JUNE**

**SYD 14 APR**

**ADE 31 MAY**

11.30am-12.30pm

Tickets \$19-\$39

## McAllister in Conversation

Artistic Director David McAllister hosts an intimate talk with a luminary from the ballet world.

**MEL 11 JUNE**

**SYD 2 APR**

**ADE 28 MAY**

5pm-5.45pm

Tickets \$25

## The Black Swan Program

In this fascinating 45-minute performance, learn about the villainous Black Swan in Stephen Baynes' *Swan Lake*

**SYD 12 APR**

**MEL 9 JUNE**

12.30pm-1.15pm

Tickets \$29-\$40

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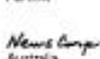
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