

The Australian Ballet confirms 2016 London tour and announces lead casting of Graeme Murphy's *Swan Lake* and first-time Europe season of Alexei Ratmansky's *Cinderella*



Amber Scott and Adam Bull – *Swan Lake*. Photo Jeff Busby



Leanne Stojmenov – *Cinderella*. Photo Jeff Busby

The Australian Ballet has confirmed its next international tour will be to London, from **13 to 23 July 2016**. Presented by Askonas Holt and Raymond Gubbay Ltd, under the artistic helm of David McAllister, the Company will perform two of its signature works; a return season of Graeme Murphy's highly acclaimed ***Swan Lake*** and first time London season of Alexei Ratmansky's ***Cinderella***.

Today the Company announces casting for both programs; Principal Artists Amber Scott (Odette) and Adam Bull (Prince) with Soloist Dimity Azoury (Duchess) will open *Swan Lake*, followed by Lana Jones, Rudy Hawkes and Amy Harris, and Leanne Stojmenov, Kevin Jackson and Ako Kondo. Principal Artists Leanne Stojmenov (Cinderella) and Kevin Jackson (Prince) will open *Cinderella*, followed by Amber Scott and Ty King-Wall, and Ako Kondo and Chengwu Guo.

The Australian Ballet also welcomes a new international media partnership with **News UK**, the first of its kind with the London-based media organisation, alongside tour partner **Qantas**.

The Hon Alexander Downer AC said, "As the Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, I am extraordinarily proud to welcome The Australia Ballet to London, one of the key centres for ballet and dance. The Australian Ballet is one of the world's leading ballet companies presenting innovative and contemporary productions of some of the finest ballets. I know that London audiences will be enthralled by their unique Australian offering."

Performing at the **Coliseum**, the West End's largest theatre, this two-week season starts with Graeme Murphy's critically-acclaimed *Swan Lake* from **13 – 16 July**. Produced to mark the company's 40th anniversary in 2002, Murphy melds the sheer power of

a classic ballet with a modern day romance. Inspired by the notorious love triangle between Princess Diana, Prince Charles and Camilla Parker-Bowles, *Swan Lake* invites the audience into a world of duty, lust, and betrayal, where no heart is left untarnished.

Kristian Fredrikson's inspired set and costume designs frame Murphy's choreography, danced to Tchaikovsky's immortal score. The Australian Ballet won the UK's Critics' Circle National Dance Award for Best Foreign Dance Company following performances in the UK in 2005.

The second production to grace the Coliseum stage between **20 – 23 July** is Alexei Ratmansky's *Cinderella*. Making its London debut, this is a witty, glamorous and romantic retelling of the classic love story, created by one of the world's most in-demand choreographers.

Set to one of the great ballet scores by Sergei Prokofiev, the humour and charm of the Cinderella story is heightened by vibrant sets and costumes, designed by Jérôme Kaplan and drawing inspiration from Dior, Schiaparelli, 1940s Hollywood and Surrealist art.

Created for The Australian Ballet in 2013, *Cinderella* earned the Company two Australian Dance Awards in 2014, for Outstanding Performance by a Company and for Principal Artist Leanne Stojmenov in the title role. The production also won two Green Room Awards in 2013, for choreography and visual design.

David McAllister, Artistic Director of The Australian Ballet, said, "Both productions have become signature works for the company. Both encompass our motto of caring for tradition, but also daring to be different.

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

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“In each work the dancers have not only embraced the choreographic challenges, but through many seasons have developed multi layered characters which drive the storytelling in both ballets.”

The Australian Ballet has a long history of touring to the UK that stretches back to 1965 when the company first toured to London. Its last tour was in 2008 when the Company performed *Les Présages and Rites* with Bangarra Dance Theatre.

“This tour is a great opportunity for us to showcase the distinctive talents of The Australian Ballet. As a dancer I still remember my first time performing in London. It’s a city that has seen all of the best ballet companies from across the globe. Our ties go back generations and bringing the Company back to the birthplace of our founding Artistic Director, Peggy Van Praagh, is always a thrill,” said McAllister.

As Australia’s national ballet company, The Australian Ballet has had a long history of international touring, and has visited 37 countries and 87 cities since it was founded in 1962. This tour marks the company’s **25th international tour**.

ABOUT SWAN LAKE

The story follows the fortunes of Odette, betrothed to Prince Siegfried yet deeply apprehensive about his relationship with the Baroness von Rothbart. It’s not until the wedding day that Siegfried and the Baroness’ clandestine affair is revealed, causing Odette such distress that by royal command she is committed to a sanatorium. There she finds comfort and escape amongst serene white swans in a frozen dream world. Critics worldwide have picked up on more than a hint of another world-famous royal ménage à trois that finds several parallels in this story of adultery, personality disorders and the betrayal of innocence.

Choreography Graeme Murphy
Creative Associate Janet Vernon
Music Piotr Ilych Tchaikovsky
Set and Costume Design Kristian Fredrikson
Original Lighting Damien Cooper
With the Orchestra of English National Opera

Wednesday 13 – Saturday 16 July

Press night is Wednesday 13 July
Evenings at 7.30pm
Matinees on Thursday and Saturday at 2pm
Tickets: £15 - £75 (£90 premium)
Groups: Discounts for 10+
Family ticket: Save 20% on selected prices
LONDON COLISEUM: 020 7845 9300, www.eno.org

ABOUT CINDERELLA

In her soot-stained dress, Cinderella works away while her bad-tempered Stepmother and Stepsisters prepare for the Royal Ball. As Cinderella dreams of dancing, an eccentrically disguised Fairy Godmother transforms her rags into a magnificent gown. In Ratmansky’s retelling of the fairytale, mice and pumpkins are replaced by planets, a moon and stars who accompany Cinderella to the ball. The handsome Prince is captivated from the moment Cinderella arrives. A clock chime and one lost slipper later, he must embark on a world-wide journey to find his love, visiting many lands teeming with temptations before he is reunited with Cinderella.

Choreography Alexei Ratmansky
Music Sergei Prokofiev
Set and Costume Design Jerome Kaplan
Lighting Design Rachel Burke
Projection Design Wendell K. Harrington
With the Orchestra of English National Opera

Wednesday 20 – Saturday 23 July

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