

The Australian Ballet unveils exclusive Sydney season of Balanchine magic alongside world premiere of two new ballets. *Symphony in C* opens 29 April



Photo credit: Justin Ridler

Symphony in C is an electrifying double bill seamlessly blending old and new to create a glittering showcase of perfect ballet moments. The Australian Ballet pairs a **George Balanchine** classic with **five bite size ballets, including two world premiere works** by rising stars of the company.

Performed at lightning speed, it is a breathtaking display of ballet favourites and ground-breaking new works certain to captivate seasoned ticket holders and ballet beginners. ***Symphony in C* runs 29 April to 14 May at Sydney Opera House.**

Lovers of modern classics will adore Balanchine's tutu extravaganza. The ballet after which the season is named, *Symphony in C* is regal in its black and white symmetry. Both firecracker fast and meltingly slow, it is a stunning tribute to the golden era of classical dance. The central pas de deux will have viewers holding their breath through a series of improbable balances and swooning falls.

The ballet's original version was choreographed by Balanchine in just two weeks and premiered in 1947. As athletic as it is delicate, *Symphony in C* is one of his most loved abstract works. Set to music by George Bizet, *Symphony in C* was written when the composer was just 17 years of age in 1855 living as a student in Paris.

For this exclusive Sydney season, Balanchine's poetry is matched by a tasting menu of divertissements. The line-up shows the pas de deux at its radiant best with excerpts from the serene ***Grand Pas Classique*** and ***Diana & Actéon***. They are

placed alongside Christopher Wheeldon's electrically charged ***After the Rain***.

Set to Arvo Pärt's haunting serene soundtrack, Wheeldon's work has moved audiences around the world to become a contemporary classic. Its jolting blend of tenderness and chemistry is akin to the intimacy of a private conversation between lovers.

However, arguably the most anticipated ballets of the night will be two world premiere works by members of The Australian Ballet, **Alice Topp** and **Richard House**, who have already generated attention following their *Bodytorque* ballets.

Now Topp and House take to the mainstage for the first time and they bring with them a loyal legion of fans. Topp has attracted critical acclaim for past works *Trace* (2015, 2010), *Same Vein* (2014), *Tinted Windows* (2013), and *Scope* (2011). Likewise, House has established his mark works *Finding the Calm* (2013), *Control* (2014) and *From Something to Nothing* (2015). All eyes will be on both young artists on opening night for this milestone as they enter the main arena.

Richard House says he relishes the chance to unleash his creativity in his new work, ***Scent of Love***, but he intends to let the music lead the process. He is thrilled to be working with two pieces of music by world renowned composer Michael Nyman, *Love Doesn't End* and *The Scent of Love*.

"I am thrilled to create a ballet around two of my all-time favourite pieces of music. I've been working to develop my craft before I felt ready to take on the music of an artist of this scale. But the timing feels right, and I am delighted to be taking on one of the masters of music of our time. Michael Nyman's searing, epic scores are the perfect vehicle of inspiration for any artist," said House.

Alice Topp explains her new work, ***Little Atlas***, is based around the notion of memory and our attempts to recreate or unmake memories.

"The work explores our connection to people, places and landmarks of the past. In particular, the way these things made us feel, whether they're the events that continue to haunt us or places of solace we return to for sanctuary.

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

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Together, with our own unique map of scars and stories, imprinted on our brains, we carry these memories through the trinity of past, future and present, bringing both a sense of comfort and discomfort, burden and blessing,” said Topps.

The Australian Ballet’s Artistic Director David McAllister looks forward to this Sydney season. “As well as the classical beauty of the Balanchine extravaganza, the gala program pulls out all the stops. I am especially proud to have two of our greatest young talents Alice Topp and Richard House make their mainstage debut. I have no doubt they will stretch our dancers in new dimensions, ensuring a wild ride of contemporary ballet at its cutting edge best.”

What the critics had to say on *Symphony in C*:

“Arms frame faces, limbs circle the body like constellations of stars around a beautiful and radiant sun.” – *The Age*

BOOKINGS

australianballet.com.au or call 1300 369 741
Tickets on sale now at australianballet.com.au

CREDITS

SYMPHONY IN C (1947)

Choreography George Balanchine © School of American Ballet

Music Georges Bizet *Symphony No. 1 in C major*

Costume and set design Tom Lingwood

Original lighting design William Akers

GALA DIVERTISSEMENTS

After the Rain © *Choreography* Christopher Wheeldon

Grand pas classique *Choreography* Victor Gsovsky

Diana and Acteon *Choreography* Agrippina Vaganova

Little Atlas *Choreography* Alice Topp

Scent of Love *Choreography* Richard House

DATES

SYDNEY ONLY SEASON

29 APRIL – 14 MAY

Joan Sutherland Theatre

Sydney Opera House

With the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra

SPECIAL EVENTS

Audiences are invited to step inside the ballet with special events during the *Symphony in C* season.

Q&A

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

9 MAY

Sydney Opera House

Post Show

FREE

McAllister in Conversation

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

30 APRIL

Sydney Opera House

5pm-5.45pm

Tickets \$25

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