THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET
2018 SEASON
In 2018, we celebrate all that is unique about The Australian Ballet.

The genius of our choreographers, the athleticism of our dancers, the rare skills of our artisans, and the boldness and open spirit that enables us to transcend boundaries and reach new heights.

Let us transport you into our imaginative world, where the impossible is just our everyday.
WELCOME TO 2018

THE POWER OF IMAGINATION

For 55 years The Australian Ballet has been powered by the imagination of our artists and creators. In 2018 we present an exciting program drawn exclusively from works that were made for our company, alongside two world premieres.

I remember the first time I danced in The Merry Widow. I was so proud to be part of a ballet that holds such a special place in our history. This year, a new generation of dancers will have that same thrill as they interpret the joy and romance of this glorious ballet.

Maina Gielgud’s production of Giselle, part of our Melbourne spring season, has toured the globe and is recognised as one of the greatest stagings of this Romantic classic. Alexei Ratmansky’s vibrant and original Cinderella, returning after its triumphant London debut in 2016, will be a Christmas treat for Sydney.

Australian choreographers are the lifeblood of our company’s creativity. This year we celebrate the inspiration they have given us to soar higher and dig deeper. Graeme Murphy, who joined The Australian Ballet as a dancer 50 years ago, has built a thrilling choreographic legacy that fuels the imagination of both audiences and dancers. Murphy, our tribute to him, will lead us on an exciting journey through highlights of his career, culminating in a revival of his award-winning Firebird.

Resident Choreographers Stephen Baynes and Tim Harbour keep our dancers challenged with their innovative works. In Verve, we match the cool lyricism of Baynes’ Constant Variants with the brooding intensity of Harbour’s Filigree and Shadow. After her 2016 mainstage debut, the evocative Little Atlas, company dancer Alice Topp will create a new work for this program.

Since powering onto our stages in 1978, Spartacus has captured our hearts, displaying the boldness and physicality of our dancers. In 2018 we will see a fresh flame ignited as Lucas Jervies premieres his brand-new production of this immortal story of a slave battling for his freedom.

Revolution and revelry, romance and revenge: the 2018 season celebrates the genius of our choreographers, the artistry of our dancers and the rare skill of our musicians and artisans. We look forward to welcoming you into our world in 2018.

David McAllister AM
Artistic Director

The Australian Ballet
OUR DANCERS

Our dancers convey complex storytelling and emotional depth through the power of movement.

They prepare for their careers from childhood and work six days a week to polish technique, develop their artistry and hone their bodies to peak fitness.

They are equally at home with the rigours of classical technique and the fresh challenges of contemporary dance, and bring to their art form a bold, athletic beauty.
MURPHY

A TRIBUTE TO AUSTRALIA’S ICONIC DANCemaker

What makes Graeme Murphy Australia’s premier choreographer? A bold imagination, irreverent humour, profound musicality and a matchless sense of the body in space.

In 2018, Murphy celebrates 50 years with The Australian Ballet. He began his dance career in the company’s corps de ballet, made his first work for our Choreographic Workshop, and went on to an incandescent career as the head of Sydney Dance Company.

Along the way, he produced landmark productions for The Australian Ballet: he set his version of The Nutcracker in a scorching Melbourne summer, made Swan Lake into a modern love triangle and charted a dancer’s journey in the moving Beyond Twelve.

We pay tribute to this remarkable artist with a revival of his vividly reimagined Firebird, paired with highlights from his stellar career, featuring inventive dance, eye-opening design and transporting music.

Join us to celebrate one of Australia’s greats.

“Murphy’s choreography is an engaging mix of new and familiar: just when you have a sense of where a phrase is going, it does something fresh.”
- SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

MELBOURNE
16 – 26 MARCH
Arts Centre Melbourne
State Theatre
with Orchestra Victoria

SYDNEY
6 – 23 APRIL
Joan Sutherland Theatre
Sydney Opera House
with Opera Australia Orchestra

CREDITS

FIREBIRD
Concept and choreography Graeme Murphy
Creative associate Janet Vernon
Music Igor Stravinsky The Firebird Suite
Costume and set design Leon Krasenstein
Original lighting design Damien Cooper

Generously supported by The Dame Peggy van Praagh Fund
Irresistibly frothy and lavishly theatrical, *The Merry Widow* has enough tangled affairs, narrow misses and jealous lovers to fuel a French farce. The tiny principality of Pontevedro is on the verge of bankruptcy, and the dashing Count Danilo must rescue his country by marrying the newly widowed and fabulously wealthy Hanna Glawari. Only when they meet does he realise that she’s his childhood sweetheart – and that she hasn’t forgiven him for jilting her years ago.

Based on the beloved operetta, this lively tale is set in the ballrooms and salons of Belle Époque Paris and is dressed magnificently in velvets, silks, spangles and feathers.

Created especially for The Australian Ballet, *The Merry Widow* is a laugh-along favourite with hum-along melodies and its heart on its sleeve.

“This sumptuous soufflé of a ballet is possibly one of the best The Australian Ballet has produced.”
- THE AUSTRALIAN

**CREDITS**

Scenario Robert Helpmann  
Choreography Ronald Hynd  
Music Franz Lehár  
Based on the operetta by Victor Léon and Leo Stein  
Arranged and orchestrated by John Lanchbery  
Costume and set design Desmond Heeley  
Original lighting design Francis Croese  
Presented by arrangement with Glocken Verlag Ltd  

Generously supported by The Margaret Ellen Pidgeon Fund

**SYDNEY**  
28 APRIL – 19 MAY  
Joan Sutherland Theatre  
Sydney Opera House  
with Opera Australia Orchestra

**CANBERRA**  
25 – 30 MAY  
Canberra Theatre  
Canberra Theatre Centre  
with Orchestra Victoria

**MELBOURNE**  
7 – 16 JUNE  
Arts Centre Melbourne  
State Theatre  
with Orchestra Victoria
VERVE

HIGH-OCTANE BALLET

Verve showcases the depth and invention of The Australian Ballet’s choreographic talent with works by three very different dancemakers: Resident Choreographers Tim Harbour and Stephen Baynes, and Coryphée Alice Topp, who created a series of pieces for our Bodytorque new-works program before making her mainstage debut with Little Atlas in 2016.

Tim Harbour’s Filigree and Shadow cruises the cutting edge of contemporary ballet. Powerful moves inspired by dark aggression, a sleek architect-designed set, washes of ominous light and a grinding score by German duo 48nord propel this work to an electrifying climax.

Stephen Baynes’ Constant Variants is neo-classical ballet at its most hypnotic. Featuring pristine technique and a Tchaikovsky score with solo cello, its jewel-like moments and pitch-perfect atmosphere beguile the mind into heavenly calm.

Alice Topp’s brand-new work, created especially for this program, will continue her explorations into intricate partnering and intense emotion, as showcased in her music-video choreography for Megan Washington and Ben Folds.

Three diverse creative minds unite for one explosive performance.

“... there is great beauty in this savagery; a magnetic, visceral drama that grabs you in a choke hold and refuses to let go.”
- ARTSHUB ON FILIGREE AND SHADOW

MELBOURNE
21 – 30 June
Arts Centre Melbourne
State Theatre
with Orchestra Victoria

CREDITS
CONSTANT VARIANTS
Choreography Stephen Baynes
Music Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Variations on a Rococo Theme
Set and costume design Michael Pearce
Original lighting design Jon Buswell

NEW WORK
Choreography and costume design Alice Topp
Staging and lighting design Jon Buswell

FILIGREE AND SHADOW
Choreography Tim Harbour
Music 48nord (Ulrich Müller and Siegfried Rössert)
Costume concept Tim Harbour
Set design Kelvin Ho
Original lighting design Benjamin Cisterne

Generously supported by The Robert Southey Fund
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

EXCLUSIVE ADELAIDE SEASON

In 1890, the artist Léon Bakst saw the original production of The Sleeping Beauty. “I lived in a magic dream for three hours, intoxicated by fairies and princesses, by splendid palaces flowing with gold, by the enchantment of the old tale,” he wrote. More than a century later, The Sleeping Beauty is a stunning showcase for The Australian Ballet’s dancers, an unforgettable childhood experience and a delight for lovers of dance, music and design.

For the first time, Artistic Director David McAllister brings his smash-hit production to Adelaide. With Tchaikovsky’s celebrated score, thrilling classical technique and a sumptuous design by the award-winning Gabriela Tylesova, this ballet casts a spell all the way to its glittering finale.

Let this reawakened classic transport you into “a magic dream”.

"The production offers a gold-class experience and the magical escape that will forever draw so many audiences to the fairytale world of ballet.”

- HERALD SUN

ADELAIDE
6 – 12 JULY
Festival Theatre
Adelaide Festival Centre
with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

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

We celebrate the many philanthropists who made this production possible, with special thanks to The Royals:

Geraldine Anne Lawton Bequest, PRINCESS AURORA
Mr Kenneth R Reed AM, PRINCE DESIRE
Friends of The Australian Ballet (NSW) Ltd, THE LILAC FAIRY
Malcolm, Tonya & Carolyn McCusker, CARABOSSE
Anonymous, THE KING
The Australian Ballet Society, THE QUEEN
The Ian Dicker Family, PRINCESS FLORINE
Francesca Roslyn Packer Barham, Indigo Alice Packer,
Emmanuelle Sheelah Packer THE BLUEBIRD
First love, betrayal, heartache and forgiveness ... we’ve all been through them, and that’s what makes Giselle resonate so deeply in our hearts. This iconic Romantic ballet has stood the test of time, not just because of the otherworldly beauty of its “white” act, with its ethereal ghosts floating through the forest, but because of the universal passion and drama of its storyline.

A young girl falls for an aristocrat in disguise. When she realises his deception, the shock sends her mad and she dies. Raised from her grave by the vengeful Queen of the Wilis, she must summon all her tenderness and strength to save her lover from destruction.

Maina Gielgud’s celebrated production, with Peter Farmer’s atmospheric designs, brings out the emotional nuances of this poignant story and the purity of its Romantic technique.

As the choreographer George Balanchine said, “Like Hamlet, Giselle is a classic: it is not only important historically, it also happens to be good.”

“... uniquely Australian zeal ... it has heart, story and an emotional truth.”
- HERALD SUN

MELBOURNE
30 AUGUST – 8 SEPTEMBER
Arts Centre Melbourne
State Theatre
with Orchestra Victoria

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

Generously supported by The Maina Gielgud Fund
Made especially for The Australian Ballet by Alexei Ratmansky, the world’s most in-demand choreographer, this Cinderella has all the elements of the story we know and love – a feisty heroine, a dashing prince, a kindly godmother and a deliciously wicked stepmother – with some fantastical additions.

Ratmansky is Artist in Residence at American Ballet Theatre, a recipient of the MacArthur “Genius” grant, and the acknowledged master of the modern story ballet. His Cinderella, designed by the acclaimed Jérôme Kaplan, takes its vision from Prokofiev’s dark and surprising 1940s score and whirls with stars and planets, Surrealist-inspired projections and a Dior-worthy golden ball gown.

After playing to packed houses and adoring audiences in London, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane, this witty and romantic Cinderella returns to the Sydney Opera House stage for an exclusive encore performance that will delight every generation.

See why Cinderella is the perfect fit.

"Effervescent and fun as festive champagne."
- DAILY TELEGRAPH
In 2018, one of The Australian Ballet’s most popular works springs to new life. *Spartacus* tells the story of a gladiator who led a slaves’ rebellion against the Roman empire. Charting the journey of a man finding passionate love, his mission and freedom, the ballet showcases the company’s men at their spirited and athletic best.

Lucas Jervies is a choreographer, a NIDA-trained director and a former dancer of The Australian Ballet: *Spartacus* is his passion project. His brand-new production will feature the soaring music of Aram Khachaturian; sets and costumes by Jérôme Kaplan, who created the inventive designs for Alexei Ratmansky’s *Cinderella*; and our male dancers in their most powerful moment as the slaves who rise against the tyranny of their rulers.

Think ballet is all pointe shoes and tutus? Think again.

“The production is about a dehumanised slave becoming a human being. Embedded within that is a love story.”

- LUCAS JERVIES

**MELBOURNE**
18 – 29 SEPTEMBER
Arts Centre Melbourne
State Theatre
with Orchestra Victoria

**SYDNEY**
9 – 24 NOVEMBER
Joan Sutherland Theatre
Sydney Opera House
with Opera Australia Orchestra

**CREDITS**
Choreography Lucas Jervies
Music Aram Khachaturian
Costume and set design Jérôme Kaplan
Lighting design Ben Cisterne
Dramaturge Imara Savage
Fight Director Nigel Poulton

We celebrate the many philanthropists who are making this production possible, with special thanks to:

Mr Kenneth R Reed AM, SPARTACUS
Malcolm, Tonya & Carolyn McCusker, FLAVIA
Friends of The Australian Ballet (NSW) Ltd, CRASSUS
Mrs Roslyn Packer AC, TERTULLA
The Australian Ballet Society, BATIATUS

The Dame Margaret Scott Fund for Choreographers supporting Lucas Jervies
Robyn Hendricks and Jerryd Madden rehearsing Spartacus in 2016.

Lucas Jervies coaching Spartacus.
CREATE SPARTACUS WITH US

YOUR AMAZING GENEROSITY UNDERPINS OUR SUCCESS

New productions are vital to our company, and being a part of creating a new ballet is a special and rewarding journey. In 2014, many of you came together and supported David McAllister’s vision for the extraordinary new production of The Sleeping Beauty by making a gift. Together, you made your mark on stage by creating an iconic Australian masterwork that our dancers are now proudly presenting to the world.

This year, we invite you to join us as we create Spartacus. This new production will showcase the athleticism and dynamic Australian style of our dancers, giving them another opportunity to delight audiences at home and across the world.

Your generous gifts will go directly to the stage, bringing to life the many costumes, sets and props that will be made in-house by our team of skilled artisans.

“I can’t wait to begin this very special creative journey, and I look forward to sharing it with you as it unfolds.”

LUCAS JERVIES, CHOREOGRAPHER

BECOME A SPARTACUS BALLET CHAMPION BY MAKING A GIFT WITH YOUR SEASON PACKAGE

A Spartacus Ballet Champion plays a significant role in bringing this new production to the stage. Gain a rare and exclusive perspective into the creative process on the road to the world premiere.

— Gifts of Valour $20,000+
— Gifts of Honour $10,000 - $19,999
— Gifts of Unity $5,000 - $9,999
— Gifts of Strength $1,000 - $4,999
— Gifts of Loyalty $500 - $999
— Gifts of Integrity $100 - $499

Your support through a gift of $100 or more will be recognised on our website and in our annual report. In addition, gifts of $1,000 or more are recognised in our souvenir programs.

Thank you for your loyalty and dedication.

Kenneth Watkins
Philanthropy Director
03 9669 2785
kennethw@australianballet.com.au

The Australian Ballet likes to celebrate the magnanimity of our many donors, to inspire and encourage others to give. However, we do respect your privacy, so please advise us if you wish your gift to remain anonymous.

Donations of $2 or more are tax-deductible.
ABN 57 004 849 987
OUR ARTISANS

Not every ballet company has an in-house costume atelier. At The Australian Ballet, a team of highly skilled artisans (costumiers, cutters, milliners and wig makers) translate the visions of our designers into shimmering, glittering life – turning our dancers into birds, ghosts, planets, gladiators and Belle Époque beauties. Fabrics and trimmings are sourced from around the world, and both traditional techniques and the latest innovations are used to produce costumes worthy of a couture house.

The signature dress for our 2018 campaign was dreamed up by designer Kat Chan and brought to life by our costume atelier. Its full skirt of silk chiffon, which evokes the sea and sky of an Australian summer, is ombre dyed and sunray pleated; the hand-beaded belt is meant to evoke coral.
Costumes in the making for Graeme Murphy's Firebird, David McAllister's The Sleeping Beauty, Christopher Wheeldon's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Alexei Ratmansky's Cinderella.

A team of 30 people worked solidly for a year to create costumes for David McAllister's The Sleeping Beauty. There are over 300 of them - not to mention 100 wigs and hats, and 130 sets of fairy wings.
STEP INSIDE THE BALLET

DISCOVER WHERE THE WONDER OF BALLET BEGINS WITH OUR ANNUAL SERIES OF EVENTS AND TALKS

“It’s so special to be able to come to these events and see what goes into creating the magic I see on stage”

- STEP INSIDE ATTENDEE
THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET

2018 EVENTS

Explore behind the scenes of our 2018 season.
australianballet.com.au/staple-side

MURPHY MELB
McAllister in Conversation 17 Mar
Post-performance Q&A 19 Mar
The Music of the Dance 21 Mar
Behind the Scenes 23 Mar

MURPHY SYD
McAllister in Conversation 7 Apr
Q&A 9 Apr
The Music of the Dance 11 Apr
Open Classes 15 Apr
Firebird Program 18 Apr
Behind the Scenes 20 Apr
The Music of the Dance 21 Apr

THE MERRY WIDOW MEL
McAllister in Conversation 9 Jun
Behind the Scenes 11 Jun
Q&A 11 Jun
The Music of the Dance 13 Jun
The Music of the Dance 16 Jun
15 minutes of fame 16 Jun

VERVE MEL
McAllister in Conversation 23 Jun
Q&A 25 Jun
The Music of the Dance 30 Jun

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY ADL
McAllister in Conversation 7 Jul
Open Classes 8 Jul
Q&A 9 Jul
Once Upon a Time: The Sleeping Beauty 10 Jul
The Music of the Dance 11 Jul

GISELLE MEL
McAllister in Conversation 1 Sep
Q&A 3 Sep
The Music of the Dance 5 Sep
The Music of the Dance 8 Sep

EXTRA PROGRAMS MEL
PRODUCTION CENTRE TOURS
Apr 9, 17
May 16
Jun 22
Jul 9, 17, 25

HAPPY ROAD
Since mid April dates are subject to change.

SPARTACUS MEL
Boys Day 22 Sep
McAllister in Conversation 22 Sep
Q&A 24 Sep
Behind the Scenes 25 Sep
The Music of the Dance 26 Sep
Open Classes 28 Sep
The Music of the Dance 29 Sep

SPARTACUS SYD
Boys Day 10 Nov
McAllister in Conversation 10 Nov
Open Classes 11 Nov
Q&A 12 Nov
Behind the Scenes 16 Nov
The Music of the Dance 21 Nov
The Music of the Dance 24 Nov

CINDERELLA SYD
McAllister in Conversation 1 Dec
The Music of the Dance 5 Dec
Open Classes 9 Dec
Q&A 3 Dec
Behind the Scenes 14 Dec
The Music of the Dance 15 Dec

HAPPY ROAD
Since mid April dates are subject to change.

MCCALLISTER IN CONVERSATION
Join our Artistic Director David McAllister for an insightful conversation with different creative and principal artists.

PRODUCTION CENTRE TOURS
Take a guided tour of our Production Centre in Melbourne, where we house over 50 years worth of costumes and props.

BEHIND THE SCENES
Watch our dancers take their class on stage and enjoy a rare opportunity to see a principal couple fine-tuning their technique.

POST-SHOW Q&A
Ask our dancers and creatives any questions you might have about the performance.

THE MUSIC OF THE DANCE
At our free music talk you’ll hear about the score of each ballet and what it’s like to be in the pit during a performance.

FIREBIRD PROGRAM
Get your ballet fix at this lunch time performance of Firebird, where you’ll see the entire performance at Sydney Opera House.

15 MINUTES OF FAME
Have your moment of glory as you learn a section from The Merry Widow on stage.

OPEN CLASSES
These classes will give young dancers the chance to perfect their skills and learn new techniques, including some that our dancers use themselves.

ONCE UPON A TIME: THE SLEEPING BEAUTY
Enjoy this one-hour version of The Sleeping Beauty performed to live music. It’s perfect for little lovers of ballet.

BOYS DAY
In this special day of dancing, budding male dancers can take class taught by one of our male artists and learn new techniques.

Studios
Studios is our program of drop-in classes in Melbourne, for absolute beginners as well as advanced dancers. You’ll use the same studio our dancers use during the day, and take class to live piano.
australianballet.com.au/studios
THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET
2018 SEASON

THE MUSIC OF 2018

MURPHY
Graeme Murphy has always been courageous in his musical choices and both intelligent and intuitive in his responses to scores. Whether set to the most challenging of contemporary Australian compositions or traditional scores like Swan Lake, his choreography illuminates the music in refreshing and exciting ways. Our tribute program will span the balletic musical gamut, from late 19th-century classics through Stravinsky to some of Australia’s greatest living composers.

THE MERRY WIDOW
The Merry Widow was originally a popular operetta written in 1905 by the Austro-Hungarian composer Franz Lehár. In 1975, John Lanchbery (then the Music Director of The Australian Ballet) and a conductor colleague set about turning this vocal score into a purely orchestral one. Rather than simply taking the original and placing the vocal lines on various instruments, Lanchbery took all that was beautiful, humorous and charming in the original and reworked the score to create something new. It is one of the best musical ‘arrangements’ Lanchbery ever created and demonstrates his incredible dramatic and musical flair.

VERVE
For his Constant Variants, Resident Choreographer Stephen Baynes chose Tchaikovsky’s charming Variations on a Rococo Theme, Tchaikovsky’s first composition for cello and orchestra; it’s a pure gem, and a brilliant example of Tchaikovsky’s gift for melody and lyricism.

Alice Topp’s works are always inventive and engaging. She has a talent for creating work which is simultaneously emotionally complex and appealingly simple. Her musical choices always inspire and reflect this and are a joy to perform.

Tim Harbour’s Filigree and Shadow has a specially commissioned score by 48nord. It’s a powerful electronic piece using sophisticated 21st-century software. Confronting and unsettling, it’s the ideal soundtrack to Tim’s exploration of human aggression.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY
The pinnacle of ballet music in the 19th century, The Sleeping Beauty not only tells the story virtually on its own, but is a musical exploration of complicated abstract concepts like good and evil, emotional maturity and adult responsibility. Tchaikovsky uses every compositional technique: inventive orchestrations, hit melody after hit melody, a harmonic architecture which is the dramatic architecture. The work is breathtaking, and inspired generations of composers to view ballet as far more than superficial narrative entertainment.

GISELLE
Created by the French composer Adolphe Adam in 1841, Giselle is one of the earliest examples of a narrative ballet with purpose-written music (as opposed to music pieced together from other existing works). To a very limited extent it does use musical themes to represent characters and dramatic development, but primarily the music ‘underscores’ the action, creating happy dance scenes and poignant, reflective ones, with the occasional moment of brass-and-timpani doomsday darkness. Adam’s score is as simple and innocent as the main protagonist.

SPARTACUS
The centrepiece of our 2018 season is a new production of Spartacus. The music was composed in 1954 by Aram Khachaturian. He was the first Armenian composer to write for silent films, and many of his works have a cinematic feel. Spartacus has a genuinely epic, heroic quality worthy of Hollywood. There is no existing music from the era of the historical Spartacus, and Khachaturian didn’t even try to write music in the style of a particular epoch. Instead, he used his imagination to create a sound world appropriate to the tale. The richness and exoticism of the score is reminiscent of colours used by composers like Ravel and Debussy, but there is a distinctively Armenian flair.

CINDERELLA
Sergei Prokofiev’s Cinderella is one of the 20th century’s greatest works of art. Prokofiev, whose natural compositional style always contained elements of dark irony and satire, found a perfect vehicle for these qualities in Cinderella. It has a harmonic architecture worthy of Tchaikovsky that shapes the entire dramatic action, and musical themes, representing characters, which grow and transform as the characters do, as their thoughts and emotions develop throughout the piece.