

PRESS RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 2pm, Thursday 15 February 2024

English National Ballet's 75th Season Announced

View the trailer for English National Ballet's 75th Season [here](#).

- World premiere of English National Ballet's new production of *Nutcracker* choreographed by Artistic Director, Aaron S. Watkin and Arielle Smith
- The Forsythe Programme to be performed at Sadler's Wells, featuring the world premiere of a new work created for English National Ballet by William Forsythe
- Akram Khan's *Giselle* returns to London for the first time since 2019
- English National Ballet marks its 75th Season with a free, 10-day digital celebration
- Extensive programme of Engagement work offered alongside performances

English National Ballet is thrilled to announce plans for its **75th Season**, running from **September 2024 - June 2025**.

Featuring two world premieres, a Company premiere and the return of audience favourites, English National Ballet's 75th Season celebrates tradition whilst forging innovation - an ethos that has shaped the Company's rich history and will inspire its future.

Artistic Director of English National Ballet, Aaron S. Watkin, said: *"In this, English National Ballet's 75th Season, we will be celebrating the myriad ways that ballet can excite, entertain, and inspire. Be it the renewal of a beloved classic with our new Nutcracker, cherished revivals, or a return to the ground-breaking works of Akram Khan and William Forsythe – this is a season that showcases the many wonderful things that ballet can offer.*

I am thrilled that English National Ballet continues to attract world-class creative talent. I can't wait to have Arielle Smith and William Forsythe back in our studios to create work and I know our dancers will be inspired by their presence.

Finally, it's hugely important to me that we welcome as many people as possible to celebrate our 75th Season with us. I am therefore delighted that we will be presenting a free digital celebration that will enable us to connect with ballet fans and new audiences alike, all around the world."

Having been seen by over 156,000 people in 10 countries and 16 cities around the world, **Akram Khan's *Giselle*** opens English National Ballet's 2024/2025 Season with a return to London (Sadler's Wells) for the first time since 2019. In this acclaimed reimagining of the iconic ballet, Khan tells a story of love, betrayal, and redemption. The production features an imposing set designed by Academy Award-winner Tim Yip and a powerful score by Vincenzo Lamagna.

Offering audiences the opportunity to see two versions of one of the great Romantic ballets in the same season, **Mary Skeaping's *Giselle***, will also be performed, touring to the Liverpool Empire and Manchester's Palace Theatre in the autumn, before returning to the London Coliseum in January 2025. With its beautiful classical language and thoughtful staging, this *Giselle* features some of ballet's most dramatic scenes and otherworldly images.

Christmas 2024 will see the **world premiere of a new production of the classic festive ballet, *Nutcracker***, choreographed by English National Ballet's Artistic Director Aaron S. Watkin and

Olivier Award-winning choreographer Arielle Smith. The production will take audiences on a fantastical adventure as they join Clara on her journey of discovery, from Edwardian London to the Land of Sweets & Delights. *Nutcracker* is brought to life by exquisite dancing, spectacular new costumes and sets by Dick Bird, lighting by Paul Pyant, and Tchaikovsky's instantly recognisable score played live by English National Ballet Philharmonic.

English National Ballet's Artistic Director and joint choreographer of *Nutcracker*, Aaron S. Watkin, said: "Nutcracker holds a special place in English National Ballet's history and in the hearts of our audiences. The Company has performed a version of it every year since it was founded in 1950 and it is an honour to be working with Arielle and Dick, to bring new magic and wonder to this much-loved ballet."

Continuing the Company's commitment to UK touring and sharing world-class ballet with the widest possible audience, *Nutcracker* will receive its world premiere at Southampton's Mayflower Theatre before performances at the London Coliseum. For the first time, English National Ballet will present a relaxed performance of *Nutcracker*, at the London Coliseum on 9 January 2025. The creation of this new production has been made possible by Charles Holloway, Lead Supporter of *Nutcracker*.

In spring 2025, English National Ballet returns to Sadler's Wells, London, with **The Forsythe Programme**, a triple bill showcasing highlights of master choreographer, William Forsythe's, broad catalogue of work. Combining ballet classicism and athleticism with the music of Barry White, Natalie Cole and Khalid to name just a few, audience favourite, **Playlist (EP)** returns alongside **Herman Schmerman (Quintet)**, a classic showcase of Forsythe's signature style not seen in the UK for nearly 30 years. Completing this special programme will be a world premiere from the master choreographer. More details to be announced.

For younger audiences, English National Ballet and English National Ballet School revive **My First Ballet: Swan Lake** at Sadler's Wells' West End venue, the Peacock Theatre, in April 2025. The perfect introduction to the artform, this is a specially adapted version of the world's most iconic ballet. Featuring choreography by Antonio Castilla, English National Ballet's Répétiteur, and with a narrator to guide the audience, the production is accessible to children aged three upwards. The run will also include a relaxed performance as part of the My First Inclusive Ballet outreach programme as well as a series of on-stage family workshops.

In summer 2025, English National Ballet continues its investment in **Emerging Talent** programmes with the launch of **Choreo Labs** – a supportive and inspiring environment for Company dancers to develop their skills and explore new choreographic ideas. Open to dancers across the Company, the series will culminate with an in-house sharing session. Choreo Labs is part of English National Ballet's future commitment to create a wider Emerging Talent performance programme, which will bring together its existing Emerging Dancer event and Choreo Labs.

To mark English National Ballet's 75th Season, a free, 10-day digital celebration will be presented in July 2025. Showcasing English National Ballet's past, present and future, **ENB@75** will feature performance excerpts filmed especially in the Company's in-house Holloway Production Studio as well as interviews, archive footage and exclusive behind-the-scenes insight. Recognising the important role digital content plays in engaging and inspiring new audiences, English National Ballet offers this as a free to view event. This will be an inclusive opportunity for online audiences around the world to celebrate with the Company at this significant moment in its history.

2024/2025 marks **Music Director, Maria Seletskaja's**, first full season in post. Alongside Principal Guest Conductor, Gavin Sutherland, Seletskaja will conduct English National Ballet Philharmonic for performances of Akram Khan's *Giselle*, Mary Skeaping's *Giselle* and *Nutcracker*. Also conducting performances of *Nutcracker* are Daniel Parkinson and Kingsley Lin.

With its extensive **Engagement** programme for 2024/2025, English National Ballet continues to be a leader in creative health and learning and participation practice. The Shared Ground Space Scheme and co-curated Ideas Incubation Labs provide valuable platforms for artist development and support. Alongside this, English National Ballet's Dance for Parkinson's, an evidence-based programme delivered nationally via six hub partners, and Dance for Dementia, offer creative health interventions that contribute to better health and well-being through artistry, creativity and community. Insights into the creative industries continue to be offered through our schools programme, Ballet Explored, and there will be celebrations of co-created dance from our youth companies and community performance groups through Re-Play, an annual sharing platform at English National Ballet's studios. Following its launch in February 2024, the Company's Ballet Club for children, young people and families resident in Newham, east London, also returns for the 2024/2025 season.

Ballet Futures, English National Ballet's talent pipeline project to incentivise children from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds (African Diaspora, Caribbean, South Asian and South East Asian heritage) to participate in professional training, continues throughout 2024/2025. Now with over 30 students across five schools nationally, this year will see the inclusion of further performance opportunities for the programme's participants.

English National Ballet's plans for international touring will be announced in due course.

-ENDS-

For further information, interview requests, and images, please contact Alice Lawley, Head of Press and Communications, on alice.lawley@ballet.org.uk

On-sale Information:

Mary Skeaping's *Giselle* and *Nutcracker* open for priority booking to Friends/ Members on Friday 16 February 2024, with general booking open from 21 February 2024.

Tickets for Arkam Khan's *Giselle* will be available in spring 2024 and for The Forsythe Programme and My First Ballet: *Swan Lake* in autumn 2024.

Listings Information:

(URLs will be live from 2pm, Thursday 15 February)

Akram Khan's *Giselle*

Sadler's Wells, London

Wednesday 18 - Saturday 28 September 2024

www.ballet.org.uk/khan-giselle

Mary Skeaping's *Giselle*

Liverpool Empire

Wednesday 23 October – Saturday 26 October 2024

www.ballet.org.uk/giselle

Mary Skeaping's *Giselle*

Manchester Palace Theatre

Wednesday 30 October – Saturday 02 November 2024

www.ballet.org.uk/giselle

***Nutcracker* WORLD PREMIERE**

Mayflower Theatre, Southampton

Thursday 28 November – Saturday 30 November 2024

www.ballet.org.uk/nutcracker

Nutcracker

London Coliseum

Thursday 12 December 2024 – Sunday 12 January 2025

www.ballet.org.uk/nutcracker

Mary Skeaping's *Giselle*

London Coliseum

Wednesday 15 January – Saturday 18 January 2025

www.ballet.org.uk/giselle

The Forsythe Programme (including a WORLD PREMIERE)

Sadler's Wells, London

Thursday 10 April – Saturday 19 April 2025

www.ballet.org.uk/forsythe

My First Ballet: *Swan Lake*

The Peacock Theatre, London

Wednesday 16 April – Saturday 26 April 2025

www.ballet.org.uk/myfirstballet

ENB @75: A Digital Celebration

July 2025

www.ballet.org.uk / [ENB's YouTube](#)

Notes to Editors

English National Ballet is a National Portfolio Organisation supported by Arts Council England.

Ballymore is Principal Building Partner of English National Ballet.

English National Ballet is an Associate Company of Sadler's Wells.

Cunard is Production Sponsor for The Forsythe Programme and UK Tour Week Production Sponsor for performances of *Giselle* by Mary Skeaping.

Charles Holloway is the Lead Supporter of *Nutcracker*.

The Wigoder Family Foundation is Principal Benefactor of The Forsythe Programme.

The New Work Fund is kindly supported by Ceri & Doug King, Fatima & Mark Grizelle and other supporters who wish to remain anonymous.

English National Ballet's Dance Health programme is supported by Tower Hamlet's Mayor's Community Fund, Derrill Allatt Foundation, D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust, The Vandervell Foundation, Linbury Trust, City Bridge Trust, G&K Boyes Charitable Trust and Backstage Trust.

About English National Ballet

English National Ballet has a long and distinguished history. Founded in 1950 as London Festival Ballet by the great English dancers Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin, it has been at the forefront of ballet's growth and evolution ever since.

English National Ballet brings world class ballet to the widest possible audience through performances across the UK and on eminent international stages; its distinguished orchestra, English National Ballet Philharmonic; its digital platforms Ballet on Demand and BalletActive; being a UK leader in creative learning and engagement practice, building innovative partnerships to deliver flagship Dance Health interventions such as Dance for Parkinson's and Dance for Dementia, and through talent development initiatives including ENBYouthCo and Ballet Futures which looks to create a more diverse and inclusive future for the artform.

English National Ballet continues to add ground-breaking new works to its repertoire whilst celebrating the tradition of great classical ballet, gaining acclaim for artistic excellence and creativity. 2019 saw the Company enter a new chapter in its history with a move to a purpose-built state-of-the-art home in east London, allowing a renewed commitment to creativity, ambition, and connection to more people, near and far, than ever before.

About Ballymore

Ballymore: 40 years of forward thinking

Ballymore is a leading property developer with a multi award-winning portfolio of some of Europe's largest and most transformative urban development projects. Our projects are defined by their vision, originality and commitment to quality and we are driven to set new, lasting standards in design, creativity and architecture. Every place we create has a unique personality inspired by its location, history, people and culture, nurtured through strong relationships with our expert partners and those we develop with local communities. We enliven areas well before the first foundations are laid and we remain long after the last brick is in place to ensure our customers are well looked after and the communities continue to thrive. Our landmark developments in the UK span the breadth of Greater London, from our new riverside communities in Royal Wharf, London City Island and Embassy Gardens, where we have transformed underused land into lively new neighbourhoods, over to Brentford where we are reconnecting the High Street with the waterfront and revitalising the town centre. In Ireland, we develop homes across a number of counties and have established Dublin Landings as a new commercial centre at North Wall Quay. We are also working in partnership with Diageo and CIE to design and deliver mixed-use developments at the Guinness brewery and Connolly Station in Dublin.