

PRESS RELEASE
UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 12PM THURSDAY 9 MARCH 2017

English National Ballet 2017 - 2018 Autumn/Winter Season

- English National Ballet performs Sir Kenneth MacMillan's *Song of the Earth* and Frank Andersen's *La Sylphide* for the first time, with performances on tour and at the London Coliseum.
- Roland Petit's *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort* returns with performances at the London Coliseum.
- Akram Khan's *Giselle* returns to London and tours to Liverpool for the first time.
- Rudolf Nureyev's *Romeo & Juliet* returns to Bristol in its 40th anniversary year.

English National Ballet today announces its 2017 - 2018 autumn/winter season.

This autumn sees two works new to English National Ballet's repertoire, Sir Kenneth MacMillan's masterwork, *Song of the Earth* and Frank Andersen's *La Sylphide*, performed on tour at the Manchester Palace Theatre, Milton Keynes Theatre, and at the London Coliseum where Roland Petite's *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort* is also revived.

Artistic Director of English National Ballet, Tamara Rojo CBE said: "*I am so pleased that next season we are able to present the masterpiece Song of the Earth in this anniversary year of Sir Kenneth MacMillan.*

"Song of the Earth is a great example of MacMillan's choreographic style. Influenced by the original Chinese poems that Mahler used to create the score, we can see how MacMillan used these delicate movements to form part of the dramatic choreography. This incredibly moving work is a wonderful vehicle for the extremely talented dancers in the company, and I can't wait for our audiences to see them perform it next season."

First performed in 1965, MacMillan's choreography for *Song of the Earth* was different from anything he had previously devised. Featuring three central figures, a Woman, a Man, and a Messenger, this powerful, moving exploration of life, death, and renewal is set to Mahler's song cycle, *Das Lied von der Erde*, performed live by English National Ballet Philharmonic. These performances of *Song of the Earth* coincide with the 25th anniversary of MacMillan's death.

Devised by one of the world's leading producers of Bournonville ballets, Frank Andersen's faithful version of the 1830s Romantic ballet *La Sylphide* sees James wake from a dream on the morning of his wedding to Effy to encounter a mysterious sylphide before him, setting off a fateful sequence of events. This is the first time Andersen's *La Sylphide* has been performed in the UK.

Roland Petit's *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort* follows a young man compelled by love for a cruel mistress. He desperately waits for her but when she finally arrives, it is to torment him. Distraught and confused, the young man succumbs to his despair. English National Ballet last performed *Jeune Homme* in 2013, as part of its Ecstasy and Death programme.

Following its sold out, critically acclaimed run last year, Akram Khan's *Giselle* returns this autumn with performances at Sadler's Wells and the Liverpool Empire Theatre. Hailed as "*a masterpiece of 21st century dance*" (Mail on Sunday), Khan's *Giselle* is one of a community of migrant workers cast out of their jobs in a condemned garment factory. Last season over 40,000 people saw Akram Khan's reimagined *Giselle* performed on tour.

The world's greatest love story, Rudolf Nureyev's *Romeo & Juliet* returns this autumn with performances at the Bristol Hippodrome. Featuring inventive and passionate choreography, and set to Prokofiev's famous score, performed live by the English National Ballet Philharmonic, these performances mark the 40th anniversary of the production, which was originally created for English National Ballet in 1977 to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

English National Ballet had its most successful Nutcracker run on record last season, when over 99,000 people came to see the production. This year sees Wayne Eagling's Nutcracker tour to the Mayflower Theatre Southampton before returning to the London Coliseum, continuing the Company's tradition of presenting a Nutcracker production each year since 1950.

Winner of Outstanding Company at the 2016 Critics Circle National Dance Awards, last season English National Ballet performed to over 280,000 people across 176 performances in the UK. Its digital output saw a partnership with Sky and Factory 42 to create a ground-breaking VR experience, and video content for Akram Khan's *Giselle*, which received over 6.5 million views.

English National Ballet is committed to presenting world-class ballet to the widest possible audience, and making the art form accessible to everyone. Last season over 20,000 tickets were available for £14 or less across every production in every venue.

**Tickets go on sale to Friends of English National Ballet at 10am on Friday 10 March.
General on sale is at 10am on Monday 13 March.**

For further information, interview requests, and images please contact Robert James, PR Manager at robert.james@ballet.org.uk or call 020 7590 2933.

For information on how to become a Friend of English National Ballet see www.ballet.org.uk/support-us

Listings information for 2017-2018 Autumn/Winter Season.

Akram Khan's *Giselle*

Sadler's Wells

Wednesday 20 - Saturday 23 September 2017

Press Night: Wednesday 20 September 2017

For more information, see: <http://giselle.ballet.org.uk>

Song of the Earth / La Sylphide

Manchester Palace Theatre

Wednesday 11 October - Saturday 14 October 2017

Press night: Wednesday 11 October 2017

For more information, see: www.ballet.org.uk/song-sylphide

Song of the Earth / La Sylphide

Milton Keynes Theatre

Tuesday 17 October - Saturday 21 October 2017

Press night: Tuesday 17 October 2017

For more information, see: www.ballet.org.uk/song-sylphide

Akram Khan's *Giselle*

Liverpool Empire Theatre

Wednesday 25 October - Saturday 28 October 2017

Press night: Wednesday 25 October 2017

For more information, see: <http://giselle.ballet.org.uk>

Romeo & Juliet

Bristol Hippodrome

Tuesday 21 November - Saturday 25th November 2017
Press night: Tuesday 21 November
For more information, see: www.ballet.org.uk/romeoandjuliet

Nutcracker

Mayflower Theatre, Southampton

Wednesday 29 November - Saturday 2 December 2017
Press night: Wednesday 29 November 2017
For more information, see: www.ballet.org.uk/nutcracker

Nutcracker

London Coliseum

Wednesday 13 December 2017 - Saturday 6 January 2018
Press night: Wednesday 13 December 2017
For more information, see: www.ballet.org.uk/nutcracker

Song of the Earth / La Sylphide

London Coliseum

Tuesday 9 January - Saturday 13 January 2018
Press night: Tuesday 9 January 2018
For more information, see: www.ballet.org.uk/song-sylphide

Le Jeune Homme et la Mort / La Sylphide

London Coliseum

Tuesday 16 January - Saturday 20 January 2018
Press night: Tuesday 16 January 2018
For more information, see: www.ballet.org.uk/jeune-sylphide

English National Ballet's 2018 spring/summer Season will be announced shortly.

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 played a major role in the growth and history of ballet in the UK. Today, English National Ballet is renowned for taking world-class ballet to the widest possible audience through its national and international tour programme, offsite performances at festivals including Glastonbury and Latitude, its distinguished orchestra English National Ballet Philharmonic, and being a UK leader in creative learning and engagement practice and delivery, building innovative partnerships to deliver flagship programmes such as English National Ballet's Dance for Parkinson's. Under the artistic directorship of Tamara Rojo, English National Ballet has gained new acclaim as it introduces innovative new works to the Company's repertoire while continuing to honour and reinvigorate traditional ballet.