

Monday 10 May 2021

English National Ballet: Reunion

Opens Monday 17 May, Sadler's Wells, London

English National Ballet's first live performance to a theatre audience in over a year will take place on **Monday 17 May**, the first day theatres in England are able to reopen after closures due to coronavirus restrictions. Performing to socially distanced audiences at **Sadler's Wells, London**, the Company presents **Reunion**, five original works by renowned choreographers and rising talents.



English National Ballet in (L-R) *Take Five Blues* © ENB, *Echoes* © ENB, *Senseless Kindness* © Morgan Sinclair

Tamara Rojo CBE, English National Ballet's Artistic Director said: "After over a year without performing in theatres, I am thrilled that English National Ballet is going to be back on stage. We created these five exciting pieces during the second lockdown last year, working in small bubbles in our studios - I can't wait to share them with live audiences for the first time."

Casting for the performances has now been announced. Opening night sees **Lead Principals Francesco Gabriele Frola, Isaac Hernández, Jeffrey Cirio, Erina Takahashi, Fernanda Oliveira** and **Joseph Caley** make their return to the stage alongside their colleagues from the Company. Full casting is available [here](#)

The five pieces that feature in Reunion were originally created and released as films during English National Ballet's critically acclaimed Digital Season in late 2020 and are now performed live on stage for the first time.

Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui reimagines *Laid in Earth* as a "torn apart" quartet. It is set to Purcell's famous aria from *Dido and Aeneas* – sung live by mezzo soprano Catherine Backhouse, as well as new electronic music composed by Olga Wojciechowska.

In *Echoes*, **Russell Maliphant** creates ever shifting choreography and uses light as an integral partner in the creative process. Collaborating with video artist Panagiotis Tomaras and with commissioned sound design by Dana Fouras, the result is mesmerising.

A former principal dancer with the Bolshoi Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet and San Francisco Ballet, world-renowned choreographer **Yuri Possokhov** works with a UK company for the first time. His piece for four dancers, *Senseless Kindness*, is based on Vasily Grossman's great novel, *Life*

and Fate, about a Russian family caught in the Second World War, and set to Shostakovich's Piano Trio No1.

In creating ***Take Five Blues***, ENB Associate Choreographer **Stina Quagebeur** was inspired by Nigel Kennedy's take on Bach's Vivace and Desmond's Take Five, and the way in which contemporary jazz and classical music are uniquely married together. Her eight dancers play with the unexpected melodies and rhythms, feeding off each other's energy in this high-spirited number that pushes past classical ballet's rules and boundaries into new territories.

Arielle Smith's *Jolly Folly* is fast-paced, surprising, and full of uncontrollable energy. The old movie musical inspired piece is driven by the Klazz Brothers' latin-infused covers of Tchaikovsky, Strauss and Mozart.

The music for *Laid in Earth* and *Senseless Kindness* is performed live by musicians of English National Ballet Philharmonic.

-ENDS-

English National Ballet is grateful for the generous grant it has been awarded through the Government's Culture Recovery Fund, which allows it to continue to create, perform and serve its audiences.

For further information and images, please contact Alice Lawley, PR Manager, on alice.lawley@ballet.org.uk or 07946541703

Listings

Reunion
Sadler's Wells, London
Monday 17 – Sunday 30 May 2021
www.ballet.org.uk/reunion

This performance runs for approximately 80 minutes with no interval.

#ENBReunion

Notes to Editors

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

NatWest is Principal Partner of English National Ballet.

Ballymore is Principal Building Partner of English National Ballet.

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

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 live performances across the UK and on eminent international stages including The Bolshoi Theatre and Palais Garnier; its digital platforms Ballet on Demand and BalletActive; its distinguished orchestra, English National Ballet Philharmonic; and being a UK leader in creative learning and engagement practice, building innovative partnerships to deliver flagship programmes such as English National Ballet's Dance for Parkinson's.

Under the artistic directorship of Tamara Rojo CBE, English National Ballet has introduced ground-breaking new works to the Company's repertoire whilst continuing to honour the tradition of great classical ballet, gaining acclaim for artistic excellence and creativity. 2019 saw English National Ballet enter a new chapter in its history when it moved into a purpose-built state-of-the-art home in east London, Mulryan Centre for Dance, bringing a renewed commitment to, and freedom for, creativity, ambition, and connection to more people, near and far, than ever before. www.ballet.org.uk

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in Let's Create that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision. www.artscouncil.org.uk

Following the Covid-19 crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million Emergency Response Package with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. We are also one of several bodies administering the Government's Culture Recovery Fund and unprecedented support package of £1.57 billion for the culture and heritage sector. Find out more at www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19