

# English National Ballet

## WORLD PREMIERE of *Creature* by Akram Khan

### Sadler's Wells, London

23 September – 02 October 2021

[www.ballet.org.uk/creature](http://www.ballet.org.uk/creature)

English National Ballet's performances of the much-anticipated world premiere of *Creature* by Akram Khan will take place at **Sadler's Wells, London**, from **23 September – 02 October 2021**.

*Creature* is an unearthly tale of exploitation and human frontiers inspired by Georg Büchner's expressionist classic *Woyzeck*, with shadows of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Drawing on themes of abandonment, isolation and the fragility of the mind, *Creature* is the tale of an outsider and the search for belonging.

**Akram Khan said:** *"The COVID-19 pandemic hit the UK just weeks before Creature was due to premiere in London last April [2020] and the final stages of our creation and rehearsal process were brought to an abrupt halt as the country went into lockdown. On returning to the studio, I've brought the experiences of the last year with me, drawing on themes of isolation, mental health, and patriarchal systems...and within that, I am exploring our very destructive nature of wanting to control everything...man-made systems, nature, animals, fellow humans, our future, and even our past...we want to control it all. And what I am realising is that you can't control a living thing, without destroying what's alive about them."*



English National Ballet rehearse *Creature* by Akram Khan, April 2021 © Photography by ASH

Khan is joined by a brilliant creative team in the creation of this new ballet including Academy Award-winning designer Tim Yip, composer and sound designer Vincenzo Lamagna, lighting designer Michael Hulls and dramaturg Ruth Little.

*Creature* is Akram Khan's third collaboration with English National Ballet and follows the success of *Dust* (performed as part of *Lest We Forget* in 2014), and *Giselle*, Khan's first ever full-length ballet.

The matinee performance of *Creature* on Saturday 25 September will be audio-described, with a pre-show insights talk related to the performance, making the ballet accessible to visually impaired people. Further information will be released to bookers via Sadler's Wells about the pre-show insights talk in September.

The postponed international premiere of *Creature* will take place at Chicago's Joan W. and Irving B. Harris Theater from 24-26 February 2022.

-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, interview requests and images, please contact Alice Lawley, PR Manager, on [alice.lawley@ballet.org.uk](mailto:alice.lawley@ballet.org.uk) or 07946541703

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **Credits:**

Direction and Choreography: Akram Khan  
Original Music and Sound Design: Vincenzo Lamagna  
with arrangement by James Keane  
Visual and Costume Design: Tim Yip  
Lighting Design: Michael Hulls  
Dramaturgy: Ruth Little  
Assistant Choreographer: Andrej Petrovič  
Guest Repetiteurs: Nicola Henshall, Mavin Khoo  
Sound System Designer: Yvonne Gilbert

A Co-Production between English National Ballet and Opera Ballet Vlaanderen (OBV)  
Co-Producer: Sadler's Wells, London Production Partner: The Joan W. and Irving B. Harris Theater  
Production Sponsor: Cunard

#### **Listings:**

**English National Ballet**  
**WORLD PREMIERE of *Creature* by Akram Khan**  
**Sadler's Wells, London**  
Thursday 23 September – Saturday 02 October 2021  
[www.ballet.org.uk/creature](http://www.ballet.org.uk/creature)

#### **Press Night:**

**Thursday 23 September, 7.30pm**

Find out more about the Audio Described Performance and Insights Talk [here](#).

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](http://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](http://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](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19)