

**For immediate release: Tuesday 11 January, 3.40pm (GMT)**

## **English National Ballet Leadership Announcement**

The Company has announced today that Artistic Director and Lead Principal Dancer, Tamara Rojo CBE, will step down towards the end of 2022 to take up the role of Artistic Director at San Francisco Ballet.

Since Tamara's appointment to the role in 2012, she has gained acclaim for artistic excellence and creativity by introducing ground-breaking works into the Company's repertoire, whilst continuing to celebrate the tradition of great classical ballet and attracting world-class talent. She has evolved the artform with bold commissions from both established and emerging creatives, including more than 40 works choreographed by women across English National Ballet's programming.

Tamara led the Company into a new chapter in 2019, by moving it into the RIBA award-winning Mulryan Centre for Dance, a purpose-built, state-of-the-art new home in east London. Here, Tamara's ambition to connect with more people and demystify the artform came to the fore, with a renewed commitment to public access, community engagement and digital innovation. Her investment in the future of ballet continued, with the introduction of forward-focused programmes including internal dancer development initiative, *Dance Leaders of the Future*, and *Ballet Futures*, a children's training programme which aims to diversify the talent pipeline.

Throughout the immense challenges of the last two years, Tamara has been a dedicated advocate, not just for English National Ballet but for the wider creative industries, making the case for the importance of the arts and demonstrating the strength, resilience, and collective determination within the industry to persevere and innovate.

Later this month, Tamara will make her choreographic and directorial debut with *Raymonda*, her first full-length ballet which English National Ballet will perform at the London Coliseum.

ENB will appoint an Artistic Advisory Panel to support the board in the search for a new Artistic Director. Tamara will remain in her post until late in the year to ensure a smooth transition. A further update will be provided at the appropriate time.

**Tamara Rojo said:** *"It has been an honour to have led this extraordinary company for the last 10 years. I am incredibly proud of all that we have achieved together, from the tremendous talent working within and alongside the Company, to creating and moving into the amazing new building we now call our home, to the off-stage communities we have established with our education and engagement work.*

*English National Ballet's fundamental aim to bring world-class ballet to the widest possible audience has always resonated with me. It is the reason the Company has been a part of my life for so many years, from performing here as a dancer early in my career, to returning as Artistic Director in 2012. My admiration and support do not end here, I will remain invested in English National Ballet's continued success in the years to come.*

*It has been a privilege to be the custodian of English National Ballet and as I prepare to hand over the reins, I am confident that this world-class company which is at the forefront of ballet's*

*growth and evolution with a much-deserved place on the international stage, will continue to flourish and thrive.”*

**English National Ballet’s Chair, Sir Roger Carr, said:** *“Tamara is a remarkable person whose vision, intellect and energy has propelled English National Ballet to new heights. The Company has outstanding dancers, a fine building with state-of-the-art facilities and a repertoire strengthened by significant new works. Collectively, these assets will provide a strong foundation on which the new Artistic Director can build the next exciting chapter in the life of this remarkable Company.*

*After ten years at the helm, the legacy that Tamara leaves will be long lasting and it is hoped that in her new position in San Francisco she will have the opportunity to capitalise on past achievements and build a bridge between these two great ballet companies for joint endeavours to our mutual benefit. I speak on behalf of us all at the English National Ballet when I offer my sincere thanks and wish Tamara every success in the future.”*

-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, Head of Press and Communications on [alice.lawley@ballet.org.uk](mailto:alice.lawley@ballet.org.uk) or 07946541703

### **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.

### **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)