

English National Ballet Emerging Dancer 2024

Sadler's Wells, London

Friday 24 May, 7.30pm

www.ballet.org.uk/emerging-dancer-2024



Photo caption: *The 2024 Emerging Dancer finalists* © Laurent Liotardo

Emerging Dancer returns to a live audience at Sadler's Wells, London on Friday 24 May. Six of English National Ballet's most promising dancers, selected by their peers, showcase their talent in front of an eminent panel of expert judges, before one is presented with the Emerging Dancer Award.

This year's finalists, mentored by their peers, will each perform a classical pas de deux and a contemporary duet in their pairings. Anna-Babette Winkler and Jose María Lorca Menchón will perform an excerpt from *La Bayadère*, Breanna Foad and Thiago Pereira will perform the Venetian Carnival duet from *Satanella*, and Anna Ciriano and Shunhei Fuchiyama will perform the Grand Pas de Deux from *Don Quixote*.

The Company's creative talent is also eminent in the contemporary section. **Rentaro Nakaaki**, himself a previous Emerging Dancer finalist, is choreographing a new work, *Moya*, for Anna Ciriano and Shunhei Fuchiyama, with original music composed by fellow Company member, Fabian Reimair.

Breanna Foad and Thiago Pereira will perform a new work by London-based Taiwanese choreographer **Ching-Ying Chien**. Chien said: *“This new duet is inspired by the imagery of Penrose stairs, an impossible object where the staircase always comes back to the starting point. In our current human society, we often believe we’re moving somewhere, yet we end up stuck in a loop. I’ve been exploring this idea with Breanna and Thiago through movement that creates a dream/nightmare feeling among reality”*.

Celebrating English National Ballet’s contemporary repertoire, Anna-Babette Winkler and Jose María Lorca Menchón will perform **Dust** by **Akram Khan**. On coaching the pair, First Soloist James Streeter said: *“Although it feels like yesterday, it has been ten years since I first performed Akram Khan’s Dust, a piece that means so much to us and we hold very close to our hearts. It is such an honour and a privilege to work alongside Erina Takahashi and Mavin Khoo as we see Anna-Babette and Jose dive deeper into this powerful work. It has been so wonderful to support them as they travel on their journey and I feel very great full to be able to share this experience with them.”*

Emerging Dancer 2024 will be hosted by Aaron S. Watkin, Artistic Director of English National Ballet.

This year’s esteemed judging panel comprises: Amanda Britton MA, Chief Executive, Principal and Artistic Director of Rambert School; Monica Zamora, Former Principal Dancer of Birmingham Royal Ballet; Edward Watson MBE, Former Principal Dancer of The Royal Ballet; and Isabela Coracy*, Senior Artist of Ballet Black.

The recipients of the People’s Choice Award, as voted for by audiences throughout the Season, and the Corps de Ballet Award, which acknowledges the work on and off-stage of an Artist of the Company, will also be announced. There will be special performances by 2022 Emerging Dancer winner Eric Snyder and People’s Choice winner Precious Adams.

English National Ballet Philharmonic will perform live, conducted by Principal Guest Conductor Gavin Sutherland.

Emerging Dancer 2024 will be filmed and made available to stream for free on English National Ballet’s YouTube channel from Thursday 30 May, for a limited time of 30 days.

Emerging Dancer 2024 is supported by CHANEL.

The People’s Choice Award is supported by Alexis and Frances Prenn.

*Replacing Freddie Opoku-Addaie, Artistic Director and CEO of Dance Umbrella.

-ENDS-

For further information, interview requests, and images, please contact Inês Carvalho, Senior Press Officer, on ines.carvalho@ballet.org.uk

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.

Listings:

**English National Ballet
Emerging Dancer 2024
Sadler’s Wells, London**

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Further information about the Emerging Dancer 2024 finalists:

Anna-Babette Winkler

Anna-Babette Winkler joined English National Ballet as an Artist of the Company in 2018, following training at English National Ballet School, and performing with Birmingham Royal Ballet. Since joining the Company, notable roles include Lead Winter in Christopher Wheeldon's *Cinderella* in-the-round at the Royal Albert Hall, Lead Snowflake in Wayne Eagling's *Nutcracker*, Moyna in Mary Skeaping's *Giselle*, and a featured role in Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui's *Laid in Earth*.

Anna Ciriano

Anna Ciriano joined the Company in 2022. Anna started her training at Institut del Teatre in her home city of Barcelona, and after graduating from English National Ballet School in 2017, she performed with Orlando Ballet and Birmingham Royal Ballet. Since joining English National Ballet Anna has danced Spanish in Wayne Eagling's *Nutcracker* and appeared in Akram Khan's *Giselle*, Tamara Rojo's *Raymonda* and Derek Deane's *Swan Lake*.

Breanna Foad

Breanna Foad joined ENB in 2018, following training at the Australian Ballet School and English National Ballet School. Breanna performed the leading role of Chosen One in Mats Ek's *The Rite of Spring* as part of Ek/Forsythe/Quagebeur at Sadler's Wells in 2022. She went on to dance the role of Chosen One in the world premiere of Andrea Miller's *Les Noces: Ascent to Days*, as part of Our Voices at Sadler's Wells, in September 2023.

Jose María Lorca Menchón

Jose María Lorca Menchón joined ENB in 2022. He trained at Conservatorio Profesional de Danza de Murcia, Spain, and English National Ballet School, where he had the role of the Prince created on him for My First Ballet: *Cinderella* (2020). Jose's repertoire with ENB includes Wayne Eagling's *Nutcracker*, Tamara Rojo's *Raymonda*, and William Forsythe's *Playlist (EP)*, David Dawson's *Four Last Songs* and Stina Quagebeur's *Take Five Blues*.

Shunhei Fuchiyama

Shunhei Fuchiyama started dancing at the age of five, training at the Acri-Horimoto Ballet Academy and The Harid Conservatory, before joining English National Ballet in 2021, the same year that he was awarded with the 5th prize in the Prix de Lausanne, and the 1st prize Classical in NBA National ballet competition. Since joining English National Ballet, Shunhei's notable roles include Freddie and Cossack in Wayne Eagling's *Nutcracker* and peasant pas de deux in Mary Skeaping's *Giselle*.

Thiago Pereira

Thiago Pereira, from Minas Gerais, Brazil, joined English National Ballet as Artist of the Company in 2022, following his training in Vórtice escola de danças and Académie de danse Princesse Grace. Since joining the Company, Thiago has appeared in Akram Khan's *Giselle*, Tamara Rojo's *Raymonda*, Derek Dean's *Swan Lake*, and Balanchine's *Theme and Variations* as part of Our Voices at Sadler's Wells in 2023.

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 programmes such as Dance for Parkinson's; and through talent development initiatives including 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.