

PRESS RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO until 1pm, Wednesday 18 February 2026

A Season to 'Feel More': English National Ballet, 2026-2027

www.ballet.org.uk

View the trailer for English National Ballet's 2026-2027 Season [here](#).

- English National Ballet invites audiences to 'feel more' with a season of live performance, participation programmes, creative health initiatives and digital activity
- National touring takes ballet across the country, showcasing timeless classics, family-friendly performances and bold contemporary work
- World premieres from rising choreographic talents Jae Man Joo and Micaela Taylor
- Company performs George Balanchine's *Symphony in Three Movements* for the first time
- Rudolf Nureyev's *Romeo & Juliet*, the Company's signature production, tours nationally
- Derek Deane's *Swan Lake* in-the-round celebrates 30 years with Royal Albert Hall performances
- Extensive programme of learning, participation and talent development opportunities
- Watkin and Smith's *Nutcracker* released to Ballet on Demand, for viewing anywhere, anytime

English National Ballet's 2026-2027 season opens up the possibilities of ballet, offering more ways to discover, feel and engage with ballet, on stage and beyond.

English National Ballet's Artistic Director, Aaron S. Watkin, said:

"Dance has the emotional power to move, creating space for multiple perspectives, reactions and experiences. Our 2026-2027 season offers a range of opportunities. We're inviting audiences to 'feel more' through thought-provoking new works, much-loved classics, and creative learning, participation and digital programmes that reach more people, in more ways."

The season kicks off in September at Sadler's Wells Theatre, London, with ***Rhythm Riot*** (24 September – 3 October 2026), a dynamic new triple bill comprising two world premieres and a Company debut. The programme opens with **George Balanchine's *Symphony in Three Movements***, originally created for New York City Ballet in 1972. Performed by English National Ballet for the first time, the piece showcases the brilliance of Balanchine's neo-classical style to full effect. 32 dancers perform the ballet's three movements in a vibrant display of virtuosity, musicality and control, set to Stravinsky's electrifying score, played live by English National Ballet Philharmonic.

The bill is completed by two world premieres: the UK debut of Jae Man Joo and a new work from rising choreographic talent Micaela Taylor. Korean-born choreographer Jae Man Joo, recipient of the 2009 Princess Grace Choreographer Award, creates ***Auguries of Innocence***, drawing on William Blake's profound poem of the same name. This compelling new ballet blends enthralling movement with emotional depth, expressing the interconnectedness of the human, natural and spiritual worlds. It is set to the soul-stirring music of Pēteris Vasks, performed live by English National Ballet Philharmonic. Set and costume designs are by Thomas Mika, with lighting design by Mark Henderson.

Micaela Taylor's *Bow Out* closes the programme. Inspired by the 1930s jazz era and scene-sensations the Nicholas Brothers, Taylor brings a pulsing new work to English National Ballet's repertoire. Exploring the idea of vitality and expressive freedom, it features a new score by Tru (Philip Buckner), performed live by English National Ballet Philharmonic, and conducted by Maria

Seletskaja. With designs by Candice Macallister, *Bow Out* showcases Taylor's distinctive storytelling and versatile movement style, inviting audiences to experience something fresh and memorable.

Honouring our longstanding commitment to celebrating tradition, English National Ballet tours **Rudolf Nureyev's *Romeo & Juliet***, in autumn 2026. This signature reimagining of one of the world's greatest love stories travels to **Liverpool's Empire Theatre** (15 - 17 October 2026), **Manchester's Palace Theatre** (21 - 25 October 2026), **Mayflower Theatre, Southampton** (3 - 5 December 2026), and the **London Coliseum** (14 - 24 January 2027), where it first premiered in 1977.

Renowned for its compelling drama and exhilarating choreography, Nureyev's production is brought to life with gorgeous sets and costumes by Ezio Frigerio and Franca Squarciapino. Sergei Prokofiev's breathtaking score is played live by English National Ballet Philharmonic, conducted by Music Director Maria Seletskaja, Principal Guest Conductor Gavin Sutherland and Benjamin Pope.

Our sugar-spun tradition returns to the **London Coliseum** this winter with ***Nutcracker*** (17 December 2026 - 10 January 2027), choreographed by Artistic Director **Aaron S. Watkin** and Olivier Award-winner **Arielle Smith**. Audiences join Clara on her fantastical adventure, brought to life by exquisite dancing, spectacular costumes and sets by Dick Bird and Piotr Tchaikovsky's instantly recognisable score, played live by English National Ballet Philharmonic. The orchestra is conducted by Music Director Maria Seletskaja, Principal Guest Conductor Gavin Sutherland, David Briskin and Alec Frank-Gemmill.

In spring 2027, **Johan Inger's** award-winning ***Carmen*** returns to the company's repertoire with performances at **Sadler's Wells Theatre**, London (7 - 17 April 2027), before touring nationally for the first time to the **Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury** (22 - 24 April 2027). Inger's reimagining delves beneath the surface of the classic tale of seduction and obsession, fusing classical and contemporary movement to striking effect. Set to Shchedrin's arrangement of Bizet's renowned score, and including additional music by Marc Alvarez to heighten the drama, music is performed live by English National Ballet Philharmonic, conducted by Maria Seletskaja and Benjamin Haemhouts. The production features set designs by Curt Allen Wilmer and Leticia Gañan with estudiodeDos, costumes by David Delfin, and lighting design by Tom Visser.

For younger audiences, English National Ballet and English National Ballet School travel to towns and cities across the country with ***My First Ballet: Cinderella***. This magical introduction to ballet follows nature-loving Cinderella on a journey of self-discovery, choreographed by **George Williamson**, with designs by Rachael Canning and lighting design by Stevie Mackie. Featuring a narrator to guide the audience, the production makes ballet accessible for children as young as three.

The national tour opens at the **New Theatre, Oxford** (6 - 7 February 2027), with further dates at the **Grand Opera House, York** (13 - 14 February 2027), **Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury** (16 - 17 February 2027), **Opera House, Manchester** (20 - 21 February 2027), and **Peacock Theatre, London** (25 March - 3 April 2027), with further dates to be announced. London dates include sensory adapted and BSL-interpreted performances, touch tour and visual story guides as part of the ***My First Inclusive Ballet*** programme, alongside family workshops offering more ways for audiences to connect with ballet.

English National Ballet's 2026-2027 season closes with performances of **Derek Deane's** spectacular ***Swan Lake in-the-round***, marking its 30th anniversary. From 16 - 27 June 2027, the **Royal Albert Hall** is transformed into a magical lakeside, with 60 swans, choreography unfolding in the round, and stunning designs by Peter Farmer, lit by Howard Harrison. Piotr Tchaikovsky's unforgettable score brings the story of Odette and Odile to life, performed live by English National Ballet Philharmonic, and conducted by Music Director Maria Seletskaja and Principal Guest Conductor Gavin Sutherland.

This season we welcome world-class talent to perform with the company: Associate Guest Artist **Ksenia Ovsyanick** (former English National Ballet Soloist and Staatsballett Berlin Principal) in *Rhythm Riot* and *Romeo & Juliet* (London Coliseum); Paris Opera Ballet Étoile and two-time Prix Benois de la Danse winner **Hugo Marchand** in *Romeo & Juliet* (London Coliseum); and Associate Guest Artist **Davi Ramos**, First Soloist with The Australian Ballet, in *Nutcracker*.

We are also delighted to continue welcoming our Associate Guest Repetiteur, Cynthia Harvey, along with Guest Repetiteurs Stephanie Arndt, Yannick Boquin, Manuel Legris, Elisabeth Maurin, and Alejandro Parente, giving our dancers the opportunity to work with a diverse range of artistic voices and expertise.

2026-2027 also sees the return of **Studio Sessions**. This talent development programme offers dancers a supportive and inspiring environment to explore choreographic ideas and develop new skills, culminating with an in-house sharing session.

Through English National Ballet's engagement, creative learning and participation, we connect with tens of thousands of adults, children and young people each year - in schools, on tour and in our local communities. Our sector leading **Dance for Parkinson's** and **Dance for Dementia** are based at our studios and extend across the UK and online. **My First Inclusive Ballet** in schools and family hubs widens opportunities to feel inspired and unlock creativity. At the Mulryan Centre for Dance, activity includes youth dance development through **Summer Intensives**, **ENBYouthCo-nnect** and **ENBYouthCo**, **Shared Ground** artist support, our annual dance showcase **Re-Play**, **Open House** and **Dance Classes for All**.

Ballet Futures continues work to create a more inclusive, equitable and artistically rich art form. The programme supports young dancers from historically underrepresented backgrounds - particularly those of African Diaspora, Caribbean, South Asian and Southeast Asian heritage - through sustained training, mentorship and professional development. Students also benefit from performance opportunities with the company and wider artistic partners.

The Company's **digital content, channels, and platforms** bring ballet to audiences anywhere, anytime. **BalletActive** offers subscribers hundreds of online classes, while **Ballet on Demand** streams much-loved productions, which in 2026-2027 will include Aaron S. Watkin and Arielle Smith's critically acclaimed *Nutcracker*. A new co-production partnership with **Marquee TV** will expand the Company's digital reach, with world-class performances and behind-the-scenes content available through the subscription service for audiences across the globe.

-ENDS-

For further information, interview requests, and images, please contact Caroline Ansdell, Communications Consultant, on contractor_cansdell@ballet.org.uk or Lydia Bell, Press Officer, on lydia.bell@ballet.org.uk

On-sale Information:

Booking is open for *Romeo & Juliet* at Mayflower Theatre, Southampton.

Booking for *Romeo & Juliet* at the Liverpool Empire and Manchester Palace Theatre opens on Wednesday 18 February for Friends/Members, and on Friday 20 February for general booking.

Booking for *Nutcracker* and *Romeo & Juliet* at the London Coliseum opens Wednesday 18 February for Friends/Members, and on Friday 20 February for general booking.

Booking for *Rhythm Riot* and *Carmen* at Sadler's Wells Theatre will open later this year.

Booking for My First Ballet: *Cinderella* will open in autumn 2026.

Booking for *Carmen* at the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury opens Monday 23 March for Friends/Members, and on Monday, 30 March for general booking.

Booking for *Swan Lake in-the-round* at the Royal Albert Hall opens in summer 2026.

2026-2027 Season Listings:

Rhythm Riot

Sadler's Wells Theatre, London

24 September – 3 October 2026

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/rhythm-riot>

Romeo & Juliet

Liverpool Empire Theatre

15 – 17 October 2026

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/romeo-juliet>

Romeo & Juliet

Manchester Palace Theatre

21 – 25 October 2026

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/romeo-juliet>

Romeo & Juliet

Mayflower Theatre, Southampton

3 – 5 December 2026

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/romeo-juliet>

Nutcracker

London Coliseum

17 December 2026 – 10 January 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/nutcracker/>

Romeo & Juliet

London Coliseum

14 – 24 January 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/romeo-juliet>

My First Ballet: *Cinderella*

New Theatre, Oxford

6 – 7 February 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/my-first-ballet-cinderella/>

My First Ballet: *Cinderella*

Grand Opera House, York

13 – 14 February 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/my-first-ballet-cinderella/>

My First Ballet: *Cinderella*

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

16 – 17 February 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/my-first-ballet-cinderella/>

My First Ballet: *Cinderella*

Manchester Opera House, Manchester

20 – 21 February 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/my-first-ballet-cinderella/>

My First Ballet: *Cinderella*

The Peacock Theatre, London

25 March – 3 April 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/my-first-ballet-cinderella/>

Carmen

Sadler's Wells Theatre, London

7 – 17 April 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/carmen/>

Carmen

The Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury

22 – 24 April 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/carmen/>

Swan Lake in-the-round

Royal Albert Hall, London

16 – 27 June 2027

<https://www.ballet.org.uk/production/swan-lake-in-the-round/>

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.

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

Charles Holloway OBE is the Lead Supporter of *Nutcracker*.

Cunard is UK Tour Sponsor for *Romeo & Juliet* and Production Sponsor for Johan Inger's *Carmen* at Sadler's Wells.

About English National Ballet

We are English National Ballet. And for over 75 years, we've been opening doors, curtains and minds. Creating moving, meaningful experiences that take ballet to new places – creatively, emotionally, and physically.

Whether we're on stage, on screen or online, we are here to open up the possibilities of ballet for everyone, everywhere. In towns, cities, studios and schools – across England and around the world – we connect with more people, in more places, in more ways.

Because the beauty of ballet is you can simply feel it. And whatever you feel, you're free to feel it here.

Feel more with English National Ballet.