



National Youth Ballet

Press Release – for immediate release

NATIONAL YOUTH BALLET RETURNS TO BIRMINGHAM FOR 2018 SEASON

- Following last year's 30th Anniversary season, NYB will return to Birmingham for performances at the **Crescent Theatre** on Thursday 30 and Friday 31 August
- A two-week residential programme will take place at **Elmhurst Ballet School** in Edgbaston from 19 – 28 August, with young dancers from across the country
- The 2018 Season, entitled ***Bright Young Things***, incorporates seven ballets in one programme
- The 2018 Company features 105 young dancers aged 9-18 from across the UK
- The season will culminate in a Gala performance at **Sadler's Wells** in London on Sunday 2 September 2018

For its 2018 season, the **National Youth Ballet** ("NYB") will return to Birmingham with **Bright Young Things**, a mixed programme of ballets choreographed by some of the UK's most eminent professionals and rising talents, performed by a Company of young dancers aged 9-18 from across the UK. NYB returns to the **Crescent Theatre** for the second year, with three performances on Thursday 30 and Friday 31 August following a residential programme at Elmhurst Ballet School in Edgbaston.

Bright Young Things will encompass seven short ballets inspired by the lives of extraordinary people, and celebrating the power of imagination and being bold, with ambition and flair. The programme will feature two pieces of classical repertoire alongside five fresh new commissions created especially for NYB's young Company.

Two works from NYB's repertoire will return for 2018; **Antony Dowson's** 1950's inspired classic *Bright Young Things*, and **Janet Kinson's** *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. Alongside these will be five ambitious new works; **Jo Meredith's** *Finding Your Voice*, following the life of 1920's "It Girl" Clara Bow; **Louise Bennett's** *Ada*, a ballet inspired by mathematician Ada Lovelace, **Sophie Laplane's** *WATUSI*, a bold new work from Scottish Ballet's choreographer in residence; **Matt Nicholson's** *Another Night's Dream*, a modern twist on Shakespeare's much-loved comedy; and **Emily Jane Boyle's** *The Red Balloon*, a new narrative ballet based on the 1950's French film, to be performed by NYB's Junior Company.

Patrons: Carlos Acosta CBE, David Bintley CBE, Sir Matthew Bourne OBE, Deborah Bull CBE, Dame Darcey Bussell DBE, Jayne Cadbury MBE, Lauren Cuthbertson, Antony Dowson FRAD, Stephen Jefferies, Janet Kinson FISTD, Joanna Lumley OBE, Dame Monica Mason DBE, Anna Meadmore, Angela Mortimer, Samira Saidi, Dame Antoinette Sibley DBE, Wayne Sleep OBE, Sir Peter Wright CBE

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Betchworth House, 57-65 Station Road, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1DL

NYB

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Now in its 31st year, NYB provides empowering and transformational opportunities for young people to participate in, create and perform ballet. At the heart of its annual season is a two-week residential programme that sees the young company come together with a team of professional dancers, choreographers and teachers to take them on a journey from studio to stage, emulating the experience of being in a professional dance company. This year 105 dancers aged 9-18 were offered places with the Company and will perform in the 2018 season.

NYB also nurtures talent offstage, and through its *Beyond Ballet* platform offers emerging artists the chance to create work in a company environment alongside established professionals. Aimed at early career professionals aged 18-35, *Beyond Ballet* offers artists mentoring, shadowing opportunities and a paid role as part of the artistic team, with their work being profiled within the season. This year's *Beyond Ballet* artists are choreographers **Emily-Jane Boyle**, **Sophie Laplane** and **Matt Nicholson**, with other young creatives also working in the areas of rehearsal direction, lighting and wardrobe.

The 2018 season also sees the return of the annual **Choreographic Competition**, with the winning piece being showcased within the **Bright Young Things** programme. This year's competition takes place on Thursday 23 August and will be judged by Birmingham Royal Ballet Director and NYB Patron **David Bintley**, CBE, and Birmingham Royal Ballet First Artist and 2017 NYB Beyond Ballet choreographer **Ruth Brill**.

Many NYB alumni go on to work professionally, with recent success stories from NYB's 2017 company including: **James Lovell**, who will this year make his professional debut in the lead role of The Prince in Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*; **Niamh O'Flannagain**, who has been offered the post of Apprentice Dancer for Ballet Ireland's production of *Nutcracker*; **Arielle Smith**, a *Beyond Ballet* choreographer who has been offered the post of New Adventures Young Associate Choreographer by Matthew Bourne; **Basil James** who has joined the Royal Ballet Upper School, and **Oscar Ainsworth** who has joined Northern Ballet.

Other notable alumni from NYB's history include **Drew McOnie** (Director and Choreographer), **Sir Gregory Dean** (Principal at Royal Danish Ballet), **Jessica Brown Findlay** (Actress, *Downton Abbey*) and **Tyrone Singleton** (Principal at Birmingham Royal Ballet). Over 80 alumni are currently performing on the West End stage or with professional ballet companies across the world, with many alumni having worked for leading companies including Royal Ballet, English National Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet and Matthew Bourne's New Adventures.

NYB's Patrons include Carlos Acosta, Sir Matthew Bourne, Dame Darcey Bussell, Joanna Lumley, Dame Monica Mason, Wayne Sleep and Sir Peter Wright.

NYB Artistic Director **Mikah Smillie** said today: *"We are passionate about nurturing young people, providing creative and performance experiences that inspire, raise aspirations and celebrate excellence. Working with so many young people I am constantly moved by their lives and stories, so this year we wanted to celebrate the extraordinary within each one of us. Bright Young Things champions the individual, showcasing their tenacity and trailblazing spirit."*

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“This spirit and dedication is a great preparation for life and the profession. It is thrilling to watch NYB company members go on to achieve remarkable things, and it is forever rewarding to then see alumni returning as professionals to mentor and nurture the next generation of ‘Bright Young Things’.”

**www.nationalyouthballet.org
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**For further information, images, interviews and tickets please contact
Mark Senior on mark@markseniorpr.com / 07446 169 997**

LISTINGS

Thursday 30 – Friday 31 August 2018

THE CRESCENT THEATRE, BIRMINGHAM

Sheepcote Street, Birmingham, B16 8AE

Performances: Thursday 7.30pm, Friday 2.30pm and 7.30pm

Tickets: Adults £23.25, Under 16s £20, Students £13

Box Office: 0121 643 5858 / crescent-theatre.co.uk

Sunday 2 September 2018

SADLER’S WELLS

Rosebery Avenue, London, EC1R 4TN

Performance: 7.30pm

Tickets £32.00 - £55.00, Students £10.00 *

Box Office: 020 7863 8000 / sadlerswells.com

*Transaction fee applies: £3 for telephone bookings, and £1.95 for online bookings. No charge in person at Ticket Office.

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