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How The Royal Ballet School Celebrated World Ballet Day 2022

Our Friends · Tuesday, December 27th, 2022

On Nov. 2, 2022, World Ballet Day, the biggest global celebration of dance, returned for its ninth year. A partnership between The Royal Ballet and The Australian Ballet, the day showcased the art form at its best and involved over 60 top UK and international dance companies.

Streamed live across six continents, World Ballet Day gave viewers a free behind-the-scenes look at dance company rehearsals and classes, featuring some of ballet's biggest names. There were also previews of upcoming performances and exclusive interviews.

The day included performances from Cape Town City Ballet, Bangkok City Ballet, and a joint company class from Pacific Northwest Ballet and Dance Theatre of Harlem. Students of The Royal Ballet School also took part in the global event.

World Ballet Day 2022 Live from The Royal Ballet

As part of the annual event, The Royal Ballet streamed almost five hours of live classes, rehearsals, and performances featuring Company staff, musicians, and dancers. The Royal Ballet stream began with a Company class that displayed the dancers' impressive skill for precision, flexibility, and remembering sequences.

Following the class, some of The Royal Ballet's top dancers took part in performance-grade dance rehearsals. First, Reece Clark and Marianela Nuñez rehearsed the *Diamonds* pas de deux from George Balanchine's three-act ballet *Jewels*. *Diamonds* will be available to audiences in cinemas in 2023.

Then came rehearsals of *Prima*, a new piece from Valentino Zucchetti (a Royal Ballet First Soloist), and *Mayerling*, with Ryoichi Hirano and Melissa Hamilton.

Joseph Sissens, an alumnus of The Royal Ballet School, took part in a rehearsal of Joseph Toonga's *See Us!!*, a piece that combines various styles and explores the use of bodies in space, group movement, and protest.

These rehearsals demonstrated how detailed and rigorous feedback from rehearsal directors elevates performances and helps dancers achieve their best. The rehearsals also highlighted the connection between The Royal Ballet directors, dancers, and in-house musicians.

The stream included rehearsal footage from *Sleepwalker*, a modern reimagining of *La Sonnambula* from Kristen McNally and Alexander Campbell. The intense duet stars Isabel Lubach and Joe Powell-Main, a Royal Ballet School alumnus and wheelchair dancer.

The live stream also featured work by The Royal Ballet to bring ballet to Doncaster schools. It concluded by showing all the video duets submitted by the public for the World Ballet Day TikTok challenge.

The Royal Ballet School's *Nutcracker* Rehearsals

The Royal Ballet School part of the stream began with an interview with Tom Hazelby, a Pre-professional student. Hazelby, who joined the School in Year 8, praised the School's teachers, discipline, and performance opportunities.

When asked about the connection between The Royal Ballet and the School via the Bridge of Aspiration, Hazelby said it was "great to perform with the Company and have that opportunity from such a young age."

After the interview, Year 8 dancers took part in their *Nutcracker* rehearsals with Royal Ballet School alumni Giacomo Rovero and Sae Maeda.

Company Répétiteur Gary Avis led performers through their rehearsals of the party scene. The young students quickly understood and applied Avis' feedback, worked well with The Royal Ballet dancers, and brought energy and enthusiasm to the experience.

Royal Ballet School teachers Liane McRae and José Carayol prepared the participating students before the event. The School is "incredibly proud" of "how beautifully they danced."

About The Royal Ballet School

Based in London, The Royal Ballet School is a world centre of classical ballet education. Founded in 1926 by dancer and choreographer Dame Ninette de Valois, the School has contributed to the rich history of The Royal Ballet and other companies world-wide for nearly a century.

Many acclaimed performers and choreographers are former students, including Anya Linden, Margot Fonteyn, Lynn Seymour, Kenneth MacMillan, David Wall, Anthony Dowell, Antoinette Sibley, Stephen Jefferies, Marguerite Porter, Jonathan Cope, and Darcey Bussell.

Recent alumni of the School, and modern ballet greats, include Francesca Hayward, Vadim Muntagirov, Lauren Cuthbertson, Edward Watson, Steven McRae, Marianela Nuñez, and Christopher Wheeldon.

The Royal Ballet School offers a full-time training course across its White Lodge (Richmond) and Upper School (Covent Garden) sites. Alongside an exceptional classical ballet education taught through the traditional System of Training, students gain experience of several dance styles and techniques.

The course includes a thorough academic and pastoral programme, and the School's pioneering Healthy Dancer Programme ensures students receive world-class healthcare support from a dedicated team of 20 professionals.

The School admissions board disregards academic performance or personal situation when considering which young dancers to admit, focusing solely on talent and artistic potential in classical ballet. On average, 88% of current students depend on financial support to fund their full-time training.

The Royal Ballet School's commitment to making outstanding classical ballet teaching more accessible has led to its extensive Training and Access programme. Young dancers, dance teachers, and the public can benefit from the School's decades of ballet expertise through Intensive Courses, the Associate Programme, and Inspire Seminars.

Learn more about The Royal Ballet School.

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