

Having a ball with Cinderella: Scottish Ballet's first wish comes true, as part of 50th anniversary celebrations

On Saturday 12 January, Scottish Ballet made the first of five wishes come true as part of their 50th anniversary celebrations. Lily Douglas, aged 11, was surprised by the company's Principal dancers who revealed that her dream of dancing with the company, taking a backstage tour, and watching *Cinderella* would come true.

An avid dancer and a huge ballet fan, Lily has been battling a form of childhood cancer called 'Ewing's Sarcoma' and has recently been undergoing rounds of treatment. A family friend submitted a wish on Lily's behalf to Scottish Ballet's *Five Wishes* campaign for her to spend the day with the company.

Thinking she was attending a workshop at Theatre Royal in Glasgow, Principal dancers Bethany Kingsley-Garner, Constance Devernay and Sophie Martin surprised her and announced that she would, in fact, be welcomed to watch the company take their morning class, before being invited to join them on stage.

Dame Darcey Bussell greeted Lily with a special video message, before she was taken on an exclusive backstage tour to the dancers' dressing rooms, and to see the sets, costumes and props.

On stage, Principal dancer Christopher Harrison, dressed as The Prince, presented Lily with her own custom, bejewelled pointe shoe, before she and her family and friends took to their seats to watch the magical and much-loved performance of Christopher Hampson's *Cinderella*.

Over 400 wishes were submitted, with over 100,000 votes cast by the general public. The top 50 were presented to an esteemed judging panel which includes **Dame Darcey Bussell, Susan Calman, Fred MacAulay, Janice Forsyth, Christopher Hampson and Principal Dancer Christopher Harrison**, with full details of the five wishes announced on Thursday 31 January.

This was chosen as the first wish alongside a submission for a fellow ballet lover, Rosie Mitchell, aged 7, who was similarly being treated for cancer. A surprise visit to Rosie's dance school took place in Greenock on Tuesday 18 December 2018 to share with her that her wish had been chosen. Very sadly, Rosie passed away in January 2019 and Scottish Ballet have been liaising with the family to pay tribute to her memory.

CEO/Artistic Director of Scottish Ballet, Christopher Hampson, said:

'We received an overwhelming number of wishes to our *Make a Wish* campaign and it was incredibly difficult to select five wishes. The judging panel was, however, unanimous in wanting to make Lily and Rosie's wishes come true and for Scottish Ballet to share the magic of dance with them. We are looking forward to thanking people for their continued support of Scottish Ballet, as we help to make the wishes come true in the company's 50th anniversary year.'

Dame Darcey Bussell, champion of the first wish, said:

‘I am delighted that Scottish Ballet were able to make this wish come true for Lily. There were so many wishes for us to choose from, but we were all inspired by Lily’s story and her love and passion for dance. She really deserved to have this opportunity to dance with Scottish Ballet, and I hope she had the most wonderful day.’

Talking about the wish and the surprise, Lily’s mother Jane Douglas said:

‘I can’t believe Lily’s wish was chosen. When I found out I was over the moon; it was so difficult to keep the news a secret, but the surprise was worth it. From the minute we arrived, we were made to feel so welcome by Scottish Ballet and it was an incredible experience. Lily had an amazing day, and she loved being part of the company.’

Mhairi Dunn, who submitted Lily’s wish, said:

‘I have had the pleasure of meeting Lily only once, but her story has stuck with me and touched my heart. I want to make a wish for Lily to join the ballerinas for a day, and get the chance to dance with them! This little girl deserves the world and as much light in her life as we can give her!’

The deadline for submitting and voting to the *Five Wishes* campaign has now closed.

Full details about the five wishes will be announced on Thursday 31 January, and they will take place in Scotland throughout 2019 as part of Scottish Ballet’s 50th anniversary year:

<https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/wish>

NOTES TO EDITORS:**@ScottishBallet**

[Twitter](#) / [Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#)

www.scottishballet.co.uk

www.scottishballet.co.uk/50

<https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/wish>

Scottish Ballet 50th Anniversary Press Pack can be downloaded [here](#)

Information about the Five Wishes campaign can be downloaded [here](#)

Images available to download directly from [here](#)

Scottish Ballet Press Contacts:

For more information on the 2019/2020 season and Five Wishes campaign, including interview, picture and biography requests, please contact The Corner Shop PR:

Susie Gray: susie@thecornershoppr.com / 07834073795

Magda Paduch: magda@thecornershoppr.com / 07583164070

Press enquiries and requests can also be sent to Joy Parkinson, Communications Officer, Scottish Ballet:

Joy Parkinson: joy.parkinson@scottishballet.co.uk / 07780310614

About Scottish Ballet

- Scottish Ballet, founded in 1969, is Scotland’s national dance company. Based in Glasgow, the company performs regularly across Scotland, and increasingly throughout the UK and internationally – promoting Scotland’s pioneering spirit far and wide.
- Under CEO/Artistic Director Christopher Hampson, Scottish Ballet presents bold, adventurous performances rooted in strong classical technique, accompanied by the Scottish Ballet Orchestra. The company’s broad repertoire includes new versions of the classics and ground-breaking commissions, as well as an innovative digital season every two year
- Scottish Ballet runs an extensive engagement programme, tailored to the needs of diverse communities, promotes confidence, fosters well-being and encourages creativity through dance.

- In 2019, Scottish Ballet celebrates 50 years of inspiring audiences on stage and beyond, with a creative vision crafted by Scotland. For more information about the anniversary season, visit: www.scottishballet.co.uk/50
- Scottish Ballet is funded by the Scottish Government.

ENDS