

## **Lighting up the screen: Scottish Ballet announces winter programme, including world premiere of first feature film**

- World premiere of Scottish Ballet's full-length film *The Secret Theatre* this Christmas
- Brand new short film *The Swan*, inspired by the stage production of *Swan Lake*
- New programme of **adult and children's ballet classes** presented on Zoom
- Range of **health resources**, including dance classes for those living with neurological conditions, and movement resources for NHS staff and keyworkers
- **Free membership** launched for audiences to stay connected with Scottish Ballet

Scottish Ballet's mission is to inspire on stage and beyond, and so the company will build on its creative and innovative digital work to keep audiences inspired, fit and connected this winter.

With theatres remaining closed due to COVID-19, Scottish Ballet is committed to connecting with audiences and tour venues throughout the coming months. With the screen as its stage, the company continues to produce artistic work and community programmes, including the world premiere of the company's first full-length, feature film, *The Secret Theatre*.

Created by CEO/Artistic Director Christopher Hampson and long-term collaborator Lez Brotherston, *The Secret Theatre* will bring the magic of theatre into people's homes this Christmas, with an online premiere on Monday 21 December at 6pm.

Directed for screen by Jess and Morgs, the film is seen through the eyes of a young boy as he stumbles into an empty theatre. The Christmas special will feature characters, choreography and music from Scottish Ballet's popular festive repertoire, as the worlds of the Snow Queen and the Sugar

Plum Fairy collide.

Set against a score of Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky, with music recorded live by the Scottish Ballet Orchestra, this new film will be an unforgettable adventure for all the family. It shares the company's love for our closed theatres, and the commitment that the show must go on. The film will be accompanied by a series of talks and workshops tailored to the communities Scottish Ballet tours to, delivered in partnership with venues.

This will follow the world premiere of short film *The Swan*, drawing on Scottish Ballet's sleek and stylish stage production of *Swan Lake*, and captured through the lens of Director and Editor, Eve McConnachie. Featuring David Dawson's visceral choreography from the first six minutes of Act IV, the film centres the strong, graceful Odette in a lake of light, surrounded by the arching backs, spiralling arms and mesmerising formations of the all-female cast. It will premiere online on Thursday 19 November at 7pm and is sponsored by Aberdeen Standard Investments.

Taking inspiration from the artistic programme, creativity weaves through Scottish Ballet's classes, resources, talks and workshops to keep people moving and motivated this winter.

The *SB Health* team will launch a new 6-week block of online classes of *Elevate*© and *Time to Dance* via Zoom from Monday 9 November, for people living with MS and dementia. These are in addition to the popular *Dance for Parkinson's Scotland* classes, run in partnership with Dance Base. *SB Health* is sponsored by Baillie Gifford.

Working with the Scottish Government and NHS Scotland, the *Health at Hand* series of breath and movement resources were produced for NHS staff and keyworkers, to help alleviate some of the physical and mental impacts of working over long periods. These are now available for everyone to benefit from online.

A brand new programme of **adult and children's classes** will also bring ballet directly into people's homes; allowing participants to practice and perfect their technique via Zoom. With courses ranging from Absolute Beginners to Advanced, classes will go on sale to Scottish Ballet members on Friday 23 October at 10am.

And, from today, anyone can sign up to become a Scottish Ballet member for free through the **new**

**membership programme.** Audiences and class participants are invited to become part of the SB community, to make the most of all these digital offerings and to stay up to date with Scotland's national dance company.

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

'At Scottish Ballet, dance is our primary connector to each other and our communities, and we are committed to creating and developing work that continues to engage and inspire our audiences.'

Whilst theatres remain closed, we have continued to pivot our creative energies towards digital output, allowing us to connect locally and engage globally. Our expertise and innovation within the digital field means we are excited to present new work that pushes the boundaries of production during these challenging times.

Dance is a medium that brings people together and now, more than ever, we need to connect with each other. By bringing new artistic and engagement work into people's homes this winter, we celebrate the benefits and importance of creativity in all its forms.'

**Catherine Cassidy, Director of Engagement at Scottish Ballet, said:**

'Connecting with communities is at the heart of all that we do, and we are committed to creating programmes that engage with people from all walks of life.'

We feel it is vital to help support and improve people's physical and mental wellbeing and so we are delighted to be offering a range of classes, resources, talks and workshops for people to access digitally this winter.'

Bookings and more information can be found at:

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

Full programme information including artist quotes, creative teams and booking information can be found overleaf in the Notes to Editors.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

A press pack, including biographies and photographs, can be found available for [download here](#).

### **Scottish Ballet press contact**

For more information about Scottish Ballet, please contact Joy Parkinson, Press Manager:

Joy Parkinson: [joy.parkinson@scottishballet.co.uk](mailto:joy.parkinson@scottishballet.co.uk) / +44 7780310614

### **@ScottishBallet**

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

[scottishballet.co.uk](http://scottishballet.co.uk)

## **Full programme information:**

### **Brand new artistic films**

#### *The Secret Theatre: a Christmas special*

#### **Creative Team**

Executive Producer:	Scottish Ballet
Creative Directors:	Christopher Hampson and Lez Brotherston
Directors for Screen:	Jess and Morgs – Jessica Wright and Morgann Runacre-Temple
Choreographers:	Christopher Hampson and Peter Darrell
Music:	Nikolai Rimsky Korsakov & Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, recorded live by the Scottish Ballet Orchestra
Designer:	Lez Brotherston
Writer:	Sam Brown
Producer:	Beth Allan, Forest of Black
Director of Photography:	David Liddell
Head of Hair and Makeup:	Darren Ware
1st Assistant Director:	Dominic Davey
VFX Specialist:	Ciaran Lyons
Editor:	Arttu Salmi

#### **Copy:**

This Christmas, Scottish Ballet will bring the magic of the theatre right into your home.

In a deserted city, a young boy stumbles into a theatre. He wanders through the auditorium, where rows of velvet chairs, draping curtains and chandeliers seem to lie in lonely wait for audiences to return. The theatre may be empty, but the

show will go on... Starring characters from our most popular festive ballets, the worlds of the Snow Queen and the Sugar Plum Fairy collide when the theatre bursts into life. In this spectacular, feature-length film, you'll be treated to an extraordinary show filled with acrobats, snowflakes, clowns, princes and – of course – beautiful ballerinas.

- World premiere on Monday 21 December at 6pm, via Scottish Ballet website.
- Tickets for *The Secret Theatre* are free and must be booked in advance on Scottish Ballet's website. Audiences are asked to consider making an optional donation to support the making of this film and will also be encouraged to support their local theatre.
- There will be an accompanying programme of talks and workshops for all ages inspired by *The Secret Theatre*, for local communities to engage with, delivered in partnership with venues. When booking tickets, audiences are asked to select their local theatre to ensure they receive this information.

#SBSecretTheatre

<https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/event/the-secret-theatre>

**CEO / Artistic Director and Choreographer Christopher Hampson said:**

'I am thrilled that we are able to bring a taste of Christmas to our audiences this winter with the world premiere of *The Secret Theatre*. A new venture for the company, I am excited to have developed on our digital work by creating and presenting Scottish Ballet's first feature-film; combining the colourful characters, costumes, music and sets of our festive favourites, and producing a new story that can be viewed in people's homes.

My hope for *The Secret Theatre* is to entertain and inspire audiences, both celebrating the magic of theatre and the importance of cultural access to our communities. Having had the opportunity to collaborate with people from across art forms on this film, we shine a light on the creative industries with a message that the show, must go on.'

**Co-Creative Director and Designer, Lez Brotherston said:**

'Christopher and I have collaborated on creating our own versions of stories for some time now. We've been given this great opportunity to collaborate once more and make a feature film this Christmas; bringing the costumes, sets and props from our recent work on *The Snow Queen and The Nutcracker* together to create a new story.

For me, *The Secret Theatre* is a backstage adventure, and a story that shares our wonder and love of making theatre. It's my hope that audiences will enjoy this journey through our imagination this winter.'

**Jess and Morgs (Jessica Wright and Morgann Runacre-Temple), Directors for Screen said:**

'We are delighted to be working with Scottish Ballet on *The Secret Theatre*. Having worked with the Company during *Tremble* in the company's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we are thrilled to collaborate with them again. Scottish Ballet are leading the way with dance on screen and we are excited to be a part of this fresh and pioneering film.'

## Support for Scottish Ballet and Venues

The Secret Theatre is for you, our audiences, communities, and supporters across Scotland and beyond.

If you'd like to support the making of The Secret Theatre please consider donating. Thank you.

If you would like to make a donation online, you can do so [here](#).

Alternatively, you can donate via text:

Text SBXMAS 5 to 70450 to donate £5

Text SBXMAS 10 to 70450 to donate £10

Text SBXMAS 20 to 70450 to donate £20

If you live in the US and would like to make a tax-deductible donation, you can do so [here](#).

At Scottish Ballet, we believe our local theatres are essential, and right now they are fighting for their survival. If you are able to, please consider supporting our charitable theatre partners through this extremely challenging time:

[Festival Theatre, Edinburgh](#)

[His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen](#)

[Eden Court, Inverness](#)

[Theatre Royal Newcastle](#)

[Grand Opera House, Belfast](#)

To donate by text, you must be 16 years or older and in the UK. Texts cost the donation plus one standard rate message.

Please make sure you have the bill payer's permission before donating.

## *The Swan*

### **Creative Team**

Choreographer:	David Dawson
Director and Editor:	Eve McConnachie
Director of Photography:	Steve Cardno
Music:	Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Producer:	Tony Currie

### **Copy:**

The lake is a pool of light. The strong, graceful Odette captivates us, surrounded by arching backs, spiralling arms and mesmerising formations. David Dawson's daring, visceral choreography from *Swan Lake* is perfectly paired with the rich, romantic Tchaikovsky score in our latest short film, *The Swan*. With an all-female cast led by Principal Constance Devernay, *The Swan* is a powerful showcase of our dancers' strength and connectivity.

- World premiere on Thursday 19 November at 7pm, via Scottish Ballet website.
- Tickets for *The Swan* are free and must be booked in advance on Scottish Ballet's website.
- This short film will be followed by a video interview with the film's director, Eve McConnachie, in conversation with First Artist Roseanna Leney.

#SBTheSwan

<https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/event/the-swan>

### **Talking about *The Swan*, Director and Editor Eve McConnachie said:**

'I have always been inspired by the minimalism of Scottish Ballet's *Swan Lake*. I wanted to capture its atmosphere by focusing on the central Odette, against the movement of the swans, following the lines of their bodies silhouetted in the strip of light. To dance this act takes great athleticism and strength so I hope that, alongside the beauty, it celebrates the power of the female form.'

### **Talking about *Swan Lake*, Choreographer David Dawson said:**

'I am thrilled to have had the opportunity to work with everyone at Scottish Ballet, and to begin a new adventure of discovery together with the wonderful artists of this unique and dynamic company – searching for new layers within the character and theatre of this mythical love story, and finding new ways of questioning the heart, mind and body, to reach a deeper understanding of this work.'

*The Swan* is sponsored by Aberdeen Standard Investments

## **Brand new programme of adult and children's ballet classes**

### **Classes Copy:**

Scottish Ballet is launching new online ballet classes to enjoy from your home!

Whether you're brand new to ballet, or keen to practise and perfect your technique, we're here to keep you fit and motivated this winter. These live, interactive classes will take place on Zoom and can be booked as 7-week courses, starting from Monday 2 November.

The courses will be taught by Scottish Ballet dancers and experienced teachers. We expect these classes to be popular, so make sure you're ready to book when they go on sale on Friday 23 October. In order to book, you'll need to join our new free membership programme.

For full details and how to book visit:

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

### **SB Health Copy:**

Scottish Ballet is also excited to be announcing a new 6-week block of *Elevate*© and *Time to Dance* classes on Zoom.

These interactive, live classes are especially designed for people living with MS and dementia and can be enjoyed alone or with a family member, companion or carer. Each session will be delivered by *SB Health* artists and accompanied by live music, offering you a variety of ways to connect with Scottish Ballet repertoire.

The classes will go on sale on Friday 23 October and launch on Monday 9 November for six weeks.

Our *Dance for Parkinson's* Scotland classes, run in partnership with Dance Base, will continue to be streamed via our *Dance for Parkinson's* Facebook page on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday each week.

There are lots of *SB Health* resources to try at home. You can find our *Health at Hand* videos on our website and YouTube channel. Initially created for NHS & Social Care staff, these 10-minute movement and breath sessions are designed to support physical and emotional wellbeing, accompanied by specially recorded music.

For full details and how to book visit:

<https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/join-in/dance-health-wellbeing>

*SB Health* is sponsored by Baillie Gifford



## **Brand new free membership programme**

### **Copy:**

Join Scottish Ballet's free membership programme and be part of the Scottish Ballet community

Want to peek behind the scenes and take part in exclusive events and classes?

Join the membership programme for free and enjoy:

- Exclusive access to our online ballet classes, catering for all abilities and taught by professionals including Scottish Ballet dancers\*
- Access to exclusive films and online events that bring you closer to the company\*
- Regular email updates to keep you in the loop with our latest news, films, competitions and special offers
- Digital subscription to Backstage, our company magazine full of special features and interviews
- Perks from our pals – from local to legendary, we partner with companies that reflect our adventurous spirit. They're generous too, so expect offers just for you.

<https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/support/individual-support/membership>

## **About Scottish Ballet**

- Scottish Ballet, founded in 1969, is Scotland's national dance company. Based in Glasgow, the company performs regularly across Scotland, 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, both on stage and via digital platforms.
- Scottish Ballet runs an extensive engagement programme, tailored to the needs of diverse communities, promoting confidence, fostering wellbeing and encouraging creativity through dance.
- SB Health is supported by Baillie Gifford with a funding commitment for the next five years. The programme is aligned to the Company's repertoire, in particular the work created as part of the Five in Five campaign which looks to create five new narrative ballets in five years; launched to celebrate the company's 50th anniversary in 2019.
- Alongside Baillie Gifford, SB Health is supported and funded by The Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Life Changes Trust, R S Macdonald Charitable Trust, The Rayne Foundation, Elizabeth Frankland Moore & Star Foundation, The Robertson Trust, Pam and Norman Murray, Ed and Jean Murray, Jane Britten and Fiona Chalmers, alongside anonymous patrons.
- Scottish Ballet's Dance for Parkinson's programme is delivered in partnership with Dance Base, Edinburgh.
- Scottish Ballet is funded by the Scottish Government.

**ENDS**