

## **Scottish Ballet and Nexus Studios announce six new dance films, created by Emmy Award-nominated director Fx Goby**

- World premiere of six new dance films by Emmy Award-nominated director Fx Goby.
- The films focus on the stories of six individual dance artists and how they use dance to communicate themselves and feel safe and empowered in who they are.
- The films were commissioned as part of Scottish Ballet's *Safe to Be Me*<sup>TM</sup> Festival 2021; a digital festival of dance that celebrates diversity, made possible with the support of Aberdeen Standard Investments.
- To bring the festival to a celebratory close, the films will be released on Nowness, the global video channel celebrating the best of culture, from today:  
<https://www.nowness.com/>

Today, Scottish Ballet and Nexus Studios announce six new dance films in a series titled *The Shimmering Extraordinary*, created by Emmy Award-nominated director Fx Goby that will be released on Nowness from today.

The six short films focus on the stories of six individual artists, putting the lens on their journey and practice, to explore how dance and movement has become the language they use to express and communicate themselves.

Bringing together people from various backgrounds, the inspiring films give voice to each person's story; shining a light on the strength and resilience of overcoming obstacles, to feel proud and empowered in who they are.

The artists who feature in each film are Annie Edwards, Hayaat zahra shah, Madeline Squire, Mukeni Nel, Nikita Gold and Saul Nash.

Commissioned as part of Scottish Ballet's *Safe to Be Me*<sup>TM</sup> Festival 2021, a digital festival of dance that celebrates diversity, the films are inspired by the programme's themes of acceptance, identity, and respect.

This film series brings the online festival to a celebratory close, after three weeks in which Scottish Ballet has worked with over 2,000 young people aged between 10 and 23; delivering over 50 digital dance and film sessions, alongside inspirational talks from dance industry artists and leaders.

*Safe to Be Me*<sup>TM</sup> is a project that has been running in schools since 2019. Scottish Ballet's Engagement team use their practice in dance and movement to inspire creative thinking and open up conversation for young people across ableism, bigotry, family diversity, homophobia, racism, and transphobia, in line with key Scottish Government targets to address bullying, discrimination and prejudice in these areas.

Using movement as a tool to discuss and explore intersectionality, the films and the festival celebrate dance as a universal language; a way in which to celebrate and communicate oneself.

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

'Scottish Ballet is committed to bringing dance to everyone, and so we are proud to have engaged with more young people than ever before as we moved this year's *Safe to Be Me*<sup>TM</sup> Festival online. We are humbled that the programme's values of acceptance, identity and respect have been further platformed in the inspiring films directed by Fx Goby, and the connection that each dance artist has in using movement to express themselves.'

**Fx Goby, Director, said:**

'Art and dance are a universal language that transcend cultures and words. A powerful tool to raise awareness about important topics that can have a profound effect on people. This series of films focuses on a diverse group of people who all used dance to overcome hurdles in their lives and wanted to share their stories to inspire others to leave a lasting impact.'

**Annie Edwards, artist featured in film titled *Annie*, said:**

‘Dance, to me, means agency, embodiment and power. It’s a place where all your desires can be followed and imagined. To be an artist in this film has been a wonderful opportunity to explore my own experience in collaboration with others; to be seen, and sharing this through dance and film feels like a powerful exploration.’

**Hayaat zahra shah, artist featured in film titled *Hayaat Zahra*, said:**

‘To be an artist means I can communicate with audience members who can relate through dance and music. I am so happy to be on this project that Scottish Ballet have made for young people around the world, who can understand what dance can mean to each individual. I really wish I had this when I was at school. It would have made a big difference today.’

**Madeline Squire, artist featured in film titled *Maddy*, said:**

‘I feel very lucky to be able to share my story in this way. As an artist I aim to keep evolving and continue to express my creativity. Fx is an incredible creative and this project is such a beautiful example of celebrating differences in individuals.’

**Mukeni Nel, artist featured in film titled *Mukeni*, said:**

‘This project means a lot to me, especially after the year we’ve had. To be able to share what I love to do with so many people, and with other amazing artists, I feel extremely lucky. To be an artist in these times has been hard but it’s made me stop and think why I started dancing, and in a way ignited the flame and passion in which I started dancing. ‘

**Nikita Gold, artist featured in film titled *Nikita Gold*, said:**

‘I love performing, it means the world to me to express my true self in dance. I love my career and it’s been so exciting working with the film crew to create such an amazing and inspirational new project.’

**Saul Nash, artist featured in film titled *Saul*, said:**

‘As an artist it is important for me to be able to share my stories in the hope of inspiring others. This project spreads an extremely positive message in encouraging people to feel comfortable in their own skin. This really resonates with me.’

The three films titled *Hayaat Zahra*, *Nikita Gold* and *Saul* have been released exclusively on Nowness on Wednesday 26 May until Friday 4 June.

The three films titled *Annie*, *Maddy* and *Mukeni* will be shared on Nowness on Friday 28 May via <https://www.nowness.com/series/the-shimmering-extraordinary>

The full mini-series of six films titled *The Shimmering Extraordinary* will be made available via Scottish Ballet from Friday 4 June. To find out more about Scottish Ballet, and *Safe to Be Me*<sup>TM</sup> visit:

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

To find out more about Nexus Studios visit:

<https://nexusstudios.com/>

To find out more about Fx Goby visit:

<https://www.fxgoby.com/>

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

A press pack of assets, biographies, photographs, press release and production credits is available for [download here](#).

#### **Scottish Ballet press contact**

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#### **@ScottishBallet**

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

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

#### **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 screen.
- Scottish Ballet runs an extensive engagement programme, tailored to the needs of diverse communities, promoting confidence, fostering wellbeing, and encouraging creativity through dance.
- Scottish Ballet is funded by the Scottish Government.
- For more information, visit: <https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/>

### **About Scottish Ballet's Safe to Be Me™**

- Scottish Ballet's *Safe to Be Me™* project launched in 2019 and, it has since, engaged with over 3000 young people to help empower and support them in feeling safe and confident in who they are.
- *Safe to Be Me™* has been supported by Aberdeen Standard Investments since 2019. The programme aligns with the company's core value of encouraging diversity, and their corporate vision to work towards a culture of inclusion where everyone is able to be fully themselves at work.
- *Safe to Be Me™ Festival 2021* has been programmed in consultation with *Conyach*, *Edinburgh International Festival*, *Intercultural Youth Scotland (IYS)*, *LGBT Youth Scotland* and *Sparkle – The National Transgender Charity*.

### **About Nexus Studios**

- Nexus Studios is a world-leading, independent film and immersive studio with animation and storytelling at its core. With studios in London, LA and Sydney, they create meaningful, heartfelt stories that positively add to the cultural conversation.
- Their prolific output includes Oscar nominated and BAFTA winning films, Cannes Grand Prix winning commercials and EMMY nominated AR & VR experiences.
- Working seamlessly across the entertainment and branded content space, their clients include Netflix, Disney, BBC and Sony as well as major brands including Google, Apple, Headspace and Facebook.
- For more information, visit: <https://nexusstudios.com/>

### **Sponsors**

#### **About Aberdeen Standard Investments**

- *Safe to Be Me™* is supported by Aberdeen Standard Investments.

- Aberdeen Standard Investments is dedicated to enabling their clients to be better investors. They combine their global network of investment professionals with products and solutions across a broad range of markets, asset classes and investment strategies. Research, data and technology underpin the company's decision-making.
- Aberdeen Standard Investments manages a total of £456.9 bn (€510.4bn/US\$ 606.7 bn) of assets on behalf of governments, pension funds, insurers, companies, charities, foundations and individuals across 80 countries (as at 31 December 2020).
- The company's full range of solutions spans equities, multi-asset, fixed income, liquidity, alternatives, private markets and quantitative capabilities. Through a deep knowledge of local markets and the power of coordinated global oversight, Aberdeen Standard Investments drives better investment outcomes and deliver long-term sustainable benefits for all stakeholders.
- Responsible investment is in the company's DNA – and through leading ESG framework they aim to make a real-world impact and drive positive change. This means not only improving long-term returns, but also playing a part in building a world that is more sustainable, just, inclusive and diverse.
- For more information, visit: <https://www.aberdeenstandard.com/>

#### **About Baillie Gifford**

- Scottish Ballet's First Artist Madeline Squire, star of *Maddy*, is sponsored by Baillie Gifford.
- For more information, visit: <https://www.bailliegifford.com/>

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