

‘The Sleeping Beauty’ cask of Royal Lochnagar whisky is awakened after 26 years

- A unique cask of Royal Lochnagar whisky, laid down in 1994, has now been bottled as part of Diageo’s prestigious Casks of Distinction range.
- 470 bottles will be sold at an auction hosted by online secondary market leaders Whisky Auctioneer 9-13 September 2021.
- Bottle number one will include the original cask end painting of ‘The Sleeping Beauty’ painted by Scottish artist Norman Edgar, based on a Scottish Ballet dancer.
- All proceeds will go to the Scottish Ballet Endowment Fund to support the future of Scotland’s national dance company.

Today, Scottish Ballet, Diageo and Whisky Auctioneer announce the release of 470 bottles from a single cask of Royal Lochnagar whisky, which will be sold at auction 9-13 September 2021.

The unique cask was laid down in 1994 at the instigation of Lord MacFarlane of Bearsden, who was at the time Chair of United Distillers and Vice Chair of Scottish Ballet. Scottish artist Norman Edgar was commissioned to paint the cask end portraying Scottish Ballet Principal dancer Nicci Theis in the iconic role of Princess Aurora, the sleeping beauty. It was to be a donation with a difference, an investment in the future of Scotland’s national dance company.

Twenty-six years later, ‘The Sleeping Beauty’ has been awakened and bottled as part of the prestigious Casks of Distinction range. This highly collectible bottle is now ready to be shared with whisky lovers and ballet fans alike, with every pound raised at auction contributing to the Scottish Ballet Endowment Fund. All bottling and auction costs have been generously donated by Diageo and Whisky Auctioneer in support of Scottish Ballet.

The first auction lot will include bottle number one and the unique cask end painting by Norman Edgar depicting Princess Aurora, the sleeping beauty. The first ten lots will also include exclusive behind-the-scenes experiences with Scottish Ballet.

HRH Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay and Patron of Scottish Ballet, said:

‘It is marvellous to know that this unique gift has been bottled and will now be offered for sale in support of the Scottish Ballet Endowment Fund, ensuring a lifelong benefit to all those who love ballet and who love Scotland.’¹

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

‘Like all arts organisations, Scottish Ballet has endured a challenging eighteen months unable to perform live, and this income will be vital in ensuring the company’s long-term future and capacity to inspire future audiences, on stage and beyond. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has played their part in bringing this whisky fairytale to life.’

James Mackay, Head of Rare & Exceptional Spirits at Diageo, said:

‘It is with great pride and pleasure that we have bottled ‘The Sleeping Beauty’ Cask of Distinction, beginning a new chapter in this beautiful story, and to offer lovers of Scottish craft and fine arts a chance to appreciate this unique single malt Scotch whisky, while benefiting Scottish Ballet.’

Joe Wilson, Head of Auction Content at Whisky Auctioneer, said:

‘It’s a privilege to support the Scottish Ballet Endowment Fund by hosting the online auction of this incredibly distinctive Royal Lochnagar release. This whisky has a story to tell and an important cause to support, so we are sure that both whisky and ballet lovers, as well as collectors around the world, will be excited to have the opportunity to acquire such an interesting expression.’

Lord MacFarlane of Bearsden said:

‘It is deeply gratifying that this Royal Lochnagar cask, which I presented to Scottish Ballet in celebration of its 25th anniversary in 1994, is now being awoken. I am delighted that people will now be able to taste this extremely special whisky, but even more importantly the legacy of our

¹ This quote was provided by Scottish Ballet’s Patron The Duke of Rothesay for the booklet that accompanies each bottle of whisky.

donation will be continued through the funds the cask will raise for the Scottish Ballet Endowment Fund.'

Artist Norman Edgar said:

'A great fan of the artist Edgar Degas, I had never painted any ballet paintings and enjoyed creating the pose after watching a performance of *The Sleeping Beauty* in Glasgow, with the shape of Aurora's dress following the circular barrel ends. As a relatively young man at the time, I would also still be around to sample the result!'

Charles MacLean MBE, Master of the Quaich and whisky writer, said:

'This is as good an example of Royal Lochnagar as I have ever tasted. It has retained the original distillery character, while long aging has developed layers of complexity.'

To find out more and register interest in the auction, visit

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

NOTES TO EDITORS:

A press pack of assets and photography is available for [download here](#).

Scottish Ballet press contact

For more information about Scottish Ballet, please contact Joy Parkinson, Press & Communications Manager:
joy.parkinson@scottishballet.co.uk / +44 7780310614

Diageo press contact

For more information about Royal Lochnagar whisky, please contact Catherine Humphrey at Bacchus PR:
catherine@bacchus.agency

Whisky Auctioneer press contact

For more information about Whisky Auctioneer, please contact Kathryn Wilkie at Spey:
kathryn@spey.scot

@ScottishBallet

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

[scottishballet.co.uk](https://www.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: scottishballet.co.uk

About Diageo

Diageo is a global leader in beverage alcohol with an outstanding collection of brands across spirits and beer categories. These brands include Johnnie Walker, Crown Royal, J&B, Buchanan's and Windsor whiskies, Smirnoff, Ciroc and Ketel One vodkas, Captain Morgan, Baileys, Don Julio, Tanqueray and Guinness. Diageo is a global company, and our products are sold in more than 180 countries around the world. The company is listed on both the London Stock Exchange (DGE) and the New York Stock Exchange (DEO).

For more information, visit: diageo.com

About Whisky Auctioneer

Whisky Auctioneer is the global market leader and trusted authority on the buying and selling of whisky and spirits at auction. Founded in 2013 and located in Perth, Scotland, Whisky Auctioneer utilises its expertise and knowledge combined with its auction platform, to increase interest and passion in the whisky and spirits community.

Whisky Auctioneer endeavours to make the market more accessible for buyers and sellers of any background and geography. Its monthly global auctions feature the most comprehensive selection of old, rare and collectible whiskies and spirits available online. Whisky Auctioneer is passionate about connecting these bottles with those who share in their passion and actively support their customers in their aims, whether that be consuming, collecting or investing.

In February 2021, the Perth-based online auction house made history during the iconic sale of The Perfect Collection when a bottle of The Macallan 1926 Fine and Rare 60 Year Old sold for a hammer price of £1m, the first time a single bottle of whisky has sold at an online only auction for one million pounds.

Whisky Auctioneer became the first online auction house to sell a million-pound bottle and outperformed the nearest traditional auction house by 200% in value from spirits sales in 2020, showcasing the move that whisky collectors, investors and drinkers have already made online and firmly establishing their leading position within the modern secondary whisky market.

The business currently sees over 100,000 bids per month and has conducted deliveries to 74 countries across the globe. It also opened its first European base in Germany last year.

For more information, visit: whiskyauctioneer.com

ENDS