



ROYAL  
BALLET

January 2019

## The Royal Ballet announces programme celebrating the centenary of Margot Fonteyn's birth

This June, The Royal Ballet pays tribute to Prima Ballerina Assoluta Dame **Margot Fonteyn** with a special programme of works celebrating the centenary of her birth. *Margot Fonteyn: A Celebration* will take place on 8 June 2019, with a performance of *The Firebird*, one of her signature ballets, alongside a selection of other works closely associated with one of ballet's most revered and influential dancers.

Director of The Royal Ballet, **Kevin O' Hare** comments: 'I'm thrilled to be able to announce this special evening celebrating the life and legacy of Margot Fonteyn. She was an icon of British ballet and a celebrity beyond the stage, her impact and influence without parallel. She captured the hearts of the Company and audiences all around the world. It's a privilege to honour our Prima Ballerina Assoluta with this one-off performance in her centenary year.'

Fonteyn was born in Reigate, Surrey, and studied in the UK and Shanghai. She made her debut with the Vic-Wells ballet while still a student before joining the Company in 1935, her special qualities immediately recognised by Director **Ninette de Valois**. She was renowned in classics such as *The Sleeping Beauty* and became muse to Frederick Ashton, Founder Choreographer of The Royal Ballet, who created many roles for her including *Ondine*, *Sylvia* and Chloë in *Daphnis and Chloë*. She forged distinguished dance partnerships with **Robert Helpmann**, **Michael Somes** and latterly with **Rudolf Nureyev**.

This celebration will also include a free exhibition of Margot Fonteyn related items from the Royal Opera House archive as well as a series of talks and Insights celebrating her legacy. Further details will be announced in due course.

Images are available to download [here](#).

— ENDS —

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Box Office** | roh.org.uk | + 44 (0)20 7304 4000

### About the Royal Opera House

The Royal Opera House's aim is for many more people to enjoy and engage in exceptional ballet and opera. As The Royal Ballet, The Royal Opera and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, we bring together the world's most extraordinary ballet and opera artists in more than 500 performances every year; live events that thrill, move and excite, and that transport people to other worlds through music, theatre and dance.

### The Royal Ballet

Under the directorship of Kevin O'Hare, The Royal Ballet unites tradition and innovation in world-class performances, and is a driving force in the development of ballet as an art form. Based at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, it brings together today's most dynamic and versatile dancers with a world-class orchestra and leading choreographers, composers, conductors, directors and creative teams to share awe-inspiring theatrical experiences with diverse audiences worldwide.

The Company's extensive repertory embraces 19th-century classics, the singular legacy of works by Founder Choreographer Frederick Ashton and Principal Choreographer Kenneth MacMillan and the compelling new canon of work including pieces by Resident Choreographer Wayne McGregor, Artistic Associate Christopher Wheeldon and Artist in Residence Liam Scarlett.

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## **PRESS OFFICE CONTACTS**

1. For interviews and further information contact [Sarah Farrell](#)
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