

# BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

## PRESS RELEASE

10 January 2024

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- **SIR PETER WRIGHT'S CLASSIC STAGING OF THE SLEEPING BEAUTY RETURNS TO BIRMINGHAM DURING THE PRODUCTION'S 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR**
- **A CAST OF 70 BIRMINGHAM AND WEST MIDLANDS DANCE TALENT TO PERFORM WITH BRB PROFESSIONALS IN SLEEPING BEAUTY DREAMS A SPECIAL NEW ADAPTATION OF SIR PETER WRIGHT'S PRODUCTION**

Following a sell-out success and one of the most talked about theatrical events of 2023 with Black Sabbath - The Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet returns to Birmingham Hippodrome with **Sir Peter Wright's sumptuous staging of The Sleeping Beauty** in the production's 40th anniversary year.

The Sleeping Beauty has been delighting audiences for well over a hundred years, sprinkling ballet magic on this favourite childhood story and its cast of familiar characters.

Sir Peter Wright's The Sleeping Beauty will be performed at Birmingham Hippodrome, the company's home theatre, from Wednesday 21 February - Saturday 2 March as part of a UK tour and will feature virtuoso dance and spectacle from the BRB company providing an enchanting experience for all the family.

Last seen on the Birmingham Hippodrome stage over six years ago, The Sleeping Beauty, continues BRB's legacy of presenting the acclaimed heritage classics celebrating the beloved work of its founder, Sir Peter Wright.

The Sleeping Beauty is the fourth of Sir Peter Wright's productions to be presented by the company since autumn 2022, following Coppélia, The Nutcracker and Swan Lake. The acclaimed Royal Ballet Sinfonia performs Tchaikovsky's glorious score live, with designs by Philip Prowse and lighting design by Mark Jonathan.

**Sir Peter Wright said:** "I find it hard to believe that this tour marks the 40th Anniversary of The Sleeping Beauty. This has always been the most opulent of ballets, but Philip Prowse's incredible design created a unique fairy tale world (with almost 30 fairy character tutus alone!) that allows dancers to really inhabit some of classical ballet's most famous roles."

**Director of Birmingham Royal Ballet Carlos Acosta said** "I am thrilled to be reviving Sir Peter Wright's production of The Sleeping Beauty. The Company is excited to be delighting Midlands audiences once more with this definitive version of one of the great classical ballets, welcoming people of all ages to our performances."

As part of the Company's season at Birmingham Hippodrome, BRB will also present **Sleeping Beauty Dreams**.

Sleeping Beauty Dreams is an exciting opportunity for aspiring young dancers and passionate amateurs training at local dance schools aged from eight upwards, to experience the thrill of live performance in a professional theatre and get a taste of the workings of a professional company supported by BRB's technical teams and wider BRB.

Sleeping Beauty Dreams, the fourth project of its kind from the Company's Learning, Engagement, Access and Participation team, led by Rebecca Brookes Acting Head of LEAP, started in 2017 with *Cinderella Dreams* and highlights the depth of dance talent found in Birmingham and the West Midlands.

Each production has involved a cast of up to 65 people, ranging in age from eight to 78. This year has been the Company's most popular yet, with over 230 auditionees attending audition days held in 2023.

This year's chosen cast of 70, including 6 current BRB Dance Track students and 4 previous Dance Track students, will take part in a special new adaptation of Sir Peter Wright's much-loved production, performed on the set of BRB's own *The Sleeping Beauty*.

Sleeping Beauty Dreams will premiere in front of a Birmingham Hippodrome audience, with recorded music, on Sunday 25 February. It will feature two of BRB's world-class dancers in the principal roles of Aurora and Prince Florimund. Principals will be announced on [www.brb.org.uk](http://www.brb.org.uk)

Tickets for *The Sleeping Beauty* at Birmingham Hippodrome and *Sleeping Beauty Dreams* are available at [www.birminghamhippodrome.com](http://www.birminghamhippodrome.com)

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#### **Notes to Editors**

##### **Birmingham Royal Ballet**

Based at Birmingham Hippodrome, Birmingham Royal Ballet is the United Kingdom's leading touring ballet company performing a range of traditional, classical and heritage ballets as well as ground-breaking new works with the aim of encouraging choreographers of the future. The Company's Director since January 2020 is the internationally renowned Carlos Acosta. Birmingham Royal Ballet standardly performs at Birmingham Hippodrome for approximately ten weeks of the year and the remainder of the year tours throughout the United Kingdom and overseas. On average, the Company performs 100 shows a year nationally and internationally.

##### **The Royal Ballet Sinfonia**

The Royal Ballet Sinfonia is Birmingham Royal Ballet's permanent orchestra, it is also Britain's busiest ballet orchestra. The Sinfonia also plays frequently for The Royal Ballet and other leading ballet companies, including performances with Paris Opéra Ballet, New York City Ballet, Australian Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, the Kirov, Norwegian Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, and La Scala Ballet.

**Dance Track**

BRB's Dance Track is a talent identification programme aimed at training young dancers aged from six to eight. The project endeavours to identify and train young participants showing a potential for ballet and to instill a passion for dance at an early age.

Initially, the LEAP team works with over 40 schools across the north, south and centre of Birmingham and delivers workshops to all Year 1 pupils. The workshops introduce dance in a fun and friendly way that is accessible to even the most hesitant dancer.