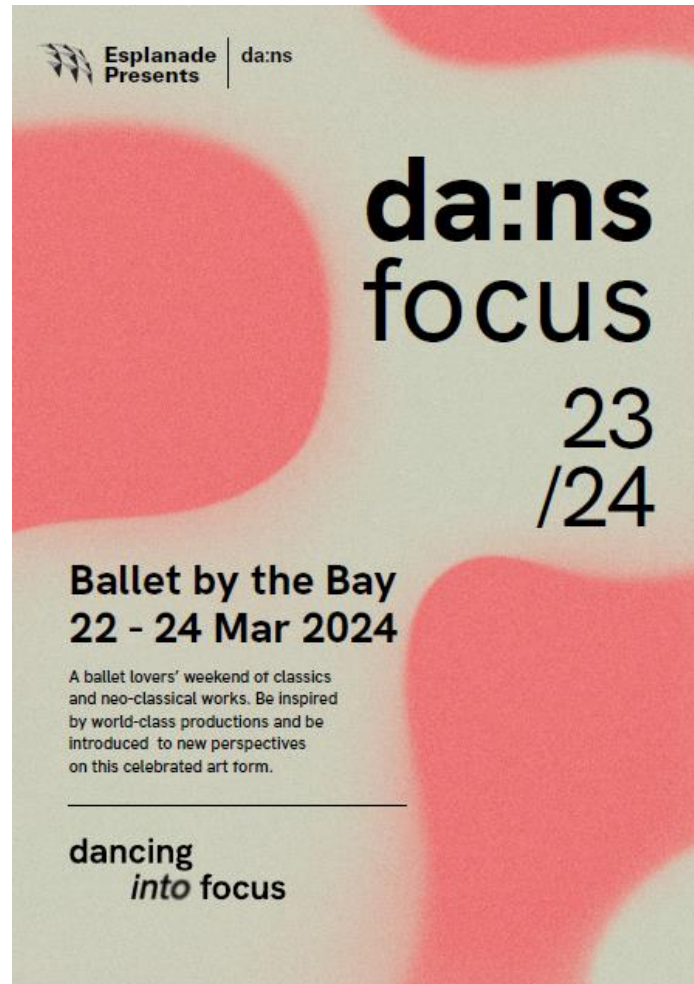


Esplanade Presents

## da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay

22 – 24 Mar 2024

[www.esplanade.com/dans](http://www.esplanade.com/dans)



Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay presents *Ballet by the Bay*, a ballet lovers' weekend of classics and neo-classical works, from 22 – 24 Mar 2024. *Ballet by the Bay* will take place annually as part of *da:ns focus*, our year-round dance season comprising five themed weekends.

Our last presentation of a live international ballet production was in 2019, when Paris Opera Ballet performed works by three outstanding choreographers of the 20th and 21st century: William Forsythe, Crystal Pite and Jerome Robbins. During the pandemic, it was not possible to bring ballet productions or companies from overseas, and therefore, we organised screenings of three filmed productions by The Royal Ballet in 2021. As part of this presentation, we also produced two podcasts on the topics that we felt were urgent in the ballet world today; [diversity](#) and [how social media is changing the art form](#). After almost five years, we are very excited to bring live ballet performances by international ballet stars back to our centre through the first edition of our *Ballet by the Bay* weekend, where we will also work closely with our ballet companies and artists from Singapore.

In our Theatre, we will be presenting ***Melissa Hamilton's International Ballet Stars Gala***. Through a close collaboration with Melissa Hamilton, the first soloist from The Royal Ballet,

this Gala will bring eight star dancers from the world's top-tier ballet companies such as **The Royal Ballet (Melissa Hamilton, Ryoichi Hirano, Yasmine Naghdi, Marceline Sambé), Hamburg Ballet (Madoka Sugai and Alessandro Frola)** and **Stuttgart Ballet (Mackenzie Brown & Martí Fernández Paixà)** to Singapore. Performing with them will be talented dancers from our own **Singapore Ballet**. Melissa is the artistic lead for this Gala, curating the dancers as well as the works to be performed, which will be a mix of beloved classical titles, as well as contemporary works.

At the DBS Foundation Outdoor Theatre, the audience will be treated to free performances by **National Contemporary Ballet from Singapore**. Founded in 2022 by Jeffrey Tan, former principal dancer of Singapore Dance Theatre, National Contemporary Ballet focuses on contemporary ballet and will be making its Esplanade debut with *Impermanence*, choreographed by Jeffrey featuring young dancers from Singapore and Thailand. There will also be a free programme at our Concourse stage on the opening day of the weekend for all to enjoy.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to our Principal Sponsor, BNP Paribas, for their kind support of *da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay*. Ballet has always been an important part of dance programming at Esplanade, and now with a dedicated weekend, we look forward to not only presenting productions of high calibre but also introducing new perspectives on this celebrated art form.

**Izumi Asakawa**

Producer, The Esplanade Co Ltd

## About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre. It hosts a year-round line-up of about 3,500 live performances and activities presented by Esplanade, its partners and hirers. As an arts centre for everyone, Esplanade also creates opportunities for seniors, youth, children and underserved communities to experience the arts. More than 70% of the shows that take place each year at the centre are free for all to enjoy.

Esplanade also brings the arts virtually to audiences in Singapore and beyond, through its diverse range of digital programmes on [Esplanade Offstage](#), an all-access backstage pass to the performing arts and guide to Singapore and Asian arts and culture, with videos, podcasts, articles, quizzes and resources.

The centre works in close partnership with local, regional and international artists to develop artistic capabilities and content, push artistic boundaries and engage audiences. Esplanade supports the creation of artistic content by commissioning and producing new Singapore and Asian work for the international stage. It also develops technical capabilities for the industry nationally.

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is operated by The Esplanade Co Ltd (TECL), which is a not-for-profit organisation, a registered Charity and an Institution of a Public Character. The Charity Council awarded TECL the Charity Governance Award – Special Commendation for Clarity of Strategy in 2016 and 2022, and the Charity Transparency Award from 2016 – 2023. Esplanade is Singapore's first Dementia-Friendly Arts Venue and a certified Dementia Go-To Point, as well as a guide/assistance dog friendly centre.

TECL receives funding support from Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and its Community Programmes are supported by Tote Board Family, comprising Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.

Visit [Esplanade.com](https://www.esplanade.com) for more information.

~ End ~

Issued by *The Esplanade Co Ltd*.

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## Annexe

Esplanade Presents

### da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay

22 – 24 Mar 2024

[www.esplanade.com/dans](http://www.esplanade.com/dans)

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### Melissa Hamilton's International Ballet Stars Gala

Melissa Hamilton & Ryoichi Hirano (The Royal Ballet)

Yasmine Naghdi & Marcelino Sambé (The Royal Ballet)

Madoka Sugai & Alessandro Frola (Hamburg Ballet)

Mackenzie Brown & Martí Fernández Paixà (Stuttgart Ballet)

Singapore Ballet

(Various countries)

23 & 24 Mar 2024

Sat, 8pm

Sun, 3pm

Esplanade Theatre



A spectacle filled with excitement, emotive beauty and physical prowess, *Melissa Hamilton's International Ballet Stars Gala* brings some of today's brightest stars from the international ballet world to the Esplanade stage.

Witness the wonder of world-renowned dance artists from the most revered dance companies in the world: The Royal Ballet, Hamburg Ballet and Stuttgart Ballet, with the Singapore Ballet in this star-studded weekend of performances.

Audiences from around the world are invited to revel in the performances of stars like Melissa Hamilton, Ryoichi Hirano, Yasmine Naghdi, Marcelino Sambé, Madoka Sugai, Alessandro Frola, Mackenzie Brown and Martí Fernández Paixà, who will grace the stage with excerpts from well-loved ballet classics, iconic company heritage pieces and modern innovative new work from today's most inspiring choreographers.

Complimented by an ensemble appearance from Singapore Ballet, this performance is set to be a magical one, a showcase of how dance is an art form with the ability to tell stories without words, inspiring reflection and connection that transcend day-to-day life.

This programme is part of *da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay*, a ballet lovers' weekend of classics and neo-classical works. Be inspired by world-class productions and be introduced to new perspectives on this celebrated art form.

2hrs, including 20mins intermission.

\$40\*, \$60\*, \$80\*, \$100^, \$120^

\*Limited concessions for seniors, NSFs and students: \$32, \$48, \$64

Limited concessions for PWDs: \$32

**^Esplanade&Me Early Bird Specials available (8 – 28 Dec 2023)**

Black & White: 20% savings

Discover (min. 2): 15% savings

**^Esplanade&Me Specials available (From 29 Dec 2023, 10am)**

Black & White: 15% savings

Discover (min. 2): 10% savings

Not a member? *Esplanade&Me Discover* is a free membership. Sign up now at [www.esplanade.com/membership](http://www.esplanade.com/membership)

## About the artists

### Melissa Hamilton

Melissa Hamilton is a First Soloist of The Royal Ballet. She won the 2007 Youth American Grand Prix and that year joined The Royal Ballet as an Artist, promoted to First Artist in 2009, Soloist in 2010 and First Soloist in 2013.

Her roles with The Royal Ballet include Manon, Juliet, Mary Vetsera (*Mayerling*), Raven Girl, the Sugar Plum Fairy, Queen of the Dryads, Olga (*Onegin*), the Lilac Fairy and Princess Florine (*Sleeping Beauty*), Peasant Pas and Zulme (*Giselle*), Fairy Godmother and Summer Fairy (*Cinderella*), Pas de Trois and Big Swans (*Swan Lake*). She has also performed leading roles in *Agon*, *Apollo*, *Serenade*, *Four Temperaments Rubies*, *Afternoon of a Faun*, *The Concert*, *Requiem*, *The Judas Tree*, *Elite Syncopations*, among many others.

Created roles include Wayne McGregor's *Infra*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Limen*, *Carbon Life*, *Wolf Works*, *Yugen*, *The Dante Project* and *Untitled, 2023*, David Dawson's *The Human Seasons*, Christopher Wheeldon's *Trespass* and Kyle Abraham's *Optional Family: A Divertissement*.

As a guest principal with Semperoper Ballett, she made her role debuts of Odette/Odile (*Swan Lake*), Aurora (*The Sleeping Beauty*) and Nikiya (*La Bayadère*) and has appeared as

a guest with Teatro alla Scala, New National Theatre Tokyo, Birmingham Royal Ballet and Polish National Ballet.

Other repertoire includes Ben Stevenson's *Three Preludes*, Matz Ek's *She was Black*, Maurice Béjart's *La Luna* and Wayne McGregor's *Tree of Codes*.

Awards include YAGP Grand Prix, Gold Medal at Seoul International Ballet competition and the Critics' Circle Award for Outstanding Female Performance 2009.

#### Ryoichi Hirano

Japanese dancer Ryoichi Hirano is a Principal of The Royal Ballet. He joined the company as a Prix de Lausanne apprentice in 2001 and became an Artist in 2002, promoted to First Artist in 2007, Soloist in 2008, First Soloist in 2012 and Principal in 2016.

His repertory with The Royal Ballet includes Albrecht (*Giselle*), Prince Siegfried (*Swan Lake*), Prince Florimund (*The Sleeping Beauty*), Leontes and Polixenes (*The Winter's Tale*), Espada and Gamache (*Don Quixote*), Romeo, Tybalt and Paris (*Romeo and Juliet*), Onegin (*Onegin*), Jean de Brienne (*Raymonda Act III*), Crown Prince Rudolf (*Mayerling*), Prince (*The Prince of the Pagodas*, *The Nutcracker*), Rasputin and Officer (*Anastasia*), Witch (*Hansel and Gretel*), among many others.

Ryoichi has created roles for the Royal Ballet in Liam Scarlett's *Asphodel Meadows* and in Wayne McGregor's *The Dante Project*, *Infra* and *Obsidian Tear*.

#### Yasmine Naghdi

Yasmine Naghdi is a Principal of The Royal Ballet. She joined in 2010, was promoted to First Artist in 2012, Soloist in 2014, First Soloist in 2016 and Principal in 2017.

Her leading roles with the Company include Odette/Odile (*Swan Lake*), Princess Aurora (*The Sleeping Beauty*), Juliet (*Romeo and Juliet*), Tatiana (*Onegin*), Giselle, Cinderella, Kitri (*Don Quixote*), Gamzatti (*La Bayadère*), Swanilda (*Coppélia*), Baroness Mary Vetsera, Countess Marie Larish (*Mayerling*), Sugar Plum Fairy (*The Nutcracker*), Firebird (*The Firebird*), Mathilde Kschessinska (*Anastasia*), Tita (*Like Water for Chocolate*), among many others.

She created a role in Valentino Zucchetti's *Prima*.

Her further repertory includes Le Corsaire Grand Pas de deux, Sylvia Act III Pas de deux, *Le Parc* (Angelin Preljocaj), *Three Preludes* (Ben Stevenson) and *Ballet Imperial* (George Balanchine).

#### Marcelino Sambé

Portuguese dancer Marcelino Sambé is a Principal of The Royal Ballet. He joined the company during the 2012/13 Season, promoted to First Artist in 2014, Soloist in 2015, First Soloist in 2017 and Principal in 2019.

His repertory with the company includes Prince Siegfried (*Swan Lake*), Albrecht (*Giselle*), Prince Florimund (*Sleeping Beauty*), Franz (*Coppélia*), Colas (*La Fille mal gardée*), Oberon (*The Dream*), Hans-Peter/Nutcracker (*The Nutcracker*), Romeo (*Romeo and Juliet*), Brother Clown (*The Winter's Tale*), Des Grieux, Lescaut and Beggar Chief (*Manon*), Crown Prince Rudolf (*Mayerling*), Bronze Idol (*La Bayadère*), Basilio (*Don Quixote*), Officer (*Anastasia*), among many others.

He created Pedro in Christopher Wheeldon's *Like Water for Chocolate* and roles in Kyle Abraham's *Optional Family: A Divertissement*, Crystal Pite's *Flight Pattern*, Kim Brandstrup's

*Ceremony of Innocence*, Marriott's *Connectome*, Hofesh Shechter's *Untouchable*, Cathy Marston's *The Cellist* and Wayne McGregor's *Woolf Works* and *The Dante Project*.

Sambé's dance awards include a silver medal at the Moscow International Ballet Competition in 2008, first prize at the Youth American Grand Prix in 2009, a gold medal and special award at the USA International Ballet Competition in 2010 and the Critics' Circle National Dance Awards for Outstanding Male Classical Performance (2017) and Best Male Dancer (2019).

#### Madoka Sugai

Japanese dancer Madoka Sugai is a Principal dancer with Hamburg Ballet. She joined the company in 2014, promoted to Soloist in 2017 and Principal in 2019.

Her repertoire with the company includes Peasant Pas de deux (*Giselle*), Cinderella (*A Cinderella Story*), Prudence Duvernoy (*Lady of the Camellias*), Princess Natalia in (*Illusions – like Swan Lake*), Woman III (*Bernstein Dances*), Hermia (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Ophelia (*Hamlet 21*), Sylvia (*Sylvia*), Princess Aurora, Princess Florine, Mercury and Aurora, the Dawn (*The Sleeping Beauty*, 2021), Louise and The Beautiful Girl from Granada (*The Nutcracker*), Bronislava Nijinsky (*Nijinsky*), *Woman in Apricot – Dances at a Gathering* (Jerome Robbins), *Kitri* (Rudolf Nurejev after Marius Petipa), *Princess Perdita* (The Winter's Tale).

Other roles are *Soldier Songs* (Des Knaben Wunderhorn), *The Fifth Symphony of Gustav Mahler*, *Vaslav*, Broadway's *Pavlova*, *Saint Matthew Passion*, *Third Symphony of Gustav Mahler*, *Préludes CV*, *Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet* (Balanchine).

Created roles include A Mystic and A young Woman in *Dona Nobis Pacem* and solos in *Beethoven Project*, *Ghost Light*, *Beethoven Project II*, *Solo for Two* (Konstantin Tselikov), *Little Requiem* (Aleix Martínez) and *Götterboten* (Aljoscha Lenz). Madoka's awards include *Prix de Lausanne* 2012 and the Dr. Wilhelm Oberdörffer Prize 2018.

#### Alessandro Frola

Italian dancer Alessandro Frola is a Principal of Hamburg Ballet. He joined the company 2019, promoted to Soloist in 2022 and to Principal in 2023.

His repertoire with the company includes Lysander (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Endymion (*Sylvia*), Prince Désiré, Catalabutte and Cupid's Blessing (*The Sleeping Beauty*, 2021), Wolf Beifeld (*Liliom*), Frederick the Great (*Death in Venice*), Pas de deux (*A Cinderella Story*), Prince Siegfried and Prince Alexander in (*Illusions – like Swan Lake*), Love (*Bernstein Dances*), Mercutio (*Romeo and Juliet*), Allan Gray (*A Streetcar Named Desire*), Arlequin (*Carnaval*) and The Spirit of the Rose (*Le Spectre de la rose in "Nijinsky"*).

Other roles include *Saint Matthew Passion*, *Third Symphony of Gustav Mahler* and *Préludes CV*. He created the role of *The Shadow* (*Dona Nobis Pacem*) and a role in *Peter and Igor*. Alessandro was awarded the Dr. Wilhelm Oberdörffer Prize 2023.

#### Mackenzie Brown

Mackenzie Brown is a Principal of Stuttgart Ballet. She joined in 2020, promoted to Demi-Soloist 2021, Soloist in 2022 and Principal in October 2023.

Her repertoire with the company includes Aurora in *Aurora's Nap* (Johan Inger), *Blake Works I* (William Forsythe), *Bliss* (Johan Inger), *Bouillards* (John Cranko): *Les Fées sont d'exquises danseuses*, *Cassiopeia's Garden* (Christian Spuck), *Falling Angels* (Jiří Kylián), *Große Fuge* (Hans van Manen), *Initials R.B.M.E.* (John Cranko), *Princess Louise*, *Mayerling* (Kenneth



MacMillan), *One of a Kind* (Jiří Kylián), *Olga, Onegin* (John Cranko), *Out of Breath* (Johan Inger), *Requiem* (Kenneth MacMillan), among many others.

She has created roles in *A Dialog* (Roman Novitzky), *Aurora's Nap* (Johan Inger), and *Einssein* (Mauro Bigonzetti), *In Esisto* (Vittoria Girelli): Solo, *Leisure* (Fabio Adoriso), *Nachtmerrrie* (Marco Goecke), *Reflection/s* (Roman Novitzky): Solo, *Was bleibet* (Alessandro Giamonte).

Her awards include Prix de Lausanne 2019 gold medal, the Contemporary Dance Prize and the Audience Favourite Prize. She also won The Erik Bruhn Prize 2023.

#### Martí Fernández Paixà

Spanish dancer Martí Fernández Paixà is a Principal with Stuttgart Ballet.

He joined the company as an apprentice in 2014/15, and one season later he was taken into the Corps de ballet. In 2016, he was promoted to Demi Soloist, Soloist in 2017 and became Principal at the beginning of the 2021/22 season.

Martí's repertory includes Romeo, Paris and Benvolio, *Romeo & Juliet* (Cranko); the title role in Demis Volpi's *Krabat*; Prince Desiré, Ali Baba and the Prince of the South, *The Sleeping Beauty* (Marcia Haydée); Onegin and Lensky in *Onegin* (Cranko); Allan Gray, *A Streetcar named Desire* (Neumeier); Colas, *La Fille mal Gardée* (Ashton); Man in Blue and Man in Purple, *Dances at a Gathering* (Robbins); Couple in White, *ForgottenLand* (Kylián); Apollo in Demis Volpi's *Death in Venice*; *Spring Waters* (Asaf Messerer); Le Jeune Homme et La Mort (Petit); *Boléro* (Béjart). He has also performed leading roles in works by Kenneth MacMillan, Jiří Kylián, Hans van Manen, Edward Clug and Marco Goecke.

Created roles include the title role in Demis Volpi's *The Soldier's Tale* and the Young Syrian in his *Salome and Ascaresa* (Alessandro Giamonte), *Cassiopeia's Garden* (Christian Spuck), *Naiad* (Douglas Lee), *Neurons* (Katarzyna Kozielska), *Patterns in ¾* (Edward Clug), *Petals* (Louis Stiens), *PS* (Katarzyna Kozielska), *Reflection/s* (Roman Novitzky): Solo, *Take Your Pleasure Seriously* (Katarzyna Kozielska).

#### Singapore Ballet

Singapore Ballet was founded as Singapore Dance Theatre in 1988 by Goh Soo Khim and Anthony Then. In 2002, the company graced the official opening of Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay with the opening performance of Boi Sakti's *Reminiscing the Moon*. Singapore Ballet continues to have the privilege of performing in a world-class performing arts venue, exhilarating audiences with a myriad of repertoires. As Singapore's premier ballet company comprising of 38 company dancers plus apprentices, the company performs six seasons annually with three full ballet performances at the stage of Esplanade Theatre. The highlights of the Company's annual performance season include the widely-popular *Ballet Under the Stars* at Fort Canning Park and *Masterpiece in Motion*, as well as *Passages Contemporary Season*. The company also presents *Made in Singapore* through the choreographic workshop, where budding choreographers build on developing choreographic language through a sense of exploration.

The company's repertoire ranges from classical to contemporary ballet, from renowned choreographers like Choo-San Goh, George Balanchine, Kinsun Chan, Val Caniparoli, Ma Cong, Edmund Stripe, Natalie Weir, Edwaard Liang, Nils Christie, Toru Shimazaki, Christina Chan, Timothy Harbour, François Klaus, Timothy Rushton, Pam Tanowitz and Loughlan Prior. In 2008, Janek Schergen was appointed Artistic Director. Under his leadership, the company has made new achievements in the international and Singapore dance arena, including 43 world premieres, 22 company premieres, and numerous revivals of the company's existing repertoire. Singapore Ballet has captivated audiences in Malaysia,



Indonesia, Philippines, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Mexico, China, Australia, France, United States, London, Laos, and Switzerland.

Singapore Ballet tours to Malaysia and Penang annually and has seen a growth in its dedicated support to the company. Through the invitation of Sadlers Wells, the Company has also performed at London's Singapore season at the Peacock Theatre. Seen to be a little Asiatic gem, "the Company's strength lies in a seamless transition between strong classical technique and contemporary movement," as described by Graham Watts of Ballet. Co magazine.

#### Hamilton Christou Productions

This gala is produced by Hamilton Christou Productions, founded by internationally acclaimed and celebrated British ballerina Melissa Hamilton of The Royal Ballet, London, and her husband Michael Christou, a renowned property developer and businessman. The company's mission is to create an inclusive global community of like-minded dance enthusiasts, showcasing the best of ballet through live performances.

## Masterclass with Melissa Hamilton

24 Mar 2024, Sun, 9am  
Esplanade Rehearsal Studio



Dance, learn and be inspired by world-renowned stars of The Royal Ballet in two exclusive masterclasses with Melissa Hamilton and Yasmine Naghdi.

With 30 years of combined professional performing experience dancing with The Royal Ballet and on stages worldwide, both ballerinas have developed a passion for teaching. They are dedicated to helping and motivating both students and young professionals to reach their full potential.

This masterclass with Melissa Hamilton is recommended for male and female dancers aged 10 to 12, with at least five years of ballet training, or equivalent proficiency at RAD Grade Five level or higher. Pointe shoes are welcome, but not necessary.

After the masterclass, there will be a photo session with Melissa, where each participant will be able to take a photo with the artist with your mobile phone or camera.

This programme is part of *da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay*, a ballet lovers' weekend of classics and neo-classical works. Be inspired by world-class productions and be introduced to new perspectives on this celebrated art form.

1hr 30mins, no intermission

\$70

## Masterclass with Yasmine Naghdi

24 Mar 2024, Sun, 11am  
Esplanade Rehearsal Studio



Dance, learn and be inspired by world-renowned stars of The Royal Ballet in two exclusive masterclasses with Melissa Hamilton and Yasmine Naghdi.

With 30 years of combined professional performing experience dancing with The Royal Ballet and on stages worldwide, both ballerinas have developed a passion for teaching. They are dedicated to helping and motivating both students and young professionals to reach their full potential.

This masterclass with Yasmine Naghdi is recommended for male and female dancers aged 13 to 16, with at least eight years of ballet training, or equivalent proficiency at RAD Advanced One level or higher. Pointe shoes are welcome, but not necessary.

After the masterclass, there will be a photo session with Yasmine, where each participant will be able to take a photo with the artist with your mobile phone or camera.

This programme is part of *da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay*, a ballet lovers' weekend of classics and neo-classical works. Be inspired by world-class productions and be introduced to new perspectives on this celebrated art form.

1hr 30mins, no intermission

\$70

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More information on *da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay* will be released at a later date.