GISELLE
AKRAM KHAN’S
GISSELLE

English National Ballet

AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL
March 2018
Winner of the 2017 Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dance and the Stef Stefanou Award for Outstanding Company, 2016 Critics’ Circle National Dance Awards
Winner of the 2017 South Bank Sky Awards for Dance
Winner of the Robert Robson Award for Best Dance Production Manchester Theatre Awards 2017
Winner of the 2017 Tanz Magazine Production of the Year

1–4 March 2018
ASB Theatre, Aotea Centre
Direction and choreography by Akram Khan
Music by Vincenzo Lamagna, after the original score of Adolphe Adam
Orchestration by Gavin Sutherland
Visual design and costumes by Tim Yip
Lighting design by Mark Henderson
Dramaturgy by Ruth Little
Assistant choreographer: Andrej Petrović
Rehearsal director: Mavin Khoo
Sound designer: Yvonne Gilbert

Co-produced by Manchester International Festival and Sadler’s Wells, London

Supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England, and the Giselle Production Syndicate

The role of Giselle is generously sponsored by Carol Brigstocke

With special thanks to Aud Jebsen, Sponsor of the Aud Jebsen International Talent Programme

English National Ballet is an Associate Company of Sadler’s Wells

Auckland Arts Festival Season
With support from
Platinum Patron Sir James Wallace – The Wallace Foundation

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A WORD FROM JONATHAN BIELSKI, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL

Tēnā koutou katoa.

Welcome to this very special presentation as part of Auckland Arts Festival 2018.

This year marks 10 festivals. We are a young festival but one that has made a major impact on our city and built a global reputation. For my first Festival I am privileged to join an outstanding group of people who have nurtured this event and who hand me a gift of an opportunity.

In honouring that opportunity, there were many ideas I wanted to pursue. Chief among them was this visit by the acclaimed English National Ballet. A project of this scale is exactly my vision for our Festival; events of a one-off nature, that would otherwise be impossible, by artists who are striking out boldly with great artistic risk.

Nearly 100 people have travelled to Auckland from ENB’s home at Markova House in Kensington, London. The monumental production has been steaming towards us on the high seas for many weeks, and tonight all this comes together in a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see a world-class ballet company at the top of its game, in a game-changing production by one of the leading choreographers of our time.

Under the inspirational leadership of powerhouse artistic director Tamara Rojo CBE, the ENB has surged ahead creatively and commands the attention of the dance world for both its visionary new productions and for the majesty of its dancing cohort. This is truly a company in a period of greatness.

I have been a fanboy of Akram Khan for nearly two decades. His unique choreographic language, rooted as it is in traditional Kathak dance, and his deep commitment to storytelling, mean the body of work he has created is unparalleled in dance.

When Tamara Rojo invited Akram to make a new Giselle for her company – his first full-length ballet – the arts world cheered wildly at the inspired idea. Since the world première at the Manchester International Festival, this exhilarating ballet has been arguably the most in-demand work anywhere in the world.

I am thrilled that Auckland audiences are the first international city to see this bracing new Giselle in the company’s New Zealand debut, and I record my appreciation to Tamara, Executive Director Patrick Harrison and the entire company for choosing to come to Aotearoa.

I salute the generous personal support of Sir James Wallace and our entire patrons group who collectively enable us to present work of this scale in New Zealand.

Tonight belongs to the extraordinary dancers of English National Ballet who are not bettered anywhere else right now. This is a company of artists we are privileged to witness in full flight. Delight in it. And have a great Auckland Arts Festival.

Jonathan Bielski
Welcome to these performances by English National Ballet of Akram Khan’s Giselle here at the ASB Theatre, Aotea Centre. We are extremely honoured to be part of the auspicious Auckland Arts Festival 2018.

Our visit to this magnificent part of the world is a first for English National Ballet and I know I speak for the entire Company when I say how very exciting the build-up has been for all of us. Thank you to our wonderful hosts for welcoming us to New Zealand.

I am a true believer that for any art form to continue to be relevant, the iconic works must be revisited, reinterpreted. Giselle is one of the great classics of the ballet tradition. When I decided I wanted English National Ballet to create a new interpretation, I knew I would need a collaborator with the courage to approach the work with respect, knowledge and creativity.

Akram Khan more than met the challenge, bringing to life an exceptional piece of work. I am thankful to him and the entire creative team of this award-winning production: Vincenzo Lamagna, who created a new score, orchestrated by Music Director Gavin Sutherland; Dramaturg Ruth Little; Set and Costume Designer Tim Yip; Lighting Designer Mark Henderson; Sound Designer Yvonne Gilbert; Assistant Choreographer Andrej Petrović; and Rehearsal Director Mavin Khoo.

Since its premiere in 2016, Akram Khan’s Giselle has been seen by over 57,000 people across the UK, and for the first time in the Company’s history it will be screened across cinemas internationally in the Spring. Everyone at English National Ballet has been so moved by the overwhelmingly positive response from audiences, critics and the industry, and we are excited to perform it for you here in Auckland – its international premiere.

I’d like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our Guest Artist across these performances, welcoming back Oscar Chacon to reprise his role as Hilarion. These appearances would not have been made possible without the generosity and support of the Aud Jebsen International Talent Programme.

I want to thank our Co-Producers: Manchester International Festival, Sadler’s Wells, London, our Giselle Production Syndicate of individual donors and Arts Council England for their continued support. And of course, thank you to our new audiences here in New Zealand.

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Act I

Giselle is one of a community of migrant garment factory workers (the Outcasts). Dispossessed of their jobs by the factory’s closure, and separated by a high wall from their hopes of livelihood and security, the Outcasts function as little more than exotic entertainment for the factory Landlords. In Act I, the wealthy Albrecht disguises himself as an Outcast in order to visit his lover Giselle. But his presence is noted by Hilarion – Giselle’s would-be lover – a shapechanging ‘fixer’ who trades with and mimics the Landlords for his own and his community’s profit. Albrecht’s wooing of Giselle is interrupted by the unexpected arrival of the Landlords. Seeing his fiancée Bathilde among them, Albrecht tries to hide. Giselle recognises the fine dress worn by Bathilde as the product of her own factory labour. The Outcasts dance for the Landlords until Albrecht and Hilarion disturb the Ceremony with their conflict. Bathilde’s father confronts Albrecht, forcing him to return to Bathilde and to their world. When he submits and returns to Bathilde, Giselle is driven mad with grief. The Landlord gives a command, and the Outcasts encircle Giselle. When the crowd disperses, her lifeless body is revealed. Denying any responsibility, the Landlords retreat beneath the Wall.

Interval

Act II

A wrecked, abandoned ‘ghost’ factory is revealed – a place where Giselle and her female co-workers have laboured, and many have died. Here Albrecht, grieving for Giselle, confronts and condemns the Landlords. Myrtha, Queen of the Wilis (ghosts of factory workers who seek revenge for the wrongs done to them in life), enters, driving Albrecht away. She summons Giselle from her lifeless body into the realm of death, to join the company of the remorseless Wilis. Hilarion enters to mourn at Giselle’s grave. The Wilis surround him, demanding retribution for Giselle’s death, and Hilarion is brutally killed. Albrecht returns and becomes aware of Giselle’s presence. The lovers are reunited on the threshold between life and death. Breaking the cycle of violence – and defying Myrtha’s command – Giselle forgives Albrecht and releases him into life. The Wilis depart with Giselle, and Albrecht – now an outcast from his own community – is left alone by the Wall.

SYNOPSIS

Cesar Corrales and Stina Quagebeur

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The canon of ballets consists of a relatively small group of works which have been passed down from one generation to another of which Giselle (1841) is really the earliest. With restaging it is constantly modified to enable it to appeal to new audiences and survive. But initially it tapped into the fashion for Romanticism with its emphasis on exoticism, irrationality, otherworldliness and danger.

Giselle’s first act was set in an idealised picturesque arcadia in reaction to an increasingly urbanised society. In the original ballet, this was the German Rhineland at grape-harvest time, allowing for the introduction of an idealised peasant community with their folk dances and traditional customs. The act ended with an example of irrationality with Giselle’s sudden insanity on discovering Albrecht’s betrothal to the aristocratic Bathilde.

The second act focused on society’s fascination with the supernatural, by phantoms and spirits particularly as the introduction of gas lighting in the theatre enhanced the sense of moonlight and ghostly effects. The impression of the supernatural and insubstantial was reinforced by the development of pointe work, which combined with light jumps, gave the ballerina the illusion of weightlessness. This impression was intensified by dancers’ use of soft arms and

**GISELLE – A ROMANTIC BALLET**
but it was used for a specific purpose; in *Giselle* to create an ethereal world. This led to contrasting movement between the two acts; an effect Akram Khan’s production repeats by using pointe-work for the ghosts of factory slaves, but modern blocked shoes make this more aggressive than the lighter style of the 19th century.

Although *Giselle* may have disappeared from many European opera houses in the late 19th century, it survived both in popular theatres and at the Imperial Ballet in Russia. Ballerinas would introduce their own solo dances (evidence of which has come to light with the archaeology of the original score). 60 years after the premiere when Carlotta Zambelli was a guest with the Imperial Ballet in St. Petersburg in 1901, she was advised that she would make little impact if she performed *Giselle*’s original Act I solo (she had specially learnt from Adeline Théodore) so she inserted a variation from Ambrose Thomas’ opera, *Hamlet*. Characterisation of Giselle inevitably altered with different interpreters and it was the great dramatic ballerina, Fanny Elssler, who developed the mad scene at the end of Act I into a mimetic tour de force. In the 20th century, just as Shakespeare’s plays are relocated for specific productions, so choreographers have put their own gloss on *Giselle*. As early as 1907 Alexander Gorsky for the Bolshoi in Moscow relocated it from the late medieval period to the 1790s ‘Directoire’ period and dressed his wilis in flowing ‘Duncanesque’ drapery.

When *Giselle* was created, as musicologist Marian Smith has demonstrated, *Giselle* was half mime, half dance. As audiences lost patience with mime scenes the balance changed to focus on dance. The Romantic era in ballet was notable for the development of pointe-work for women in soft but unblocked slippers. Grisi, herself was one of the most technically proficient, their costumes, long, tulle, bell shaped skirts which became known as romantic tutus. Women gave the works an element of danger when they were presented as femme fatales or, as in *Giselle* with Myrtha and her sister-wilis, as beautiful vampires who lure men to their death.

*Giselle* was the idea of the poet and critic, Théophile Gautier, who was looking for a vehicle to display the talents of a young dancer at the Paris Opéra, Carlotta Grisi. This was the first time Gautier had developed a scenario for a ballet and he wisely enlisted the aid of the more experienced Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges who appears to have been responsible for the clarity of the narrative. Apart from the general Romantic influences on a universally popular theme of love beyond death, there were two specific sources for Giselle. Firstly the poem, *Fantômes*, published in the volume *Les Orientales* by the Romantic writer Victor Hugo in 1829. This told of a Spanish girl who, “was over-fond of dancing and that killed her.” Secondly there was the Slavic legend of the wilis, which attracted Gautier’s attention through the writings of Heinrich Heine (1797-1856).

In 1984 Frederic Franklin restaged *Giselle* for Harlem Dance Theatre, placing it in Louisiana Créole society just before the American Civil War, with Act II set in a Mississippi bayou overhung with Spanish Moss. For English National Ballet, in 1994, Derek Deane set *Giselle* in Austria immediately after the First World War. Others took more radical perspectives. In 1982 Mats Ek used Adolph Adam’s score but brought *Giselle* up to date setting Act II in an asylum. More adventurous was Michael Keegan-Dolan’s production for Fabulous Beast set in Ireland. Albrecht was a bisexual line-dancing teacher from Bratislava who two-timed Giselle with the butcher’s son. This production was enhanced by a score by Philip Feeney in which a very brief passage of Adam’s original score heard at the end was remarkably evocative. As some choreographers were moving away from tradition others were researching *Giselle*’s origins. In their 2011 production for Pacific Northwest Ballet, Marian Smith, with dance reconstruction-scholar Doug Fullington, took this furthest, but the process had begun with Mary Skeaping who, in 1971, mounted her definitive long-lasting production for English National Ballet.

*Giselle* is a ballet at the heart of English National Ballet. At its foundation in 1950, Alicia Markova made it a condition of her involvement that her partner Anton Dolin mounted a new *Giselle* for her. Remarkably Khan’s provocative re-imaging is only English National Ballet’s fourth in 68 years.

Jane Pritchard, Archive Consultant English National Ballet
Akram Khan’s Giselle is a work of memory and testimony; a revision of the classic narrative ballet through the lens of globalisation and its imbalances of wealth, power and labour. It takes the narrative structure of the 19th century original – a Romantic tale of love, betrayal and forgiveness – and adapts it to the circumstances of a community of migrant workers (the ‘peasants’ of the original version). The setting of the classical Giselle is medieval Germany; Khan’s is an abstract version of our own times, transparent to the economic cycles of the past. The impulse to renew the story of Giselle is rooted in the precarious situation of migrants and refugees everywhere today – the marginalisation of people seeking security in places increasingly inaccessible to them behind literal and metaphorical walls.

Khan’s revision of the story draws a connection between Manchester, centre of the global textile industry in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and Bangladesh, birthplace of Khan’s parents and a key location, for now, of the factories and beneficiaries of the contemporary global garment assembly industry. The ebb of the economic tide in late 18th century Bengal – which shifted wealth and power to the burgeoning cotton industry of Manchester, leaving the city of Dhaka in ruins, was followed by the collapse of the British industry in the mid-20th century, and the subsequent flow of capital and investment back to Dhaka in the 1980s. In both countries, economic forces have at various times thrust up and withdrawn from industrial complexes, leaving dilapidated spaces haunted by histories of human labour: “The ideology of economic reason has hitherto largely omitted the costs to society of its majestic progression through the world.”

This “majestic progression” leads, among other externalities, to mass human movement as capital inhabits and then abandons its sites of cheap labour, propelling the migration of workers from rural areas to cities and across national borders in search of livelihoods and security. Over four million people now work in around 5,500 garment factories and sweatshops in Bangladesh (80–90% of them women), but their jobs and futures are no more secure than the price of their labour, and they too may one day join the growing numbers of stateless exiles discounted by wealthier nations as ‘economic migrants’ and chided for their aspirations.
Khan’s *Giselle*, like the original, occupies two distinct realms of life and death. But it is also a realm of memory, in which echoes of former lives and journeys are woven into the present. In Act I, Giselle, a former garment factory worker, exiled with her community from work and from her homeland, seeks entrance to the place where the factory landlords live in luxury, their borders protected by a high wall.

Giselle is in love with Albrecht, a member of this wealthy class who disguises himself as an outcast to woo her. But she is also loved by Hilarion, an outcast with the spirit of the fox or trickster – a ‘fixer’ adept at crossing the boundary between rich and poor in search of advantage. Hilarion brokers the relationship between his own community and that of the visiting landlords, among them Albrecht’s fiancée Bathilde, in whose fine dress Giselle recognises her own handiwork. When exposed by Hilarion as an impostor and confronted with the choice between his life of privilege and the precarity of the Outcasts’ existence, Albrecht returns to Bathilde, betraying Giselle and abandoning the secret fruit of their love. Lost on the border between two violently unequal worlds, Giselle’s fate is sealed as the Landlords retreat to safety and seclusion.

Act II takes place not in the ballet blanc otherworldly glade of the original, but behind the Wall, in a broken-down ‘ghost’ factory, one of globalisation’s proliferating mausoleums. Here the female migrant workers of Act I have laboured, and too many have died, victims not of betrayal in love, but of industrial accidents caused by greed, neglect or exhaustion.

The ghost factory is haunted by the memory of the women (the Wilis) who have passed through its doors and never returned. In this condemned space the Wilis seek revenge upon those who have injured them. The bamboo canes carried by the Wilis are both weapons and remnants of a pre-industrial past. They refer to the structure of the hand loom and early weaving machines, and to traditions of skilled craftsmanship before the advent of factory piece work. Giselle is a newcomer in this world, still intimate with the life and the love she has so recently lost. Her desire to break the cycle of violence which ends Hilarion’s life leads to her reconciliation with Albrecht and his release from the retributive justice of the Wilis. He returns, now an outcast himself, to the borderland beyond the Wall.

The original ballet, too, is present as a memory trace in elements of classical movement vocabulary and fragments which refer to the choreography of Coralli and Perrot. It is present in the narrative structure, which remains close to the libretto by Gautier and St Georges, and in haunting melodic motifs drawn from Adolphe Adam’s original score by composer Vincenzo Lamagna. Lamagna layers classical instrumentation and abstract industrial resonances into a complex current of sound; a work of constant interweaving, like the ballet itself. Over many months of research and rehearsal, Khan, the dancers and the creative team drew on the rich resource of English National Ballet’s *Giselle* in Mary Skeaping’s iconic version, as well as on a vast reservoir of contemporary and archival images, sounds and movement forms associated with industrial processes, Kathak dance tradition, courtly ceremony, folk dance, animal movement and human migration. Out of these materials a movement vocabulary was developed and adapted to the circumstances of the narrative and its context, including the monumental nature and dynamic potential of the set. The production evolved through a process of accretion, pattern-creation and disruption, and the layering and interweaving of motifs and metaphors.

The ancestral *Giselle* haunts this new version, which honours its enduring legacy and the mythic quality of its story, while allowing contemporary issues and forces – economic, physical and social – to transform it into a testament of our troubled times.

Akram Khan’s *Giselle* is a work of rituals and cycles, suffused with the memory of movement, the violence of inequality, and the resilience, capability and desires of the human body.

Ruth Little – Dramaturg

Akram Khan Company

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DANCERS

Lead Principals
Joseph Caley
Jeffrey Cirio*
Alina Cojocaru
Jurgita Dronina
Isaac Hernández
Fernanda Oliveira
Aaron Robison
Tamara Rojo
Erina Takahashi

Principals
Begoña Cao
Oscar Chacon*
Cesar Corrales
Shiori Kase
Laurretta Summerscales

Character Artists
Michael Coleman*
Jane Haworth

First Soloists
Fernando Bufalá
Crystal Costa
James Forbat
Alison McWhinney
Adela Ramírez
Fabian Reimair
Junor Souza

Soloists
Aitor Arrieta
Katja Khaniukova
Skyler Martin
Ken Saruhashi
James Streeter

Junior Soloists
Tiffany Hedman
Rina Kanehara
Senri Kou
Daniel Kraus
Guilherme Menezes

First Artists
Precious Adams
Isabelle Brouwers
Jung ah Choi
Barry Drummond
Anjuli Hudson
Van Le Ngoc
Stina Quagebeur
Francesca Velicu

Artists of the Company
Matthew Astley
Claire Barrett
William Beagley
Alice Bellini
Georgia Bould
Francisco Bosch
Emilia Cadorin
Fernando Carratalá Coloma
Julia Conway
Henry Dowden
Noam Durand
Shevelle Dynott
Eireen Evrard
Giorgio Garrett
Jennie Harrington
Amber Hunt
Sarah Kundi
Pedro Lapetra
Laurent Liotardo
Adriana Lizardi
Daniel McCormick
Joshua McSherry-Gray
Victor Prigent
Maria José Sales
William Simmonds
Emily Suzuki
Lucinda Strachan
Connie Vowles
Angela Wood
Erik Woolhouse
Rhys Antoni Yeomans
Jia Zhang

*Guest Artists

ENGLISH NATIONAL BALLET

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Tamara Rojo was appointed Artistic Director of English National Ballet in 2012. She combines this role with her dancing career, performing as Lead Principal with the Company.

Trained in Madrid at the Victor Ullate School.

She won a Gold Medal at the Paris International Dance Competition and a Special Jury Award unanimously given by a judging panel led by Natalia Makarova, Vladimir Vasiliev and Galina Samsova, who asked her to join Scottish Ballet.

Within six months of joining English National Ballet, Tamara was promoted to Principal, and went on to dance the full range of the Company’s principal roles. Derek Deane created the roles of Juliet (Romeo & Juliet) and Clara (The Nutcracker) for her. Her performances as Clara broke all box office records at the London Coliseum and The Times named her “Dance Revelation of the Year.”

Tamara joined The Royal Ballet as a Principal at the invitation of Sir Anthony Dowell shortly after her highly acclaimed Guest Artist debut with the Company in Sir Peter Wright’s Giselle, and danced there for 12 years.

Tamara has been repeatedly recognised for her artistic excellence. Her awards include: the 2010 Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production; Spain’s three highest Honours, The Prince of Asturias Award, the Gold Medal of Fine Arts and Encomienda de Número de Isabel la Católica; the Benois de la Danse Award; Critics’ Circle National Dance Award; Barclay’s Outstanding Achievement in Dance Award; Positano Dance Award; Leonide Massine Premio al Valore; the Italian Critic’s Award; and from the City of Madrid, both the International Medal of the Arts and the Interpretation Award.

She is a member of the Board of the Creative Industries Federation, the Anglo-Spanish Society, a Patron of the Ipswich-based DanceEast Academy, Patron of the Flamingo Chicks and Adviser to Spain’s Superior Council of Artistic Studies.

In January 2016 Tamara Rojo became D.A. Magna Cum Laude, presenting her thesis ‘Psychological Profile of the Elite Dancer – Vocational Characteristics of the Professional Dancer’ at Rey Juan Carlos University, and was awarded a CBE for her services to ballet in the Queen’s 2016 New Year’s Honours.
EXECUTIVE, ARTISTIC & CONDUCTORS

PATRICK HARRISON
Executive Director

Birthplace
Norwich, UK

Training
Lancaster University, graduating with a first class degree in politics and international relations

Previous companies
Cambridge Arts Theatre (Executive Director); the National Theatre (Director of Commercial Operations); The British Museum and The National Gallery

English National Ballet
Joined 2016

Career highlights
Overseeing the development of commercial and audience experience provision as part of the £80m NTFuture project, growing the National Theatre’s trading company to an annual turnover of £13m

Other info
Patrick is currently on Battersea Arts Centre’s Enterprises Board, and Bristol Old Vic Theatre’s Trading Board, offering advice and support to the executive teams, with a focus on commercial opportunities and current capital projects

GAVIN SUTHERLAND
Music Director

Birthplace
County Durham, UK

Training
University of Huddersfield – First Class Honours and Masters in Conducting, Orchestration and Piano, Kruczynski Prize for Piano and Davidson Prize for Distinction Brought to the Institution

Affiliations include
Northern Ballet; Birmingham Royal Ballet; Royal New Zealand Ballet; New National Ballet of Japan; Norwegian National Ballet; Royal Ballet Sinfonia; London Symphony Orchestra; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra; BBC Concert Orchestra; Münchner Rundfunkorchester. Currently Principal Guest Conductor for Australian Philharmonic Orchestra

English National Ballet
Appointed Music Director June 2008. Arranged and orchestrated Wayne Eagling’s Men Y Men (Rachmaninoff); No Man’s Land (Bizet); Akram Khan’s Giselle and reconstructions for Le Corsaire.

Other orchestrations also include the Emerging Dancer competitions and many ENB events, including the My First Ballet series. Made his Royal Opera House debut in 2017 with the Company during the Kenneth MacMillan National Celebration performances

Other Info
Recorded over 90 CDs, broadcast worldwide, regular conductor for BBC Radio 2’s Friday Night is Music Night. His musical Little Women enjoyed two runs in London, and his other compositions and arrangements are in considerable demand. Frequent appearances as piano soloist and in chamber music. Appointed Chairman of the Light Music Society in 2009. July 2016 made his debut at the BBC Proms, Royal Albert Hall with the BBC Concert Orchestra. 2017 conducted the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in the Last Night of the BBC Proms in the Park

GERRY CORNELIUS
Guest Conductor

Birthplace
London UK

Education
Durham University Royal Academy of Music, London St Petersburg Conservatory

Affiliations include
Royal Opera House, English National Opera; Hallé Orchestra; London Sinfonietta, London Philharmonic Orchestra; English National Ballet; New York City Ballet; Hong Kong Ballet; Welsh National Opera; Scottish Opera; Festival d’Aix-en-Provence; Bregenzer Festspiele; Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg; BBC Concert Orchestra; BCM, The Opera Group; MusikFabrik and Cologne

English National Ballet
Swan Lake; The Sleeping Beauty; Nutcracker; Cinderella; The Snow Queen; Romeo & Juliet in-the-round and Akram Khan’s Giselle

Other Info
He is particularly in demand to conduct first performances of major new works. These include award-winning new operas and ensemble pieces by George Benjamin, Olga Neuwirth, Thomas Adès, Julian Anderson, Judith Weir, Tansy Davies & Richard Causton. He was the Associate Conductor of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and Conductor for the New Music Ensemble of Cambridge University
AKRAM KHAN
Choreography
Birthplace
London, UK
Training
De Montfort University and Performing Arts at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance
Affiliations include
National Ballet of China; collaborations with actress Juliette Binoche; ballerina Sylvie Guillem; choreographers/dancers Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Israel Galván; singer Kylie Minogue; visual artists Anish Kapoor; Antony Gormley and Tim Yip; writer Hanif Kureishi; composers Steve Reich, Nitin Sawhney., Jocelyn Poole and Ben Frost. His creation for the London 2012 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony was received with unanimous acclaim.
Works created include
Until the Lions, Kaash; TOROBAKA; Vertical Road, DESH, iTMOi, Dust, technê, Until the Lions, XENOS
Other info
Recognised for their ferocious industrial hybrid of electro-orchestral sounds.

ADOLPHE ADAM
Composer
Birthplace
Paris, France
Training
Paris Conservatoire studying piano, organ and composition
Affiliations
Composed scores for the King’s Theatre and Drury Lane, London, the Paris Opera, the Bolshoi Theatre, St Petersburg and the Königliche Opernhaus, Berlin
Work created
14 ballets including Giselle, Faust, La Fille du Danube, La Jolie Fille du Gande, Le Djiable à quatre, Le Corseau and other theatrical productions and church music. Professor of composition at the Paris Conservatoire from 1849
Other info
Honourable Mention Prix de Rome, Second Prix de Rome (1824). In 1847 he founded the Théâtre National but the project floundered and he lost his money in the 1849 revolution.

VINCENTO LAMAGNA
Music after the original score
Birthplace
Naples, Italy
Affiliations
Vincento Lamagna is an Italian musician, composer and producer based in London. His music is known for its visceral, emotive and edgy language that utilises an unconventional hybrid of electro-orchestral sounds. As well as his solo work, Lamagna has carved a niche in the alternative contemporary dance world, where he has established himself as a major collaborator with some of the most acclaimed choreographers of this generation, Hofesh Shechter and Akram Khan. His most recent collaborations include Akram Khan’s award-winning 21st century adaptation of Giselle for English National Ballet and Khan’s Until the Lions, which was premiered at the Roundhouse, London in 2016. His scores are a mercurial combination of acoustic and electronic music, recognised for their ferocious industrial undertones, haunted melodies and cinematic soundscapes
www.vincenzolamagna.com

TIM YIP
Visual Design and Costumes
Birthplace
Hong Kong
Training
Hong Kong Polytechnic University, photography degree
Affiliations include
Collaborations with many film directors of international acclaim, John Woo, Ang Lee, Tsai Ming Liang, Tian Zhuangzhuang and Li Shaohong. Renowned Taiwanese theatrical groups Cloud Gate Dance Theatre; Contemporary Legend Theatre; Han-Tang Yuetu Dance Ensemble touring throughout China, Austria, France, USA, the UK and Singapore. In 2010 he collaborated with theatre director Robert Wilson on 1433: The Grand Voyage
Other info
Tim was Art and Costume Director for the Beijing handover performance of the Olympic Games closing ceremony in Athens. For Christian Dior’s 60th anniversary exhibition, his work, Floating Leaves Garden successfully drew global attention between fashion and art towards Chinese tradition. In recent year’s solo art exhibitions have been held in New York, Beijing and Shanghai. Publications include Lost in Time; Flower of the Wind, Floating, Circulation, Rouge: L’art de Tim Yip (published in both French and English), Illusions of Silence and Passage. For Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon, Tim won the Academy Award for Best Art Direction and the British Academy Film Award for Best Costume Designer in 2001

MARK HENDERSON
Lighting Design
Birthplace
Mansfield, UK
Other info / Awards

RUTH LITTLE
Dramaturg
Birthplace
Sydney, Australia
Training
University of Sydney; Cambridge University
Previous affiliations
Griffin Theatre Company, Sydney; Out of Joint, Soho Theatre and the Royal Court, (Literary Manager); The Young Vic (Artistic Associate)

English National Ballet
Affiliations
Akram Khan’s award-winning productions of Dust, 2014 and Giselle in 2016
Awards
Winner of 2012 Kenneth Tynan Award for dramaturgy

Other info
Associate Director at Cape Farewell from 2010–2016 and dramaturging with Akram Khan Company (Gnosis, Vertical Road, DESH, iTMOi, Dust), technê, Until the Lions, XENOS); Guest Editor, Dance Umbrella’s ‘Definite Article’, 2015, dramaturging 1984 Jonathan Watkins, Northern Ballet); Publications include The Young Vic Book; The Royal Court Theatre Inside Out; The Slow Art of Contemporary Expedition; Islandings and Art, Place, Climate; Situated Ethics, War in the Body, The Meteorological Body

“...evoked by Vincento Lamagna’s magnificently cinematic score”
Evening Standard
LEAD PRINCIPALS

ISAAK HERNÁNDEZ
Lead Principal
Birthplace
Guadalajara, Mexico
Training
His Father, Hector Hernández followed by Philadelphia’s Rock School for Dance Education
English National Ballet
Joined 2015 as Lead Principal having previously appeared with the Company as a guest artist as Prince Siegfried in Hamburg Ballet’s 30th Anniversary Gala and in 2004 entered the Béjart Ballet, Lausanne performing with the CST II. For 12 years. Principal roles and ballets included; Phoenix in Firebird; Tristan and Isolde; Ani paraiat Zarahustha; Song of a Wayfarer; Dionysio; 7 Danses greques; Dialogue de l’Ombre Double; Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9; The Rite of Spring; Ballade de la rue Athina; Strawinsky; Helingakobe; Bakithi; La Mort du Tamber; and Parsifal including works by Tony Fabre and Gil Roman. He was also appeared at the Memorial to Gianni Versace; Serata homaggio a Béjart; 30th and 31st World Ballet Festivals, Tokyo; Nurseyev’s Gala, 2014; Stuttgart Ballet Gala with Friedemann Vogel and the Ave Maya Gala at the Bolsho

OSCAR CHACON
Guest Artist
Birthplace
Cali, Colombia
Training
Incoballet (Colombian Institute of classical ballet); Rudra Béjart School, Lausanne Graham technique; Indian dance; African dance and Flamenco including other disciplines, theatre, kendo, singing and percussion. His teachers included Carolyn Carlson, Mayra Woodruff, Sabriti Savai, Chantala Savali, Azary Pilsetsky and Michele Gascard
English National Ballet
Made his debut with the Company as Hilarion in Akram Khan’s Giselle, Autumn 2016
Affiliations
At the invitation of Maurice Béjart he performed at Hamburg Ballad’s 30th Anniversary Gala and in 2004 entered the Béjart Ballet, Lausanne performing with the CST II. For 12 years. Principal roles and ballets included; Phoenix in Firebird; Tristan and Isolde; Ani paraiat Zarahustha; Song of a Wayfarer; Dionysio; 7 Danses greques; Dialogue de l’Ombre Double; Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9; The Rite of Spring; Ballade de la rue Athina; Strawinsky; Helingakobe; Bakithi; La Mort du Tamber; and Parsifal including works by Tony Fabre and Gil Roman. Oscar has also appeared at the Memorial to Gianni Versace; Serata homaggio a Béjart; 30th and 31st World Ballet Festivals, Tokyo; Nurseyev’s Gala, 2014; Stuttgart Ballet Gala with Friedemann Vogel and the Ave Maya Gala at the Bolsho

FERNANDA OLIVEIRA
Lead Principal
Birthplace
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Training
Centre de Dança Rio, Royal Ballet Upper School
Previous company
Ballet Nacional de Santiago de Chile
English National Ballet
Favourite roles
Juliet, Swanilda in Cappelio, title role in Manon
Favourite productions
Romeo & Juliet and Manon
Career highlights
Creating role of Aurora in Deane’s The Sleeping Beauty and Clara in Christopher Hampson’s The Nutracker
Other info
Won first prize and grand prix in Buenos Aires and first prize in Conselho Brasileiroda Dança. Married to First Soloist, Fabian Reimair and gave birth to their son Liam in July 2010

DONNA O’DONNELL
Principal
Birthplace
Los Angeles, California
Training
Royal Ballet Upper School
Previous company
English National Ballet
English National Ballet
Favourite roles
Aurora in The Sleeping Beauty, Romeo & Juliet (Nureyev), Giselle (Skeaping), Zobeide in Scheherazade (Carmen Petit) and Manon (MacMillan)
Career highlights
A Million Kisses to my Skin by David Dawson and creating roles in Wayne Eagling’s Resolution and Derek Deane’s Strictly Gershwin. Summer 2011 leading role in Roland Petit’s Carmen at the London Coliseum, Spring 2015 William Forsythe’s In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated and appearing as Frida Kahlo in Broken Wings, choreographed by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Sadler’s Wells, 2016
Other info
Has toured with Carlos Acosta and hosted a Dance Gala in 2009 in aid of two London children’s charities. She has guested with National Ballet of Tokyo in Roland Petit’s La Cheva-cause

ERINA TAKAHASHI
Lead Principal
Birthplace
Kushiro, Japan
Training
Kushiro Ballet Academy by Kou Yano, Rudra Béjart School, Lausanne (Graham technique; Indian classical ballet); Rudra Béjart School, Lausanne (Graham technique; Indian classical ballet); Rudra Béjart School, Lausanne (Graham technique; Indian classical ballet); Rudra Béjart School, Lausanne (Graham technique; Indian classical ballet); Rudra Béjart School, Lausanne (Graham technique; Indian classical ballet); Rudra Béjart School, Lausanne (Graham technique; Indian classical ballet); Rudra Béjart School, Lausanne (Graham technique; Indian classical ballet); Rudra Béjart School, Lausanne (Graham technique)
English National Ballet
Favourite roles
Giselle, Juliet, The Chosen One in In the Rite of Spring
Favourite production
Mary Skeaping’s Giselle
Career highlights
Best Female Newcomer in 2002 Critics’ Circle Awards, enjoys reading in English and Japanese and doing yoga. Married to Soloist, James Streeter
Other info
Frasia Kahlo in Broken Wings, choreographed by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Sadler’s Wells, 2016

BEGOÑA CAO
Principal
Birthplace
London, UK
Training
Arts Educational School London, Royal Ballet Upper School
English National Ballet
Favourite roles
Carmen & Juliet (Nureyev), Manon (Petit) and Bakthi; La Mort du Tambour; Strawinsky; Heliogabale; 30th and 31st World Ballet Festivals, Tokyo; Nurseyev’s Gala, 2014; Stuttgart Ballet Gala with Friedemann Vogel and the Ave Maya Gala at the Bolsho
Other info
Oscar was awarded a BALLET2000 prize (awarded to dancers who have show with major international companies) at the Palais des Festivals, Cannes 2016

PRINCIPALS

“Exceptional”
The New York Times

“...electrifyingly glamorous”
The Independent on Sunday

“...I could have watched the real, fleet Erina Takahashi all night”
The Daily Telegraph

“...fascinating to watch him dance with so much energy, passion and contagious jubilation, making you shiver with pleasure”
Monaco Reporter

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**CRYSTAL COSTA**  
First Soloist  
Birthplace  
Vancouver, Canada  
Age started dancing  
Seven years old  
Training  
In Vancouver with Heidi Zolty and Ania Storoszczuk-Smeets and The National Ballet School in Toronto  
Previous company  
Hong Kong Ballet as Principal dancer  
English National Ballet  
 Joined 2007, First Soloist 2008  
Favourite roles  
Giselle  
Favourite productions  
Giselle and Les Sylphides  
Other info  
Won the Peter Dwyer Award for Most Promising Dancer. Roles created include Natalie Weir’s Butterfly and Storoszczuk-Smeets and The National Ballet School in Toronto’s choreographic workshop in 2007. Loves to cook and enjoys playing the drums. Crystal was the winner of the 2010 People’s Choice Award.  
Instagram: james4bat

**JAMES FORBAT**  
First Soloist  
Birthplace  
London, UK  
Age started dancing  
Four years old  
Training  
Velentine Walker School of Dance, Reigate; Royal Ballet School 1997–2005  
Previous companies  
Whilst a student appeared with both The Royal Ballet and Birmingham Royal Ballet companies  
English National Ballet  
Favourite roles  
Albrecht in Mary Skeaping’s Giselle; JF Kyllä’s Petite Mort  
Career highlight  
The principal ‘turning boy’ in Landers Etudes and Romeo in Nureyev’s Romeo & Juliet  
Roles would love to dance  
Des Grieux in MacMillan’s Manon and any role in Forsythe’s In The Middle, Somewhat Elevated  
Other info  
Married to fellow Company dancer Francisco Bosch and they have a French Bulldog

**ALISON MCGWHINNEY**  
First Soloist  
Birthplace  
Port MacQuarie, Australia  
Age started dancing  
Four years old  
Training  
English National Ballet School, Ecole Ballet Studios  
Previous companies  
London City Ballet, Vienstaatstoper Ballet  
English National Ballet  
Favourite role  
Juliet  
Favourite production  
Rudolf Nureyev’s Romeo & Juliet  
Career highlights  
Performing at the Sydney Opera House, the role of the Lilac Fairy in Kenneth MacMillan’s The Sleeping Beauty and as Juliet in Rudolf Nureyev’s Romeo & Juliet. January 2017 danced both Myrtha and Giselle in Mary Skeaping’s Giselle at the London Coliseum  
Other info  
JAMES STREETER
Soloist
Birthplace
Rochford, UK
Age started dancing
Five years old
Training
English National Ballet School
English National Ballet
Favourite role
Tybalt in Romeo & Juliet
Would most like to dance with
My wife, Lead Principal Erina Takahashi
Career highlight
Tybalt in Derek Deane’s Romeo & Juliet in-the-round at the Royal Albert Hall, Rothbart in Swan Lake, Albrecht in Mary Skeaping’s Giselle
Other info
Hobbies include sailing and cycling

KATJA KHANIUKOVA
Soloist
Birthplace
Kiev, Ukraine
Training
Kiev State Choreographic Institute
Previous companies
Principal Dancer – Kiev Ballet
English National Ballet
Joined 2014 and has appeared as Clara in Eagling’s Nutcracker, Romeo & Juliet in-the-round at the Royal Albert Hall and roles in Ronald Hynd’s Coppélia, Derek Deane’s Swan Lake, Medora and Guinane in Corsaire and the title role in Mary Skeaping’s Giselle. Promoted to Soloist in 2017
Roles include
Juliet, Kitri (Don Quixote), Clara (Nutcracker), Aurora and Princess Florine (Bluebird) from Sleeping Beauty, Odette/Odile and both Medora and Guinane (Corsaire)
Other info
As a guest principal with Latvian National Opera and Och国际芭蕾舞团（拉脱维亚，日本）。国际奖项包括在塞夫里国际芭蕾舞比赛（2015）获得金牌；世界舞蹈大赛（2007）获得银奖；在首尔国际芭蕾舞比赛（2011）和伊斯坦布尔国际芭蕾舞比赛（2012）获得金牌。Katja was a finalist during English National Ballet’s annual Emerging Dancer Competition (2015) sponsored by Emerging Female Talent Fund

KEN SARUHASHI
Soloist
Birthplace
Hokkaido, Japan
Training
Harumi Shimoda Ballet School; English National Ballet School
English National Ballet
Joined 2011, promoted First Artist 2014, Junior Soloist 2016, Soloist 2017
Career highlights
Lankendem in Le Corsaire, Prince Siegfried in Swan Lake, Aszure Barton’s Fantastic Beings and Albrecht in Mary Skeaping’s Giselle
Roles would love to dance
Basilio in Don Quixote and Romeo
Other info
Ken was nominated for the 2013 Emerging Dancer Competition and the 2014 Emerging Dancer Competition

JAMES STREETER
Soloist
Birthplace
Rochford, UK
Age started dancing
Five years old
Training
English National Ballet School
English National Ballet
Favourite role
Tybalt in Romeo & Juliet
Would most like to dance with
My wife, Lead Principal Erina Takahashi
Career highlight
Tybalt in Derek Deane’s Romeo & Juliet in-the-round at the Royal Albert Hall, Rothbart in Swan Lake (both in-the-round and proscenium arch productions) and in Akram Khan’s Dust partnering both Tamara Rojo and Erina Takahashi at the Barbican and on the Pyramid Stage, Glastonbury 2014
Other info
Hobbies include sailing and cycling

AI TOR ARRIETA
Soloist
Birthplace
Oiartzun, Spain (Basque Country)
Training
Royal Conservatory of Dance Mariemma, Madrid
English National Ballet
Joined as Junior Soloist in 2016, promoted to Soloist, 2017
Roles include
Albrecht in Akram Khan’s Giselle, the Nutcracker in Eagling’s Nutcracker, the Peasant pas de deux in Skeaping’s Giselle and Paris in Nureyev’s Romeo & Juliet
Previous company
Compañía Nacional de Danza, Madrid, leading roles in Orpheus Suite, Raymonda Variations and Don Quixote by José Martinez including other works by George Balanchine, William Forsythe, Ohad Naharin and Tony Fabre
Role would like to dance
Solor from La Bayadère, Prince Siegfried, Swan Lake and Albrecht in Giselle
Other info
Won Gold Medal at the International Ballet Competition of Biarritz, 2013 and plays the Cello and Piano. Aitor was crowned joint winner of the 2017 Emerging Dancer Competition opposite Rina Kanehara

KATJA KHANIUKOVA
Soloist
Birthplace
Kiev, Ukraine
Training
Kiev State Choreographic Institute
Previous companies
Principal Dancer – Kiev Ballet
English National Ballet
Joined 2014 and has appeared as Clara in Eagling’s Nutcracker, Romeo & Juliet in-the-round at the Royal Albert Hall and roles in Ronald Hynd’s Coppélia, Derek Deane’s Swan Lake, Medora and Guinane in Corsaire and the title role in Mary Skeaping’s Giselle. Promoted to Soloist in 2017
Roles include
Juliet, Kitri (Don Quixote), Clara (Nutcracker), Aurora and Princess Florine (Bluebird) from Sleeping Beauty, Odette/Odile and both Medora and Guinane (Corsaire)
Other info
As a guest principal with Latvian National Opera and Och国际芭蕾舞团（拉脱维亚，日本）。国际奖项包括在塞夫里国际芭蕾舞比赛（2015）获得金牌；世界舞蹈大赛（2007）获得银奖；在首尔国际芭蕾舞比赛（2011）和伊斯坦布尔国际芭蕾舞比赛（2012）获得金牌。Katja was a finalist during English National Ballet’s annual Emerging Dancer Competition (2015) sponsored by Emerging Female Talent Fund

KEN SARUHASHI
Soloist
Birthplace
Hokkaido, Japan
Training
Harumi Shimoda Ballet School; English National Ballet School
English National Ballet
Joined 2011, promoted First Artist 2014, Junior Soloist 2016, Soloist 2017
Career highlights
Lankendem in Le Corsaire, Prince Siegfried in Swan Lake, Aszure Barton’s Fantastic Beings and Albrecht in Mary Skeaping’s Giselle
Roles would love to dance
Basilio in Don Quixote and Romeo
Other info
Ken was nominated for the 2013 Emerging Dancer Competition and the 2014 Emerging Dancer Competition

JAMES STREETER
Soloist
Birthplace
Rochford, UK
Age started dancing
Five years old
Training
English National Ballet School
English National Ballet
Favourite role
Tybalt in Romeo & Juliet
Would most like to dance with
My wife, Lead Principal Erina Takahashi
Career highlight
Tybalt in Derek Deane’s Romeo & Juliet in-the-round at the Royal Albert Hall, Rothbart in Swan Lake (both in-the-round and proscenium arch productions) and in Akram Khan’s Dust partnering both Tamara Rojo and Erina Takahashi at the Barbican and on the Pyramid Stage, Glastonbury 2014
Other info
Hobbies include sailing and cycling
IN THE ROLE OF MYRTHA

STINA QUAGEBEUR
First Artist
Birthplace
Sint-Lievens-Houtem, Belgium
Age started dancing
Six years old
Training
Ingrid Lootvoet, Royal Ballet School, English National Ballet School
English National Ballet
Joined 2004, First Artist 2016
Favourite production
Lest We Forget
Career highlights
Opening night of Akram Khan’s Dust at the Barbican Theatre and the Pyramid Stage at Glastonbury. Performing in William Forsythe’s In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated at Sadler’s Wells. Autumn 2016 saw Stina create the leading role of Myrtha, Queen of the Wilis in Akram Khan’s Giselle
Other info
Alongside her dancing career choreography plays an important part of her professional life. She was awarded and selected to go to New York by the Breaking Glass Project with her work Vera. She has created various new works for the Company and most recently choreographed the annual fundraising gala at The Dorchester, March 2016

ISABELLE BROUWERS
First Artist
Birthplace
Bonn, Germany (Nationality British)
Training
Royal Ballet Lower School and English National Ballet School
English National Ballet
Joined 2014, promoted First Artist 2017
Previous companies
Appeared in child roles in both Swan Lake and The Nutcracker with The Royal Ballet
Role would love to dance
Jiří Kylián’s Petite Mort and Odette/Odile
Awards
Youth America Grand Prix in 2007; Genée International Ballet Competition Silver Medal 2013 and second place Young British Dancer of the Year 2013. Nominated for both the 2015 and 2016 Emerging Dancer Final
Favourite role
Odile in Swan Lake
Career highlights
Being accepted into the Company and dancing the role of Louise in Eagling’s Nutcracker, Coliseum 2014. Dancing at the Palais Garnier (Paris Opéra) June 2016, Odalisques in Le Corsaire, competing in the Emerging Dancer Final 2015 and 2016 and working with Akram Khan on the creation of Giselle
Other info
Has lived in Europe, South East Asia and Mexico but now considers London her new home plus speaks five languages!

SARAH KUNDI
Artist of the Company
Birthplace
London, UK
Training
Central School of Ballet
English National Ballet
Joined 2014
Previous companies
Northern Ballet 2004-2008 and Ballet Black 2008-2013
Role would love to dance
Juliet in Romeo & Juliet
Created roles and Awards
Created the role of Eurydice in Will Tuckett’s Orpheus for Ballet Black’s 10th Anniversary in 2011. Commended for the Phyllis Bedells Bursary in 2002; 2017 winner of the Corps de Ballet Award (2017) presented to an exceptional Artist of the Company who has gone above and beyond the call of duty over the previous season
Favourite roles
Tennis Girl in Gillian Lynne’s Simple Man, My Man’s Gone in David Nixon’s I Got Rythmn and Scottish Dances by David Bintley
Career highlights
Being nominated for a National Dance Award in 2010 for Outstanding Classical Female Performance and being featured as ‘Dancer of the Month’ later that year in The Dancing Times
Other info
Apart from dancing Sarah’s main big passion is listening to music of any kind, reading and spending time with her family and friends. She is Patron of Chantry School of Contemporary and Balletic Arts
I would like to thank the entire creative team, without them, I am a lost soul with no compass. But a special thanks also to my wife, Yoko, who debated with me, challenged me, all throughout the creative process, the narrative, and through the whole vision of Giselle.” — Akram Khan
Auckland Arts Festival is a place for ambitious ideas by storytellers, provocateurs and creators.

The Festival reflects our contemporary, cosmopolitan city with its many communities. It challenges artists and audiences to be bold and take a risk. Through the work of artists from Aotearoa and across the world, we aim to unify, uplift, enlighten and inspire the people of Tāmaki Makaurau and our many visitors.

Taking place annually in March, 2018 marks the 10th Auckland Arts Festival. This year more than 200,000 people are expected to attend the Festival, which comprises more than 50 events taking place in all corners of the Auckland region and many of which are free.

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In the centre of the Aotea Arts Precinct, this comfortable and upbeat pop-up club is your place to gather before and after a show, grab a delicious meal from a bespoke menu, enjoy live music from instrumentalists and DJs, or unwind over the long summer nights with a special Festival cocktail.

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