



**Media information
For immediate use**

Scottish Ballet at Edinburgh International Festival 2009

Scottish Ballet brings the world premiere of a radical and powerful reimagining of a classic tale, and striking, stylish work by Ashton and Forsythe to the stage of The Edinburgh Festival Theatre for Festival 09.

In their 40th anniversary year, the company presents the **world premiere** of ***Petrushka*** choreographed by Ian Spink, ***Workwithinwork*** choreographed by William Forsythe and ***Scènes De Ballet*** choreographed by Frederick Ashton with live music performed by the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** conducted by **Nicolas Kok** on Friday 4 and Saturday 5 September in three performances supported through the **Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund**.

Petrushka, the tragic story of a Russian puppet brought to life by a wizard's enchanted flute originally premiered by Ballet Russe in Paris in 1911 is given a twenty-first century twist for Festival 09 by choreographer and director, Ian Spink and designer Yannis Thavoris.

With ground-breaking music by Stravinsky, thought by some as being 'dirty' and grotesque, *Petrushka* has elements in common with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. The original ballet designed by Benois and choreographed by Fokine harked back to the 19th century boisterous revelry of the St Petersburg carnival before lent - the Shrovetide Fair.

Spink and Thavoris have updated *Petrushka* to Russia of the late 1990's in this new work created especially for Scottish Ballet.

Choreographer Ian Spink comments: "Our re-visiting of *Petrushka* keeps the original music but we've created and updated the libretto. Our Shrovetide fair has lost some of its folk traditions and gained more of a street feel. The ballet has been re-located to the 1990's - a period of dramatic change for Russia.

"Our 'puppets', more like human puppets still perform for the crowds - workers, sellers, gypsies, visitors carry on their business and celebrate a chaotic beginning to Lent.

"Within the central layers of the piece, as in the original, we enter the 'backstage' world of the 3 central characters. The comic love triangle, displayed to the crowd in the first scene has a darker and ultimately deadlier side.

"Designer Yannis Thavoris has created a shimmering realistic post-industrial landscape with characters who look like they've just stepped out of a St Petersburg or Moscow street.

"The score, packed with a mix of street, folk and expressionist fragments, drives along with energy - hinting at Stravinsky's later work, *Rite of Spring*."

Scottish Ballet's programme for Festival 09 also includes Frederick Ashton's ***Scènes de Ballet***. The choreography is a direct response to the elegant sophistication of Stravinsky's score. It was Ashton's favourite of his own works, and together with his *Cinderella* and *Symphonic Variations* formed the bedrock of what was to become the 'English style'. Steeped in the language of classical ballet, the work's striking designs feature crisp tutus, black velvet berets and pearl chokers which echo the Broadway chic of the late 1940s.

Created by William Forsythe, former director of Frankfurt Ballet, ***Workwithinwork*** completes the programme. This piece unites the dancers' classical discipline and experimental playfulness using Berio's haunting *Duetti* for two violins. The resulting

displays of dance virtuosity shimmer in and out of the shadows on the beautifully lit Playhouse stage.

This autumn, Scottish Ballet marks its 40th anniversary with over 40 days of celebrations commencing September 1st. This includes a photographic coffee table book, *40 Years of Scottish Ballet*. Annotated by dance writer and long time follower of Scottish Ballet Mary Brennan, the book is launched on 31 August at Edinburgh International Book Festival. Members of the public are also invited to share their memories of the company at a special 40th Anniversary Exhibition, which forms part of Homecoming Scotland 2009, at Tramway in Glasgow throughout the month of September before touring throughout Scotland.

Edinburgh International Festival 2009

Scenes de Ballet

Frederick Ashton Choreographer

Igor Stravinsky Music

Work Within Work

William Forsythe Choreographer

Luciano Berio Music

Petrushka

Ian Spink Choreographer

Yannis Thavoris Designer

Igor Stravinsky Music

Scottish Ballet

Scottish Chamber Orchestra

Nicolas Kok Conductor

Friday 4 September 7.30pm & Saturday 5 September 2.30pm & 7.30pm, The Edinburgh Playhouse

Tickets from £10

Supported through the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund

eif.co.uk

Hub Tickets: +44(0)131 473 2000

ENDS

Founded in 1969, Scottish Ballet is Scotland's national dance Company. The Company performs across Scotland, the UK and abroad, with strong classical technique at the root of all of its work. Its broad repertoire includes new version of the classics, seminal pieces from the 20th century modern ballet canon, signature pieces by living choreographers and new commissions. This year, Scottish Ballet moved to its new purpose-built home at the Tramway complex in Glasgow, creating a production and presentation facility of a scale and artistic mix unrivalled in the UK. <http://www.scottishballet.co.uk/>

Ian Spink has a real knack of breathing new life into classic stories, putting his own fresh slant onto some of the most well-established works. He most recently directed *Private Lives* for The Citizens Theatre, *L'enfant et les Sortilèges* and *L'heure Espagnole* for

Opera Zuid, Maastricht and choreographed *A Tragedy of Fashion* for Rambert Dance Company.

As part of Edinburgh International Festival 2009 Ashley Page, Artistic Director, Scottish Ballet and choreographer Ian Spink will be taking part in a **Conversations with Artists** on **Wednesday 2 September, 5.00pm, The Hub**.

Scottish Ballet will also be presenting dance workshops in Edinburgh schools in September as part of Edinburgh International Festivals ongoing arts education programme.

For further information please contact:

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