

# NEWS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET

For immediate release: Friday 11 October



## The Australian Ballet's free annual event *Ballet Under the Stars* heads to regional Victoria for the first time in its 53-year history to delight audiences with the romantic classic *Giselle*

The Australian Ballet will pirouette into Gippsland this October for the company's free annual outdoor performance, *Ballet Under the Stars*, presented exclusively at Larder Park on Saturday 26 October 2019 and hosted by ARIA award-winning Australian musician Megan Washington. This is the first time the event will visit regional Victoria in its 53-year history, showcasing a full-length production of a timeless, romantic ballet, the much-loved classic *Giselle*.

*Ballet Under the Stars* is a highlight of The Australian Ballet's annual calendar and offers audiences the opportunity to enjoy a world-class, high-quality arts experience outside the major metropolitan cities. Held in New South Wales for the last three years, Victoria proudly welcomes the event back, expecting this year's performance will attract an estimated 10,000 attendees.

This popular outdoor community performance is supported by the Victorian Government via its tourism and major events agency, Visit Victoria.

As a free community event, *Ballet Under the Stars* provides both new and seasoned ballet lovers with the opportunity to enjoy a performance by Australia's national ballet company. In addition, The Australian Ballet will present pre-show entertainment aimed to provide opportunities to get to know more about ballet and its dancers. These activities include the chance to watch the dancers warm up on the stage, autograph signing and an interactive Q&A session.

Commenting on the program, Executive Director of The Australian Ballet, Libby Christie said, "We are delighted to be able to offer *Ballet Under the Stars* as a free performance to the community in regional Victoria. This event gives people of all ages and backgrounds the chance to experience world-class ballet and introduces ballet to many new audience members. As Australia's national ballet company, we are committed to being active community members and are proud to showcase the best of Australian culture and talent. We're thrilled to return to Victoria with this magical production."

Victoria's Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula is delighted to support *Ballet Under the Stars* and said;

"We're thrilled to be supporting *Ballet Under the Stars* in the Latrobe Valley – the first time in the event's 53-year history it will be staged in regional Victoria."

"*Ballet Under the Stars* offers the ideal opportunity to visit the Latrobe Valley and experience all that it has to offer, from fine wine and produce to breathtaking scenery and all just over an hour from Melbourne."

The ethereal and timeless *Giselle* has been enchanting audiences since it first appeared on stage in Paris in 1841. This October, *Giselle* will ignite a magical realm on stage worlds away from Paris when The Australian Ballet performs it for a Gippsland audience.

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## **Giselle**

This production of *Giselle* was created in 1986 by Maina Gielgud former Artistic Director of The Australian Ballet. The story opens with a vibrant grape harvest scene in a rural village. Innocent young Giselle meets Count Albrecht, who has disguised himself as a peasant in order to win her love. When Giselle discovers he is betrothed to another, she goes mad and dies of a broken heart. Transformed into a spirit, Giselle roams a forest haunted by the ghosts of jilted women, the wilis, who take revenge on the men who cross their path by forcing them to dance to their deaths. A remorseful Albrecht visits Giselle's grave in the forest one night, and, in the ultimate act of forgiveness and love, she dances with him until the sun rises and the evil spirits fade; she saves his life and finds peace in the afterlife.

## **EVENT INFORMATION**

*Ballet Under the Stars* is a free event for everyone.

Register Early. Due to high demand and limited capacity, we recommend you register on the waitlist to be the first to secure your free tickets. Tickets are required to secure entry to the event.

## **FOR PRE-REGISTRATION:**

[australianballet.com.au/the-ballets/ballet-under-the-stars](http://australianballet.com.au/the-ballets/ballet-under-the-stars)

Gates open at 4:00 for a 7:00pm performance.

Further details to follow.

For all media enquiries, including interviews and images, please contact:

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