

BOSTON BALLET

MIKKO NISSINEN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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BOSTON BALLET PRESENTS MARIUS PETIPA'S *THE SLEEPING BEAUTY*

ACCLAIMED CLASSIC RETURNS FOR FIVE PERFORMANCES ONLY

April 11, 2018 (BOSTON, MA) — Boston Ballet presents the coming-of-age fairytale *The Sleeping Beauty* by Marius Petipa with additional choreography by Sir Frederick Ashton. Hailed as one of the Company's trademark works, this quintessential production features soaring music by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky and sumptuous sets and costumes by Emmy Award-winning designer David Walker. *The Sleeping Beauty* runs May 11–19, 2018, at the Boston Opera House.

"This is my favorite production of *The Sleeping Beauty*, and I am excited to share it with Boston audiences again. It is a fantastic introduction for the first-time ballet goer, as well as a true pleasure for connoisseurs," said Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen. "*The Sleeping Beauty* is ingrained in ballet history, and I am proud that Boston Ballet continues this legacy. The tradition, emotion, and atmosphere created by the superb dancing, costumes, and sets have made audiences fall in love with this beloved story again and again."

This spring, Company dancers will be tasked with adding their fresh takes on *The Sleeping Beauty's* many iconic and technically challenging roles, including Aurora, Carabosse, and the Lilac Fairy, among others. Ballet Master and former Principal Dancer Larissa Ponomarenko performed Aurora in Boston Ballet's previous performances of *The Sleeping Beauty* and has been coaching Company dancers in this role and several others.

Guest conductor Ming Luke will lead the Boston Ballet Orchestra for all five performances of Tchaikovsky's magnificent score. Luke returns to Boston Ballet after making his debut in 2016 during performances of Mikko Nissinen's *The Nutcracker*. He is also the principal guest conductor for San Francisco Ballet and has worked with ensembles worldwide, including Bolshoi Orchestra, Houston Symphony, Birmingham Royal, Kennedy Center Opera Orchestra, and New York City Ballet Orchestra, among others.

Marius Petipa (1818–1910), considered the "father of classical ballet," danced and choreographed for the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia for nearly 60 years. Petipa's ballets showcased the corps de ballet, which had previously only been used as an ornamental frame for solos. He also restructured the classical pas de deux into three sections: the adagio, the male and female solo variations, and the coda; some of his finest pas de deux are on display in *The Sleeping Beauty*.

Sir Frederick Ashton (1904–1988) became resident choreographer of The Royal Ballet in 1938; he succeeded Ninette de Valois as director in 1963 and retired in 1970. Ashton made his choreographic debut in 1926. He is widely regarded as one of the most influential dance figures of the 20th century and his choreography developed a signature English style.

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Boston Ballet premiered the Ninette de Valois production of Petipa's *The Sleeping Beauty* in 2005 and has subsequently performed it in 2009, 2013, and 2017. Following last season's performances, Alastair Macaulay, Chief Dance Critic of *The New York Times*, praised Boston Ballet's production of *The Sleeping Beauty* as one of "the world's best."

All performances of *The Sleeping Beauty* take place at the Boston Opera House (539 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111):

Friday, May 11 at 7:30 pm
Saturday, May 12 at 1:30 pm
Saturday, May 12 at 7:30 pm
Sunday, May 13 at 1:30 pm
Saturday, May 19 at 1:30 pm

Tickets start at \$35. For more information, visit bostonballet.org or call 617.695.6955.

The Sleeping Beauty is approximately 2 hours and 51 minutes with two intermissions.

The Sleeping Beauty

Music: Peter Ilych Tchaikovsky
Choreography: Marius Petipa with additional choreography by Sir Frederick Ashton
Production: Ninette de Valois (after Nicolai Sergeev's 1939 production)
Lighting Design: John Cuff
Set and Costume Design: David Walker
Guest Conductor: Ming Luke

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About Boston Ballet

Since 1963, Boston Ballet's internationally acclaimed performances of classical, neo-classical, and contemporary ballets, combined with a dedication to world-class dance education and community initiative programs, have made the institution a leader in its field, with a 54-year history of promoting excellence and access to dance.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen and Executive Director Meredith Max Hodges, the Company maintains a diverse repertoire, ranging from full-length ballets to new works by some of today's finest choreographers. Boston Ballet's second company, Boston Ballet II, is comprised of dancers who gain experience by performing with the Company and independently, presenting special programs to audiences throughout the Northeast.

Boston Ballet School, the official school of Boston Ballet, has a long-standing dedication to providing exceptional dance education and ballet training to students across three studios in Boston, Newton, and the North Shore. Led by Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen and Director Margaret Tracey, the School reaches more than 5,000 students (toddler to adult) each year through its four core programs: Children's Program, Classical Ballet Program, Adult Dance Program, and Pre-Professional Program.

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Boston Ballet's Department of Education and Community Initiatives (ECI) provides programming, events, and activities that connect the community to dance. ECI reaches more than 4,000 individuals in Boston, North Shore, and the surrounding communities each year through Citydance, ECI on Location, Adaptive Dance, and other community programs.

For more information, please visit bostonballet.org.

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