

Wednesday 16 June 2010

Edge of night: it's gracious, audacious and innovative

Two masterworks and a world premiere make for an exciting triple bill

Two generations of Australian ballet talent come together to present *Edge of night* for The Australian Ballet in 2010.

In keeping with the company's tradition of caring for tradition while daring to be different, *Edge of night* is a triple bill where resident choreographer **Stephen Baynes** presents two critically acclaimed works alongside a world premiere for rising star **Tim Harbour**.

Opening in Melbourne at the Arts Centre on 26 August, the season heads to the Sydney Opera House from 11 November.

Baynes and Harbour both trained with The Australian Ballet School, danced for many years with The Australian Ballet, and now create beautiful works for its artists to perform. For Artistic Director David McAllister, Baynes and Harbour come together in *Edge of night* to showcase the very best traits of Australian choreography.

"It's all about having a willingness to take risks, opting for a bold and playful approach, and ensuring there is an ongoing respect for classical ballet technique," McAllister said.

When Baynes' *Molto Vivace* premiered in 2003, Handel's score was accompanied by the sound of dropping jaws. Boldly colourful, playful and laugh-out-loud funny, it showed the future of ballet was bright indeed.

In contrast, the achingly romantic *At the edge of night* shows a very different side to Baynes' work. Set to seven preludes by Sergei Rachmaninov, the music, says Baynes "speaks of a nostalgic yearning, of idyllic dreams, of pride and passion." And so does the ballet.

Tim Harbour's mainstage debut for The Australian Ballet, *Halcyon*, completes the bill. A dancer with The Australian Ballet for 12 years, Harbour has had a meteoric rise as a choreographer. After a succession of critically acclaimed works for the company's *Bodytorque* series, and commissions for Australian companies, a chance spotting by Christopher Wheeldon saw him recruited to create a ballet for the New-York based Morphoses in late 2009.

Based on a Greek myth and set to a specially commissioned score from Gerard Brophy, Harbour's *Halcyon* will be a much anticipated debut.

The tradition of nurturing choreographic talent has continued under a number of Artistic Directors at The Australian Ballet. Both Baynes and Harbour are an inspiration to the next generation of Australian choreographers and prove the importance of nurturing talent to produce the major artists of tomorrow. *Edge of night* showcases just this.

The performances

Melbourne 26 August – 4 September
(11 performances)

State Theatre, the Arts Centre
with Orchestra Victoria

Sydney 11 – 29 November
(19 performances)

Opera Theatre, Sydney Opera House
with Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra

Bookings

australianballet.com.au or 1300 369 741

Credits

AT THE EDGE OF NIGHT (1997)

Choreography Stephen Baynes

Music Sergei Rachmaninov

Set and costume design Michael Pearce

Lighting design Stephen Wickham

HALCYON (2010)

Choreography Tim Harbour

Music Gerard Brophy

Design Bluebottle

MOLTO VIVACE (2003)

Choreography Stephen Baynes

Music George Frideric Handel

Costume design Anna French

Set design Richard Roberts

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