

17 May 2010

The Australian Ballet ventures north to perform under the Milky Way in paradise

The Australian Ballet is escaping Melbourne's winter to perform under the stars in Queensland this June.

Now in its third year, *Pas de Deux in Paradise* is an exclusive outdoor performance at luxury resort **qualia** located on the northernmost point of Hamilton Island.

Four of the company's leading dancers will perform show-stopping pas de deux from a mixed repertoire of ballet classics and contemporary masterpieces.

The event, to be held from Friday 11 to Sunday 13 June 2010, is the third of its kind and will be hosted for the second year in a row by the Nine Network's **Catriona Rowntree**.

Internationally renowned Principal Artists **Lucinda Dunn** and **Robert Curran** will perform the stunning Black Swan pas de deux from *Swan Lake* and an emotional, contemporary pas de deux from **Christopher Wheeldon's** sublime *After the Rain*©.

Principal Artist **Rachel Rawlins** will pair with Senior Artist **Andrew Killian** to dance a lavish pas de deux from **Graeme Murphy's** acclaimed interpretation of the traditional tale of *The Nutcracker*, *Nutcracker – The Story of Clara*, as well as an excerpt from the passionate *El Tango*, choreographed by **Stephen Baynes**.

Artistic Director of The Australian Ballet **David McAllister** said that each year the experience at qualia had been very different.

"This year, four of our most loved dancers will be performing a beautiful mix of repertoire, from the classics like *Swan Lake* to critically acclaimed contemporary pieces like Christopher Wheeldon's *After the Rain*," he said.

In another added dimension to this year's event, The Australian Ballet will be displaying some of the company's most spectacular costumes in the beautiful setting of qualia's Long Pavilion.

In addition to the ballet performance, June's event will include a Q&A session, allowing guests to directly ask questions of the dancers and the opportunity to view class on stage on the day of the performance.

The ballets:

Nutcracker – The Story of Clara

In 1992, to mark The Australian Ballet's 30th birthday, Australian choreographic legend Graeme Murphy created a brand-new interpretation of one of the best known and most loved ballets of all time: *Nutcracker*. Murphy's ballet takes audiences deeper into the story of the original child heroine - Clara. Rachel Rawlins and Andrew Killian will perform the lavish pas de deux from Act Two of *Nutcracker – The Story of Clara*.

Swan Lake

Set to the immortal score by Tchaikovsky, *Swan Lake* is lauded across the world as one of *the* iconic ballet narratives. First seen in 1877, companies across the world have different versions of this classic ballet in their repertoire, mostly based on the 1895 revival by Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov. Lucinda Dunn and Robert Curran will perform the Black Swan pas de deux.

***After the Rain*©**

Created by international choreographer and 'golden boy' of the dance world Christopher Wheeldon, *After the Rain*© premiered by the New York City Ballet in 2005. It is a ballet of bold movements and heartfelt emotion, set to two atmospheric pieces by Estonian composer Arvo Pärt. Rich in invention and feeling, the ballet has deeply romantic pas de deux, one of which will be performed by Lucinda Dunn and Robert Curran at qualia in 2010.

El Tango

El Tango was originally created in 1998 as a pas de deux for then Principal Artists David McAllister and Vicki Attard. With music by legendary tango composer Astor Piazzolla, it offers a dramatic series of taut and shifting ensemble movement ideal for showcasing the company's leading dancers. In 2010 *El Tango* will be performed by Rachel Rawlins and Andrew Killian.

A special package has been put together exclusively for guests staying at qualia for the weekend of 11-13 June. Bookings for the event can be made at 1300 780 959 or by emailing reservations@qualia.com.au.

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