



## PRESS RELEASE

# THE DUCHESS OF CORNWALL VISITS ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE



Photo by David Tett

- HRH The Duchess of Cornwall visits the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) headquarters in Battersea, London for the first time
- The Duchess was welcomed by Her Majesty's Deputy Lord-Lieutenant for Wandsworth, RAD Chief Executive Luke Rittner CBE, RAD Chairman Guy Perricone and The Mayor of Wandsworth. Her Royal Highness also met RAD Ambassadors Angela Rippon CBE and Iain Mackay, along with the Academy's Artistic Director Paula Hunt MNZM
- Her Royal Highness watched a range of classes and met a variety of students, including Silver Swans, boys involved in RAD's male dance initiative Project B, and trainee dance teachers demonstrating the RAD's latest classical ballet programme, *Discovering Repertoire*

**HRH The Duchess of Cornwall visited the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) headquarters in Battersea, London today for the first time.** The RAD was delighted to welcome Her Royal Highness to watch a range of dance classes and to meet with students of all ages, as well as staff.

The Duchess observed a Silver Swans session, a ballet class specially designed for learners aged 55 and over, which was taught by RAD Registered Teacher Sarah Platt. These classes, which have been launched across the UK, are taught exclusively by Silver Swans Licensed Teachers, who have been trained to safely adapt ballet techniques for older adults. The RAD's Ambassador for Silver Swans **Angela Rippon CBE** also attended the class and discussed the initiative and the many benefits of ballet for older learners.

Her Royal Highness also had the opportunity to observe the next generation of male dancers take inspiration from RAD's Male Dance Ambassador and former Birmingham Royal Ballet Principal **Iain Mackay**, who led a Project B class, just for boys. The visit was rounded off by a demonstration of the RAD's new *Discovering Repertoire* programme. Artistic Director **Paula Hunt MNZM**, and students studying on the Academy's BA in Ballet Education programme presented a taster of this classical ballet performance programme, which allows students to learn choreography from famous ballets to the original music score.

**Chief Executive Luke Rittner CBE said:** *“It was a privilege and a delight for us to welcome HRH The Duchess of Cornwall to our headquarters in Battersea today. We hope that The Duchess enjoyed her visit to the Academy, and particularly the opportunity to see some of the ways in which we promote dance and dancing to students of all ages, and in 84 countries around the globe.”*

**Angela Rippon CBE was delighted to have the opportunity to welcome HRH to a Silver Swans class:** *“It was wonderful to meet HRH The Duchess of Cornwall today and for her to see a Silver Swans class in action. Ballet is fabulous exercise for body, mind and spirit, particularly as we get older.”*

**Silver Swan Ruth Holleley added:**

*“We were excited to show The Duchess that ballet is for every age group!”*

The Royal Academy of Dance received its Royal Charter from King George V in 1936. The following year, the RAD was awarded its coat of arms by the College of Arms. The Academy is proud to have Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as its Patron.

The RAD has been based in Battersea Square since 1972, and is currently preparing to move to a new, purpose built headquarters less than a mile from its current location in 2020, the same year that the organisation will celebrate its centenary.

**– ENDS –**

### **Notes to Editors**

**Website:** [www.rad.org.uk](http://www.rad.org.uk)

**Facebook:** @RoyalAcademyofDance

**Twitter:** @RADheadquarters

**Instagram:** @RoyalAcademyofDance

### **Royal Academy of Dance**

With approximately 14,000 members in 84 countries, the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) is one of the largest and most influential dance education and training organisations in the world. Established in 1920 to improve standards and re-invigorate dance training, the Academy helps and encourages its teachers to perfect their teaching skills and pass on this knowledge to their students. There are currently over 1,000 students in full-time or part-time teacher training programmes with the Academy and each year the examination syllabus is taught to thousands of young people worldwide, with around a quarter of a million pupils per year going on to take RAD exams.

### **Silver Swans**

The Royal Academy of Dance launched Silver Swans in September 2017. Silver Swans is a pilot project featuring branded ballet classes created specifically for the over-55s and taught exclusively by Silver Swans Licensed Teachers. Specially designed for mature dancers, classes help improve mobility, posture, coordination and energy levels and, most importantly, impart the sense of wellbeing that dance brings. Silver Swans classes are delivered by qualified dance teachers who have trained to safely adapt ballet techniques for older adults. Classes are currently available in selected parts of the US and UK, and the RAD will be gradually introducing Silver Swans classes across the world in the next few years. Also in the works is a heartwarming feature film titled *Silver Swans*, inspired by the RAD programme, which is being written by Fay Rusling and Oriane Messina (Green Wing), produced by Janette Day of CrossDay Productions Ltd and will shoot in 2019.

[www.rad.org.uk/silverswans](http://www.rad.org.uk/silverswans)

### **Project B**

Project B is a range of initiatives that aim to widen access to dance for boys and to encourage them

to take up ballet. Find out more: [www.rad.org.uk/projectb](http://www.rad.org.uk/projectb)

### **Discovering Repertoire**

*Discovering Repertoire* is a new, classical ballet performance programme for students aged 12 upwards and adults of all ages. Drawing on some of the most famous and much-loved works from the classical ballet repertoire, students can study choreography from *Coppélia*, *Giselle*, *Paquita*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake*. This unique programme provides the opportunity for students of all ages and levels to develop their musicality, expressiveness and artistry, whilst learning more about ballet's most popular stories and music.

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