



**English  
National  
Ballet**

**Appointment of  
Executive Director**

July 2024 | BBPKA



Saxton Bampfylde

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# A message from the Chair

Welcome to English National Ballet (ENB).

ENB is proud to be one of the country's leading arts organisation. We will be celebrating our 75th anniversary season commencing this autumn. We have a long history of bringing ballet and dance to audiences all over the country, as well as internationally. We are unique in the range of dance that we present from traditional ballet to pioneering new work. In everything we do, our aim is to make ballet accessible and welcoming, and the experience emotionally transporting.

We have a brilliant past and a loyal core audience. But our future is one of further transformation, new strategies, and attracting ever wider and younger audiences.

Our vital work in engagement, education, health and outreach is growing every single year. Our aim throughout is to ensure that ballet and dance are properly recognised as the most accessible and life transforming art forms in the country

With a fabulous state of the art new building on City Island, with an excellent company of dancers, musicians, technicians and craft specialists, and with a very sound financial position, we are well placed for an exciting next chapter in our history.

I hope that you are intrigued to find out more about the opportunities and the challenges.



**Sir Rupert Gavin**  
Chair



## Background

English National Ballet was founded in 1950 by the great dancers Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin, with a pioneering ambition to take ballet beyond the opera houses and around the country. We strive for a world where ballet has no barriers and everyone can be moved by the power of dance, and our mission is to open up the possibilities of ballet, to move more people in more ways. Our significant and influential contribution to Britain's cultural sector is demonstrated by our strong and diverse audiences, regular recognition from key industry awards, and the elite talent that we attract.

We are based in London but are a touring company. We perform in London throughout the year with a six-week season at the London Coliseum and residencies at Sadler's Wells (twice-yearly) and the Royal Albert Hall (at least every other year). We tour the UK, visiting Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester and Southampton, as well as smaller venues as part of our My First Ballet productions for children and families, which are produced by ENB and delivered by students from English National Ballet School (a separate company, but one with which we have a historically close relationship). We also tour the world, sharing our in-demand productions with global

audiences. Recent locations include Brooklyn Academy of Music, Chicago's Harris Theater, the Palais Garnier and Champs Elysée in Paris, the Bunka Kaikan in Japan and Teatro Real in Madrid.

We are a world-class company with dynamism and flair at our core and we strive to take an open-minded approach to evolving the artform. We have been nominated for and won multiple Olivier and National Dance Awards, including the award for Best Company Response to the Pandemic.

English National Ballet has introduced ground-breaking new works to the Company's repertoire, whilst continuing to celebrate the tradition of great classical ballet, gaining acclaim for artistic excellence, creativity, accessibility and evolution of the art form. Our work has been credited with catalysing a cultural shift through commissioning and promoting choreography by women.

In August 2023, after an international search was undertaken by the Board of Trustees, Aaron S. Watkin took up the post of Artistic Director, succeeding a 10-year tenure by Tamara Rojo.



**"English National Ballet is firing on all cylinders these days. At every performance, the stages, from the backcloth to footlights, achieve an excellence of which its founders Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin would be hugely proud"**  
***Jeffrey Taylor, Sunday Express***



## 2023/2024 – Our Recent Season

Aaron S. Watkin joined ENB after a 17-year tenure as Artistic Director of the Dresden Semperoper Ballett and following a dance career with classical companies including English National Ballet, National Ballet of Canada and Dutch National Ballet. He was invited by world renowned Choreographer William Forsythe to become a Principal Dancer with Ballet Frankfurt and was later a Choreographic Assistant, in charge of staging his ballets on dance companies throughout the world, including Kirov Ballet, Paris Opera, Dutch National Ballet among others. Prior to his appointment in Dresden, Watkin served as Associate Artistic Director at Victor Ullate Ballet in Madrid.

### **2023/2024 season opener**

The 2023/2024 season, Aaron S. Watkin's first season for English National Ballet, opened in September 2023 at Sadler's Wells with

Our Voices, a triple bill showing the virtuosity of the Company through Balanchine's *Theme and Variations*, Andrea Miller's *Les Noces* and David Dawson's *Four Last Songs*.

### **The 2023/2024 season included:**

- Two world premieres, a UK premiere and a Company premiere
- New works from David Dawson, Andrea Miller and the UK premiere of Johan Inger's *Carmen*
- George Balanchine's *Theme and Variations* was performed by ENB for the first time
- Akram Khan's *Giselle* and Mary Skeaping's production were performed in the same season
- Derek Deane's *Swan Lake* returned to the Royal Albert Hall
- The return of *Emerging Dancer*, which showcased talent throughout the Company





## 2024/2025 – Our 75th Season

Running from September 2024 to June 2025, ENB will continue to celebrate tradition whilst forging innovation – an ethos that has shaped the Company's rich history and will inspire its future.

The 2024/2025 season features two world premieres, a Company premiere and the return of audience favourites.

Having been seen by over 156,000 people in 10 countries and 16 cities around the world, **Akram Khan's *Giselle*** opens the Season with a return to London for the first time since 2019. In this acclaimed reimagining of the iconic ballet, Khan tells a story of love, betrayal, and redemption. The production features an imposing set designed by Academy Award-winner Tim Yip and a powerful score by Vincenzo Lamagna.

Offering audiences the opportunity to see two versions of one of the great Romantic ballets in the same season, **Mary Skeaping's *Giselle*** will also be performed, touring to the Liverpool Empire and Manchester's Palace Theatre in the autumn, before returning to the London Coliseum in January 2025. With its beautiful classical language and thoughtful staging, this

*Giselle* features some of ballet's most dramatic scenes and otherworldly images. Christmas 2024 will see the **world premiere of a new production of the classic festive ballet, *Nutcracker***, choreographed by English National Ballet's Artistic Director Aaron S. Watkin and Olivier Award-winning choreographer Arielle Smith. The production will take audiences on a fantastical adventure as they join Clara on her journey of discovery, from Edwardian London to the Land of Sweets & Delights. *Nutcracker* is bought to life by exquisite dancing, spectacular new costumes and sets by Dick Bird, and Tchaikovsky's instantly recognisable score played live by English National Ballet Philharmonic.

In spring 2024, ENB returns to Sadler's Wells with ***The Forsythe Programme***, a triple bill showcasing highlights of master choreographer William Forsythe's broad catalogue of work. Combining ballet classicism and athleticism with the music of Barry White, Natalie Cole and Khalid to name just a few, audience favourite ***Playlist (EP)*** returns alongside a new acquisition for ENB, and the commission of a new work created on the Company.

For younger audiences, English National Ballet and English National Ballet School revive **My First Ballet: Swan Lake** at the Peacock Theatre, London in April 2025. The perfect introduction to the artform, this specially adapted version of the world's most iconic ballet sees a narrator guide the audience, making the production accessible to audiences as young as three. The run will also include a relaxed performance as part of the *My First Inclusive Ballet* outreach programme as well as a series of on-stage family workshops.

In summer 2025, ENB continues its commitment to talent development with the launch of **Choreo Labs**, a supportive and inspiring environment for Company dancers to develop their skills and explore ideas for new choreography. Open to dancers across the Company, the series will culminate with an in-house sharing session. *Choreo Labs* and ENB's existing *Emerging Dancer* event will run on rotation, providing a range of opportunity for artistic growth both on stage and off.

To mark ENB's 75th Season, a free digital celebration will be presented in June 2025. Showcasing ENB's past, present and future, **ENB@75** will feature performance excerpts filmed especially in the Company's in-house Holloway Production Studio as well as interviews, archive footage and exclusive behind-the-scenes insight. Recognising the

important role digital content plays in engaging and inspiring new audiences, ENB offers this as a free to view event. This will be an inclusive opportunity for online audiences around the world to celebrate with the Company at this significant moment in its history.

With its extensive **Engagement** programme for 2024/2025, ENB continues to be a leader in creative health and learning and participation practice. The Shared Ground Space Scheme and co-curated Ideas Incubation Labs provide valuable platforms for artist development and support. Alongside this, ENB's *Dance for Parkinson's*, an evidence-based programme delivered nationally via six hub partners, and *Dance for Dementia*, offer creative health interventions that contribute to better health and well-being through artistry, creativity and community. Insights into the creative industries continue to be offered through our schools programme, *Ballet Explored*, and there will be a celebration of co-created dance from our youth and community performance groups through *Re-Play*, an annual sharing platform at ENB's studios. The company's newly launched Ballet Club for children, young people and families resident in Newham, east London, also returns for the 2024/2025 season.





**'Of all the UK's classical companies, English National Ballet looks most like a 21st-century outfit... that pushes the artform and connects with audiences. It's a gift.'**

*David Jays, The Sunday Times*



## A Decade of Excellence and Innovation in Performance

### 2013/14

- *Lest We Forget* (programme to mark centenary of First World War: Akram Khan's *Dust*, Russell Maliphant's *Second Breath* and Liam Scarlett's *No Man's Land*) at the Barbican
- UK tour: premiere of Anna Marie Holmes' *Le Corsaire*, Derek Deane's *Romeo & Juliet* in-the-round at the Royal Albert Hall and *Coppélia*
- Tours to Madrid, Granada and Peralada

### 2014/15

- *Modern Masters* (dedicated to icons of 20th century choreography: William Forsythe's *In The Middle Somewhat Elevated*, John Neumeier's *Spring & Fall* and Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort*)
- *My First Ballet* tour
- UK tour: *Swan Lake* and *Coppélia*

### 2015/16

- *She Said* (dedicated to female choreographers: premieres of Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Broken Wings*, Aszure Barton's *Fantastic Beings* and Yabin Wang's *M-Dao*)

- UK tour: return of *Lest We Forget* and *Le Corsaire*, together with *Swan Lake*, Rudolf Nureyev's *Romeo & Juliet* and *Swan Lake* in-the-round at the Royal Albert Hall
- *My First Ballet* tour
- *Emerging Dancer 2016*
- First UK company in 60 years to perform at Palais Garnier in Paris, plus tour to Oman

### 2016/17

- First UK company to perform Pina Bausch's *The Rite of Spring* (in a programme with William Forsythe's *In The Middle, Somewhat Elevated* and Hans van Manen's *Adagio Hammerklavier*)
- Premiere of Akram Khan's re-imagining of *Giselle*
- UK tour: Mary Skeaping's classical *Giselle* and return of *Romeo & Juliet* at the Royal Festival Hall
- *My First Ballet* tour
- *Emerging Dancer 2017*
- Tours to Japan and Poland

# A Decade of Excellence and Innovation in Performance cont'd

## 2017/18

- *Voices of America* (dedicated to American neo-classical ballet: premiere of *Playlist*, William Forsythe's first creation for a UK ballet company in 20 years, together with his *Approximate Sonata 2016*, Jerome Robbins' *The Cage* and return of *Fantastic Beings*)
- *My First Ballet* tour
- *Emerging Dancer 2018*
- Return of Akram Khan's *Giselle*
- UK tour: Kenneth MacMillan's *Song of the Earth*, Frank Andersen's restaging of *La Sylphide*, Kenneth MacMillan's *The Sleeping Beauty*, Rudolf Nureyev's *Romeo and Juliet* and Roland Petit's *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort*
- Tours to New Zealand, Dublin and Hong Kong

## 2018/19

- Premiere of Christopher Wheeldon's *Cinderella* in-the-round at the Royal Albert Hall
- *She Persisted* (premiere of Stina Quagebeur's *Nora*, and return of *The Rite of Spring* and *Broken Wings*)
- *My First Ballet* tour
- *Emerging Dancer 2019*
- *Lest We Forget* returns
- UK tour: Kenneth MacMillan's *Manon* and *Swan Lake*
- Tours to Chicago (first performance in US in 30 years), Luxembourg and Moscow (Chekhov International Festival on the new stage of Bolshoi Theatre)

## 2019/20

- Celebration of ENB's 70th Anniversary in 2020 with Gala at the London Coliseum
- UK Tour: Christopher Wheeldon's *Cinderella* and *Le Corsaire* plus return of Akram Khan's *Giselle*
- Tour to Madrid
- Start of lockdown

## 2020/21

- Launch of ENB at Home
- *Emerging Dancer 2020*
- Reunion (season of made-for-digital short works by Russell Maliphant, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Yuri Possokhov, Arielle Smith and Stina Quagebeur)
- Return to live performance with Reunion, adapted for the stage
- *Solstice* at Royal Festival Hall (mixed bill of extracts from ENB's diverse repertoire)

## 2021/22

- Premiere of Akram Khan's *Creature*
- Premiere of Tamara Rojo's reinterpretation of *Raymonda*
- *Emerging Dancer: A Celebration*
- *The Forsythe Evening* (honouring William Forsythe with a double bill of *Blake Works* and the extended version of *Playlist*)
- Tours to Chicago, Barcelona and New York

## 2022/23

- A return to national touring with Derek Deane's *Swan Lake* and Tamara Rojo's *Raymonda*
- Triple Bill at Sadler's Wells comprising the premieres of Mats Ek's *Rite of Spring*, Stina Quagebeur's extended *Take Five Blues*, and the return of William Forsythe's *Blake Works*
- Wayne Eagling's *Nutcracker* and Derek Deane's *Swan Lake* at the London Coliseum
- Return of Akram Khan's *Creature*
- Touring Akram Khan's *Giselle* to the Theatre de Champs Elysées, Paris; and the Festspielhaus in St. Polten, Austria
- Touring Rojo's *Raymonda* to the Teatro Real in Madrid

ENB has delighted Christmas audiences with performances of *Nutcracker* in every year of its history.

## Engagement, Pipeline and Digital

ENB was the first British ballet company to establish an 'Education Unit' in 1980 and our creative learning and engagement programmes are very much at the heart of our mission today, working with people who lack opportunities to access dance or who are marginalised in some way. As a sector leader in creative learning and outreach delivered across the UK, we connect thousands of participants from a wide demographic, delivering physical, mental and societal benefits through dance. Programme strands cover Health and Wellbeing, Children and Young People, Placemaking and Industry Skills.

Our 14-year flagship project, *Dance for Parkinson's*, which was the first of its kind in the UK, has five national hubs, and is the focus of a King's College London/UCL academic study, supported by the Wellcome Trust, researching the scalability of arts projects for social-prescribing. We engage with schools and local communities wherever we perform and our ENBYouthCo and ENBEldersCo programmes provide opportunities for young people and those aged 55+ years to develop their dance practice.

*Ballet Futures* is our talent pipeline project, initiated in 2022 in partnership with five ballet schools across England; a high quality, multi-year ballet training programme which provides resources and opportunities for 35 dancers aged 8–12 from backgrounds currently underrepresented in ballet.

Our award-winning *ENB At Home* online platform hosts our *Ballet on Demand* series of filmed ballets and our pioneering Digital Season of five short films choreographed for camera. It also hosts *BalletActive*, our ballet-fitness subscription service offering world class ballet training to enjoy on demand. Since launch in November 2020, over 75,000 classes have been taken on the platform.

Our online engagement and social media reach has grown to over 206m impressions and 10m video views with 730,000 followers across social media platforms. A film of Akram Khan's *Giselle* has been broadcast in cinemas and on television across the world and been seen by nearly 300,000 people. We built on this success in 2021 by creating a feature film of Akram Khan's *Creature* with Oscar-winning director, Asif Kapadia, which has been released across the UK and is currently appearing in film festivals internationally.







**English National Ballet's move to east London will transform the future of ballet, both in the capital and nationwide.** *Sadiq Khan,*

*Mayor of London*

## The Mulryan Centre for Dance

**In July 2019, English National Ballet moved into its purpose-built new premises. The Mulryan Centre for Dance is based in a new east London neighbourhood, London City Island, in Canning Town. This puts us at the heart of an increasingly thriving cultural community in East London.**

At 93,000 square feet, our new home is four times larger than our previous premises in Kensington, which allows a renewed commitment to, and freedom for, creativity, ambition, and connection to more people than ever before.

The building has seven state-of-the-art dance studios plus the five-storey fly-towered Holloway Production Studio which provides a unique full-size theatre space for technical rehearsals and previews. The facilities also

include public and exhibition spaces as well as dedicated education and engagement studios.

The greater space capacity and industry-leading specification has also enabled a thriving commercial hires and events business, which is a key contributor to our earned income, attracting hires from world-class companies in the commercial theatre, opera and film sectors.

As we have emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, looking to the future, we have the opportunity to fully embrace the range of opportunities our new building affords us.



## The Company

Our organisation comprises around 220 staff, including 65 dancers and our own orchestra, the English National Ballet Philharmonic. As a touring company, we swell in size when we are performing, and shrink back to core numbers at other times. We also engage hundreds of freelance teachers, dancers and makers across the year.

English National Ballet and our trading subsidiary English National Ballet Enterprises Ltd have an annual turnover of circa £22m. As an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, we currently receive an annual grant from Arts Council England of £6m and we also raise funds from individuals,

corporates, and trusts and foundations to supplement the income we receive from box office, as well as other revenue streams such as commercial hires of spaces within our building.

This is an exciting period for English National Ballet as we begin a new chapter with energy and enthusiasm with a new Artistic Director and refreshed Board; which sits alongside a new brand strategy and strategic plan.

English National Ballet is an equal opportunity organisation, committed to creating an inclusive culture where equality is promoted, and diversity is celebrated.





# The Role

**Reports to:** The Chair of English National Ballet.

**Works with:** Artistic Director, Chief Operating Officer

**Direct Reports:** Executive Producer, Technical Director, Director of Marketing & Communications, Development Director, Engagement Director

**Joint reports with AD:** Music Director, Medical Director, Head of Performance Development & Coaching

The Executive Director (ED) works in partnership with the Artistic Director (AD) and Chief Operating Officer (COO) to set the strategic direction for English National Ballet (ENB), inspire and lead the c. 220 staff and support the executive team of departmental directors to manage the organisation and deliver its output.

The ED leads on the strategic framework for the organisation and ensures delivery of the organisation's activity plans. The role manages relationships with a broad range of external stakeholders including donors, Arts Council England and trade unions. They develop strategic partnerships and networks for the organisation and play an active role in advocacy and sector lobbying.

The role oversees commissioning, producing and technical, learning and participation (engagement), fundraising, marketing, press, communications and digital. The ED supports the AD in the management of artistic and music teams.

The AD leads the artistic team, including the Company's dancers, and defines the artistic vision for the Company in support of the strategic framework. They identify, attract and nurture talent to the Company, and create and curate ambitious artistic programmes which include new work, acquisitions, remounts, pipeline projects and creative collaborations.

The COO leads on the cultivation of a dynamic and well-run operating environment from which the strategic plans can be delivered and to facilitate artistic ambition to thrive. The role has a strong focus on organisational sustainability particularly in finance, human resources and organisational development, commercial activities and growing new income streams, as well as building services, management systems and IT, board governance, legal and compliance.

It is essential that the ED, AD and COO are able to communicate clearly and to work collaboratively in a team.



# Main Responsibilities

## Strategic

- Provide strategic leadership and direction for ENB, working closely with the AD and COO;
  - With the COO, AD and executive team of departmental directors, embed and deliver ENB's strategic priorities in support of the artistic vision and budget, and work with them to develop strategic plans;
  - Seek new ways to 'open up' ballet, evolve the artform, drive the direction of Engagement programmes and grow and diversify audiences and participants;
  - Work closely with the Engagement Director to promote and help develop strong relationships with Arts Council England (ACE) and successfully renew ENB's National Portfolio funding in 2027; and
  - Work with the COO (also Company Secretary) to ensure close and constructive working with ENB's Board of Trustees and Subcommittees.
- Maintain strong dialogue and constructive relationships with ENB's recognised trade unions (Equity, Musicians' Union and BECTU), including annual pay and conditions negotiations;
  - Work closely with the Artistic Director to deliver and implement their artistic vision and strategy;
  - Support the strategy and planning of the wider artistic and music programme, and the Artistic Director and Music Director's leadership of people and culture;
  - Work alongside the Artistic Director to ensure a strategic approach to investment in and support for holistic medical and wellbeing provision for ENB dancers; and
  - Chair ENB's Safeguarding Steering Group.

## Management

- Provide leadership, strategic direction and clear objectives to all line reports, and with the COO and AD to promote a positive and inclusive Company culture to the whole organisation;
  - Coordinate and facilitate different departments and cross-departmental functions to deliver organisational goals;
  - Work with the COO to deliver and maintain organisational sustainability, including the financial management and the optimisation of organisational resource and investment;
  - Oversee, promote and help to develop the work of the Engagement Department and utilise the recently formed Engagement Advisory Committee, ensuring that Engagement work is embedded, has positive impact, and amplified;
  - Work closely with the Development Director and fully utilise the Development Committee membership to proactively drive and support fundraising, including the strategic development of cases for support and the personal stewardship of some major donors;
- Represent the Company's vision and aspirations to press and media, and with the Director of Marketing and Communications, manage external comms and mitigate reputational risk strategically and proactively;
  - Develop strategic partnerships and maintain strong stakeholder relationships with ACE, government, funders, peer organisations and sector bodies;
  - Provide leadership on and strategy for relevant lobbying and advocacy priorities for the Company and the wider sector;
  - Keep abreast of artistic and political environments, forming and maintaining appropriate contacts;
  - Attend such meetings or events as are necessary for the leadership or promotion of the Company, including performances, industry events, local activities and fundraising cultivation; and
  - Carry out such other duties as may reasonably be required by the Chairman or the Board.

# Person Specification

## Essential

- A strong understanding of and passion for performing arts, and experience of working at a senior leadership level within an organisation of similar size (in terms of turnover or numbers of people);
- Experience of developing and implementing strategies to meet organisational objectives;
- Ability to create and convey ENB's vision clearly and provide leadership to a dynamic and fast-moving creative organisation;
- Direct experience of fundraising and experience of managing Development functions, including direct cultivation and stewardship of donors;
- Understanding and experience of the creative process and the management of artists and creatives;
- Demonstrable commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion;

- Experience of and demonstrable enthusiasm for engagement and community work;
- Strong commercial acumen;
- Strong management skills at a senior level;
- Demonstrable gravitas, and presentational and media skills.

## Desirable

- Experience of working in a National Portfolio Organisation and with ACE;
- Experience of being in an organisation which tours;
- Experience of interactions with some/all of the three unions relevant to ENB (Equity, BECTU, Musicians' Union);
- Strong relevant networks, and experience of advocacy at the highest levels of the arts, funders and politics;
- Experience with contract negotiations in the performing arts.







# How to apply

**Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to English National Ballet on this appointment.**

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code **BBPKA**

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring\* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024**

\* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

## **GDPR personal data notice**

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

## **Due diligence**

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.



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