

----

## INTRODUCTION

----

**KS:** Good Evening Hull!

I'm Kofi Smiles; Face of the BBC for Hull 2017.

**GA:** I'm Gary Avis; Ballet Master and Principal Character Artist of The Royal Ballet.

**GA:** It's our pleasure to be part of this evening's event here in Queens Gardens to watch a live relay of The Royal Ballet in their very special programme of work to mark the reopening of the recently refurbished Hull New Theatre.

**KS:** Gary, could you tell us a bit about what you do with The Royal Ballet and how long you've been with the company?

**GA:**

**KS:** Fascinating! During the interval I'll be asking Gary a few more questions about his career, the work of The Royal Ballet and about some of Hull's home grown talent.

**KS:** Some of you may have seen this afternoon over in Trinity Square two beautiful performances of a new piece of work called Take Flight choreographed by Rachel Attfield and Calvin Richardson with music by John Weeb and Camille Saint-Saens. This was a result of a unique partnership between The Royal Ballet's Learning & Participation team, Hull UK City of Culture 2017, four Hull dance schools and Hull 2017

volunteers. More about this project later.

**GA:** It's going to be an actioned-packed evening with 17 pieces of extraordinary work. We've got everything from the iconic pas de deux from Swan Lake to an electrifying tap dance. We're also very privileged to be welcoming an incredible cohort of dancers to Hull this evening; truly some of the most talented and celebrated artists in the world.

**GA:** This includes a few particular dancers who have a very special connection with Hull. Principal Dancer with the Mariinsky Ballet Xander Parish. Former Principal Dancer with Birmingham Royal Ballet and now English National Ballet, Joseph Caley. Soloist Elizabeth Harrod and First Artist Demezla Parish, both from The Royal Ballet.

**GA:** They all received dance training locally and some grew up in the area. Check out their biographies included on the free sheet or of course, take to the internet to find out more using your favourite search engine. You can also find and follow some of these awesome dancers on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

**KS:** There's more! We're delighted to welcome two local Hull schools to be part of this evening's programme. The Skelton Hooper School of Dance and Theatre will be performing their new work A Dancer's Story and the Northern Academy of Performing Arts will perform Death of the Spoken Word.

**KS:** This evening's show is in two acts including one interval. The first half of tonight's programme includes:

**KS:** Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude, a virtuoso piece by American choreographer William Forsythe, danced by Marianela Nunez [[MARRY-A-NELLA NUNYEZ](#)], Beatrix Stix-Brunell, Akane Takada, James Hay and Valentino Zucchetti [[VALENTINO ZOOKETTI](#)].

**KS:** We then have a crash course in ballet with Eric Gauthier's witty Ballet 101 performed by Xander Parish. His sister Demelza Parish, Lukas Bjorneboe Braendsrod [[BJORN-BRAINDSROD](#)] and Calvin Richardson will then perform Heart's Furies; a new work by choreographer Andrew McNichol commissioned especially for Hull 2017.

**KS:** Joseph Caley performs Hamlet's solo from The Shakespeare Suite by David Bintley, Artistic Director of Birmingham Royal Ballet.

**KS:** Yuhui Choe and Ryoichi Hirano [[ROY-ICHI HIRANO](#)] perform the beautiful Meditation from Thais pas de deux [[PAR DER DER](#)] by Frederick Ashton, Founder Choreographer of The Royal Ballet.

**GA:** Francesca Hayward and Alexander Campbell perform Tarantella by the great American choreographer George Balanchine.

**GA:** The students from The Skelton Hooper School of Dance and Theatre will be performing their new work A Dancer's

Story choreographed by Vanessa Hooper.

**GA:** And to close the first half we have a very touching pas de deux from Ashton's Two Pigeons performed by Elizabeth Harrod and Steven McRae

**GA:** Tonight's live music is provided by Robert Clark and Kate Shipway playing Piano with Robert Gibbs playing violin and David Cohen playing cello.

**GA:** What a great first half!

**KS:** It's brilliant. We'll then have an interval where we'll be able to find out a bit more from Gary about the work of The Royal Ballet, get a bit of an insight into Take Flight. This

is The Royal Ballet's Learning & Participation project which took place in the beautiful Trinity Square today as well as taking a look at the programme for tonight's second half.

**GA:** We would like to say a quick thank you to all the partners who have made this evening possible including Hull Culture & Leisure, Hull City Council, Hull UK City of Culture 2017 and of course, my colleagues at The Royal Ballet.

**KS:** A special thanks to The Royal Ballet's Director Kevin O'Hare who has been the visionary behind tonight's programme and to all the dancers who have graced the stages this afternoon and this evening. We must not forget the rest of the team at the Royal Opera House who've helped us organise and stage today's events; some of whom are here

with us this evening. Also, the Director of tonight's live relay, Ross MacGibbon and his talented team.

**GA:** And as ever, thanks to you all - the audience for turning out.

**KS:** We hope you enjoy this evening's programme and thank you so much for joining us! See you in the interval.

END OF INTRO

----  
**INTERVAL**

----  
**KS:** How amazing was that? I can't believe what I've just witnessed. I think we're being truly spoilt. It makes me want to get up and dance!

**KS:** Gary, you know what it takes to reach this level of dancing - you've been with The Royal Ballet for many years. What is the life of a dancer really like?

**GA:**

**KA:** For those who don't know, can you tell us a bit about The Royal Ballet and its history?

**GA:** The Company reaches back to 1931 and has always had great choreography at its heart. It's still the most amazing blend of tradition and innovation. We have a brilliant range of repertoire incorporating not only the famous 19th-century classics but also our 20th century heritage ballets by Ashton and MacMillan and now the most exciting choreographers working today, Wayne McGregor, Christopher Wheeldon and Liam Scarlett.

**KA:** The Royal Ballet performs all over the world. Where can we see the company perform next?

**GA:** We always have an international tour in the summer (this year we went to Australia) but our performances in Covent Garden can be seen in cinemas all around the world.

We start off with Christopher Wheeldon's brilliant Alice's Adventures in Wonderland on 23rd October. There is also World Ballet Day on 5th October so be sure to look out for that online and we'll discuss that a bit more later.

**KA:** Can you explain to us about how tonight's programme came about and who has been involved in putting it together?

**GA:** Well with our Director, Kevin O'Hare, being from Hull, there was an obvious connection and the idea quickly took shape. He's always very collaborative and so combining both professional dancers and the emerging dance talent in Hull today flowed very naturally. It really has been a collaborative effort with all the partners, led by Kevin

O'Hare and Niccy Hallifax, Executive Producer for Hull 2017 and their wider teams.

**KA:** Hull has produced some incredible dancers over the years and a few of them are here with us tonight. How important is choosing the right training when you're young?

**GA:** Not everyone is going to become a professional dancer but it's good to find a qualified teacher and someone who inspires you. If you want to make ballet your life, then there are the big schools out there who offer vocational training and know how to identify talent. It's about spotting the potential for great technique, artistry and musicality. It's also about loving what you do!

**KA:** What is your first memory of dancing?

**GA:**

**KA:** I mentioned Take Flight earlier this evening. Can you explain to us what Take Flight is, how it came about and who's involved?

**GA:** Creative learning for young people is a really important part of The Royal Ballet's work. This was a unique project with our Learning and Participation team, Hull City of Culture and over 100 young dancers from four local dance schools and a wealth of volunteers. Huge thanks to Lyn Wilson and Heather Shepherdson School of Dance, The McKeown Irish Dance Academy, Northern Academy of Performing Arts (NAPA) and Skelton Hooper School of Dance

and Theatre.

We'll also see a behind-the-scenes making of film shortly that will give you a flavour of the project.

**KA:** We've seen this evening some incredible dancers on stage who come from Hull and trained in some of the local dance schools and gone on to be very successful. Why do you think this is? Is it the patties, chip spice or something in the water...? I'm joking. Why do you actually think Hull has produced such a good crop of dancers?

**GA:**

**KA:** It's of course worth noting that there are many many more success stories.

**GA:** Indeed. For example, Liam Mower who flourished early on his career in the lead cast of Billy Elliot.

**GA:** There is also Hull-born young choreographer Andrew McNicol whose work we saw in the first of tonight called Heart's Furies.

**GA:** We also have Joshua McSherry-Gray, an Artist with English National Ballet and then talents such as Michael O'Hare who is Senior Ballet Master of Birmingham Royal Ballet, and Robert Parker, Artistic Director of Elmhurst Ballet School.

**KS:** Last by no means least, Kevin O'Hare who is the Director of The Royal Ballet. He's had an incredible career and first



performed on the Hull New Theatre stage when he was a young boy with his brother Michael.

**GA:** The dance scene is really thriving in Hull. I know everyone is watching closely and really looking forward to what's to come in the future, I know I am.

**KA:** Gary. Shall we move on to telling the audience about what's coming up in tonight's second half?

**GA:** Absolutely.

**GA:** We're going to start with the iconic pas de deux from ACT 2 of Swan Lake performed by Fumi Kaneko and Reece Clarke.

**GA:** We then have our second piece by local dance school Northern Academy of Performing Arts called Death of the Spoken Word choreographed by Julie Lovewell and Hannah Goodhall.

**GA:** Melissa Hamilton and Edward Watson will perform the very contemporary Qualia choreographed by Wayne McGregor.

**KS:** Calvin Richardson will perform The Dying Swan which he choreographed himself. This piece was also featured in Take Flight this afternoon.

**KS:** Natalia Osipova [[NAT-TALIA OH-SEEPAVA](#)] and Matthew Ball will perform a pas de deux [[PAR DER DER](#)] from Romeo and Juliet by that choreographic genius of the 20th century,

Kenneth MacMillan.

KS: Marianela Nunez [MARRY-A-NELLA NUNYEZ] and Thiago Squares [TEA-ARGO SWAREZ] will perform the pas de deux [PAR DER DER] from Christopher Wheeldon's After the Rain.

GA: Frederick Ashton's Sylvia pas de deux is performed Yasmine Naghidi and Xander Parish.

GA: We then have Steven McRae performing his Czardas Tap Dance and we end with the fireworks of Akane Takada and Joseph Caley in Le Corsaire.

KS: Wow! Another incredible half. I can't wait.

KS: Gary, what from tonight's repertoire is your favourite and why? And is there anything you've performed yourself?

GA:.

KS: I think I could see myself as taking on the role of Prince Siegfried in Swan Lake! There is a film in that! What do you think?

GA:.. Of course!

KS: Anyhow, maybe another time and perhaps you could coach me?

GA:.. Sounds like a great idea to me. There is not long until the show begins again. Please grab yourself a drink and use

the facilities. We've got lots of beautiful content to keep you entertained too so keep an eye out on these beautiful screens. You may even catch a glimpse of yourselves.

**KS:** We've also got a very special treat for you all at the end of the show... you won't want to miss it!

**GA:** See you on the other side.

END OF INTRVAL

----

## **FINALE**

----

**GA:** Ladies & Gentlemen, there you have it! What an incredible programme.

**KS:** I don't know about you all but I thought that was astonishing.

**GA:** As you might remember Kofi mentioning, we have a very special treat for you at the end. That time has come.

**GA:** Fresh from the stage at Hull New to take their final curtain call with you all... please welcome to the stage the performers from tonight's show along with Director of The

Royal Ballet, Kevin O'Hare.

[Applause]

**KS:** Once again, many thanks to all of those who worked tirelessly on this project from right across the Royal Opera House as well as Hull 2017, HCAL and Hull City Council teams.

**KS:** Thank you all for coming and helping to mark this very special occasion of the re-opening of Hull New Theatre. Don't forget to check out everything that's coming up and we hope to see you in the beautiful theatre soon. There is also plenty more to come in Hull's year as UK City of Culture. Head on over to [hull2017.co.uk](http://hull2017.co.uk) to find out what's on and book for some incredible shows coming up right across the city.

**GA:** Don't forget, in less than a month you can witness some of the most extraordinary ballet from some of the world's greatest companies from around the globe as part of World Ballet Day on 5 October. It features The Australian Ballet, The Bolshoi Ballet, The Royal Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, and San Francisco Ballet along with many others.

**GA:** It's all free and live! Visit [worldballetday.com](http://worldballetday.com) for details and don't forget to put this in your diaries.

**KS:** And there we have it. An incredible evening of ballet and dance right here in Hull.

**GA:** Thank you all again for coming and have a safe journey home.

KS/GA: Good Night!

END