

Friday 24 April
Sadler's Wells Digital Stage



An Evening with Natalia Osipova

Valse Triste, Qutb & Ave Maria

Natalia Osipova is a major star in the dance world. She started formal ballet training at age 8, joining the Bolshoi Ballet at age 18 and dancing many of the art form's biggest roles. After leaving the Bolshoi in 2011, she joined American Ballet Theatre as a guest dancer and later the Mikhailovsky Ballet. She joined The Royal Ballet as a principal in 2013 after her guest appearance in Swan Lake.

This showcase comprises of three of Natalia's most captivating appearances on the Sadler's Wells stage. Featuring Valse Triste, specially created for Natalia and American Ballet Theatre principal David Hallberg by Alexei Ratmansky, and the beautifully emotive Ave Maria by Japanese choreographer Yuka Oishi set to the music of Schubert, both of which premiered in 2018 at Sadler's Wells' as part of Pure Dance.

The programme will also feature Qutb, a uniquely complex and intimate work by Sadler's Wells Associate Artist Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, which premiered in 2016 as part of Natalia's first commission alongside works by Arthur Pita and fellow Associate Artist Russell Maliphant.



VALSE TRISTE, PURE DANCE 2018

Natalia Osipova

Russian dancer Natalia Osipova is a Principal of The Royal Ballet. She joined the Company as a Principal in autumn 2013, after appearing as a Guest Artist the previous Season as Odette/Odile (Swan Lake) with Carlos Acosta. Her roles with the Company include Giselle, Kitri (Don Quixote), Sugar Plum Fairy (The Nutcracker), Princess Aurora (The Sleeping Beauty), Lise (La Fille mal gardée), Titania (The Dream), Marguerite (Marguerite and Armand), Juliet, Tatiana (Onegin), Manon, Sylvia, Mary Vetsera (Mayerling), Natalia Petrovna (A Month in the Country), Anastasia, Gamzatti and Nikiya (La Bayadère) and roles in Rhapsody, Serenade, Raymonda Act III, DGV: Danse à grande vitesse and Tchaikovsky Pas de deux. She has created numerous roles – in Strapless, Woolf Works, Tetractys, Connectome, Medusa and works by Possokhov and Ratmansky, among others.

Natalia was born in Moscow and began dancing at the age of five. Aged eight she joined the Mikhail Lavrosky Ballet School. From 1995 to 2004 she trained at the Moscow State Academy of Choreography and on graduating entered the corps of the Bolshoi Ballet, where she was promoted to principal in 2010. Her repertory there included Kitri (Don Quixote), Giselle, Nikiya and Gamzatti (La Bayadère), La Sylphide, Esmerelda, Princess Aurora and Swanilda (Coppélia). In 2011 she left the Bolshoi to join the Mikhailovsky Ballet as a principal.

Natalia has appeared as a guest artist with companies around the world. In March 2012 she became a principal of American Ballet Theatre, where she created the title role in Alexei Ratmansky's The Firebird. Her awards include Golden Masks for her performances in In the Upper Room (2008) and La Sylphide (2009), Critics' Circle National Dance Awards (Best Female Dancer, 2007, 2010 and 2014), Positano Dance Awards (Best Female Dancer, 2008 and 2011) and a Benois de la Danse Award (Best Female Dancer, 2008).



VALSE TRISTE, PURE DANCE 2018

Programme

Valse Triste

Words by Alexei Ratmansky

I have known Natalia from her early days at the Bolshoi when I was artistic director, and since then at American Ballet Theatre, where I also worked with David Hallberg. They are both very special artists, dear to my heart, and I am delighted that the three of us have been reunited to work on this piece. Valse Triste is a short work. This "sad waltz" is by the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius. It's music that I have always wanted to dance to myself, and so has a very personal meaning to me. And now it is significant in a new way because it forms part of Natalia's own project, with a name that I like very much. It says it all: Pure Dance.

Choreography

Alexei Ratmansky

Costume Design

Moritz Junge

Dancers

Natalia Osipova and David Hallberg

Lighting Design

Adam Carrée

Composer

Jean Sibelius

Film Direction & Editing

David Kaplowitz

Music

Valse Triste

Camera

Will Darkin, Dan Hodgson and David Kaplowitz

A Sadler's Wells production

Co-produced with New York City Center

In association with The Round Company

Part of Natalia Osipova: Pure Dance, 14 September 2018



VALSE TRISTE, PURE DANCE 2018

Qutb

Words by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui

Qutb is an Arabic word: it translates in English as axis or pivot. It can be used in astronomy to refer to celestial movements. But it is also a spiritual symbol. In Sufism it stands for the perfect human being or "The Universal Man": he or she who, as a spiritual leader, passes on knowledge and has a divine connection with God or Allah.

In Qutb I wanted to explore unknown and dangerous territory. Inter- and co-dependency, contact improvisation, flow, trance and counterbalance are the physical tools with which the three performers, each coming from different dance or movement languages, connect and communicate with one another. There's an extreme fragility to their exchanges as the choreography can only appear when all three are perfectly aligned, but this delicacy also brings about a sense of intense focus and strength. It becomes a rite of passing or a walk in the desert to reach an unknown destination.

The three dancers incarnate many things, at times they are like victims of a natural disaster. They pick each other up out of the debris and carry each other through a waste land. There's a sense of suffering, there's something aimless, but there's also a feeling of slow healing, of redemption, of forgiveness and mutual support.

From another perspective the performers could also be interpreted as celestial bodies, planets or even mythological entities as well. Natalia Osipova represents Venus, James O'Hara is Earth and Jason Kittelberger embodies Mars. They orbit next and around each other, collide and interact through space. They will forever intertwine and gravitate around the sun.

The work is a second step collaborating with the incredibly inspiring dancer Natalia Osipova. Her strong, stable spirit and flexible mind and body create the colours with which to paint Qutb. Long term collaborators, the fluid and graceful James O'Hara together with the beautiful power and physical presence of Jason Kittelberger fulfil the trio.

Choreography

Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui

Dancers

Natalia Osipova, Jason Kittelberger and James O'Hara

Set & Lighting Design

Fabiana Piccioli

Costume Design

Kimie Nakano

Sound Design & Additional Instrumentation

Felix Buxton

Music

Trailer 1 by Mono & World's End Girlfriend

Bülbül Kasidesi by Yarkin featuring Sufi Vocal Masters

Trailer 2 by Mono & World's End Girlfriend

Ney Taksimi Yavuz Akalin by Yarkin featuring Sufi Vocal Masters

Ortni Reliart by Felix Buxton and Mono & World's End Girlfriend

Film Directed by
Ross MacGibbon

Produced by
Lucie Conrad

A Sadler's Wells production
Premiere 29 June 2016

Courtesy of Illuminations and Sky Arts



Ave Maria

Words by Yuka Oishi

Despite the music, this is not a religious piece. Ave Maria is about a woman with a strength of love and sensibility. When I started to pick a theme, intuition told me to work with Natalia's feminine side. I had an image of her dancing to a powerful yet beautiful song in a simple white dress to reflect this. I believe that dance is a language which we are only able to feel. Working with Natalia, I thought I might be able to find a new way of phrasing a sentence or even finding a new language together.

Choreography

Yuka Oishi

Dancer

Natalia Osipova

Composer

Franz Schubert

Music

Ave Maria, Ellens Gesang III, D.839
Barbara Bonney & Geoffrey Parsons

Costume Design

Stewart J Charlesworth

Lighting Design

Adam Carrée

Film Direction & Editing

David Kaplowitz

Camera

Will Darkin, Dan Hodgson and David Kaplowitz

A Sadler's Wells production

Co-produced with New York City Center

In association with The Round Company

Part of Natalia Osipova: Pure Dance, 14 September 2018



AVE MARIA, PURE DANCE 2018



AVE MARIA, PURE DANCE 2018

Qutb is made available as part of this programme courtesy of Illuminations and Sky Arts.

Pure Dance was co-produced with New York City Center in association The Round Company.

Valse Triste (2018), Qutb (2016) and Ave Maria (2018) are Sadler's Wells Productions.