

Giselle opens tonight at the Festival Theatre



Following its critically acclaimed visit in 2011, Royal New Zealand Ballet (RNZB) returns to Edinburgh during its five city UK tour featuring an elegant take on the timeless classic, *Giselle*, as well as a dynamic contemporary mixed bill program featuring three European premieres.

RNZB Artistic Director Francesco Ventriglia said: “I am honoured to be leading the Royal New Zealand Ballet on my return to Europe this year. We’ll be flying the New Zealand flag with pride with our two different ballet programmes. A mixed bill and our highly praised production of *Giselle*.”

This staging of *Giselle* was conceived by two superstar performers, former RNZB Artistic Director Ethan Stiefel and former Principal of London’s Royal Ballet Johan Kobborg.

Stiefel said: “*Giselle* is one of the great Romantic ballets, and it’s truly inspiring to collaborate with my good friend. We are delighted to have the chance to present our version of a ballet we both know very well.”

This of-the-moment production of *Giselle* recently toured China and the USA to great acclaim and makes its UK debut this autumn.

First staged in Paris in 1841, *Giselle* is one of the oldest surviving ballets still in the international repertory. The music by Adolphe Adam (1803 – 1856) is one of the first full-length ballet scores ever to be composed.

The Royal New Zealand Ballet’s touring programme can be seen as a distillation of contemporary New Zealand’s culture and

some of the most powerful influences at play in society today. There are fascinating juxtapositions and questions – about Pasifika culture viewed from outside and within, about the power of dance as a commemoration, and about a small company with a long and distinguished history and a unique voice, proudly representing a small country on the world stage.

RNZB is a versatile company of 34 dancers with six different nationalities. They tour regularly to ten centres and up to 50 small communities around New Zealand.

Formed in 1953 by Royal Danish Ballet Principal Dancer Poul Gnatt, RNZB has developed a reputation for strong and unique interpretations of full-length dramatic works, something which has been a hallmark of its work since the 1980s.

The company has an enviable track record in commissioning and performing works from New Zealand and international choreographers including, in recent years, Mark Baldwin, Andrew Simmons, David Dawson, Cameron McMillan, Daniel Belton, Neil Ieremia and Larry Keigwin.

Royal New Zealand Ballet presents Giselle

Where: Edinburgh's Festival Theatre

When: Tuesday 27 October – Saturday 31 October at 7.30pm.

Matinee performances on Thursday and Saturday at 2.30pm

Tickets: £13.50 – £42.50 www.edtheatres.com

Photo Evan Li