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Robert Curran's last leap for The Australian Ballet

Principal Artist departs the company after 16 remarkable years



Principal Artist Robert Curran. Photograph James Braund.

Robert Curran, principal artist of The Australian Ballet, has announced he is retiring from the company.

Curran will perform for the last time during *The Merry Widow* season at Sydney Opera House. His final show will be on **Saturday 26 November 2011 at 7.30pm.**

This year marks his 16th anniversary with The Australian Ballet and his tenth as a principal artist.

Curran's astonishing technical skill and powerful stage presence, along with his sensitivity and intelligence, has made him one of ballet's most adored leading men.

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Artistic Director of The Australian Ballet David McAllister said Curran would be remembered for leading the company in some of its most important and exciting performances.

"Robert's star has shone brightly over The Australian Ballet in a career spanning 16 years. In 2011 he has soared across a range of roles, leaving the stage at his absolute peak," said McAllister.

"A classic leading man, Robert has been an audience favourite and wooed nearly all of our leading ballerinas with his elegant dancing and extraordinary partnering. His role as the romantic hero Danilo in *The Merry Widow* is a fitting finale for an artist who will be remembered as one of the country's finest dancers."

Robert Curran joined The Australian Ballet in 1996 and was promoted to principal artist in 2002.

During his tenure with the company he has danced in numerous classical and contemporary works by such celebrated choreographers as Jiří Kylián, George Balanchine, John Cranko, Jerome Robbins, Stephen Baynes, Stanton Welch, Sir Kenneth MacMillan and Graeme Murphy.

Curran has also performed extensively overseas. Recent highlights include wowing audiences of The Hong Kong Ballet during a guest appearance in July this year and dancing with Kirsty Martin in Moscow at the 2010 Prix Benois de la Danse, the dance equivalent of the Oscars.

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In announcing his decision Robert Curran said:
"I feel so fortunate to have had my career with
The Australian Ballet. I am so proud of this
company and I will cherish every memory I
have from the past sixteen years."

"There was never going to be a good time for
me to leave such a special place, only a right
time. The time has arrived and I am looking
forward to extending myself in order to
continue to contribute to the arts in Australia
beyond my dancing on the stage."

Robert Curran will perform his final shows at
selected performances of *The Merry Widow* at
Sydney Opera House, opening today 10
November and running until 28 November.

Tickets for Curran's final performance on 26
November are limited but seats remain
available for other performances during the
season.

WHAT THE CRITICS SAID

"The ultimate poetic and sensitive dancer"
Sunday Herald Sun

"The grand danseur noble"
Adelaide Review

"Robert Curran is, as always, a magnetic
presence and consummate partner"
The Sunday Age

"Easy charm and a technique both flawless
and effortless"
The Australian

"Robert Curran is the most astonishingly
sensitive partner"
Sunday Herald Sun

- ends -

REPERTOIRE HIGHLIGHTS

- *The Merry Widow* 2011
- *Madame Butterfly* 2011
- Graeme Murphy's *Nutcracker* – *The Story of Clara* 2009
- Kenneth MacMillan's *Manon* 2008
- *Symphonie Fantastique* 2007
- *Don Quixote* 2007
- *Apollo* 2007
- *Giselle* 2006
- *Le Spectre de la rose* 2006
- *Forgotten Land* 2005
- *Petite Mort* 2005
- *Other Dances* 2001
- *At the edge of night* 1997

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