

## **RAMBERT APPOINTS BENOIT SWAN POUFFER AS NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Rambert, the UK's leading contemporary dance company, has appointed **Benoit Swan Pouffer** as its new Artistic Director.

**Benoit Swan Pouffer** is an internationally-renowned dance artist, choreographer and company leader. Born and trained in Paris, he moved to New York where he worked as a principal dancer with **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** before becoming the Artistic Director of **Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet**, a post he held for 10 years until 2014. His time at the helm of Cedar Lake was acclaimed by the New York Times as "a New York success story", gaining recognition for promoting the careers of a new generation of international choreographers through commissioning work by artists including Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Alexander Ekman, Crystal Pite and Hofesh Shechter.

Benoit was appointed Guest Artistic Director of Rambert in April of this year, following **Mark Baldwin** standing down after 15 years in the role and while Rambert undertook a global search for a permanent successor. He has been central to establishing **Rambert2**, the company's new ensemble of outstanding early-career dancers, in partnership with the **Rambert School**. Rambert2's debut season at Sadler's Wells in London this November included *Grey Matter*, a new creation choreographed by Pouffer. He has commissioned new works including a piece for Rambert by **Marion Motin**, which premieres at **Sadler's Wells** in May 2019, and creations by **Andrea Miller** and **Jermaine Spivey** for Rambert2 in 2019/20. He is appearing as artistic advisor in the **BBC's** new talent series *The Greatest Dancer*, airing in 2019.

Pouffer becomes the eighth Artistic Director in the 92-year history of the company founded by **Dame Marie Rambert**. Unlike his predecessors, who had all previously served as dancers and/or resident choreographers with the company, Pouffer's is a new association with the company. As Artistic Director, Pouffer joins a leadership team at Rambert headed by Chief Executive/Executive Producer **Helen Shute**. Forthcoming projects for the company include collaborations with **Manchester International Festival** and the **Royal Opera House**, and Rambert2 touring schools and other non-theatre spaces with **Ohad Naharin's** work *Kamuyot*.

**Benoit Swan Pouffer:**

'I grew up seeing Rambert as an iconic institution and would never have dared to dream I would one day be leading it. I am honoured that Howard and the organisation believe in the vision I have for this extraordinary company and have trusted me to carry this responsibility. Even after 92 years you've only seen a fraction of what Rambert has to offer. I look forward to leading a company that is exciting, inclusive and different and sharing the incredible passion inside this organisation with audiences around the UK and the world.'

**Rambert Chair Sir Howard Panter:**

'Benoit was the outstanding candidate for the position of Artistic Director; his vision for the company is inspiring and I have been blown away by the success of his guest tenure. He is an international leader in dance, and it is incredibly exciting to have a new voice in British dance leading a national company like Rambert. I am proud to appoint someone who I believe will lead the company with ambition, immense passion and dedication.'

**Rambert Chief Executive / Executive Producer Helen Shute:**

'Rambert is a great company with even more potential and deserves bold leadership. Benoit's eye for talent and passion for seeking out fresh faces with new ideas is exactly what the dance industry needs from its leading company. I am confident his artistic direction will make Rambert a force to be reckoned with and I look forward to helping him achieve that.'

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## Notes for Editors

### Rambert

Rambert is Britain's leading contemporary dance company. It presents new and historic dance works to audiences in all parts of the country, performed by world-class dancers. Rambert has the most extensive national touring programme of any UK contemporary dance company and, through partnerships with theatres in England, Scotland and Wales, develops new audiences for dance in all parts of the country.

[www.rambert.org.uk](http://www.rambert.org.uk)

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