



**ADELAIDE
FESTIVAL**

28 FEB - 15 MAR 2020



Photo: Hugo Glendinning

DANCE/UK

Enter Achilles

By Lloyd Newson
(DV8 Physical Theatre)

Presented by Ballet Rambert &
Sadler's Wells

Australian Premiere / Australian Exclusive

13-15 March 2020
DUNSTAN PLAYHOUSE,
ADELAIDE FESTIVAL CENTRE

Duration 1hr 20 mins, no interval

Please note that filming and photography are not allowed.

A Rambert & Sadler's Wells co-production in association with Onassis STEGI, Athens. Co-produced with Festspielhaus St. Pölten; Grec Festival de Barcelona i Teatre Nacional de Catalunya; Théâtre de la Ville – Paris / Chaillot – Théâtre national de la danse; Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg; Adelaide Festival, Melbourne International Arts Festival; Romaeuropa Festival and Torinodanza Festival / Teatro Stabile di Torino – Teatro Nazionale.

Premiere: first performed 7 June 1995, Wiener Festwochen, Vienna. Recreation Premiere at Festspielhaus, St Pölten. Premiere International Run at Onassis STEGI, Athens.



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An interview with...

As *Enter Achilles* is revived in a co-production between Sadler's Wells and Rambert, we spoke with choreographer Lloyd Newson about restaging the 1995 work...



Photo: Fiona Cullen

LLOYD NEWSON

CONCEIVER,
CHOREOGRAPHER
& DIRECTOR

***Enter Achilles* was made in 1995. It was turned into a film by the BBC winning a number of accolades including an International Emmy and Prix Italia. It continues to be a staple resource for GCSE, A Level and degree and diploma syllabuses throughout the UK. Why do you think the work struck such a strong chord with audiences across Britain and abroad?**

I formed my own company (DV8 Physical Theatre) in the mid-1980s out of a frustration with the vagueness and abstractionism I experienced with most British dance; both as a dancer and audience member. And I wasn't alone... many people saw *Enter Achilles* as a welcome relief to other contemporary dance they'd seen. It had a storyline and characters people could recognise; audiences understood what the performers were doing on stage and why they were moving the way they were.

What a relief it is to see a modern dance piece where you don't spend the first 15 minutes wondering what the hell is going on.

The Observer on *Enter Achilles* (1995)

If people comprehend what a work is about, generally it's easier to engage with it – and that includes criticising it. Which might explain why some contemporary choreographers prefer making abstract work; it's the Emperor's New Clothes. Audiences are left thinking, "I'm not smart enough to understand this" when unfortunately, there's often little to understand. Dance with meaning, which mixes drama with humour was rare when I made *Enter Achilles* in the mid-90s and is still relatively rare today – when was the last time you laughed in a contemporary dance show?

Why have you decided to restage *Enter Achilles* with Rambert?

After 30 years I was tired of running a company and managing people, as well as having the pressures, and fears, of making new work. So, I put DV8 on hold at the end of 2015... and that worked a treat, I discovered the joys of a life outside of dance. Then Helen Shute (Rambert's chief executive and executive producer) approached me about her plans for Rambert to showcase seminal British works which were no longer available for audiences to see live and asked if I'd be willing to mount *Enter Achilles* again.

What stopped me making or restaging works on other companies in the past was the expectation to use dancers within an already existing company. This was too constricting because I cast performers according to the needs of a project. I require dancers who can act, which is a hard ask, then I may also need them to sing or do aerial work, or even, be good at football. Previously, due to the subject matter of my works, I've actively sought to employ disabled, older (60+) and ethnically diverse performers.

While many companies have dancers who have great technical skills and can execute perfect pirouettes, they often struggle to understand the principles of body language, as the work they do trains this knowledge out of them. Many dancers I've auditioned, despite their incredible techniques, can't connect meaning to movement. Rambert is the only repertory company that has offered me the opportunity to audition worldwide to find the right dancers for my work. I was enticed by the prospect of being able to focus on the art, without the pressures of having to manage a company. This along with Helen's guarantee of sufficient support and time in the rehearsal room meant I couldn't refuse her offer.

Do you think ideas about what it is to be a man have changed significantly since you first made *Enter Achilles*?

Let's take football as an example, as there are some references to it in the work. When I first formed DV8, English teams had been banned from playing in European football for 5 years because of hooliganism – it was referred to as the 'English Disease'. 39 people died in the Heysel disaster; 14 Liverpool fans were subsequently convicted of manslaughter. It's fair to say that the majority of football hooligans during this period were English men, not women, predominantly from working-class backgrounds. Compared to that, today's calmer matches abroad show some things have changed – although police confiscating passports and banning alcohol in stands at matches has helped reduce that violence considerably. However, the pressure for men to conform to masculine stereotypes hasn't vanished despite the wishes of many of the chattering classes and remains highly ingrained in the social conditioning of most men. Don't get me wrong, there are many admirable attributes associated with traditional masculinity, and *Enter Achilles* isn't a blanket condemnation of masculinity, far from it, but it's worrying today in the UK that 78% of the perpetrators of violent crime are men, 74% of homicide victims are male and men are 3 times more likely to commit suicide than women.

Interestingly, this year when the American Psychological Association (APA) said traditional masculine ideology had been shown to limit males' psychological development they got a fair amount of flack as a result. While APA were quick to make clear they weren't referring to every quality we associate with masculinity, they believed they had enough empirical evidence to show that many masculine ideals are often counterproductive to men's emotional stability and that aspiring to these stereotypes can exacerbate men's mental health problems resulting in violence towards others or themselves – suicide, excessive drinking, reckless behaviour.

The British police receive 100 calls relating to domestic abuse every hour; where the perpetrators, again, are mainly men. If England loses in a World Cup match, that number will increase by 38%. That's not a good ad for modern day man. One of the questions we asked back in 1995 when making *Enter Achilles* was, we accept men have historically oppressed women, but how oppressive have men been to themselves? So, to answer your question, there has been some chipping away at the negative aspects of masculinity: the violence, sexism and homophobia but as the stats show the problems haven't disappeared. I think in light of all this and with the advent of #Metoo and Brexit it's a timely moment to revisit the work.

Biographies

LLOYD NEWSON

CONCEIVER,
CHOREOGRAPHER
& DIRECTOR

Lloyd Newson has led DV8 Physical Theatre since its inception in 1985. His work straddles dance, text, theatre and film, focusing on social, psychological and political issues. Born in Australia, Newson graduated from Melbourne University having studied psychology and social work. During that time he developed an interest in dance, a fascination that brought him to the UK where he gained a full scholarship to study at London Contemporary Dance School. Before forming his own company (DV8) he danced and/or choreographed with many companies including the Modern Dance Ensemble (Melbourne), Impulse Dance Theatre/New Zealand Ballet Company, One Extra Dance Theatre (Sydney) and Extemporary Dance Theatre (London). Newson's work, be it for stage or film, has won 55 national and international awards. He has been cited by the Critics' Circle as being one of the hundred most influential artists working in Britain during the last hundred years. He was awarded an honorary degree from Roehampton University and in 2013 received an OBE from Her Majesty the Queen for services to contemporary dance.

SADLER'S WELLS PRODUCTIONS

Sadler's Wells is a London-based, world-leading creative organisation committed to the making of dance. Since 2005, it has created award-winning productions in collaboration with its Associate Artists, international dance companies and partners. They include *Sutra* by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and sculptor Antony Gormley and William Forsythe's *A Quiet Evening of Dance*. Sadler's Wells productions have been enjoyed by 2 million people and toured to the most prestigious venues around the world, such as the Lincoln Center in New York and the National Centre for Performing Arts in Beijing.

If you could pick up a dance piece, turn it inside out and look at the label, the words 'Made at Sadler's Wells' would be a guarantee of quality.

The Scotsman

BALLET RAMBERT

Rambert believes if you push yourself, you can move the world forward. This dance company supports brilliant and daring people to do amazing things, including the world's most diverse ensembles of dancers, and artists invited to realise special projects, like the hand-picked company of *Enter Achilles*. It also includes audiences and participants, everything created is with and for them. Their work can take place on the great stages of the world, in local communities, at their London home, or online – anywhere inspiration, ambition and belief can be shared.

In 2020/21, Rambert is working with more than 60 professional dancers and performing in 18 different countries, led by Chief Executive/Executive Producer Helen Shute and Artistic Director Benoit Swan Pouffer, and supported by organisations and individuals who share their vision for a radically inclusive 21st-century dance company, including Arts Council England.

Production Credits

CREATIVE TEAM

Presented by Rambert & Sadler's Wells

Conceived and directed by Lloyd Newson (DV8 Physical Theatre)

Choreography Lloyd Newson with the performers (past and present)

Original set design Ian MacNeil

Original music Adrian Johnston

Original lighting design Jack Thompson

Creative Associate & Tour Director Hannes Langolf

Lighting realised by Richard Godin

Associate Sound Designer Amir Sherhan

Design Assistant Loren Elstein

Costume design Kinnetia Isidore & Richard Gellar

Costume Assistants Eleanor Coole-Green, Hannah Hayward

Rehearsal Director Paul White (Autumn 2019)

RAMBERT PERFORMERS

Richard Cilli

Eddie Hookham

Tom Davis Dunn

Scott Jennings

Nelson Earl

Georgios Kotsifakis

Miguel Fiol Duran

Jag Popham

Ian Garside

John Ross

TECHNICAL TEAM

Production Manager Tom Pattullo

Company Stage Manager Joanne Woolley

Technical Stage Manager Robin Turley Smith

Production Carpenter Jake Channon

Sound Supervisor Amir Sherhan

Re-lights/Operator Tom Pritchard

Production Electrician James Bentley

Set construction Simon York and Miraculous Engineering

Production Consultant Steve Wald

PRODUCING TEAM

Producer Alex Darbyshire

Manager Grace Hopkins

Assistant Producer Gráinne Pollak

Administrative Assistant Sophie Knowles

TEACHERS

Regular Company Teachers Olivia Ancona, Louise Bennett, Baptiste Bourgoignon, Olivia Bowman-Jackson, Navala Chaudhari, Pippa Duke, Bruno Guillore, Phil Hulford, Jovair Longo, Katie Lusby, Stephen Pelton, Sonia Rafferty, Lewis Wilkins

Company Aerial Teachers Leo Hedman, Will Davis

Irish Dancing Teacher James Greenan

Company Vocal Coaches Kate Marlais, Melanie Pappenheim

Company Acting Workshop Juliet Knight

Lloyd Newson wishes to acknowledge and thank previous casts (1995 and 1997/98) of *Enter Achilles*:

Robert Tannion, Ross Hounslow, Gabriel Castillo, Jordi Cortés Molina, Juan Kruz Diaz de Garaio Esnaola, John-Paul Zaccarini, Mike Ashcroft, Liam Steel, Jeremy James, David Emanuel, Paul Clayden, David McCormick and Chris Haring.



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AF Ticket holders enjoy a two-course dinner
(entrée + main OR main + dessert)
including a glass of wine for \$49pp.