

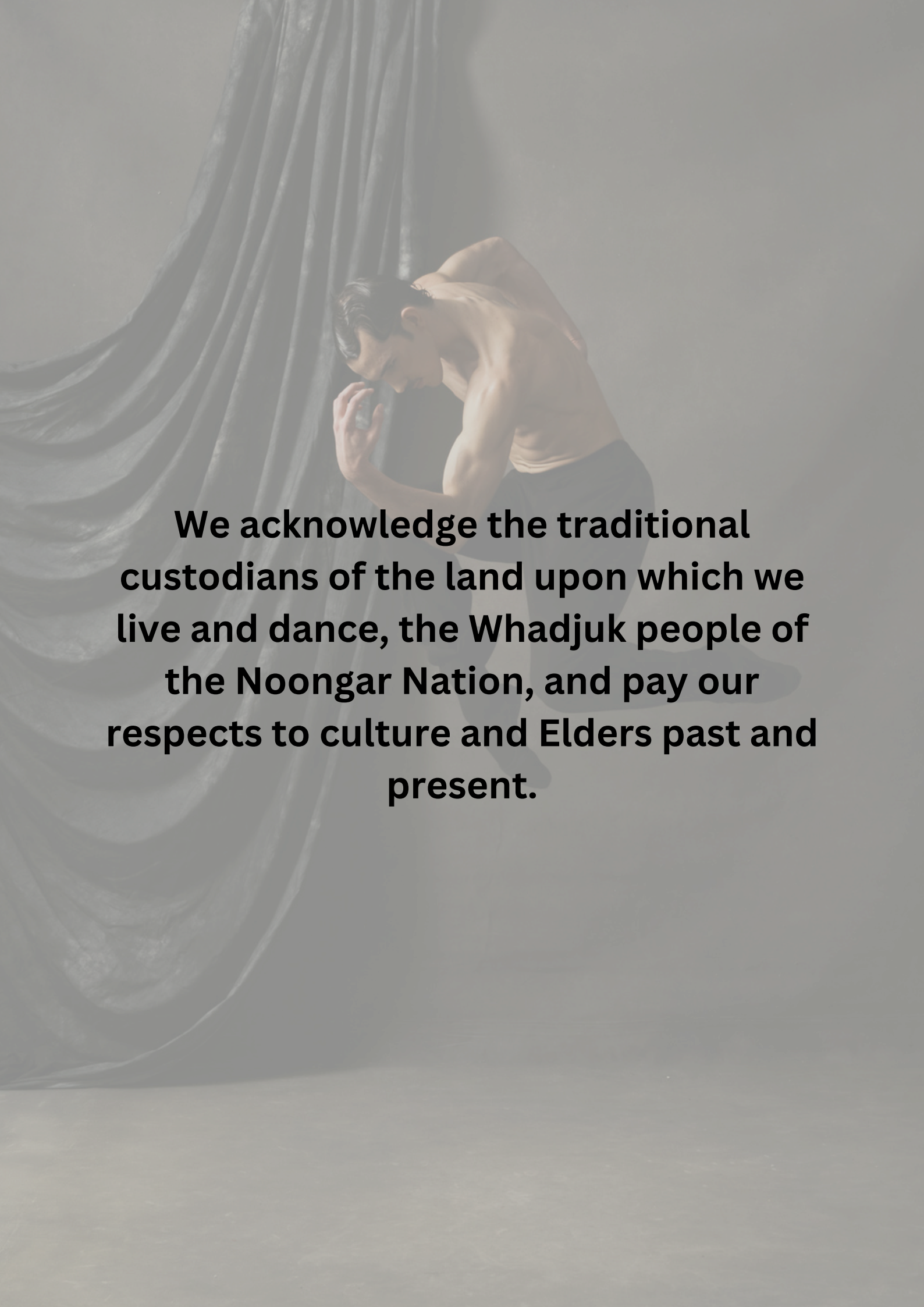


WEST AUSTRALIAN
BALLET

MACBETH

Creative Learning Pack
Inspire your students through dance

CITY OF  **PERTH**
City of Light

A shirtless man is captured in a dynamic, low-to-the-ground pose, leaning forward with his head bowed and hands near his face. He is wearing dark shorts. The background features large, flowing, light-colored fabric draped from the top left, creating deep folds and shadows. The overall lighting is soft and diffused, giving the scene a dreamlike or ethereal quality. The text is overlaid in the center-right of the image.

**We acknowledge the traditional
custodians of the land upon which we
live and dance, the Whadjuk people of
the Noongar Nation, and pay our
respects to culture and Elders past and
present.**

WELCOME

We are so excited to have you join us at one of West Australian Ballet's incredible School Matinee performances of 2026.

These performances are specifically designed to provide students with an immersive learning experience, diving into the world of dance and live performance. We can't wait to share our hard work with you all!

In 2026, we are able to offer four school matinee performances aimed to inspire students from Kindergarten to Year 12. These include Genesis, Macbeth, and due to overwhelming demand, two performances of The Nutcracker to close out the school year.

Each performance offers something truly unique for young audiences to experience and learn alongside.

Accompanied by a curriculum aligned Creative Learning Pack, School Matinee performances provide educators and students further insights into dance as an art form.

Assisting with creating lesson plans and activities, as well as performance adjacent classroom exercises, our Creative Learning Pack is a valuable resource for students and teachers alike. These activities are suitable for both primary and secondary students.

All can be customised and adapted to suit individual needs.

Symbols are used throughout the pack to direct you to key information, performance specific details and activities.



Indicates key information



Indicates an activity



Indicates information about the show

We are delighted to share the joy of dance with you and look forward to welcoming you to West Australian Ballet's 2026 School Matinee performances.

Sincerely,
Natasha McCann
Head of Education & Community Engagement

CONTENTS

Welcome	3
The History of Ballet	4
Positions of the Arms	5
About West Australian Ballet Company	6
Your Trip to the Theatre	7
About the Performance	8
Meet the Characters	9-10
Synopsis	11-12
Q&A With the Choreographer	13 - 17
Secondary School Activities	18 - 22
Digital Learning Resources	23
Ballet Glossary	24
2026 School Matinee Booking Form	25



THE HISTORY OF BALLET



Image Source: <https://thegoodlifeinfrance.com/louis-xiv-the-sun-king/>

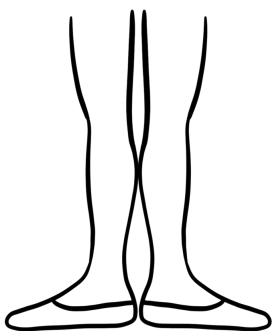
Ballet as an art form began in the royal courts of Italy and France in the 1600's. Formal group dances from the royal courts developed into the art form we now know after *The Sun King*, King Louis XIV of France established the first ballet school, the Académie Royale de Danse, in Paris in 1661.

The word ballet originates from the Latin word 'ballare', which means 'to dance'. To this day, all of the steps in ballet have French names, meaning dancers across the globe all speak the same language and can take a ballet class anywhere and understand exactly what to do.

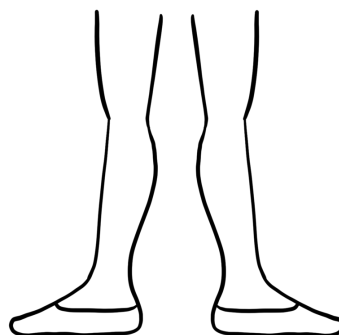
Ballet Positions

In ballet there are five basic positions of the feet and arms. The positions of the feet originated from fencing positions, and require the dancer to *turn out*, or rotate the entire leg, from the top of the thigh to the toes. If you look at a dancer standing in any of the five positions, you'll see their toes point in opposite directions.

Positions of the feet



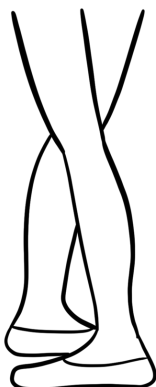
1st position



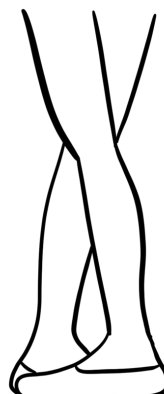
2nd position



3rd position

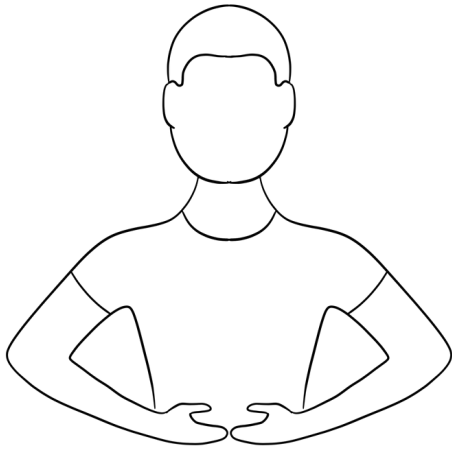


4th position

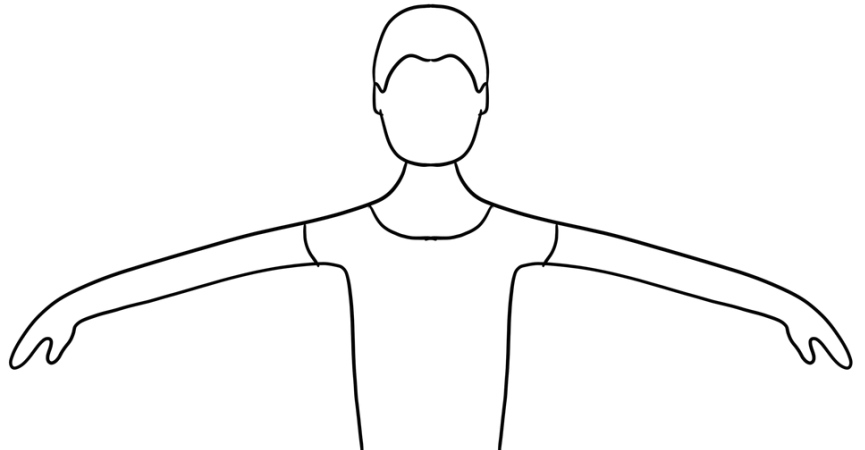


5th position

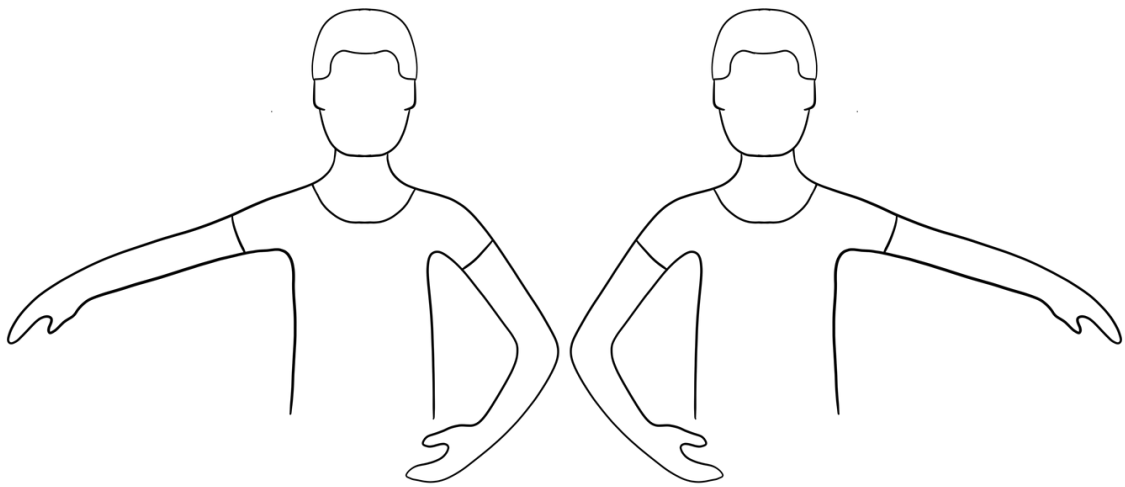
Positions of the arms



1st position



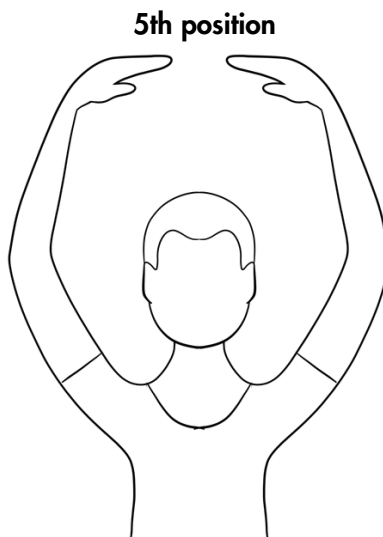
2nd position



3rd position



4th position



5th position



4th position



WEST AUSTRALIAN BALLET

West Australian Ballet is the state's flagship ballet company and Australia's oldest continuous ballet company. Established in 1952 by Madame Kira Bousloff, West Australian Ballet presents up to 50 performances annually across Western Australia, reaching a total audience of over 100,000 people.

The company offers an extensive program of dance works throughout the year, with five major seasons in Perth, regional touring throughout the state, public classes, and extensive education and community learning opportunities.

West Australian Ballet is the only state dance company that has an official partnership with its state symphony orchestra; the West Australian Symphony Orchestra.

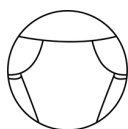
The West Australian Ballet Centre has been our home since 2012, and is situated on the historical site of the former Blind Institute in Maylands. The history of the building site dates back to 1897 when the Victorian Institute and the Industrial School for the Blind was developed as part of the 60th year celebration of Queen Victoria's reign.

Leanne Stojmenov joined West Australian Ballet's Artistic Management Team as Rehearsal Director in 2024, before her appointment as the company's Artistic Director from 2026.

2026 is the company's 74th year in operation as we continue "to enrich lives through dance".



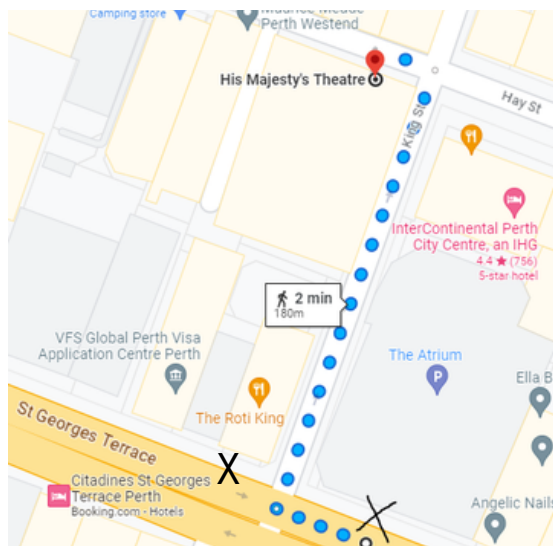
West Australian Ballet Centre



YOUR TRIP TO THE THEATRE

His Majesty's Theatre, 827- 905 Hay Street Perth, WA.

We are so excited to welcome you and your students to the theatre for this performance. Read on for helpful hints on how you and your students can best enjoy your trip.



- **Travelling by bus:** There are designated bus bays located on the corner of King St and St Georges Terrace that have been reserved for a safe drop off and pick up. It is a short walk from the theatre and students do not need to cross any roads(see map pictured). Please do not instruct your bus driver to drop you off on King Street or Hay Street as there is high potential for this to cause traffic complications.
- **Travelling by car:** Parking is available at His Majesty's Car park, entrance on Murray Street.
- **Travelling by public transport:** Buses travel directly into the city terminating at Perth Busport. The closest train stations are Perth Underground Station or Esplanade.
- **Arrival Time:** Please make sure you arrive at the theatre with enough time to collect your tickets and find your seats. Arriving late and missing the start of a performance will diminish your students understanding of the ballet as well as disrupt others. In addition, most performances are 'lock outs', which means that late audience members will only be allowed in at predetermined times (for example, interval) or not at all.

Below are a few things to remind your students before attending:

- **Electronic devices:** Please ensure all mobile phones and other electronic devices are turned off. These are disruptive to the performance and distracting to audience members and performers.
- **Photography:** Photography is prohibited during the performance, but we encourage you to document your experience by taking pictures before and after the show. Don't forget to tag @waballet if you post about your experience on social media.
- **Food and beverages:** There are many different places to get something to eat or drink in the city, however, please be aware that only plastic bottled water is permitted in the auditorium. All other food and beverages must be consumed before entering.
- **How to find your seat:** We ask you to please only sit in the seats allocated on your tickets. On your ticket is the level (Stalls, Dress Circle, or Upper Circle), your row (alphabetical letter), and seat number. The front of house staff will read your ticket as you enter the theatre to check you are on the right level, and will help you find your seats if needed.
- **Most importantly:** Enjoy and applaud the performance if you were moved by what you saw!

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

School matinee of

MACBETH

Wednesday 16 September, 12 Noon

His Majesty's Theatre, 827- 905 Hay Street Perth WA

Running time: 2 hours (inclusive of 20 minute interval)

Ticketed Pre show Q&A: 11:00am - 11:30am

Choreographer Alice Topp

Set and Lighting Designer Jon Buswell

Costume Designer Aleisa Jelbart

Dramaturgy Ruth Little

Composer Christopher Gordon

Conductor Joel Bass

Musicians String ensemble from West Australian Symphony Orchestra

A co-production with Royal New Zealand Ballet

Smoke, haze and lighting effects will be used during this performance. This production contains mature themes and scenes that some audience members may find distressing. These include stylised depictions of violence (including murder and suicide), themes of death and grief, representation of drug use, sexual themes and suggestive content, and psychological manipulation and distress. This production is classified as M – Suitable for mature audiences. We recommend it is suitable for viewers aged 16 and over. Parental discretion is strongly advised, particularly for younger or more sensitive audience members. We encourage audiences to consider these themes when deciding if the performance is appropriate for themselves or those in their care.





In Shakespeare's play the Thanes and Lords are male, but in a contemporary context gender-blind casting more accurately represents the social world.

Macbeth

An ambitious and capable political prodigy; destined for high office and possessed of a moral compass, but impatient for success and in thrall both to his wife and to the malign influence of social media

Lady Macbeth

A shrewd and seductive partner to Macbeth; hungry for power at any cost, forcefully persuasive, and initially scornful of consequence

Influencers

Masters of media and dangerously compelling messaging

Banquo

A rising political star and loyal ally to Macbeth, whose strong ambition is restrained by conscience

Fleance

Banquo's young son

Duncan

Head of state and mentor to Macbeth; a steady, purposeful and trusting leader

Malcolm

Duncan's son and political heir

Donalbain

Duncan's second child

Macduff

A former ally of Macbeth, who flees following Banquo's murder, and whose family is slaughtered on Macbeth's order

Lennox

A minister in Duncan's, and later Macbeth's, government; loyal to Macbeth until the murder of Macduff's family

Ross

A minister in Duncan's, and later Macbeth's, government; an enthusiastic sharer of news

Angus

A minister in Duncan's, and later Macbeth's, government; quick to recognise the danger represented by Macbeth

SYNOPSIS

Macbeth is the leader of a political faction vying for power over a rowdy and hostile opposition. In partnership with his close ally Banquo, Macbeth takes on his opponents in a heated debate, and forces them into submission. On their way to celebrate their victory, Macbeth and Banquo encounter three social media influencers, whose ambiguous prophecies seem to point Macbeth towards the fulfilment of his wildest dreams: party leadership followed by leadership of the nation. But there's a catch: according to the prophecy, Macbeth's supremacy will be short-lived, while Banquo's descendants will achieve unimaginable power in generations to come.

Later, at a bar, Macbeth's political allies Ross and Angus inform him that the first of the influencers' prophecies has come to pass: he has been promoted by the incumbent head of state, Duncan, to party leadership. Duncan duly praises Macbeth and Banquo, but dashes Macbeth's hopes by publicly naming his son Malcolm as his own successor.

Macbeth communicates the day's strange events to his wife Lady Macbeth, who immediately seizes on the prospect of the ultimate goal for herself and her husband. By murdering Duncan and implicating Malcolm in the crime, she knows Macbeth can claim the prize of power for himself. As the couple prepares to welcome Duncan to their home, Macbeth falters at the thought of killing his leader and mentor. But Lady Macbeth goads and berates him, and her appetite for power ultimately wins Macbeth over. She concocts a lethal poison and delivers it to Duncan at a dinner party in his honour.

Torn between his commitment to his wife's desires and his conscience, Macbeth clumsily attempts to revive the dying Duncan, and the couple is smeared with blood which Lady Macbeth insists they can wash away completely. Horrified, suspicious and under suspicion themselves, Malcolm and his sibling Donalbain, along with Duncan's loyal supporter Macduff, flee the scene of the crime. Macbeth names himself head of state and assumes the leadership.



Act 2

The newly unelected leader meets privately with Banquo to discuss the influencers' prophecy. But, already growing isolated under the strain of his crime and the prospect of losing power to Banquo's descendants, Macbeth determines to have his friend killed and so guarantee an unhindered dictatorship.

He summons hitmen to do the job, but hides the truth from Lady Macbeth. Banquo is slaughtered in a manufactured pool-room brawl, but his son Fleance escapes. The murderous couple, meanwhile, host a sumptuous banquet to mark Macbeth's succession. The banquet begins, but Macbeth is stricken by the sudden appearance of Banquo's ghost. Despite Lady Macbeth's urging, he falls into seeming madness and the banquet is abandoned. Unable to sleep or to relish the fruits of their actions, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth search for solace but cannot find it.

Elsewhere, Lennox, Ross and Angus share their suspicions about Macbeth's role in the murders of Duncan and Banquo, which have upended the governance of the nation. Macbeth, meanwhile, increasingly paranoid and credulous, returns to the

influencers for further predictions of his future. In a series of cryptic and contradictory messages, they assure him that he need fear none but Macduff, and that his strength cannot be vanquished if he seizes the nearest way to absolute power. Taking this to mean he should obliterate his enemies, he determines to kill Macduff and his family. But his plan fails; though Macduff's loved ones are annihilated in a blaze, Macduff escapes and joins Malcolm in exile. Ross informs him that his family has been murdered, and Macduff turns his grief and rage towards Macbeth.

Lady Macbeth, her mind fractured by guilt and horror, sleepwalks alone and unreachable, and finally takes her own life. Exiled from his society, his companions and his heart, a reckless and despairing Macbeth takes refuge in his fortress home, but Lennox, Ross, Angus, Malcolm and Donalbain descend upon him. Still believing himself untouchable, Macbeth is stunned to meet Macduff, who metes out rough justice against the usurper, leaving Fleance with the final word.



Q&A WITH THE CHOREOGRAPHER



Alice Topp

Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have a very important relationship in the ballet. Could you please explain how you used movement, through space, body and energy to help portray the meaning of the first duet with Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, where she persuades Macbeth to commit the first murder?

The Shakespearean story centres around the characters Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, encompassing their choices, ambitions, behaviours, partnership and psychological decline. The first duet in the ballet is pivotal in setting up the protagonists' relationship, motives and their personalities. It is the first time we are introduced to Lady Macbeth and experience the couple's dynamics. Prior to this moment in the ballet, we have witnessed a short, private solo from Macbeth, where we become aware of his darkest, deepest thoughts and contemplations, dwelling on what it would take for him to assume leadership, the thought of the crime weighing heavily on his mind. Lady Macbeth knows her husband well enough to know he needs encouragement to go ahead with such an act, psyching herself into a commanding, alluring mindset and state to deliver assurance and conviction to help get him

over the line. The first duet establishes their love, trust and commitment to each other. It also establishes their drive to climb the political ladder, aiming to claim the power they both desire. This is demonstrated choreographically through their partnering - twisting and turning, intertwined, intimate movement, reckless abandon and impulsiveness. Lady Macbeth sees it within her power to draw on Macbeth's inner most thoughts and call them into action. Here we witness their relationship and partnership through the push and pull, the counterbalance, the trust demonstrated in their partnering and lifts, the tactility and the conversation between their bodies.

To bring this substantial passage of text to life in movement, I first allocated the time to deliver it all. Firstly, I set aside 6.5 minutes to cover the storytelling, directing and collaborating with the composer on the narrative arc and creating enough time to deliver the conversation. We discussed the journey across those 6.5 minutes and how the music would reflect the conversation. We then needed to establish the partnership between Macbeth and his wife. We needed to demonstrate their passion, commitment and charged energy - Macbeth just receiving a promotion and Lady Macbeth having prepared herself mentally for a persuasive conversation. We used a musical shift, a vocabulary shift and an energetic change in the physical conversation to indicate the shift in their dialogue. What begins as thrilling news of a promotion and joy shared turns to the next step and 'call for action' mid-way during their duet. For Macbeth, there are feelings of discomfort, and ultimately shame for having such murderous thoughts, and for Lady Macbeth, she stokes the fire and

burning desire by explaining the how, when and where and that she will take control of the preparation to kill Duncan. It's a lot to cover in 6.5 minutes but there's so much movement written into Shakespeare's text and there are many ways to play with the dialogue through the physicality. The closeness of their bodies displays their intimacy whilst the tension in their bodies towards each other can suggest a differing of opinion. Torsion and twists can demonstrate a torn feeling, whilst lifts or height levels in space can demonstrate one person literally above another in conversation and in power dynamics - a person bearing over another versus someone looking up to another tells a great deal just with geography.

You can play with the space between bodies - what are you saying with the space between them, and then them coming together, as if uniting?



Oscar Valdés as Macbeth & Dayana Hardy Acuña as Lady Macbeth. Photo by Julio Blanes.

Lady Macbeth weaponises her seductiveness and aims to lean on it as a way of persuading Macbeth to commit the crime, which can be demonstrated through the type of movement she delivers, the intention, focus and the protracted delivery with the slow, haunting music. She's considered and calm in her delivery, assuring him that the plan is secure and will achieve the outcome they desire. She demonstrates the method they will use to murder Duncan with absolute confidence, making him feel a sense of assured results and thus feeling a sense of

promise. Together, they dance in a domestic setting, suggesting a private setting for the conversation to unfold. The environment, music, costume design, and language of movement all assist in telling the story.

Could you please talk about how you used dance elements to portray Lady Macbeth's personality and persona to other characters in the work?

Lady Macbeth is a popular 'IT' girl - a Vogue cover girl, face of many luxe brands, red carpet regular kind-of-gal. Her partnership with Macbeth only further elevates her personal status. She is a person of great power alone - a woman in demand and of great popularity. We incorporated all the production elements to help demonstrate her character and to support the movement to tell this story. The costume design plays a big part in visually demonstrating the type of person she is. Aleisa created expensive-looking designs for her - chic outfits with luxurious fabrics, rich colours and textures, satin-finishes, metallics and statement pieces. Drenched in jewellery, the costumes paint a picture of someone with a great sense of style and the money to burn. The set design elements also compliment this picture. In one scene, we witness Lady Macbeth lounging in a claw foot bath at home, drinking wine and smoking. She rises from the bath to put on a silk robe and walk into her lounge to make herself a cocktail. This first introduction to Lady Macbeth paints a picture of someone on her own clock and basking in her space and time. She's not in a mad rush and lives in luxury. Together with the movement and music, these elements help form a picture of who Lady Macbeth is.

The movement for Lady Macbeth also captures her character through the quality, pace and style. In the first duet with Macbeth, her movements are a demonstration of control, balance and power - reflecting her personality and position in time. Her steps are considered, her

extensions high and her quality cool. This vocabulary allows us to see how she can persuade Macbeth as she moves about the stage with such confidence and calmness. Shortly after during The Dinner Scene she plays the ultimate hostess entertaining guests, working the room and putting on a display of coolness in her slick, tight outfit. She's alluring and captivating as she basks in the social light and commands the space with sumptuous movement. In The Banquet scene in Act 2, when all is unravelling, her desperation to 'keep up appearances' and keep her best 'poker face' on demonstrates a steeliness and tenacity. She's worked hard for the image they present as a couple and she's desperate to protect their status and political, societal position.

Every step Lady Macbeth takes is with intention and purpose, so this was at the front of my mind during creation.

Are there any movement motifs in the ballet? If so, could you please explain what they represent?

Motifs are a great way to create a recurring picture, idea, emotion and thread throughout the ballet. There are a few motifs in our story that all relate back to the original Shakespearean text. The first one is the crown hands. This is reflective of becoming King, and even though our story doesn't have Kings and Queens, it's a great symbol of leadership and a universal image that is associated with ruling. Our story has Macbeth becoming a political leader, so even though he never physically bears a crown, the motif reflects his power as 'Kingpin' or head figure.

Another motif is washing the hands. This is an affectation throughout the text as Lady Macbeth struggles to unsee the blood on her hands, feverishly washing her hands repeatedly in the story. This motif is already a physical display in the text, so carrying this through into our ballet gave us a language that already exists that we could play on in different iterations. Macbeth starts to adopt a variation of the washing which morphs into a

kind of swiping affectation, as he becomes obsessed with the digital world and media as he spirals into paranoia. People are constantly watching, documenting and observing his every move and his washing and swiping becomes a compulsive behaviour.



Charles Dashwood as Macbeth & Alexa Tuzil as Lady Macbeth. Photo by Julio Blanes.

Where did you draw inspiration from for the modern take on this old Shakespeare story?

I studied Macbeth at school and have always loved the story. I've been fortunate enough to experience the play several times, witnessing many different takes on the story from Punchdrunk's immersive Sleep No More in New York to a modern adaptation in Oldenburg, Germany. The inspiration for the modern take on the old Shakespearean story started in 2020, when designer Jon Buswell and I decided to get our heads together to work on our first full length narrative ballet. I've always felt that Macbeth would make a brilliant ballet and that the themes in the story are timeless. The idea of modernising an old story really propels and fuels me as I see it as a great opportunity to reflect the world we live in today and connect with people, landscape and the current climate. In modernising, it also makes the story more relatable and accessible, also making ballet as an art form more relatable and accessible. Bringing modern storytelling to the ballet

stages invites new people to engage with the art form and gives us an opportunity to expand the ballet language into a new world. Our modern take on Macbeth introduces elements that didn't exist in the 1700's - social media for example. In modernising, we are able to connect with current audiences on current issues and present an interpretation that captures our time.

What does the set crumbling at the end of the banquet scene symbolize in the piece? What shifts did you make choreographically so the audience could read into this?

The Banquet Table sliding and the table-top contents crashing to the floor comes about at the end of Banquo's Ghost appearance. The ghost lifts the table up and causes the avalanche of crockery and cutlery, crashing to the ground with a mighty racket. It's a symbol of Macbeth's state of mind - fracturing, splintering and crumbling under the pressure. He's hallucinating, having just ordered the murder of his best friend Banquo and his son Fleance, and the guilt is plaguing him. The crashing of the table contents amplifies the intensity and landslide of the moment - Macbeth publicly losing his mind and creating a scene.



Alice Topp with Charles Dashwood as Macbeth & Alexa Tuzil as Lady Macbeth. Photo by Julio Blanes.

There is a split scene in the first Act where Lady Macbeth is on the mezzanine and Macbeth is beneath. What does this represent in the space and what does it tell us about their energy and relationship?

This scene was designed to tell two critical parts of the story that are separate scenes in

the play - Macbeth's promotion by boss Duncan and Lady Macbeth hearing from Macbeth about the prophecy and that Duncan is coming for a dinner which they are to host. We chose to have these two scenes sit alongside each other so that we could demonstrate the two events happening at once and the juxtaposition of scenes - Macbeth receiving a promotion but also learning that Duncan's successor is his son Malcolm, and Lady Macbeth hearing about the prophecy from Macbeth that he is to become leader and psyching herself up to convince him to murder Duncan. The two scenes are a nice interplay - we see Macbeth's moments of doubt, insecurity and shame at the thought of murder whilst we witness Lady M prepare for it. She sits in the bath above - a lady bathing in her power, her husband in the space below, contemplating his future and fate on a ground level.

How did you show the different relationships of the characters in the ballet and their hierarchy in the political world?

There are many politicians/characters in the story - Macduff, Malcolm, Donalbain, Ross, Angus, Lennox, Duncan, Banquo... each character has their place in the political arena. We used a combination of costume and choreography to denote their status and relationship. Duncan is the leader of the party - the only one wearing a stately pale grey suit and overcoat to suggest a more experienced gentleman. Macbeth is the only politician in a black suit with no tie, demonstrating his young, confident, charismatic approach. The rest of the politicians are in shades of grey - charcoal, steel, gunmetal, cement, stone shades for example. Banquo is Macbeth's best friend and colleague, and is by his side from the beginning of the ballet. Donalbain and Malcolm are Duncan's offspring, and we are introduced to them at the same time we meet Duncan. Throughout that scene I made sure to demonstrate the family connection and promised succession with the three dancers showing their bond through movement,

patterns and composition. Ross, Angus and Lennox are politicians working for their party. The sudden leadership change and Duncan's death causes them to question Macbeth and mistrust him, and in the end, swing and defect. These characters are pivotal players in the story as we witness their growing mistrust in their leader as they experience Macbeth's irrationality and impulsiveness increase. Their mistrust causes his paranoia to spiral and we witness him further isolate himself.

All of the patterns and combinations tell a story - of alliance, of opposition and of isolation. The language of movement can indicate the kind of conversation - challenge and resistance or unity and symmetry. These are important tools throughout the work.



Adam Alzaim, Evangeline Beal-Attwood & Isabella Triscari as Influencers. Photo by Julio Blanes.

How did you find the challenge of trying to piece all the elements of the performance together- set, costumes, light, music-to find the balance visually and thread it all together seamlessly?

Every element is information. Each component needs to work together to complete a picture. The creative team worked very collaboratively to ensure each element complemented each other, created synergy and cohesiveness. There are many ways to tell a story and sometimes we used a combination of elements and in other moments we chose one element to

speak the loudest. All of these choices are made with the focus on what tells the story best. The balance is super important. Everyone processes information differently and making sure there is time for the information to be digested is important.

Too much information at once can overwhelm and override. Creating busy movement when the music and visuals are busy is a lot of stimulation and information, so sometimes having sparse movement in these moments is more digestible. It's all about balance and communication between the elements.



Charles Dashwood as Macbeth. Photo by Julio Blanes.

Collaboration is my favourite part of the process. Discussing how best to bring the story to life with the creative team and dancers is a thrilling journey of limitless possibilities. Curating and making choices about how to realise the story together with incredible artists is a beautiful chemistry experiment where we get to share our vision, perspectives, experiences, ideas, interpretations and different ways of seeing the world. It's a process that relies on communication, compromise, trust and openness at every stage of the process and with all collaborators. Coming together to share this creative experience and be endlessly inspired by your colleagues is a journey of pure joy, discovery and wonderment.



SECONDARY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Discussion Points- (ACADAR018), (ACADAR019), (ACADAR025)

The following is a list of discussion points to assist your students in their understanding and critical analysis of a work.

- Think of two or three words to describe your immediate response to the performance as a whole.
- What parts did you respond to the most and why?
- What were your thoughts and emotions when watching the performance? Did your emotional response change throughout the different scenes or character interactions? Did you have a particular response to a specific section or moment in the work?
- Did the work have a clear storyline? If so, what was it and does everybody in the group interpret the story in the same way?
- Describe some of the dance movements you saw in the performance. What was it about these movements that caught your attention? Try to describe the movement using both verbal and physical descriptions.
- Describe the performers you saw. Which one or two stood out for you? What was it about their performance that you liked? E.g. physicality, performance quality, role in the work, engagement with the other dancers etc.
- Describe the use of props and sets in the performance. What impact did they have in presenting an idea?
- Describe the lighting and other technical aspects. What was its purpose and how did this enhance the performance?
- Describe the costumes. Were they appropriate for the work and the movement? Did they distract from, or contribute to the performance?
- Describe the setting of the stage. Describe the way the dancers used the performance area. How would the work be affected if it was performed in a different performance setting? I.e. Outdoors or proscenium arch theatre.

RESPONDING | DANCE IN CONTEXT - Year 10 (ACADAR026)

Dance genres/styles are influenced by the social, cultural and historical contexts in which they exist.

As a class (prior to watching West Australian Ballet's performance of *Macbeth*), watch Justin Kurzel's 2015 movie adaptation of the Shakespearean tragedy of *Macbeth*. Ask students to take notes on the era the movie is set in, considering the social, cultural and historical aspects explored in the film.

While viewing West Australian Ballet's performance of *Macbeth*, ask students to note the social, cultural and historical contexts presented.

TASK:

After compiling notes from both versions of *Macbeth*, compare and contrast the social, cultural and historical contexts presented in the film and ballet performance. Detail how the genre/movement style has been influenced as a result of the development of the era in the performance. Considering that the dance and film interpretations of *Macbeth* occur in different eras and locations, compare how effectively the themes were conveyed, and in your opinion, which era is stronger at conveying the themes in the story of *Macbeth*. Present your ideas in an essay format.

UNIT 1 | POPULAR DANCE - Year 11

Case Study - Popular Dance

After viewing the performance of *Macbeth*, consider the dance elements of Body, Dynamics, Space and Time (BDST). In a group discussion, reflect upon the choreographic devices you think may have been used, researched or developed during the creative process and were included in the final performance.

Body: What actions were used?

Dynamics: What kinds of movement qualities did you see? Sharp, soft, smooth, percussive? Was there flow and connection of movements or was it interrupted and contained?

Space: Which directions did the dancers travel in? What formations were seen? Name some shapes you saw the dancers make eg. twisted, circular, symmetrical, contrasting. Were the pathways curved or angular?

Time: What was the tempo of the music? Was the rhythm regular or irregular? Was there stillness? Were there accents placed on specific movements?

TASK: Provide an overview of West Australian Ballet, or Alice Topp. Outline the choreographic intent of *Macbeth*. Explain, using specific examples from the work, how the choreography supports the choreographic intent of the work. Explain, using specific examples from the work, how design concepts convey meaning and effect. Discuss, using specific examples from the work, how ballet/contemporary movement is reflected in the work.

Students can use the following prompts to help guide their answers:

- How did the above elements contribute to the formation of the work?
- Which elements were most utilised and drawn upon to best present the themes and ideas expressed throughout the work?
- Consider classic and contemporary choreographic styles, and how they influenced the work.
- Was there unison, canon, motif, contrast, repetition, fragmentation, embellishment, accumulation, reversal or retrograde?
- Consider why these devices may or may not have been incorporated into the work. Eg. Did this assist with story telling, world building or were they stylistic or aesthetic choices?
- Did the work look inspired or influenced by other well know choreographers? If so, discuss the potential links between creative choices and inspiration. Be specific and give examples of phrases.

UNIT 3 | AUSTRALIAN DANCE - Year 12

Choreography - Additional genre e.g. ballet/contemporary dance

TASK: Choose a character from *Macbeth* and create a 2-3 minute structured improvisation inspired by your observations of the character during the performance. Use structured improvisation to explore how your character might move. For further research, select a stimulus connected to your character such as a significant quote, relationship, emotion, symbol or moment from the performance.

Students' choreography should:

- Explore the movement qualities of your character through improvisation.
- Manipulate at least three movement elements (e.g. BEST/BDST).
- Develop a recognisable movement motif representing your character.
- Demonstrate at least three choreographic devices such as repetition, variation, contrast, retrograde, fragmentation, accumulation or canon.
- Show a clear development or transformation of the character.
- Communicate the character's personality, emotions, relationships or psychological state through movement.
- Demonstrate intentional use of additional genre conventions, such as ballet or contemporary dance.

Process:

1. Identify your character and stimulus.
2. Participate in structured improvisation tasks to generate movement material.
3. Record/select movement that effectively communicates your character.
4. Develop and manipulate this material using choreographic devices.
5. Structure the movement into a cohesive 2–3 minute structured improvisation piece.
6. Perform and reflect on your choreographic choices.

After performing, students can answer the following questions:

- What aspects of the character influenced your movement?
- What stimulus did you use?
- How did you structure your improvisation?
- Which movement qualities did you explore?
- How did your movement develop across the work?
- Which choreographic devices did you use and why?
- How did you use movement to portray the character without relying on literal acting?

A word bank is provided below as a starting point for students:

Character-driven themes:

- Ambition
- Paranoia
- Guilt
- Power
- Manipulation
- Isolation
- Obsession
- Fear
- Betrayal
- Deception
- Jealousy
- Desperation
- Corruption
- Violence
- Murder
- Revenge
- Control
- Dominance
- Submission
- Conflict
- Distrust
- Suspicion
- Instability
- Madness
- Hallucination
- Regret
- Remorse
- Shame
- Ambivalence
- Temptation
- Fate
- Consequence
- Loss
- Grief
- Destruction
- Transformation
- Identity
- Masculinity
- Femininity
- Loyalty
- Moral conflict

Dance-specific:

- Tension
- Constraint
- Resistance
- Struggle
- Weight
- Pressure
- Fragmentation
- Repetition
- Entrapment
- Duality
- Contrast
- Chaos
- Ritual
- Transformation
- Disintegration
- Connection
- Disconnection
- Hierarchy
- Oppression
- Vulnerability
- Confrontation
- Pursuit
- Collapse
- Recovery
- Descent
- Ascension



HOW TO WRITE A REVIEW VIDEO

This video, by Amy Wiseman, details how to write a review of a ballet performance. This is a valuable resource for students to reference and take inspiration from across all *Macbeth* Creative Learning Pack activities.

[VIDEO LINK HERE](#)



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

West Australian Ballet, has worked closely with Telethon Kids Institute to create a series of online workshops that focus on utilising dance to improve young people's mental and physical health and wellbeing. A wide variety of movement-based workshop exercises are available. Use these videos to explore a range of health and wellbeing topics through dance.

These free classroom resources are available for a range of year groups and cover topics such as nutrition, mindfulness, self-esteem and many more. Simply click on the link below.

[DANCE AND WELLBEING RESOURCES](#)



BALLET GLOSSARY

Plié is to bend your knees in a diamond shape.

Port de bras is movement of the arms.

Tendu means to point or stretch the foot to the front, side, or back.

Relevé means to rise to the ball of the feet in a sharp action.

Jeté is a leap from one foot to the other in which the front leg appears to have been thrown into the air.

Arabesque is a position supported on one leg with the other extended behind, forming a right angle (or higher), with long arm lines.

Pirouette is to spin or turn; a rotation of the body on one foot.

Pas de deux is a dance for two people.

Principal Artist is a dancer at the highest rank within a professional company.

Solo & Leading Artists are dancers below a principal who performs most solo and featured roles.

Artists are the ensemble group that forms the backbone of a ballet company.

Choreographer is the creative who creates the movement and designs the ballet.

Choreography is the art of creating dances and organising movement into patterns or shapes.

2026 School Matinee - Booking Form



Step 1 - Provide your contact details

Contact Teachers Name:

School:

Phone:

Email:

Student Year:

Special Seating Requirements:

Purchase Order No:

Step 2 - Select your performance(s)

School Matinees	Date/Time	No. of students at \$18 each	Subtotal Students	Teachers (10 students = 1 free teacher. Max. 4 adults for every 10 students)		Subtotal Teachers	Group Booking Fee	TOTAL (Students + Teachers + \$8.95 Fee)
				Free	Paid \$35			
<i>The Nutcracker</i>	Wed 25 th November – 12pm His Majesty's Theatre		\$				\$	\$8.95
<i>The Nutcracker</i>	Wed 2 nd December – 12pm His Majesty's Theatre		\$				\$	\$8.95
Prices includes GST.								TOTAL
								\$

Step 3 – Submit Form

Once completed, please email to learning@waballet.com.au We will confirm we have received your booking via email and provide you with an invoice.

Created by
Education Manager
Emily Coles
for
2026 season of
MACBETH
presented by
West Australian Ballet Company

Cover, Pg2, Pg8, Pg9 & Pg10 - Photo by Hypnosis Creative
Agency and Mauro Palmieri
Dancers Chihiro Nomura and Charles Dashwood