

● Theatre

'An absorbing and emotive reflection...'

ENB

By **GEORGINA BUTLER**
editorial@mkcitizen.co.uk

English National Ballet returns to Milton Keynes Theatre from Tuesday with two poignant, award-winning productions.

Ballerina Tamara Rojo has been determined to challenge perceptions of English National Ballet since she joined as artistic director and lead principal dancer in 2012. She is dedicated to showing there is more to ballet than the well-loved, traditional, tutu-clad classics, and the dance works visiting the new city this time demonstrate the diversity the Company is beginning to embrace.

Triple bill 'Lest We Forget' is Tamara's first commission of new works for English National Ballet, affording the dancers the privilege of collaborating with three of today's most celebrated British choreographers: Akram Khan, Russell Maliphant and Liam Scarlett. An absorbing, emotive reflection on World War One, Lest We Forget was created to commemorate the Centenary of the First World War in 2014. The programme illustrates

the expressive potential of modern choreography and won this year's South Bank Sky Arts Award for Dance.

Akram Khan's piece, *Dust*, won Best Modern Choreography at the Critics' Circle National Dance Awards. The Company was able to reach an entirely new audience when it was invited to perform this particular piece at the 2014 Glastonbury Festival, making it the first ballet company to ever perform on Glasto's Pyramid Stage.

'Lest We Forget is one of my proudest moments as a director so far...' – Tamara Rojo

Artistic director Tamara said: "Lest We Forget is one of my proudest moments as artistic director so far.

"Commissioning new dance works that push the boundaries of ballet is at the core of our vision.

"It is always a risk, but the reaction from critics and our audiences has been astounding, humbling and incredibly moving."

Also part of the tour this autumn is a revival of Rudolf Nureyev's 1977 award-winning *Romeo & Juliet*.

The world's greatest love story

comes to the stage in sumptuous splendour and is set to Prokofiev's score, performed live by the English National Ballet Philharmonic.

Originally created by Nureyev for English National Ballet to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee, the Company has performed this interpretation of the tale of two star-crossed lovers across the world, to critical acclaim.

Tamara adds: "Touring to audiences outside of London is something I think is truly important and I am very proud that this season we will present both full-scale ballets and new works."

Last year just under 50,000 people saw an English National Ballet performance on its autumn tour.

Don't miss your chance to discover why audiences are captivated by the Company – pirouette down to the Box Office and book those tickets!

English National Ballet performs 'Lest We Forget' at Milton Keynes Theatre on Tuesday, October 20 at 7.30pm.

English National Ballet brings 'Romeo & Juliet' to Milton Keynes Theatre from Thursday October 22 to Saturday October 24.

Call 0844 871 7652 or visit www.atgtickets.com/venues/milton-keynes-theatre



The Queen of blues rock plugs in for a special Stables date

THE STABLES

Acclaimed British blues rock guitarist Joanne Shaw Taylor is at The Stables on Monday evening.

The date – part of a UK tour presented by Planet Rock – will see the lady, who is also a dedicated singer-songwriter, pull from her critically acclaimed fourth album, *The Dirty Truth*.

Joanne's big break came when Dave Stewart discovered her, and invited her out on the road with his supergroup D.U.P.

That was back in 2002, and

she then honed her style, worked the gigs and made impact everywhere she went.

A debut album followed in 2009, and a year later she bagged the gong for Best British Vocalist at the British Blues Awards.

She took award again, a year later.

JST has been called the Queen of Blues Rock, and 'a world class talent' and with ticket sales brisk for this date, plenty are in agreement.

Also at The Stables this week:

Tonight: **Beardyman** (Auditorium)

Preston Reed (Stage 2) Friday, Oct 15: **Viva Santana** (Auditorium)

4Square (Stage 2) Saturday, October 16: **Charlie Landsborough** (Auditorium)

Keith James (Stage 2) Sunday, October 18: **Judy Collins** (Auditorium)

Marcus Malone Band (Stage 2)

Tuesday, October 19: **Focus** (Auditorium)

Jon Gomm (Stage 2, sold out) Wednesday, October 21:

Yoruba Women Choir (Auditorium)

Screaming Blue Murder Comedy Club (Stage 2)

Ibsen's play on a Doll's House



STANTONBURY CAMPUS

We did give you the lowdown last week, but in case that escaped you, here's a reminder that performances of *A Doll's House* continue at Stantonbury Campus to Saturday.

The play by the writer Ibsen – which aroused great controversy upon its release during the late nineteenth century – is being staged by the Pepper's Ghost Theatre Company at 7.30pm.

An additional matinee showing is set for Saturday, at 2.30pm.

To book your seat call 01908 324466 or visit www.stantonburytheatre.co.uk



In tune: Joanne Shaw Taylor