

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

Saturday 4 February 2023

Swan Lake

Music Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky; **Choreography** Lev Ivanov, Marius Petipa and Peter Wright;

Production Peter Wright and Galina Samsova; **Designs** Philip Prowse;

Lighting Peter Teigen (adapted by Johnny Westall-Eyre)

Odette/Odile	Céline Gittens
Prince Siegfried	Brandon Lawrence
The Queen Mother	Daria Stanciulescu
Baron von Rothbart	Jonathan Payn
Benno Prince Siegfried's Friend	Riku Ito

ACT I

The Prince's Companions	Rosanna Ely, Isabella Howard, Eilis Small, Lucy Waine, Gabriel Anderson, Haoliang Feng, Callum Findlay-White, Miles Gilliver
Two Courtesans	Sofia Liñares, Yaoqian Shang
Court Ladies, Courtiers, Ladies in Waiting	Artists of Birmingham Royal Ballet

Three-minute pause: please remain seated

ACT II

Cygnets	Karla Doorbar, Rosanna Ely, Rachele Pizzillo, Lynsey Sutherland
Two Swan Maidens	Isabella Howard, Lucy Waine
Swan Maidens	Artists of Birmingham Royal Ballet

INTERVAL

ACT III

Master of Ceremonies	Rory Mackay
Hungarian Princess	Rachele Pizzillo
Polish Princess	Yaoqian Shang
Italian Princess	Beatrice Parma
Czárdás	Emma Price, Kit Holder and Artists of Birmingham Royal Ballet
Mazurka	Artists of Birmingham Royal Ballet
Neapolitan Dance	Karla Doorbar, Reina Fuchigami, Ryan Felix, Gus Payne
Spanish Dance	Eilis Small, Lucy Waine, Haoliang Feng, Callum Findlay-White
Ambassadors, Pages, Guards, Attendants and Courtiers	Artists of Birmingham Royal Ballet

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INTERVAL

ACT IV

Swan Maidens, Cygnets Artists of Birmingham Royal Ballet

Royal Ballet Sinfonia

Conductor Paul Murphy; Leader Robert Gibbs



Approximate timings

Act I 32 minutes; pause 3 minutes ; *Act II* 32 minutes;

Interval 20 minutes; *Act III* 39 minutes; *Interval* 15 minutes

Act IV 20 minutes

The performance will end at approximately 10.15pm

THE STORY

Act I *A courtyard in the castle*

Following his father's death, Prince Siegfried will be crowned king and must marry. He dreads the loss of his freedom and has no wish to marry. It is his 21st birthday and his equerry, Benno, has arranged an entertainment to divert him. His friends present him with a crossbow, but in the middle of these celebrations the Dowager Queen arrives. She is shocked at the revelry while the court is in mourning and reminds Siegfried that he must choose a bride from three Princesses who will attend a grand reception. Benno attempts to cheer Siegfried up with the help of two courtesans. When the dancers have gone, a flight of swans passes and Benno suggests that Siegfried try out his new crossbow. They depart in pursuit.

Act II *The lakeside by moonlight*

It is midnight and Baron von Rothbart, an evil magician, awaits the arrival of the Princess Odette and her companions. He has transformed them into swans and it is only between midnight and dawn that they can return to human form. Von Rothbart hides when Siegfried arrives. Left alone, Siegfried sees a swan which, to his amazement, changes into a beautiful maiden, the Princess Odette. She explains that her enchantment can only be broken if someone who has never loved before swears an oath of undying love. Von Rothbart appears and Prince Siegfried attempts to shoot him, but Odette explains that if the magician dies the spell can never be broken. Dawn approaches. Prince Siegfried declares his love and swears to be true for eternity. Odette promises him that she will visit him the following night at the castle.

Act III *The ballroom of the castle*

At the grand reception three Princesses dance for Siegfried, but his thoughts are elsewhere. A fanfare announces the arrival of two uninvited guests; they are von Rothbart, disguised as an ambassador, and his daughter Odile, whom the sorcerer has transformed to look like Odette. The Prince believes her to be the Swan Princess. While Odile and the Prince dance, Odette keeps her promise and appears at the window, but his attention is distracted by the magician's spell. Infatuated, Siegfried asks for Odile's hand in marriage. Von Rothbart makes him swear his love for her and as Siegfried does so, Odette again appears at the window. The court is thrown into confusion and, in despair, the Prince rushes out in search of Odette.

Act IV *The lakeside*

Odette returns to the swan maidens, distraught and wishing to drown herself while she is still in human form. Realising Siegfried is following her, von Rothbart creates a storm in a vain attempt to stop him. Siegfried arrives and begs Odette's forgiveness. Sadly, she tells him that she forgives him but nothing can change the fact that his vow has been broken. Odette and Siegfried decide they cannot live apart and will die together. Odette throws herself into the lake and von Rothbart is thwarted in his attempt to stop Siegfried following her. Dawn breaks. The spell is broken as the lovers are united in a world of eternal love.

PETER WRIGHT