



Press Release

Wednesday 17 September 2025

The Royal Ballet presents *Black History Month Draft Works* - a celebration of Black female choreographers

6 - 7 October 2025

- Curated by Royal Ballet Principal dancer **Marcelino Sambé**
- Featuring five works by female choreographers, including three new works
- Tickets are £25, available at rbo.org.uk

This October, Royal Ballet Principal dancer **Marcelino Sambé** curates *Black History Month Draft Works* in the Clore Studio, an evening celebrating Black creators and choreographers whose voices are shaping the future of ballet. Featuring five emerging female choreographers and a range of dancers from **The Royal Ballet**, **Ballet Black**, and freelance artists, *Draft Works* provides artists the opportunity to develop new choreographic ideas.

Company Wayne McGregor alumnus **Hannah Joseph** and Royal Ballet Artist **Rebecca Myles Stewart** create new works for dancers of The Royal Ballet. Olivier award-winning dancer **Isabela Coracy** presents a work performed by members of Ballet Black. The programme also features works by two of the current Sadler's Wells Young Associate Choreographers, **BLUE MAKWANA** and **Elisabeth Mulenga**. MAKWANA presents a new work performed by two Royal Ballet artists and members of the Company's Aud Jebson programme, while Mulenga's work will be performed by freelance artists Steffi Fashokun, Kirke Gross, Adhya Shastry and Magnus Westwell. The works will all be set to the music of Black composers and musicians, lighting design for all works is by **Prema Mehta**.

Black History Month Draft Works is the third in a yearly series of evenings curated by Black artists from The Royal Ballet, celebrating a range of Black talent in dance and music. It follows Royal Ballet Choreographic Residency **Joseph Toonga's** *Rhythm in Resilience* (2023), and Royal

Ballet Principal **Joseph Sissens' *Legacy*** (2024). This year, all works are inspired by Sambé's own journey exploring the legacy of Black musical artists across history.

Marcelino Sambé, curator of *Black History Month Draft Works*, said:

“Being part of this project has been a real privilege. I believe these five choreographers are essential voices in the future of choreography. I have learned so much and been completely inspired by them. The way they work, communicate, and transform vision into movement is something that will deeply inspire my own journey as a dancer and creator. I feel very lucky to have played even a small part in their paths. Let's keep our eyes on them; they are our future, and it's a future that looks pretty extraordinary.”

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

[Images are available to download here.](#)

PRESS CONTACT

Ashley Woodfield: Ashley.Woodfield@roh.org.uk | Head of Ballet Press

Lily Curle: Lily.Curle@roh.org.uk | Press Officer

The Royal Ballet and Guest Artists

BLACK HISTORY MONTH DRAFT WORKS

Clore Studio

6 – 7 October 2025

Curated by **Marcelino Sambé**

Choreography **Hannah Joseph, Rebecca Myles Stewart, Isabela Coracy, BLUE MAKWANA, Elisabeth Mulenga**

Lighting Designer **Prema Mehta**

About The Royal Ballet

Under the directorship of Kevin O'Hare, The Royal Ballet unites tradition and innovation in world-class performances and is a driving force in the development of ballet as an art form. Based at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, it brings together today's most dynamic and versatile dancers with a world-class orchestra and leading choreographers, composers,

conductors, directors and creative teams to share awe-inspiring theatrical experiences with diverse audiences worldwide. The Company's extensive repertory embraces 19th-century classics, the singular legacy of works by Founder Choreographer Frederick Ashton and Principal Choreographer Kenneth MacMillan, a compelling new canon of work by choreographers today including Resident Choreographer Wayne McGregor and Artistic Associate Christopher Wheeldon, and the bold and complementary programming in the Linbury Theatre. Guest choreographers Kyle Abraham, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Cathy Marston, Arthur Pita, Crystal Pite, Hofesh Shechter, Pam Tanowitz, Mthuthuzeli November, Jessica Lang, Gemma Bond and Twyla Tharp have also created work for the Company.

About the Royal Ballet and Opera

The Royal Ballet and Opera is the home of world-class opera and ballet. We are a cultural powerhouse, bringing together two world-class performing companies in one of the UK's leading arts institutions, supported by a cast of more than 3,000 employees including technical staff, creatives, and freelancers. Based primarily at the Royal Opera House in the heart of London's Covent Garden, with production and logistics sites in Thurrock and Aberdare, our work is enjoyed by audiences in our two theatres and globally through our streaming platform, cinema Season and company tours. Our work in schools and communities up and down the country is driven by our curriculum linked programmes, specially designed to inspire creativity, widen access to the arts and diversify the future of opera and ballet. These sit alongside industry-leading talent development projects, regional partnerships, our Young RBO scheme, and a raft of daytime events, family activities, tours, exhibitions, and concerts in our Covent Garden home. We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment and aim to achieve net zero emissions by 2035.