

Rudolf Nureyev

Rudolf Nureyev first came to Australia in 1962 to visit Erik Bruhn and Sonia Arova who were guesting with the Australian Ballet during its inaugural season. In 1964 he returned as a guest artist himself and partnered Margot Fonteyn in Sydney and Melbourne in Australian Ballet performances of *Giselle* and *Swan Lake*. He also danced with Lupe Serrano, also guesting with the company, in divertissements from *Le Corsaire and Diana and Actaeon*. These first appearances generated huge excitement in Australia and Nureyev's influence on the future direction of male dancing in Australia was inestimable.

Nureyev again danced with the Australian Ballet in 1965 when he and Fonteyn joined the company for its first overseas tour. Also in 1965, while the company was in the United Kingdom, he staged his production of *Raymonda* which opened in Birmingham in November with Fonteyn, Nureyev and Bryan Lawrence in the leading roles.

Nureyev's next visit to Australia was in 1970 when he came to produce his version of *Don Quixote* for the Australian Ballet. This production had its Australian premiere in Adelaide on 23 March with Nureyev dancing Basilio opposite Lucette Aldous as Kitri. During this season Nureyev also danced the lead in the Australian premiere of Robert Helpmann's *Hamlet* first staged in England in 1942 for Sadler's Wells Ballet. Returning to Australia in 1972 Nureyev finalised arrangements for a filmed version of his *Don Quixote*, which was shot in an aircraft hangar in Melbourne, with Nureyev and Aldous again in the title roles, and released as a feature film in 1973.

Nureyev guested with the Australian Ballet again in London in 1973 during the company's sixth international tour. He visited Australia in 1975 and 1977 with London Festival Ballet. In 1975 he appeared in his own production of *The Sleeping Beauty*. In 1977 he danced in his own *Romeo and Juliet* and also appeared in Mary Skeaping's *Giselle*. Nureyev made his final appearances in Australia in November 1991 on a program that featured artists from around the world dancing a mixed repertoire that included *The Moor's*.