

Esplanade Presents

da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay

21 – 23 Feb 2025

www.esplanade.com/dans



Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is excited to announce that *ALICE (in wonderland)* by **Hong Kong Ballet** will be the centrepiece for the second edition of **da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay**, which will take place from 21 – 23 Feb 2025.

Hong Kong Ballet, which last performed at Esplanade in 2004 as part of *Huayi – Chinese Festival of Arts*, will be making a significant return after 20 years. This presentation will be the first featuring an Asian ballet company and a family-friendly production under the *da:ns* banner. It is important for us to showcase an Asian ballet company, offering the Singapore audience, especially the younger generation, a chance to see themselves represented on stage.

A key highlight of this production will be its large cast of local children. Ballet students in Singapore will have the unique opportunity to not only watch the performance but also to audition, rehearse, and perform with Hong Kong Ballet on the Esplanade Theatre stage. We hope that such experiences will deepen the appreciation of ballet for our audiences, and inspire our next generation of dancers and artists.

This *da:ns focus* presentation also coincides with the 150th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's novel *Alice in Wonderland*, allowing audiences to rediscover the classic tale through the vibrant, colourful, and imaginative staging by Septime Webre, Artistic Director of Hong Kong Ballet. As Mr Webre said about the work:

"I had goals going into the production, to have young people fall in love with ballet and to have the dancers challenged technically. I wanted the dancers to come out of the experience better dancers than going in...There is a lot of virtuosity in the production...it's certainly entertaining,

but it's not there because it is entertaining. It is a metaphor. When a dancer can do amazing turns, jumps, these tricks that are super-human...we are sending to the audience a message that 'life can be lived in its fullness...Go for the jugular in life, just go for it and you can be your best self.'"

I believe ballet fascinates and is loved worldwide because of its unique ability to convey extreme physicality and beauty through the human body, serving as a powerful affirmation of life and its boundless possibilities. We hope you will join us at *Ballet by the Bay*, and stay tuned for future announcements about additional programmes for the weekend, including free programmes and masterclasses.

Izumi Asakawa

Producer, The Esplanade Co Ltd

About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre. It hosts a year-round line-up of about 3,500 live performances and activities presented by Esplanade, its partners and hirers. As an arts centre for everyone, Esplanade also creates opportunities for seniors, youth, children and underserved communities to experience the arts. More than 70% of the shows that take place each year at the centre are free for all to enjoy.

Esplanade also brings the arts virtually to audiences in Singapore and beyond, through its diverse range of digital programmes on [Esplanade Offstage](#), an all-access backstage pass to the performing arts and guide to Singapore and Asian arts and culture, with videos, podcasts, articles, quizzes and resources.

The centre works in close partnership with local, regional and international artists to develop artistic capabilities and content, push artistic boundaries and engage audiences. Esplanade supports the creation of artistic content by commissioning and producing new Singapore and Asian work for the international stage. It also develops technical capabilities for the industry nationally.

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is operated by The Esplanade Co Ltd (TECL), which is a not-for-profit organisation, a registered Charity and an Institution of a Public Character. The Charity Council awarded TECL the Charity Governance Award – Special Commendation for Clarity of Strategy in 2016 and 2022, and the Charity Transparency Award from 2016 – 2023. Esplanade is Singapore's first Dementia-Friendly Arts Venue and a certified Dementia Go-To Point, as well as a guide/assistance dog friendly centre.

TECL receives funding support from Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and its Community Programmes are supported by Tote Board Family, comprising Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.

Visit [Esplanade.com](https://www.esplanade.com) for more information.

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Issued by *The Esplanade Co Ltd*.

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Annexe

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About *da:ns focus*

Having transformed from *da:ns festival* to *da:ns focus* in 2023/24, *da:ns focus* continues with an exciting year-round season of five themed weekends in 2024/25. Experience interconnected programmes that offer their own counterpoints, dialogues and encounters in a focused exploration.

ALICE (in wonderland)

by Hong Kong Ballet

21 – 23 Feb 2025

Fri, 7.30pm

Sat, 3pm & 7.30pm

Sun, 3pm

Esplanade Theatre



Photo Credit: Dean Alexander, courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet

"It's great entertainment for children, parents and ballet lovers alike" – South China Morning Post

"A work of rich and impressive creativity" – The Washington Post

Get ready for a whimsical ride down the rabbit hole...

Full of energy and imagination, Hong Kong Ballet Artistic Director Septime Webre's *ALICE (in wonderland)* is infused with excitement and fantasy. Marvel at the playful and theatrical costumes, colourful sets and beloved original score. Revisit the fantastical world of Lewis Carroll's classic tale in the year of its 150th anniversary through this enchanting, reimagined ballet production. Come meet Alice, the Cheshire cat, the Queen of Hearts and many more magical characters in this spectacular adventure by Hong Kong's award-winning premier ballet company.

“I had goals going into the production, to have young people fall in love with ballet and to have the dancers challenged technically. I wanted the dancers to come out of the experience better dancers than going in... There is a lot of virtuosity in the production...it's certainly entertaining, but it's not there because it is entertaining. It is a metaphor. When a dancer can do amazing turns, jumps, these tricks that are super-human...we are sending to the audience a message that 'life can be lived in its fullness...Go for the jugular in life, just go for it and you can be your best self.’” – Septime Webre, Artistic Director of Hong Kong Ballet

This programme is part of *da:ns focus – Ballet by the Bay*, a ballet lovers' weekend of classics and neo-classical works. Be inspired by world-class productions and be introduced to new perspectives on this celebrated art form.

Production Credits

Choreography: Septime Webre

Music: Matthew Pierce

Concept and Costume Design: Liz Vandal

Set Design: James Kronzer

Lighting Design: Clifton Taylor

Puppet Design: Eric Van Wyk

About Hong Kong Ballet

Hong Kong Ballet (HKB) is recognised internationally as a world-class institution that represents Hong Kong's unique character. Since its inception in 1979, HKB has evolved into a vibrant performing arts organisation with a dynamic repertoire, forward-thinking community engagement initiatives, and an emphasis on excellence.

With 50 dancers from all over the globe, HKB has restaged classical and neoclassical masterworks and dynamic original ballets created for HKB and about Hong Kong. Additionally, HKB performs works by some of today's most sought-after choreographers as well as innovative new works by its Choreographer-in-Residence, Hu Song Wei Ricky, and numerous emerging Hong Kong choreographers.

With almost 50 tours to 11 countries, HKB has recently toured throughout Europe, the US and Asia and places a special emphasis on representing Hong Kong in Mainland China and the West. HKB maintains the newly renamed Hong Kong Academy of Ballet, a professionally-oriented ballet school, as well as a full schedule of award-winning community programmes and crossover collaborations throughout Hong Kong to ensure ballet is accessible to all. HKB has also produced engaging original videos and dance films that have collectively garnered over 10 million views online, connecting with ballet lovers worldwide.

2hrs, including 20min intermission

21 & 22 Feb 2025, 7.30pm

\$40*, \$60*, \$90*, \$120^, \$150^

*Limited concessions for seniors, NSFs and students: \$32, \$48, \$72

Limited concessions for PWDs: \$32

22 & 23 Feb 2025, 3pm

\$35*, \$50*, \$70*, \$90^, \$120^

*Limited concessions for seniors, NSFs and students: \$28, \$40, \$56

Limited concessions for PWDs: \$28

^Esplanade&Me Early Bird Specials (19 Sep – 17 Oct 2024)

Black: 20% savings

White: 20% savings
Discover: 15% savings (min. 2 tickets)

^Esplanade&Me Specials

Black: 15% savings
White: 15% savings
Discover: 10% savings (min. 2 tickets)