

PRESS RELEASE

**ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE WELCOMES A NEW ERA
UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF A NEW AUSTRALIAN
NATIONAL DIRECTOR - REBECCA TAYLOR**



- Rebecca Taylor joins the RAD following 12 years at the Sydney Opera House
- New National Director takes the reins on the eve of the RAD's Centenary
- Rebecca Taylor pledges to lead RAD Australia to achieve its goals as one of Australia's pre-eminent dance organisations
- Rebecca Taylor announces three prestigious awards for Australian RAD members

The Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) has welcomed a new National Director to lead its operations in Australia on the eve of a new era for the Academy. Rebecca Taylor succeeds Bronwyn Watkins, the longest serving National Director (29 years) of the RAD in Australia, which is the largest RAD national office outside London.

Rebecca Taylor joins the RAD following 12 years in a variety of roles at the Sydney Opera House and before that as a professional dancer. Her leadership qualities and strategic background have made her a key recruitment for the Academy as it prepares to celebrate 100 years globally in 2020.

RAD Chief Executive Luke Rittner said:

“Rebecca Taylor was an outstanding candidate for the post of National Director of the Royal Academy of Dance in Australia, and she takes on the leadership of the Academy at a key moment in our history as we approach our centenary in 2020. Rebecca has a passion for dance and brings with her a wealth of experience and expertise gained during a highly successful career, both as a professional dancer and in senior posts in arts administration. I know she will lead the Academy in Australia with distinction.”

The RAD has a strong presence in Australia, with 25,000 students examined in its core ballet syllabus and over 1,000 Registered Teaching members in the country. RAD Australia has experienced significant growth and development over the past 10 years introducing new education programmes and qualifications to support the development of the highest standard of dance teachers and also to give second career opportunities for retiring professional dancers. More recently in 2017, RAD Australia introduced new initiatives to widen access to dance for all ages and abilities including older learners (Silver Swans®) and male dancers (Project B). Rebecca will lead the Academy at a time of great forward momentum and expansion.

Rebecca Taylor said:

“I am committed to working hard to ensure the programs, activities and services of the RAD continue to be delivered with excellence, and focus on providing the best possible experience for our students, teachers and members into the future. I am honoured to be joining such a strong and vibrant community of teachers, students, examiners, staff and supporters – a community dedicated to ensuring the continued growth of dance in quality, access and impact. I am also excited by the opportunities to further develop the RAD as a leading voice in the Australian dance sector and the benchmark for dance training and education, and to cement our goals as one of Australia’s pre-eminent dance organisations.”

One of Rebecca Taylor’s first tasks as National Director is to announce three very special RAD Awards will be presented to Australian members for their outstanding contributions and service to the RAD and dance in Australia. Celebrated RAD Registered Teacher **Prudence Bowen** will be awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Academy of Dance (FRAD) posthumously at an event early next year. Queensland-based RAD Registered Teacher and respected member of the dance community **Valerie Bayley** will also be awarded a FRAD. Finally, RAD Registered Teacher and recently retired Regional Manager for Victoria and Tasmania, **Jane Hollier** will be awarded a President’s Award for her remarkable service to dance and the RAD in both regions.

Of these prestigious awards, Rebecca Taylor added:

“These awards are a mark of the respect and appreciation the RAD has for its longest serving and distinguished members. They demonstrate the enormous pride we have in the talent and dedication that is at the very heart of our membership, which benefits not only the Academy but our students and the wider dance community. It gives me great pleasure to announce these very well-deserved awards for Prudence, Valerie and Jane.”

More news and events surrounding RAD Australia’s centenary plans will be announced in the coming months, illustrating the impact of Rebecca’s first year leading RAD Australia, as well as her direction in a new era for the organisation.

– ENDS –

Notes to Editors

Website: au.royalacademyofdance.org

Facebook: @RoyalAcademyofDanceAustralia

Facebook: @RoyalAcademyofDance

Twitter: @RADheadquarters

Instagram: @RoyalAcademyofDance

Royal Academy of Dance

With 14,000 members in 85 countries, the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) is one of the largest and most influential dance education and training organisations in the world. Established in 1920 to improve standards and re-invigorate dance training, the Academy helps and encourages its teachers to perfect their teaching skills and pass on this knowledge to their students. There are currently over 1,000 students in full-time or part-time teacher training programmes with the Academy and each year the examination syllabus is taught to thousands of young people worldwide, with around a quarter of a million pupils per year going on to take RAD exams.

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