



## MATTHEW BOURNE TO BE HONOURED WITH SPECIAL OLIVIER AWARD

*Headshot and production images available to download [here](#)*

Sir Matthew Bourne OBE has been announced as the recipient of this year's Special Award at the Olivier Awards 2019 with Mastercard, in recognition of his extraordinary achievements in dance.

Hailed by many as the UK's most successful living choreographer and director, Bourne has created and directed dance for musicals, theatre and film for 30 years, receiving numerous international accolades including seven Olivier Awards. This Special Award will be Bourne's eighth Olivier Award, making him joint holder of the most ever Olivier Awards, alongside Judi Dench.

Kenny Wax, President of the Society of London Theatre, said:

'The Society of London Theatre is delighted to acknowledge Matthew Bourne's extraordinary achievements in dance with this year's Special Olivier Award. Matthew has transformed the landscape of dance in this country and across the globe with his bold, innovative and popular work, loved by audiences around the world.'

As Artistic Director of his first company, Adventures in Motion Pictures (1987 – 2002), Bourne's award-winning work included Spitfire, Nutcracker!, Highland Fling, Cinderella and The Car Man – as well as Swan Lake, which went on to become the longest-running ballet in the West End and on Broadway, and be performed all over the world.

In 2002, with Co-Director Robert Noble, Bourne launched New Adventures, now a hugely influential exporter of British dance around the world. With the company, Bourne has premiered iconic productions including Play Without Words, Edward Scissorhands, Sleeping Beauty and The Red Shoes. 2019 sees the world premiere of Bourne's 12th full-length production, Romeo and Juliet, which involves young dance talent from across the UK performing alongside the New Adventures company.

Since 2008, New Adventures has delivered engaging and ambitious projects for people of all ages and abilities, reaching thousands worldwide each year as part of the company's ambitions to develop and nurture the next generation of artists and audiences.

Bourne has created choreography for several major musicals, including Cameron Mackintosh's productions of Oliver! and My Fair Lady, the National Theatre's revival of South Pacific, and the 2004 production of Mary Poppins (with Stephen Mear), which returns to the West End later this year.

Awarded the OBE for Services to Dance in 2001, Bourne was knighted in the Queen's New Year Honours 2016 for services to dance, and awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Award in recognition of his outstanding services to the art of ballet.

The Olivier Awards, widely recognised as Britain's most prestigious stage honours, return to the Royal Albert Hall on Sunday 7 April. This year's nominations will be announced on

Tuesday 5 March, and further details of the ceremony – including the host – will also be announced soon.

Past recipients of the Special Award include Kenneth Branagh, Stephen Sondheim, Judi Dench and Ian McKellen.

**\*\*ENDS\*\***

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## **EDITORS NOTES**

Established in 1976, the [Olivier Awards](#) celebrate the world-class status of London theatre and are Britain's most prestigious stage honours.

[Society of London Theatre \(SOLT\)](#) is a not-for-profit organisation representing the London theatre industry. SOLT runs the Olivier Awards, West End LIVE, TKTS, Theatre Tokens, Kids Week, the New Year Sale and Official London Theatre.

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[Matthew Bourne's New Adventures](#) is an iconic and ground-breaking British dance-theatre company, famous for telling stories with a unique theatrical twist. For over 30 years Matthew Bourne and New Adventures have delighted, inspired and nurtured people of all ages and backgrounds: audiences, artists and the next generation. We create world class productions and engaging projects, reaching thousands worldwide every year.

New Adventures has received numerous international awards and an incredible 12 Olivier Award nominations, including 6 wins. Over the past 30 years New Adventures has created 11 full-length productions and a triple-bill of short works. This award-winning repertoire has inspired and thrilled millions of people worldwide. In 2019 the company premieres its 12th full-length production, *Romeo and Juliet*.

Investing in the future of dance and theatre, New Adventures engages in inclusive projects with thousands of people of all ages and ability, as well as emerging artists across the UK and around the world.