



PUBLICITY  
CTGMedia@CTGLA.org

601 W TEMPLE ST | LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 | [CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://CenterTheatreGroup.org)

***“The most popular choreographer of theatrical dance in the western world.”***

*—The New Yorker*

For immediate release

**CENTER THEATRE GROUP AT THE AHMANSON THEATRE  
PRESENTED IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
GLORYA KAUFMAN PRESENTS DANCE AT THE MUSIC CENTER**

## **Matthew Bourne’s “Romeo and Juliet”**

**Music by Terry Davies based on the original score by Sergei Prokofiev**

**Directed and Choreographed by Matthew Bourne**

**In collaboration with the New Adventures artistic team**

**North American Premiere**

**January 28 – February 25, 2024; opens January 31**

**Tickets and information available at [CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://CenterTheatreGroup.org)**

LOS ANGELES, CA (January 3, 2024) — **Matthew Bourne’s “Romeo and Juliet”** will have its North American Premiere Sunday, January 28 to Sunday, February 25, 2024 at the Center Theatre Group/Ahmanson Theatre presented in association with Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center; the opening is Wednesday, January 31. The music is by Terry Davies, based on the original score by Sergei Prokofiev. It is directed and choreographed by Bourne in collaboration with the New Adventures artistic team. Tickets and information are available at [CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://CenterTheatreGroup.org).

A masterful re-telling of an ageless tale of teenage discovery and the madness of first love, “Romeo and Juliet” garnered universal critical acclaim when it premiered in 2019, and now returns to the New Adventures repertoire alongside Bourne’s world-renowned dance theatre productions.

Bourne’s new version gives Shakespeare’s timeless story of forbidden love a scintillating injection of raw passion and youthful vitality. Confined against their will by a society that seeks to divide them, our two young lovers must follow their hearts as they risk everything to be together.

Bourne said, “I had resisted creating a new production of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ for many years wondering if there was anything new to say in a much-performed work. In 2019, I found that inspiration in a countrywide young talent development project that surrounded the original production. Working alongside my usual creative team, but with a team of young artistic associates

and a young cast of super talented emerging dance artists, we created something relevant, questioning and deeply moving . . . but also, an unexpected hit show.”

CTG Producing Director Douglas C. Baker said, “We are delighted to continue our partnership with Tony Award-winning director and choreographer Matthew Bourne, who has been sharing his memorable dance theatre productions — such as ‘Swan Lake,’ ‘Cinderella,’ and ‘The Car Man’ — with our audiences for over 25 years. He returns now with the North American premiere of his electrifying take on ‘Romeo and Juliet.’ This is the first new New Adventures production we are hosting since ‘The Red Shoes’ in 2017.”

Matthew Bourne is renowned for shattering stereotypes, and exploring and pushing boundaries in dance. Key to his creative approach is the creation of work from familiar titles that are accessible to audiences unfamiliar with dance. However, Bourne’s aim is not to simply re-tell a well-known story, but instead put his own spin on the narrative that provokes the audience to think, feel, and consider the story in a new light.

New Adventures’ adaptation of “Romeo and Juliet” is no exception, bursting with youth, vitality and Bourne’s trademark storytelling. Perhaps the best-known love story in English literary tradition, and one of Shakespeare’s most enduring pieces of writing, “Romeo and Juliet” tells the tragic tale of two lovers who must follow their hearts as they risk everything to be together.

“Romeo and Juliet” is directed and choreographed by Matthew Bourne, collaborating with the New Adventures Artistic team: Etta Murfitt (Associate Artistic Director), Lez Brotherston (Set and Costume Design), Paule Constable (Lighting Design), Paul Groothuis (Sound Design) and Arielle Smith (Associate Choreographer) with Terry Davies’ thrillingly fresh orchestrations of Prokofiev’s dynamic score.

Sarah Crompton of The Observer said, “The piece is, from beginning to end, stunningly danced. Full of insight and invention, this is a thrilling rethinking. The wrenching shock of Bourne’s new version, set in the white-tiled Verona Institute . . . is how huge a leap of imagination he has made. Just as Terry Davies’s reconfiguring of Prokofiev’s score makes the familiar sound strange and edgy, Bourne’s approach lets an overworked story take on a different life. The approach is visceral and ferociously on the side of the young people at its heart. The energy this produces is visible on stage.”

Franco Milazzo said in Broadway World, “Bourne’s masterstroke is, in his words, to ‘take the Shakespeare out of Shakespeare’: his conceptual jump retains some of the original’s plot points, gender-switches some of the characters and moves the setting from ye olde Verona to the shiny modern Verona Institute. New Adventures’ set wizard Lez Brotherston comes up with a semi-circular white-tiled wall, the chilling backdrop to scenes which range from disturbing acts of violence and ugly displays of homophobic bullying to an orgiastic disco.”

Milazzo continued, “Sergei Prokofiev’s famous 1935 score is twisted this way and that by the company’s Associate Artist Terry Davies’s new arrangement but still provides the lyrical backbone pulling ‘Romeo and Juliet’s’ sharp dramatic shifts back into recognizable territory.”

In The New York Times, Roslyn Sulcas said, “Mr. Bourne brilliantly evokes a world in which the young inmates are patrolled and controlled through medication and punishment, their rigidly synchronized movement underlining their lack of freedom.”

Sulcas continued, in ‘Romeo and Juliet’s’ “first rapturous, floor-rolling, limb-entwining, passion-dazed duet — which contains what may be the longest, most acrobatic kiss ever sustained while

dancing — finds an intensity equal to the great balcony scene pas de deux . . . in Bourne's 'Romeo and Juliet,' there are no warring families or feuds to propel the action and the eventual tragedy. Instead there are other forces, particularly resonant ones: mental health and sexual harassment."

In the Express and Star, Maria Cusine called it "a thoroughly mesmerizing production. The Bourne supremacy continues." Vikki Jane Vile of Broadway World said it was "one of the most breathtaking nights at the theatre I've seen in a long time. There really are moments so stunning, whether for their drama or beauty, that you might just forget to breathe."

**New Adventures** is an iconic and ground-breaking British dance theatre company, famous for telling stories with a unique theatrical twist. Matthew Bourne — who is the only British director to have won the Tony Award for both Best Choreographer and Best Director of a Musical for his work on "Swan Lake"— and New Adventures has delighted, inspired, and nurtured people of all ages and backgrounds: audiences, artists, and the next generation of dancers, reaching thousands worldwide every year. New Adventures has received numerous international awards and 12 Olivier Award nominations, including 6 wins. Since 1986, Bourne has created 13 full-length productions and a triple bill of short works. This award-winning repertoire has inspired and thrilled millions worldwide.

Perhaps best-known for its now legendary "Swan Lake" with its corps de ballet of menacing male swans, New Adventures' intriguing twists on the ballet classics also include "Nutcracker!," "Sleeping Beauty," "Cinderella," "The Car Man," based on the opera "Carmen," and "Highland Fling," based on "La Sylphide" set in contemporary Glasgow. Bourne has also been inspired by film and literature in his innovative productions of "Edward Scissorhands," "Dorian Gray," "Play Without Words," "Lord of the Flies," "Early Adventures," and "The Red Shoes," which won two Olivier Awards. New Adventures tours to more U.K. and international venues and gives more performances each year than any other U.K. dance company, including performing seasons at the world's most iconic venues such as Royal Albert Hall, Sydney Opera House, New York City Center, The Kennedy Center, Center Theatre Group, and the most prestigious Festivals, such as Edinburgh, Ravenna, and Chekhov International Festivals.

Two years after its London premiere, Center Theatre Group made international cultural history by hosting the American premiere of Matthew Bourne's "Swan Lake" at the Ahmanson Theatre. Dance critic Lewis Segal said in the Los Angeles Times, "The swans are no joke. In fact, Bourne's secret weapon is intensity, and in its first three minutes alone his uniquely audacious and unforgettable reinterpretation delivers more of it than most traditional stagings generate in their whole first hour . . . at the very end, those characters and that score have served an untamed Romantic vision that may be Bourne's greatest gift to contemporary dance." Center Theatre Group also presented Bourne's "Cinderella," "The Car Man," "Edward Scissorhands," "The Red Shoes," "Sleeping Beauty," "Play Without Words," "Nutcracker!," and additional return engagements of "Swan Lake."

Tickets for Matthew Bourne's "Romeo and Juliet" are available through [CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://CenterTheatreGroup.org), Audience Services at (213) 972-4400 or in person at the Center Theatre Group Box Offices (at the Ahmanson Theatre) at The Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue in Downtown L.A. 90012. Performances run Tuesday through Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sunday at 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Age guidance: 14+ The production contains loud sound effects including a gun shot and has flashing lights in sections (not strobe). The production contains scenes of a disturbing and a sexual nature, including stabbing and strangulation. More details can be provided if required.

**Center Theatre Group**, one of the nation's preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles' leading not-for-profit theatre company, which, under the leadership of Artistic Director Snehal Desai, Managing Director / CEO Meghan Pressman, and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker, programs the Mark Taper Forum and the Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. Center Theatre Group is one of the country's leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics, and circumstances to serve Los Angeles. Founded in 1967, Center Theatre Group has produced more than 700 productions across its three stages, including such iconic shows as "Zoot Suit;" "Angels in America;" "The Kentucky Cycle;" "Biloxi Blues;" "Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992;" "Children of a Lesser God;" "Curtains;" "The Drowsy Chaperone;" "9 to 5: The Musical;" and "Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo." CenterTheatreGroup.org

**Bank of America** is Center Theatre Group's 2023 – 2024 Season Sponsor. Bank of America believes in the power of the arts to help economies thrive, to educate and enrich societies, and to create greater cultural understanding. For more than 20 years, the company has supported Center Theatre Group's innovative Education and Community Partnerships programs as well as world-class productions. Bank of America is also an instrumental supporter in accelerating Center Theatre Group's commitment to becoming an anti-racist, equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization.

**American Express** is the official credit card for Center Theatre Group.

# # #

### **CALENDAR LISTING FOR MATTHEW BOURNE'S "ROMEO AND JULIET"**

**Venue:** Ahmanson Theatre, 135 North Grand Avenue, Los Angeles CA 90012

**Dates:** Sunday, January 28 to Sunday, February 25, 2024.  
Press opening is January 31, 2023 at 8:00PM

**Schedule:** Tuesday through Friday evenings at 8:00PM  
Saturdays at 2:00PM and 8:00PM  
Sundays at 1:00PM and 6:30PM  
*Note:* Sunday, January 28 is at 8:00PM  
*Special* Thursday Matinee, February 22 at 2:00PM  
*No performance* Wednesday, February 5  
or Sunday Evening, February 25 at 6:30PM

**Tickets:** **Prices** — begin at \$35  
**Website** — CenterTheatreGroup.org  
**Phone** — Audience Services at (213) 628-2772  
**In person** — Center Theatre Group Box Office (at the Ahmanson Theatre) at The Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue in Downtown L.A. 90012  
**Groups** — [centertheatregroup.org/tickets/groups-and-corporate-offers](https://centertheatregroup.org/tickets/groups-and-corporate-offers)  
**Access** — Center Theatre Group offers a number of services to accommodate persons requiring mobility, vision, and hearing access. For more information, please visit [CenterTheatreGroup.org/Access](https://CenterTheatreGroup.org/Access).

# # #

## **BIO**

**Sir Matthew Bourne OBE** is widely hailed as the UK's most popular and successful choreographer and director. As the Artistic Director of New Adventures, one of the great British cultural success stories of recent times, he is responsible for creating an enormous new audience for dance countrywide. For over 30 years he has been creating and directing dance for musicals, theatre, film as well as his own highly successful, award-winning companies.

Matthew is the creator of the world's longest running ballet production, a record-breaking nine-time Olivier Award winner, and the only British director to have won the Tony Award for both Best Choreographer and Best Director of a Musical. He has been recognised by over 40 international awards, including following Dame Margot Fonteyn as only the second dance recipient of the Hamburg Shakespeare Prize for the Arts and being the first recipient, in the arts category, of The British Inspiration Award. He is also the proud recipient of the Evening Standard Award, South Bank Show Award, Time Out Special Award, Drama Desk Award, six Los Angeles Drama Critic Awards, the Gene Kelly Legacy Award and the Astaire Award for Dance on Broadway.

In 2007 he received a Special Theatre Managers Association Award for services to dance touring and audience development and was awarded the OBE for Services to Dance in 2001, followed by a Knighthood in 2016.

Matthew started his dance training at the comparatively late age of 22. He studied Dance Theatre and Choreography at The Laban Centre (now Trinity Laban) graduating in 1985 and spending a further year with the college's performance company Transitions. Matthew danced professionally for 14 years creating many roles in his own work.

As Artistic Director of his first company, Adventures in Motion Pictures from 1987 until 2002 Matthew created many award-winning works for the Company including *Spitfire* (1988), *The Infernal Galop* (1989), *Town and Country* (1991), *Deadly Serious* (1992), *Nutcracker!* (1992), *Highland Fling* (1994), *Swan Lake* (1995), *Cinderella* (1997) and *The Car Man* (2000).

Most of these iconic productions have been revived for New Adventures, which was launched by Matthew and his Co-Director Robert Noble in 2002. Ground-breaking new productions were added to the repertoire including *Play Without Words* (2002 – a co-production with the National Theatre), *Edward Scissorhands* (2005), *Dorian Gray* (2008 and 2013 in Tokyo), *Lord Of The Flies* (2011 – Director Only), *Early Adventures* (2012 – a compilation of his early work) and *Sleeping Beauty* (2012). In 2016, New Adventures presented the World Premiere of Matthew Bourne's, *The Red Shoes*, based on the classic Powell & Pressburger film with music by Bernard Herrmann. *The Red Shoes* performed to sell out audiences across the UK and won two Olivier Awards in 2017 for Best Entertainment and Best Theatre Choreographer.

2019 saw the world premiere of Matthew's 12th full-length production, *Romeo and Juliet*, which gave the brightest dance talent from across the UK the unique chance to perform and create alongside the New Adventures company. This year sees the new 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary production of *Nutcracker!* as well as the World Premiere of Bourne's latest devised work, *The Midnight Bell* inspired by the novels of English author, Patrick Hamilton.

New Adventures has become the most successful and busiest dance company in the UK and is a major exporter of British dance across the world with particularly special relationships in the USA, Japan, China, and Italy.

His film work includes many adaptations of his stage work including *Swan Lake* (1996 Emmy nomination, 2011 in 3D and 2019), *The Car Man* (2001 and 2015), *Nutcracker!* (2003 and

2022) *Matthew Bourne's Romeo and Juliet* (2019) and *The Red Shoes* (2020). Original film work includes the John Betjeman inspired *Late Flowering Lust* (1993) with Sir Nigel Hawthorne. Matthew was the subject of a *South Bank Show* in 1997, a BBC *Imagine* documentary in 2012 and a Channel 4 documentary, *Bourne to Dance*, which was broadcast on Christmas Day 2001. His production of Swan Lake features in Stephen Daldry's hit film *Billy Elliot*.

Matthew's choreography for classic musicals includes Cameron Mackintosh's productions of *Oliver!* (West End/Sam Mendes, 1994 and 2009 Olivier nomination), *My Fair Lady* (National Theatre/Trevor Nunn, 2002 - Olivier Award), and *South Pacific* (National Theatre/Trevor Nunn, 2002).

In 2004 Matthew co-directed with Richard Eyre and choreographed with Stephen Mear the hit West End musical *Mary Poppins* for which he has won two Olivier Awards for Best Theatre Choreographer (2005 and 2020), and two Tony nominations when it opened on Broadway. *Mary Poppins* returned to its original home, The Prince Edward Theatre, in London, in October 2019, where it is still playing.

Other theatre and dance work includes *As You Like It* (RSC/John Caird), *Children of Eden* (West End/John Caird), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Aix en Provence/Robert Carsen), *The Tempest* (NYT), *Show Boat* (Malmo Stadsteater, Sweden), *Peer Gynt* (Barbican/Yukio Ninagawa), *Watch With Mother* (NYDC), *Boutique* and *The Infernal Galop* (Images of Dance and The Sarasota Ballet), *Watch Your Step* (Irving Berlin Gala), *French and Saunders Live* in 2000 (UK tour), *Dearest Love* (Ballet Boyz), and *Highland Fling* (Scottish Ballet and Ballet Central)

In 1999 Faber and Faber published *Matthew Bourne and his Adventures in Motion Pictures*, edited by theatre and dance writer, Alastair Macaulay, and a new edition was published in recognition of Bourne's 25th Anniversary Celebrations in 2012.

In addition to being a prolific choreographer, Matthew supports the wider dance industry and its future. Since 2008 New Adventures has delivered projects and workshops for people of all ages and abilities to thousands worldwide, every year, as part of the company's ambitions to develop and nurture new audiences, dancers and the next generation of choreographers through the *New Adventures Choreographer Award* (NACA)

He is a proud Associate Artist of both Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles and Sadler's Wells where, as Resident Company, New Adventures have played record-breaking Christmas seasons since 2002. In 1997 Matthew was made an Honorary Fellow of his former college, The Laban Centre, becoming a Companion of Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in 2012. He has seven Honorary Doctorates from The Open University, and the De Montfort, Plymouth, Kingston and Roehampton Universities, as well as the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. In June 2018 Matthew received an honorary degree of Doctor of Letters from University of Oxford. He is also a Companion of Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts and a proud patron of many organisations, including Tring Park School for the Performing Arts, The Arts Educational School, Laine Theatre Arts, CREATE and is an Ambassador for the Theatres Trust.

In 2014 Matthew Bourne was awarded the prestigious De Valois Award for Outstanding Achievement at the National Dance Awards and later that year saw the opening of the Matthew Bourne Theatre, named in his honour, at his former school in East London, Sir George Monoux College. In 2015 he became the first dance figure to be given The Stage Award for Outstanding Contribution to British Theatre presented by the UK Theatre Awards.

In 2017 Bourne was presented with the inaugural Trailblazer in Dance and Theatre Award from The International Institute of Dance and Theatre and the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Award in recognition of his outstanding services to the art of ballet. Bourne was presented with The Special Award at the Olivier Awards 2019, in recognition of his extraordinary achievements in dance. His ninth Olivier Award in 2020 (for Mary Poppins) makes Sir Matthew the winner of the most awards in Olivier Award history.

###

January 3, 2024