

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Outdoor Recreation



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HORSHAM LANDS MUST-SEE FREE BALLET SPECTACULAR

The Australian Ballet's much-loved Ballet Under the Stars will be staged in Western Victoria for the first time, with a free outdoor performance at Horsham Recreational Reserve set to boost local tourism and businesses, thanks to support from the Allan Labor Government.

Ballet Under the Stars will transform City Oval into an open-air theatre for one night only, on Saturday 21 February, inviting audiences to experience world-class ballet beneath the summer sky.

The performance will showcase the elegance of *The Sleeping Beauty* Act III Polonaise and Grand Pas, the ethereal beauty of *La Bayadère*'s Kingdom of the Shades, and the technical brilliance of the heritage showpiece *Grand Pas Classique*.

Guests can purchase food and drinks from onsite food trucks or bring their own picnics – providing a low-cost option for families – as they enjoy a special evening of world-class ballet along the stunning backdrop of the Wimmera region.

The production is expected to create strong demand for local businesses, with visitors set to flock to the region for the weekend.

The Victorian and Federal Government's \$3 million investment in Horsham Recreation Reserve has enabled major art companies like the Australian Ballet to host performances at the Oval, with upgrades to the outdoor stage, the installation of a large screen, and improvements to street access and parking completed in 2024.

First launched in 1966, Ballet Under the Stars was historically confined to capital cities, before the Labor Government supported the 2019 performance of *Giselle* in Gippsland.

The event is backed by the Regional Events Fund, which supports events across the region such as the GPT 100 Miler, the Grampians Grape Escape and the Wimmera Steampunk Festival.

Event information and registration for complimentary tickets is available at
<https://australianballet.com.au/performances/ballet-under-the-stars>

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"A free, world-class performance is a pretty special way to showcase Western Victoria and it's the kind of event that turns a day trip into a weekend stay."

"We're proud to support experiences like this which drive local cafes, hotels and small businesses, supporting local jobs."

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jacinta Ermacora

Media contact: Jen Salter 0487 296 984 or jen.salter@minstaff.vic.gov.au

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"Western Victoria knows how to stage fantastic events and we're happy to support them because they attract visitors, bring communities together and give families a brilliant night out close to home."

Quote attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements

"Events like this help make the decision to visit Western Victoria feel easy, converting demand by giving visitors an experience to plan around then encouraging them to explore the region."

Quotes attributable to The Australia Ballet Artistic Director David Hallberg

"We're so excited to bring Ballet Under the Stars to Horsham, the furthest this program has ever travelled in Victoria. What excites me most is that the beauty of these works belong in regional Victoria just as much as on our biggest stages. This program honours ballet's traditions while looking to the future, with new works being performed in Australia for the first time."