

A ballerina in a white tutu is captured in a dynamic pose, leaning back with one leg extended upwards and the other supporting her weight. Her arms are gracefully positioned, and her expression is focused. The background is a solid, dark blue, which makes the white tutu stand out. The overall mood is elegant and artistic.

THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET

PHILANTHROPY

GIFTS IN WILLS

Planned Giving at The Australian Ballet

Impact Report | 2019–2024
A legacy of love



The Australian Ballet acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We recognise those who danced their own stories for millennia before us and their continued connection to land, waterways and culture.

Foreword from Philanthropy Director



The *power and potential* of gifts in wills

You might be surprised to learn that some of The Australian Ballet's most impactful supporters are those whose generosity will be realised after they are no longer with us.

Our Gifts in Wills and Planned Giving program has been the quiet achiever of our philanthropic portfolio since its creation in 1990. In the years since, hundreds of Ballet family members – *some without the means to support the company in their lifetimes* – have acted on their desire and foresight to remember The Australian Ballet in their estate by including a gift to the company in their will.

Over the past three decades, bequests from ballet lovers who have passed away have grown into a solid foundation of reserves, which now account for half of the company's endowment funds.

Gifts of every size have combined to become a financial bedrock for the company, stabilising us during our toughest times, such as the challenges of the pandemic.

Supplemented by over 400 bequests yet to be realised, this special group of supporters is paving the way for our long-term financial sustainability, making us less vulnerable to economic shifts.

The collective contributions of this community are funding future artistic endeavours and aspirations, enabling our Board and Management to plan confidently for the next generation of artists, creatives, and audiences.

As someone who has previously shown an interest in supporting The Australian Ballet in this way, we wanted to share some of the meaningful and measurable stories of love, legacy and impact brought about since our first Supporter Survey in 2019.

We are immensely proud of the influence our Gifts in Wills community is having on the longevity and vitality of Australia's national ballet company. We hope you are inspired by their commitment to the company in this report and will give further consideration to your place in this special group of supporters.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Watkins'.

Kenneth Watkins AM
Philanthropy Director and Bequestor



Impact in numbers

The *generous gifts* left to The Australian Ballet in supporters' wills generate an income stream for the company. Each year, the income generated from these gifts is used to fund essential operations.

As the costs of running a world-class ballet company continue to rise exponentially, gifts in wills are becoming *increasingly vital* to our ongoing growth and success. The funds received from all gifts in wills are carefully overseen by The Australian Ballet's Board of Directors and Audit, Risk, and Investment Committee.



Gifts in Wills at The Australian Ballet

188

gifts in wills of *all* sizes have been received over the company's history so far

50%

of The Australian Ballet's endowment funds come from gifts in wills

From 2019–2024

7%

average annual capital growth has been achieved on gifts in wills

\$4.5 million

of income earned from gifts in wills has funded essential company operations

3

heritage ballet productions have had their costumes and sets refurbished with support from gifts in wills

5

new ballet productions have been funded with support from gifts in wills

Impact in action

Between 2019 and 2024, \$4.5 million of income generated from gifts in wills was *dedicated to achieving artistic excellence*.

Here, we shine the spotlight on some of the ways these funds have elevated The Australian Ballet's artistic aspirations and operations since 2019, *enabling us to strive for excellence* in all we do.

Enriching our artists

Our extraordinary company of elite dancers is the centrepiece of our organisation – the driving force around which our organisation, audience members and giving community orbit. They mesmerise us on stage and constantly inspire us when they're in the studio, pushing their fitness, technique and artistry.

We take immense pride in setting our dancers up for success, and the gifts from supporters' wills provide a vital and

consistent income stream that enables everything behind the scenes to create the magic we love to see in the theatre.

From funding essential artistic operations and the countless pairs of ballet shoes our artists rely on, to bringing esteemed coaches and répétiteurs to work with the company and empowering our pioneering Artistic Health team to implement cutting-edge strategies and research, the generosity of our Gifts in Wills community keeps our dancers' worlds turning every day.

"From the point shoes we wear and the experts we work with to the repertoire we perform, *every element of our journey is made possible by the generosity of our community*. Whether I'm in the studio or on the stage, I feel supported in every step I take and *it inspires me to give my best every day*."

Amy Ronnfeldt, Corps de Ballet Dancer



Repertoire for today and tomorrow

Our canon of repertoire reflects not only who we are today but how we'll be remembered for generations to come – a sentiment that resonates deeply with members of our Gifts in Wills community, many of whom are contemplating their own future legacies.

As The Australian Ballet's eighth Artistic Director, David Hallberg approaches the task of curating a diverse and dynamic repertoire for Australia's national ballet company with great care. He has described it as "the ultimate balancing act".

A responsibility that involves nourishing artists and audiences alike, while sharing the timeless beauty of ballet through works that honour both our history and pave the way for our future.

Since the launch of our first Supporter Survey in 2019, gifts in wills left to the company have generously supported an eclectic range of repertoire and nurtured emerging choreographic voices. From the classical (*Sylvia*, 2019) to the contemporary (*Volt*, 2020; *Bodytorque*, 2021; *Instruments of Dance*, 2022; *Identity*, 2023; and *Circle Electric*, 2024), gifts in wills have championed the evolution of our art form.

"Members of our Ballet family who remember us in their wills are *at the heart of our artistic journey*. Their inspiration drives us to create impactful performances today, and *their generosity enables us to invest in a vibrant legacy for the future*, bringing joy to generations to come."

David Hallberg, Artistic Director



Restoring with integrity

It takes a village to bring first-class ballet to life and, in a world where production elements – such as sets, props and costumes – are loaned between companies and passed down through generations, this idiom rings especially true.

Costume and ballet restoration is an area of expertise The Australian Ballet holds in the highest regard. Behind every performance, there's another world of equally talented people whose technical expertise and decades of experience help bring each

production to life. Just as our dancers are driven by a love for their craft, these experts share a commitment to preserve the integrity of the art form. Together, they co-create the magic audiences are delighted to experience every time the curtain rises.

Since 2019, gifts in wills have provided a crucial stream of funding that has enabled our Costume and Production teams to meticulously restore and present beloved heritage productions, including *Romeo and Juliet* in 2022; *The Dream / Marguerite and Armand* in 2023 and *The Nutcracker* in 2024.

“The foresight of our Gifts in Wills community enables us to lovingly restore legacy production costumes, sets and props to their original splendour. Because of their commitment, *we can ensure that every detail on stage reflects our high standards and preserves the magic of our art form* – a gift for today’s audiences that will also benefit future generations.”

Musette Molyneaux, Head of Costume Workshop



Spreading the joy of dance

As Australia's national ballet company and a proud cultural leader, presenting the very best of Australian dance, artistry and creativity to communities across the country and around the world has become a celebrated feature of our calendar for decades.

In addition to creating even deeper connections with dance lovers worldwide, the formative experience of touring ballet productions of the highest standard and representing The Australian Ballet beyond our home cities, enable artists' development and furthers their careers.

In recent years, the generosity of our bequestors has helped fund the company's sell-out 60th Anniversary London Tour to the Royal Opera House in 2023, marking our return to the world stage for the first time since 2016.

The income generated from gifts in wills since 2019 has also supported an original music commission for our 2024 Education and Outreach program – a suite of inclusive, accessible initiatives designed to give people from all walks of life the opportunity to experience the beauty, emotion, and thrill of dance. In 2024, our Education and Outreach team toured the program across all seven Australian states and territories, reaching 26,354 participants.

“Over a number of years, we have witnessed growth in students’ abilities and confidence as they build on their skills from year to year. It has been an amazing experience. Our staff have been upskilled also by watching the excellent instruction. Students are always excited to hear The Australian Ballet is visiting.”

Primary teacher testimonial

Stories from our Ballet family

If you're considering including The Australian Ballet in your will, you might find it helpful to hear from members of our Gifts in Wills community who have confirmed their bequest to the company. These individuals have all made this *meaningful decision* or have loved ones who have, each for their own *inspiring reasons*.



Jane and Stephen Gow, NSW

"We were both blessed in being introduced to ballet by our parents, who first attended performances during the Australian tours of the Ballet Russes. Since the 1980s, we've found great joy in being part of the ballet audience at the Sydney Opera House, now every season. We marvel at the depth of talent and versatility in The Australian Ballet, delight in watching the dancers grow and evolve, and commend the company's outreach work in regional areas.

"Our love of The Australian Ballet has been a constant in both our lives, and in recognition of our families' lifelong love of dance, we have been moved to offer a bequest to support the company's future. We appreciate that philanthropy is crucial to ensuring peak arts organisations like The Australian Ballet continue to thrive and are proud to be helping to secure a sustainable future for the next generations."



Charles Hardman, VIC

"I was nine when I first saw The Australian Ballet perform *The Nutcracker* on a school excursion. I remember being mesmerised by the theatre and how the performance filled the room. If it wasn't for that excursion, I would not have visited the theatre or seen ballet until much later in life, if at all. It opened my eyes to a whole new world I didn't know existed.

"The Australian Ballet is a world-class performing arts organisation right here in our backyard. I hope that my gift will go some way to ensuring the company can exist forever and provide opportunities for new audiences to be exposed to theatre, ballet, the orchestra and all the other art forms that exist in and around the company."



Margie Luke, NSW

"My first encounter with ballet was as a child when my mother, Iris, took me to see a performance of *The Nutcracker* in London's Covent Garden during the 'Swinging Sixties'. This connection continued into the 1970s when my parents had season tickets to see The Australian Ballet at the newly opened Sydney Opera House. After my father passed away in 1991, I accompanied Iris in Dad's memory.

"I knew my mother had left a gift to The Australian Ballet in her will and she had always encouraged me to continue our family tradition of supporting the company. So, when she passed away in January 2024, I chose to continue her legacy by remembering the company in my will as well, which brings me great comfort. I hope my bequest will provide opportunities to aspiring dancers to continue their studies and realise their dreams."



Robyn Tamke, WA

"I am deeply proud of The Australian Ballet. As our national ballet company, it plays a vital cultural role by pushing the boundaries of what ballet can be and bringing a blend of artistry, precision, and passion to every performance.

"It gives me immense peace of mind to know that I can continue supporting The Australian Ballet beyond this world with a gift in my will. This is my way of thanking and honouring the company for the lifelong memories it has given me, while also leaving a lasting imprint. I hope my contribution ensures that the beauty and power of ballet continue to inspire future dancers and audiences."

"The Australian Ballet is a world-class performing arts organisation right here in our backyard. *I hope that my gift will go some way to ensuring the company can exist forever.*"

Charles Hardman, Bequestor





“It’s up to all of us”

Gifts in Wills Ambassador and bequestor, David McAllister AC on creating a *legacy of love and impact*

David McAllister stepped away from The Australian Ballet in late 2020, retiring after almost 40-years with the company, first as a dancer and then as Artistic Director.

In the following years, David hasn’t been able to tear himself away fully from the Primrose Potter Australian Ballet Centre entirely. In 2022, he returned to stage the choreography of *Swan Lake Variations* for The Australian Ballet’s Regional Tour, and in 2023, he dusted off his ballet flats for Alice Topp’s *Paragon*, a highlight of the company’s 60th anniversary season. In 2025, David will reunite once more with The Australian Ballet and the company’s eighth Artistic Director, David Hallberg to stage his enchanting ballet, *The Sleeping Beauty*.

David’s passion for the advancement of The Australian Ballet is one reason he cherishes his continued involvement with the company as Gifts in Wills Ambassador. “I’m very much a product of The Australian Ballet and it’s a place that will always be very close to my heart. Much like my decision to support the company by including a bequest in my will, when I was invited to take on this ambassadorial role I knew I wanted to accept because it’s another way I can help to ensure the future of the company.”

Speaking of his decision to include The Australian Ballet in his will, David reflects on the company’s standing in the country’s cultural landscape. “Arts organisations can be quite ephemeral, but I think The Australian Ballet is such an important artistic institution and it’s up to all of us to ensure that it continues in this way, by making the company both artistically and financially strong. As dance lovers and as arts lovers, if we want these vital companies to exist in all their glory in the future, we have to support them.”

The beauty of a bequest, explains David, is that it doesn’t require you to be able to make a financial contribution in your lifetime. “Not everyone has the capacity during their lives to be able to support at the level that they might like to. With a gift in your will, it’s a way to make a huge difference to the organisation and create a meaningful legacy as well.”

So, what’s next for David after *The Sleeping Beauty* in 2025? “I keep saying that 2026 will be my year to reconnect with retirement, but I haven’t stopped since I left the building so... It’s been great to draw on the experiences I’ve had with The Australian Ballet – one of the benchmark companies in the world – and to share some of that knowledge with other organisations. Ultimately, it’s all about helping to pave the way for the next generation, and I can’t help but say ‘yes’ to that.”

“With a gift in your will, it’s a way to make a huge difference to the organisation and create a meaningful legacy as well.”

David McAllister AC
Gifts in Wills Ambassador and Bequestor

How to remember The Australian Ballet in your will

1

Discuss your plans

We encourage you to discuss your estate with your loved ones and to seek legal advice.

2

Consider your options

After these important conversations, decide how you would like to include The Australian Ballet in your will.



Percentage

You can leave a percentage of your entire estate.



Residual

You can leave the balance of your estate, once you have looked after your loved ones.



Fixed

You can specify an amount to gift the company.



Specific

You can nominate other items of value, including real estate or shares.

3

Incorporate your gift

Add your chosen gift to your will and remember that we are available to help with the appropriate wording.

4

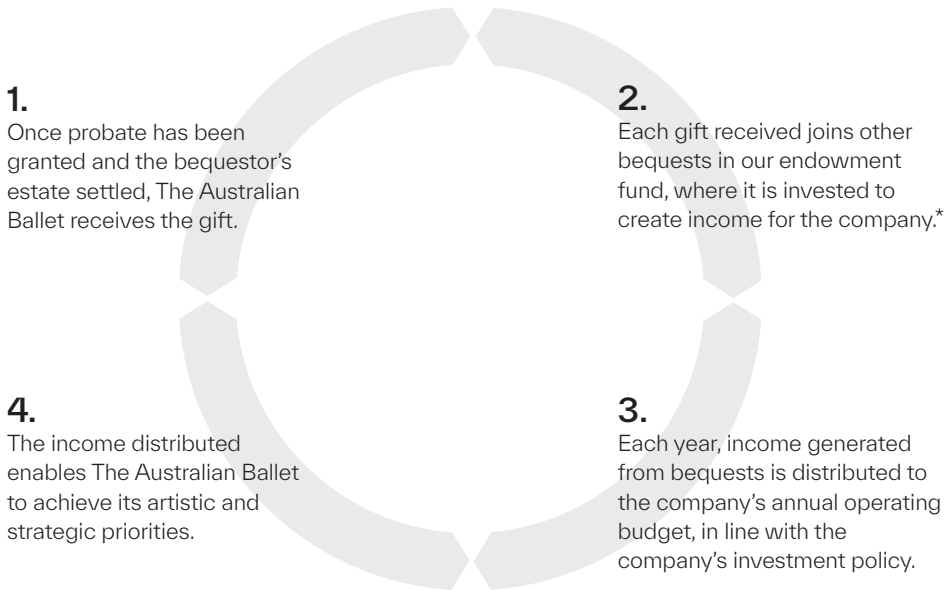
Confirm your commitment

Contact us to confirm your commitment by providing an extract of your will or a letter from your solicitor. We will then welcome you into our Gifts in Wills community and invite you to join the Dame Peggy van Praagh Leadership Circle.

Looking after your gift

Every gift made to The Australian Ballet is managed with the highest standards of professionalism and integrity in accordance with Board Policy.

The following diagram outlines the management of a typical bequest at The Australian Ballet, illustrating our commitment to honouring your legacy.



*Unless otherwise directed in accordance with the wishes of the bequestor, as outlined in their will

We'd love to hear from you

Reach out to us to begin a confidential conversation and learn how your passion for ballet can bring joy and inspiration for years to come.

You can also scan the QR code below to download our Planned Giving and Gifts in Wills brochure.



Sonia Brennan

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“It’s truly an honour to connect with ballet lovers in such a meaningful way, and ensure their treasured memories and legacies live on into the future.”



Jane Harris

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“Remembering The Australian Ballet in your will is a heartfelt decision to make and a meaningful way to provide for future audiences and artists of our beloved national ballet company.”



Principal
Partner

THE
AUSTRALIAN
BALLET

