

BALLETS RUSSES

THE ART OF COSTUME

The National Gallery of Australia's famed collection of Ballets Russes costumes on exhibition for the first time in Japan

We are pleased to announce that the landmark exhibition *Ballets Russes: the Art of Costume*, which was held in Australia in 2010, will be shown at the National Art Center, Tokyo from 18 June to 1 September, 2014. The exhibition celebrates Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes (Russian Ballet), the dance company that revolutionized ballet with its sensational fusion of art, movement and music.

Featuring 144 costumes and accessories from 33 Ballets Russes productions, as well as, costume and set design drawings, photography and original programs, this exhibition brings to life the Ballets Russes' avant-garde performances that electrified audiences in Europe, the Americas and Australia from 1909 to 1940.

Russian-born Sergei Diaghilev was instrumental in bringing together the finest artists of the early 20th century including visual artists, composers and choreographers to create a new modern art form. The Paris-based company originated in Russia under Diaghilev's charismatic leadership – but they never performed there. They toured throughout Europe, Britain and the United States of America and brought together the talents of composers such as Igor Stravinsky (who launched his career with the Ballets Russes and was Diaghilev's closest musical collaborator), and Claude Debussy; choreographers, Michel Fokine, Leonide Massine and George Balanchine and dancers such as Vaslav Nijinsky, Anna Pavlova and Thamar Karsavina.



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Léon BAKST and Aleksandr GOLOVIN
Costume for an attendant of the *Immortal Kóstchel*
from the Ballets Russes' production of
L'Oiseau de feu (The Firebird), 1910
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

After Diaghilev's untimely death in 1929, several new companies were formed to continue and develop his legacy, the most important being Les Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, formed in Monaco in 1932 by the Russian entrepreneur Colonel Wassily de Basil. This company toured internationally, including tours in Australia three times during the 1930s, enthralling audiences with its productions, sparking an appreciation of modern European art and setting the foundations for modern dance companies in Australia.

In this exhibition are costumes that were designed to be worn and breathed in on the stage, but which are also works of art by some of the greatest modern artists and theatre designers of the early 20th century, including Léon Bakst, Alexandre Benois, Nicholas Roerich, Aleksandr Golovin, Henri Matisse, Georges Braque, Natalia Goncharova, André Derain, Giorgio de Chirico and Pavel Tchelitchew.

This collection of Ballets Russes costumes, one of the largest and finest in the world, is significant for the National Gallery of Australia, which aims to celebrate modernism and to show how arts across all media contribute to an understanding of its influence.

The National Gallery of Australia's collection of Ballets Russes costumes began with the purchase of nearly 400 significant pieces at a Sotheby's auction in London in 1973, with another considerable purchase made in 1976. The Gallery has added to the collection in the decades following and this exhibition includes new acquisitions made in the last few years.

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Ballets Russes: the Art of Costume is the result of a five-year National Gallery of Australia conservation project, where fragile costumes were painstakingly conserved, often thread by thread, to bring them to their present fine condition for display. However, the nature of the Ballets Russes costumes means they are some of the most fragile pieces in the Gallery's collection and therefore only displayed for short periods. This exhibition is the largest group of the Gallery's Ballets Russes costumes to be exhibited and to tour overseas, where they will be shown in Japan for the first time.

This exhibition aims to celebrate the Ballets Russes by showing how its spirit continues for our time and place. The exhibition's tour to Tokyo coincides with the 100th anniversary of the 1914 premiere of one of the Ballets Russes' most famous productions, *Le Coq d'or* (The Golden Cockerel), designed by Natalia Goncharova.

"The costumes designed and made for the Ballets Russes were conceived in the context of powerful and emotional artistic collaboration and command attention as persuasive works of art in their own right, long after they ceased to be worn on stage. Their ingenious design, cut and construction, innovative colours and patterns, the use of a variety of fabrics and trim materials, come together with the purpose of being worn in complex action by athletic dancers for maximum visual impact on stage," said exhibition curator Dr Robert Bell, the National Gallery of Australia's Senior Curator of Decorative Arts and Design.

The National Art Center Tokyo is delighted to join in partnership with the National Gallery of Australia to bring the best of their Ballets Russes costume collection to audiences in Japan. The display of costumes and original costume and set design drawings will be supplemented in the exhibition with a collection of original programs, and related works selected from Japanese collections by the National Art Center, Tokyo.

The extensive catalogue produced by the National Gallery of Australia for its exhibition in 2010 will be reprinted in a new Japanese-language edition by the National Art Center Tokyo, which has contributed a new essay about the influence of the Ballets Russes in Japan.

Related Events (in English)

Lecture

- "Ballets Russes: The Art of Costume" by Dr Robert Bell (Curator of the exhibition, Senior Curator Decorative Arts and Design) Wed. June 18, 14:00-15:30 (Lecture will be held in English with Japanese consecutive translation)

Venue: 3F Auditorium, the National Art Center, Tokyo (limited to 250 people: First-come, first-served) Admission free with exhibition ticket

Film

- "Ballets Russes" (Directors: Daniel Geller and Dayna Goldfine, DVD, 2005, G, 118 mins) 10:30, 13:00, 15:30 on Sat. June 21 and August 16

Venue: 3F Auditorium, the National Art Center, Tokyo (limited to 250 people: First-come, first-served) Admission free with exhibition ticket

*All events are subject to changes in time and content. For details and the latest information, see the exhibition website: <http://www.tbs.co.jp//balletsrusses2014> and the Center's website: <http://www.nact.jp/>



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Léon BAKST
Costume for the Chief Eunuch
from the Ballets Russes' production of
Schéhérazade, c.1910
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



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Léon BAKST
Costume for a Syrian Woman
from the Ballets Russes' production of
Cléopâtre (Cleopatra), 1909-1930s
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



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Léon BAKST
Costumes for Queen Thamar and a Lezghin
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Thamar*, c.1912
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



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Léon BAKST
Costumes for three brigands
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Daphnis
et Chloé (Daphnis and Chloe)*, c.1912
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



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Léon BAKST
Tunic from Costume for the Blue God,
from the Ballets Russes' production of
Le Dieu bleu (The Blue God), c.1912
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



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Nicholas ROERICH
Costumes for a Polovtsian girl and a Polovtsian warrior
from the Ballets Russes' production
of *Danses polovtsiennes du Prince Igor
(The Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor)*, c.1909-37
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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General Information

Ballets Russes: The Art of Costume

Wed. June 18-Mon. September 1, 2014

Closed on Tuesdays (except August 12)

Opening hours: 10:00-18:00 *10:00-20:00 on Fridays, 16, 23 and 30 August (Last entry 30 minutes before closing)

Venue: The National Art Center, Tokyo (Kokuritsu-Shin-Bijutsukan), Special Exhibition Gallery 1E

7-22-2 Roppongi Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Organizers: The National Art Center, Tokyo, Tokyo Broadcasting System Television, Inc., National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, The Yomiuri Shimbun

With the support of: Australian Embassy Tokyo, Public Juridical Foundation Japan Ballet Association

With the sponsorship of: Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd., Chacott Co., Ltd.

With the cooperation of: K-BALLET, JAPAN AIRLINES, Yamato Logistics Co., Ltd.

Tickets (tax included)

General: adults 1,500 yen, college students 1,200 yen, high school students 600 yen

Advance/Group: adults 1,300 yen, college students 1,000 yen, high school students 400 yen

* Visitors who are under junior high school students and disabled people with ID booklets (along with the one attendant) will be admitted for free.

* Free admission on July 25, 26 and 27 for high school students upon presenting students ID.

* Tickets both Advance and General are available through Ticket Pia (P-code: 766-033), Lawson Ticket (L-code: 31307) and eplus. Service charges may apply.

* Advance tickets can be purchased through the above services and at the National Art Center, Tokyo from Wed. February 26 to Tue.

June 17, 2014 (only until Mon. June 16, 2014 at the National Art Center, Tokyo)

* Group tickets will only be available at the venue and discounts only applicable to groups of 20 people or more.

Access

Nogizaka Station, Tokyo Metro Chiyoda Line, Exit 6 (direct access)

Roppongi Station, Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line, Exit 4a (5 mins walk)

Roppongi Station, Toei Oedo Subway Line, Exit 7 (4 mins walk)

The National Art Center, Tokyo

7-22-2 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 106-8558, Japan

Tel: +81-(0)3-5405-8686 (Hello Dial)

Website: <http://www.nact.jp/>

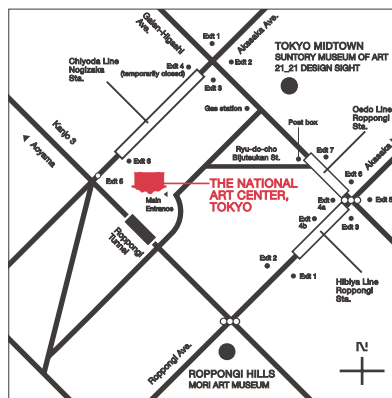
For inquiries or more information, please contact:

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The National Art Center, Tokyo

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E-mail: pr@nact.jp



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Auguste BERT
Le Spectre de la Rose — M. Nijinsky,
plate 8 from
Studies from the Russian Ballet, 1913
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

List of Image Data for Press Use

We are pleased to offer a number of different images of the works on display to help promote the exhibition. If you would like to receive one (or more), please fill out the attached form and return it to us by fax (e-mail requests will also be honored).

*Please refrain from using the images included in the press release without prior permission.



Nicholas ROERICH
Costumes for a Polovtsian girl and a Polovtsian warrior
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Danses polovtsiennes du Prince Igor* (*The Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor*), c.1909-37
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

1



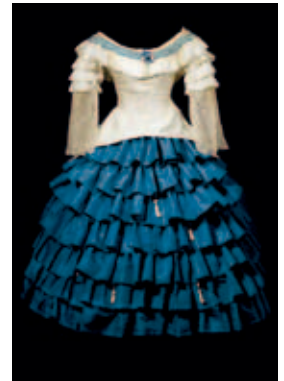
Léon BAKST
Costume for a Syrian Woman
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Cléopâtre* (*Cleopatra*), 1909-1930s
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costume for a slave or dancing girl
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Cléopâtre* (*Cleopatra*), 1918-c.1936
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costume for Chiarina
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Carnaval* (*Carnival*), c.1910
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costume for Pierrot
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Carnaval* (*Carnival*), c.1910
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costume for the Chief Eunuch
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Schéhérazade*, c.1910
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costume for Shah Zeman
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Schéhérazade*, 1910-1930s
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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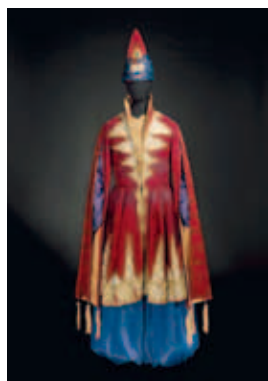
Léon BAKST
Costume for Shah Zeman (detail)
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Schéhérazade*, 1910-1930s
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costume for a dancing girl (almée) or odalisque
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Schéhérazade*, c.1915-30s
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costume for Shar Shahriar
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Schéhérazade*, 1910-30s
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Auguste BERT
Schéhérazade — M. Nijinsky,
plate 15 from
Studies from the Russian Ballet, 1910
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST and Aleksandr GOLOVIN
Costume for an attendant of the Immortal Kóstchei
from the Ballets Russes' production of *L'Oiseau de feu* (*The Firebird*), 1910
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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E. O. HOPPÉ
L'Oiseau de feu — Madame Thamar Karsavina
and M Adolph Bolm, plate 3
from *Studies from the Russian Ballet*, 1913
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Tunic from Costume for the Blue God,
from the Ballets Russes' production of
Le Dieu bleu (The Blue God), c.1912
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
*Costumes for a friend of Queen Thamar,
Queen Thamar and a Lezghin*
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Thamar*,
c.1912
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costumes for nymphs
from the Ballets Russes' production of
L'Après-midi d'un faune (the Afternoon of a Faun),
c.1912
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Comœdia Illustré, special edition,
No.16, 15 May 1912
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costumes for three brigands
from the Ballets Russes' production of *Daphnis
et Chloé (Daphnis and Chloé)*, c.1912
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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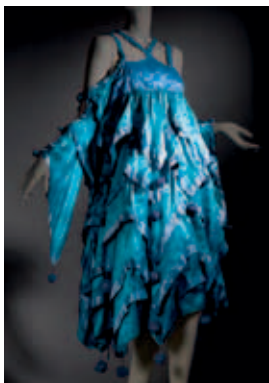
Auguste BERT
Le Spectre de la Rose — M. Nijinsky,
plate 8 from
Studies from the Russian Ballet, 1913
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Cape from costume for a lady
from the Ballets Russes' production of
Papillons (Butterflies), c.1914
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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José-Maria SERT
*Dress from the Ballets Russes' production of
Ballet de l'Astuce féminine / Cimariosiana
(Women's Wiles / Cimariosiana)*, 1920-24
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Léon BAKST
Costume for a lady-in-waiting
from the Ballets Russes' production of
the Sleeping Princess, c.1921
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Juan GRIS
Costume for the Countess
from the Ballets Russes' production of
*Les Tentations de la bergère
(The Temptations of the Shepherdess)*, c.1924
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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Georgy YAKULOV
Costumes for female workers
from the Ballets Russes' production of
Le Pas d'acier (the Steel Step), c.1927
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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