



THE ROYAL BALLET

Director KEVIN O'HARE CBE
Founder DAME NINETTE DE VALOIS OM CH DBE
Founder Choreographer SIR FREDERICK ASHTON OM CH CBE
Founder Music Director CONSTANT LAMBERT
Prima Ballerina Assoluta DAME MARGOT FONTEYN DBE

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Ballet in Three Acts

Alice's Adventures In Wonderland is dedicated by Christopher Wheeldon to Dame Ninette de Valois, Founder of The Royal Ballet, whose support and encouragement of new creative voices lives on.

Choreography CHRISTOPHER WHEELDON
Music JOBY TALBOT
Orchestrated by CHRISTOPHER AUSTIN and JOBY TALBOT by arrangement with Chester Music Ltd

Designer BOB CROWLEY
Scenario NICHOLAS WRIGHT
Lighting Designer NATASHA KATZ
Projection Designers JON DRISCOLL,
GEMMA CARRINGTON
Original Sound Designer ANDREW BRUCE for Autograph

Staging CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS,
ELIZABETH TOOHEY
Guest Principal Staging JILLIAN VANSTONE
Senior Répétiteurs GARY AVIS, SAMANTHA RAINE
Répétiteurs SIAN MURPHY, SAMIRA SAIDI
Principal Coaching CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS,
ZENAIDA YANOWSKY
Benesh Choreologist GREGORY MISLIN
Conductor KOEN KESSELS
Orchestra of the Royal Opera House
Principal Guest Concert Master by arrangement with
Trittico VASKO VASSILEV

A co-production between THE ROYAL BALLET and
THE NATIONAL BALLET OF CANADA

Directed for the screen by ROSS MACGIBBON

Exceptional philanthropic support from Royal Ballet and Opera
Principals JULIA AND HANS RAUSING

Generous philanthropic support from JOHN AND SUSAN
BURNS OBE, SIR LLOYD AND LADY DORFMAN OBE,
KENNETH AND SUSAN GREEN, SANDRA AND ANTHONY
GUTMAN, MARTIN AND JANE HOUSTON, HUO FAMILY
FOUNDATION, DOUG AND CERI KING and LINDSAY
AND SARAH TOMLINSON

Artistic Associate Christopher Wheeldon generously
supported by KENNETH AND SUSAN GREEN

The role of Alice is generously supported by
FRANCESCA STOREY-HARRIS in memory of
JUDY HARRIS

The role of The Queen of Hearts is generously supported by
RICHARD BAKER

The 2024/2025 Royal Ballet season is generously supported by
AUD JEBSEN

Broadcast live from the Royal Opera House on
TUESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2024 AT 7.15PM

Approximate Timings

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes, including two intervals.

PRE SHOW 15 minutes

ACT I 45 minutes

INTERVAL (Including Interval Feature) 20 minutes

ACT II 30 minutes

INTERVAL (Including Interval Feature) 25 minutes

ACT III 45 minutes

CURTAIN CALL 10 minutes

Guidance

There are optical illusions that may affect those with epilepsy. There is also a gunshot in Act I.

Cast

Alice FRANCESCA HAYWARD
Jack/The Knave of Hearts WILLIAM BRACEWELL
Lewis Carroll/The White Rabbit LUCA ACRI
Mother/The Queen of Hearts LAUREN CUTHBERTSON
Magician/The Mad Hatter STEVEN MCRAE
The Duchess GARY AVIS

Junior Associates of The Royal Ballet School appear by kind permission of the Artistic Director IAIN MACKAY

All casts subject to change. For full up-to-date casting, find the full cast sheet online.

Share your thoughts about tonight's performance before it starts, during the intervals or afterwards with #RBOAlice

Synopsis

ACT I

Oxford, 1862. A summer afternoon. Henry Liddell, the Dean of Christ Church and his wife are about to host a garden party at the Deanery. Lewis Carroll, a lecturer in mathematics and friend of the Liddell family, entertains the three young Liddell daughters, Lorina, Alice and Edith, by reading a story and performing magic tricks. When Jack, the gardener's boy, brings in a basket of roses, Alice's mother rejects the red one as being out of place among the white ones. Jack and Alice are friends. He gives her the discarded red rose and in return she gives him a jam tart. Alice's mother seizes on this as a pretext to accuse Jack of theft and dismiss him.

Guests arrive. Alice is devastated to see Jack leaving the house in disgrace. Lewis Carroll consoles her by offering to take her photograph. He disappears beneath the camera cloth and, to Alice's surprise, emerges as a White Rabbit. He bounds into his camera-bag and vanishes, Alice follows him and falls into a mysterious corridor. Through a keyhole, she spies a magical garden, but all the doors into it are locked.

Unexpectedly Jack, transformed into the Knave of Hearts,

rushes through the hall pursued by the Queen of Hearts, her guards and the White Rabbit: the Knave has been accused of stealing a plate of jam tarts. Alice wants to follow them but the door slams in her face, and the only unlocked door is too small to let her through. A bottle appears: Alice drinks from it and becomes so tiny that she can't even reach the door handle. She tries some cake, which has the effect of making her enormous. She cries with frustration and, by waving a fan, shrinks so drastically that her tears form a lake big enough for her to swim in.

She is joined in the pool by a variety of animals who finally collect on the shore. In the hope that the exercise will dry them off and cheer them up, Alice arranges a caucus race after which the White Rabbit appears and leads Alice further into Wonderland.

Outside a country cottage, a footman delivers an invitation for the Duchess to the Queen of Hearts's croquet party. The Duchess's footman invites him into the cottage, leaving Alice with the invitation. In the cottage the Duchess is tending a squealing baby as the Cook makes sausages. The Duchess is delighted with the royal invitation, while the Cook is envious and resentful. The mood becomes increasingly violent, apart from a moment of tranquility brought about by the mysterious appearance of a Cheshire Cat. Fearful for the baby's safety, Alice rescues it, but when it turns into a pig the Duchess takes it from her and carries it back to the kitchen for a future as a string of sausages.

The White Rabbit reappears, anxious about his forthcoming duties at the Queen's croquet game. He warns Alice not to follow him to the Royal Garden; it is dangerous to be near the bad-tempered Queen. The Knave dashes in with the tray of tarts, still pursued by the Royal Guards. Alice and the Knave hide in the Duchess's cottage. The Royal Procession arrive and the Duchess greets the Queen with a gift of sausages. Revolted, the Queen orders the procession to move on. The White Rabbit gives the Knave the all clear to make his escape, but it is too dangerous for Alice to go with him.

ACT II

Alice asks the Cheshire Cat for directions, but his vagueness leaves her more confused than ever and she finds herself at the tea table of the Mad Hatter, a March Hare and a sleepy dormouse. Alice escapes their crazy tea party and is alone and lost. An exotic caterpillar, perched on a mushroom, lifts her spirits and, before disappearing, gives her a piece of mushroom.

Alice finds herself back in the hallway of doors where she first arrived. She nibbles the sliver of mushroom, and the walls and doors disappear. At last she finds herself in the garden.

The Knave appears, still fleeing his pursuers, and is as delighted to see her as she is to see him. The Queen of Hearts arrives flanked by her guards and orders the capture of the Knave, but he escapes. The White Rabbit dashes after them, taking Alice with him.

ACT III

In the garden of the Queen of Hearts, three nervous gardeners are splashing red paint on the rosebushes: they have mistakenly planted white ones, which the Queen of Hearts detests. The Queen arrives along with the King, the Court, the Duchess and the Cook and orders the gardeners to be executed. While the Executioner is distracted by the amorous attentions of the Cook, Alice and the White Rabbit

smuggle the grateful gardeners out of sight.

The Queen displays her dancing skills, after which she and the Duchess pick their teams for the croquet game. To the Queen's dismay, the Duchess scores the first points. Meanwhile the Knave, risking all by being there, catches Alice's attention from behind a hedge.

The Queen cheats. The Duchess challenges her, whereupon the Queen orders her execution. The King calms the Queen down while Alice helps the Duchess to slip away. The Knave rejoins Alice, but this time he is discovered and the Queen orders the guards to haul him to the castle to face trial. When the Cheshire Cat makes another mysterious appearance, Alice uses the distraction to follow the Knave.

The White Rabbit prepares the courtroom for the trial. The witnesses are brought in, followed by Alice, and the members of the Court take their places. The Knave is brought in and the proceedings begin.

The first witness is the Mad Hatter, followed by the Caterpillar, the March Hare, the Dormouse, the footmen, the Duchess and the Cook. They all accuse the Knave. The King offers the Knave the chance to speak in his own defence. When his testimony produces little effect, Alice intervenes with all the force she can muster. The Knave is innocent, she insists: if anyone is guilty, it is she. Together, they deliver a final testimony and win the hearts of everyone but the Queen.

Unmoved by the Court's entreaties, the Queen seizes an axe in order to strike the fatal blows herself. The White Rabbit and the witnesses attempt to hide the Knave and Alice, but the Queen discovers them and does her best to turn the Court against them. With no escape in view, Alice pushes a witness over, which results in the collapse of the entire Court: they're only playing cards, after all.

In the midst of the chaos, Alice awakes.

The Royal Ballet

Director KEVIN O'HARE CBE
Music Director KOEN KESSELS
Resident Choreographer SIR WAYNE MCGREGOR CBE
Artistic Associate CHRISTOPHER WHEELDON OBE
Administrative Director HEATHER BAXTER
Rehearsal Director CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS
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