

Ian McKellen and Peter Schaufuss  
will collaborate and perform together  
at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe  
in the world premiere of  
**HAMLET**  
a new performance concept  
adapted from Shakespeare's play

2 - 28 August, 2022

Ashton Hall, Saint Stephens Theatre, 105 St Stephen Street, Edinburgh, EH3 5AB

**Press Night Thursday 4 August at 7.00pm**



Dancer Johan Christiansen and Ian McKellen, who will share the role of Hamlet, and director Peter Schaufuss

In his long and distinguished career, Ian McKellen has played Hamlet twice, in productions 50 years apart. In 1971 he took the rôle on tour and in the West End and then last year, aged 81, he revisited it in a age, colour, and gender-blind production at the Theatre Royal, Windsor. Despite Covid, that four-month run was completely sold out.

Now McKellen is to return to Hamlet in a world première at the 2022 Edinburgh Fringe Festival, performing with the Edinburgh Festival Ballet Company. It is sure to be one of the hottest tickets in the Fringe line up.

Ian - performing Hamlet's famous speeches, soliloquies and more - will share the rôle of Hamlet with lead dancer Johan Christiansen, and will be on stage throughout the 75-minute production.

McKellen says: "At a crucial moment in 'Hamlet', Shakespeare describes in detail a dance, performed by the actors touring through Elsinore. Hamlet says: 'What a piece of work is a man... how infinite in faculties, in form and moving, how express and admirable in action.' The same could be said of Peter Schaufuss and his company of wonderful dancers. It's inspiring to watch them and work with them."

Also performing at every performance will be Luke Schaufuss, Stefan Wise and artists from the Edinburgh Festival Ballet.

Creative team:

Director and choreographer Peter Schaufuss

Original music composed by Ethan Lewis Maltby

Production design by Ben M Rogers

This production of 'Hamlet' will launch the 400-seat Ashton Hall at Saint Stephens Edinburgh, a new performance venue in the Scottish capital named after the famous choreographer, the late Sir Frederick Ashton



Ashton Hall, Saint Stephens Theatre

## **Ian McKellen**

Ian McKellen, during his career of 60 years, has received as many major international awards for his performances on stage, screen and television. Much of this work has been in Shakespeare at the National Theatre and for the Royal Shakespeare Company on tour, at home and abroad. He particularly relished playing Macbeth with Judi Dench (RSC), Coriolanus with Irene Worth (NT) and Richard III with Maggie Smith (in his award-winning film). 50 years ago he played Hamlet on tour in the UK, Europe and in the West End. Last year he was again Hamlet in Sean Mathias' season at Windsor Theatre Royal.

He has often been part of the Edinburgh Festival, most recently in his 80th birthday solo show in the Assembly Hall, where he made his Scottish debut in 'Richard 11' and 'Edward 11' (1969).

He was appointed Companion of Honour (2007) for his services to Drama and Equality, in recognition of his LGBT activism.

## **Johan Christensen**

Johan Christensen was born in West Jutland in Denmark and joined the prestigious Royal Danish Ballet School as a child prodigy. He performed many of the children's roles on stage, including the title role Peter in Sergei Prokofiev's much loved 'Peter and the Wolf' and the Prince in the magical Nutcracker production by Alexei Ratmansky. During his schooling Johan was trained in the unique, to the Royal Danish Ballet, style of August Bournonville and participated in the 200th anniversary of the choreographers birth in 2005, appearing in all the important children's roles in the ballets presented during this the 3rd Bournonville Festival celebrations. After further extending his education at the world renowned choreographer John Neumeier's school in Hamburg he joined Peter Schaufuss Ballet at only 16 as a dancer in 2008. In the following years Johan developed and danced in the whole company repertoire including many leading roles such as the prince in Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty and The Nutcracker with great acclaim. In 2012 he danced the title role in Shakespeare's Hamlet to Sir John Gielgud's famous soliloquies and Tybalt in Sir Frederick Ashton's legendary production of Romeo and Juliet with Natalia Osipova and Ivan Vasiliev in performances in London. However, in 2019 his career turned full circle as he returned working with Peter Schaufuss as the founding Principal of Edinburgh Festival Ballet School.

## **Luke Schaufuss**

Luke Schaufuss is the third generation of a famous dancing family and was brought up in the theatre. He trained and performed on stage in children's roles from the age of 6 with the internationally renowned Royal Danish Ballet, known for its unique Bournonville tradition and Peter Schaufuss Ballet. At 16 he created the title role of 'Tommy' in the rock ballet based on the music of the legendary British rock band The Who. Shortly after, he joined the Royal Danish Ballet making his debut with the company in Bournonville's Kermessen in Brugges pas de deux and performing in ballets from Balanchine to Bournonville, Petipa, Cranko and Lander, in Copenhagen and on tour at the Paris Opera, the Kennedy Center in Washington and at the New York State Theater. In 2013 he moved to England on an invitation from David Bintley to dance with the Birmingham Royal Ballet, where he danced in ballets by Ashton, McMillan and Bintley before accepting an offer by Christopher Hampton to join the Scottish Ballet. Luke has been the recipient of many awards, including Exceptional Student at The Royal Ballet's 2011 summer school and he was selected as the year's Rising Star of Dance by the Observer and the Guardian. Luke has danced many leading roles, including Romeo in Sir Frederick Ashton's critically acclaimed Romeo and Juliet and James in the Olivier Award-winning production of La Sylphide, both in France, and Germany with Iana Selanko, Australia and in London at the Coliseum Theatre. In 2015 he was a guest artist with Los Angeles Ballet in their world premiere of Sleeping Beauty and again in 2016 dancing the role of Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet, a part created by Sir Frederick Ashton for Luke's grandfather Frank Schaufuss in 1955 for the Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen. Luke is a principal dancer with Sarasota Ballet in the USA, sharing his time between them and Edinburgh Festival Ballet Company where he is a Principal dancer and Co-Director.

## **Stefan Wise**

British dancer Stefan Wise is a dancer and Ballet Master with Edinburgh Festival Ballet. He began his training at The Arts Educational Schools London, later joining The Royal Ballet Upper School in 1997, graduating in 2000. As a student Stefan danced alongside the Royal Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet and the San Francisco Ballet. In 1997, Stefan won the Paul Clarke Bursary award. In 2000, Stefan began his career with the English National Ballet. Following this, he joined and toured with numerous dance companies internationally, including K-Ballet, Peter Schaufuss Ballet, The Royal Ballet of Flanders, and Dance Cie MESS. Stefan has danced and created numerous many soloist & principal roles in the classical and contemporary repertoire, including in works by Marius Petipa, Frederick Ashton, George Balanchine, Rudolf Nureyev, Derek Dean, Glen Tetley, Kenneth MacMillan, Christopher Hampson, Cathy Marston, William Forsythe, Stanton Welch, David Dawson, Peter Schaufuss, Jorge Lefebre, Michael Lazic & Menia Martinez. In 2014, Stefan guested at the International Ballet Gala at the Haus für Mozart in Salzburg. Most recently Stefan created and performed the principle role in 'Danza delle Ore' from La Gioconda with Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, directed by Oliver Py. Stefan also teaches and assists with pre-professional dancers in Europe, China and the USA.

## **Peter Schaufuss**

Peter Schaufuss was quite literally brought up in the theatre and is an Olivier, Evening Standard and Edinburgh Critic's Award-winning choreographer, teacher, director and widely recognized as one of the most talented male dancers on the international stage. In a stellar career he has performed with the most celebrated ballerinas of his time at all major ballet companies, and staged upwards of 100 productions worldwide. He has had ballets and choreography specifically created for him by the likes of Sir Kenneth McMillan, George Balanchine, Roland Petit, Sir Frederick Ashton, among others. Peter has also been the director of 'English National Ballet', 'Berlin Ballet' at the German Opera Berlin and 'Royal Danish Ballet'. He is the Founder of the 'English National Ballet School', the 'Peter Schaufuss Ballet & School' and the 'Royal Danish Ballet School in Holstebro'. Peter has had his own Emmy Award nominated television programme 'Dancer' for the BBC as well as built 'Black Box Theatre' to his design, in Denmark, which is his native country.

## LISTINGS INFO

### HAMLET

Ashton Hall  
Saint Stephens  
105 St Stephen Street,  
Edinburgh, EH3 5A

2 - 28 August

Tuesday - Sunday  
at 19.00 (20.15)

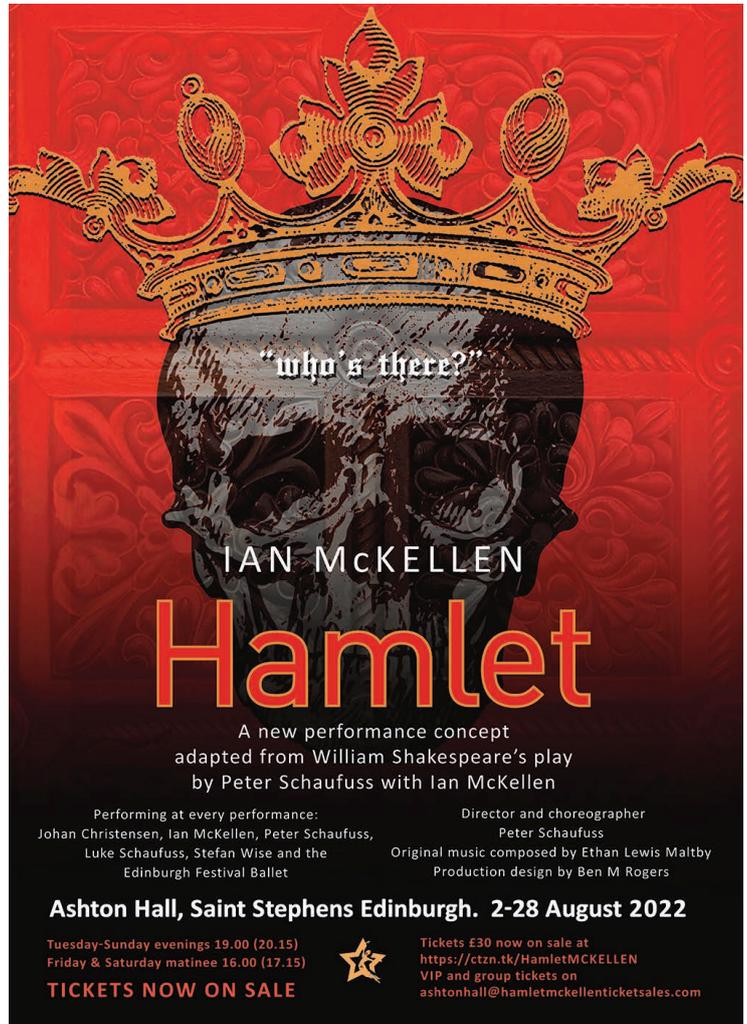
Friday & Saturday matinee  
at 16.00 (17.15)

Tickets: £30.00

on sale now at

<https://ctzn.tk/HamletMCKELLEN>

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[ashtonhall@hamletmckellenticketsales.com](mailto:ashtonhall@hamletmckellenticketsales.com)



"who's there?"

IAN MCKELLEN

# Hamlet

A new performance concept  
adapted from William Shakespeare's play  
by Peter Schaufuss with Ian McKellen

Performing at every performance:  
Johan Christensen, Ian McKellen, Peter Schaufuss,  
Luke Schaufuss, Stefan Wise and the  
Edinburgh Festival Ballet

Director and choreographer  
Peter Schaufuss  
Original music composed by Ethan Lewis Maltby  
Production design by Ben M Rogers

**Ashton Hall, Saint Stephens Edinburgh. 2-28 August 2022**

Tuesday-Sunday evenings 19.00 (20.15)  
Friday & Saturday matinee 16.00 (17.15)

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