

ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall formally opens new Royal Academy of Dance global headquarters

New international home for dance celebrates 100+ years of history at world's leading dance education and training organisation



Image: Royal Academy of Dance

- HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, Vice-Patron of the Royal Academy of Dance opens the new global headquarters of the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD), one of the world's leading dance education and training organisations.
- Her Royal Highness, who has taken the RAD's Silver Swans ballet classes, said, "As the very proud Vice-Patron of the RAD, I would like to congratulate everybody who has made this wonderful new building possible. Having had a very short tour of it, seeing its complete magnificence, it's just doing so much for so many young people and old people like me".
- Over 60,000 sq. ft headquarters will showcase the RAD's exceptional dancing talent and expand on outreach and wellbeing initiatives for the local community.
- For more information visit: www.royalacademyofdance.org
- Images available to download [here](#)

10 March 2022: HRH The Duchess of Cornwall formally opened the new state-of-the-art Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) global headquarters today. Her Royal Highness was given a tour of the building by Chief Executive Luke Rittner CBE, accompanied by RAD President Dame Darcey Bussell DBE.

Created as a new international home for dance, the £19.5m Battersea-based project enables the charity to realise the potential of the 60,000 sq. ft headquarters, and they are fundraising for the final, but crucial, £1 million to meet their target. In this new space, the RAD will expand on its 100-year commitment to high-quality dance education and will harness the transformational power of dance to reach more people, regardless of age, ability, or location. The enhanced education and training facilities for students and teachers include seven large dance studios, a café and a shop. The new building is now also home to a long wished for 193-seat performance space to

showcase the RAD's dancing talent. On display for the first time in its 100+ year history will be a fully accessible archive showcasing the RAD's extraordinary collection of 75,000 artefacts, books, programmes, letters, relics and costumes, which can be viewed by appointment with the RAD's archivist.

The Duchess, Vice-Patron of the RAD since 2020, toured the new building and learnt about how the space is being used to expand on the Academy's work in the local community through a network of outreach and wellbeing initiatives.

The Duchess was introduced to RAD students training to become dance teachers, each of whom are passionate about shaping and influencing the future of dance. She then continued her visit with a look at a Silver Swans ballet class for learners aged over 55; Silver Swans Licensee and The Duchess' own teacher Sarah Platt delivered a class in the studio, whilst being joined remotely by a class in Perth, Australia and their teacher Jamelia Gubgub for this special occasion. Her Royal Highness is herself a 'swan', as part of her ongoing commitment to championing active aging. As part of the tour, Her Royal Highness was also able to meet participants from the RADiate programme – which provides subsidised inclusive dance classes designed to develop the physicality and boost the self-esteem of children and young people with additional learning needs.

A dance presentation in the brand-new studio theatre, which moved from ballet to hip-hop, included performances from the Step Into Dance initiative. The largest inclusive dance programme of its kind in the UK, the RAD programme delivered in partnership with the Jack Petchey Foundation reaches over 6,000 secondary school students annually across London and Essex to offer regular dance classes in a variety of styles. The Step Hip Hop Company who performed for Her Royal Highness, is run in association with *ZooNation: The Kate Prince Company* and trains weekly, developing technique and choreographic skills in dance styles influenced by hip hop culture.

The Duchess then unveiled a commemorative plaque, officially opening the new Royal Academy of Dance headquarters. Her Royal Highness unveiled the plaque, made from solid oak by The Oak and Rope Company, the same Kent-based small business that created the hand-crafted garden swing gifted to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on their wedding day; a swing pictured in official photographs marking Prince George's third birthday, Prince William's birthday, and Father's Day.

The Duchess also congratulated the winner of the RAD's art competition for primary schools in Wandsworth. KS1 and KS2 students from across the borough were invited to submit a piece of artwork inspired by how dance makes them feel. Winner Richard age 8 from Alderbrook Primary School was introduced to The Duchess of Cornwall and had the opportunity to present his work to her, alongside the work of runners up Indiana and Genevieve.

As a token of appreciation for her visit, Her Royal Highness was presented with a posey by Dance School student Mia, aged 11. Mia is a student from the local area who takes regular dance classes at the RAD's headquarters.

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall said during the tour: "As the very proud Vice-Patron of the RAD, I would like to congratulate everybody who has made this wonderful new building possible. Having had a very short tour of it, seeing its complete magnificence, it's just doing so much for so many young people and old people like me. As a Silver

Swan myself, I was inspired by my first visit here to try it out and I have been doing it ever since. I'd also like to say a huge thanks to Luke who has done such a wonderful job over the years."

The Duchess concluded by saying, "I just want to say again how proud I am to be part of it all."

Dame Darcey Bussell, DBE, President of the RAD said: "Today marks the start of an important new chapter for the RAD. By way of our high quality classical ballet training, our teachers empower hundreds of thousands of young people annually worldwide and spread the joy of dance across the community. The RAD is a British cultural export to treasure and these new headquarters will be so inspiring for all. As President, I could not be more proud and thankful to everyone who has made this happen."

Luke Rittner CBE, RAD Chief Executive said: "I am delighted to welcome our Vice-Patron HRH The Duchess of Cornwall to help launch our new global headquarters. Destined to become a home for dance, this exciting new chapter in the Academy's 100+ year history symbolises our commitment to excellence in all aspects of dance education and teaching. Our new state-of-the-art flagship building will enable us to build on our mission to promote the joy of dance from right on our doorstep to across the globe, bringing opportunities for dancers of all ages and abilities"

The new purpose-built global headquarters for the **Royal Academy of Dance** form part of **Coda**, a mixed-use development on York Road by **Avanton**.

-ENDS-

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Images and film from the Royal Rota:

This event was covered by the Royal Rota. To obtain please contact your usual supplier of Royal images and broadcast footage.

Notes to Editors:

About the Royal Academy of Dance

Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) is one of the most influential dance education and training organisations in the world with a strong global membership in 85 countries.

Established in 1920 to improve standards and re-invigorate dance training, the RAD helps and encourages its teachers to perfect their teaching skills and pass on this knowledge to their students. There are currently over 1,000 students in full-time or part-time teacher training programmes with the RAD and each year the examination syllabus is taught to thousands of young people worldwide, with around a quarter of a million pupils per year going on to take RAD exams.

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