

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall discusses taking Silver Swans ballet classes as Royal Academy of Dance announces her new role as Vice-Patron

Her Royal Highness discussed the many benefits of dance in a video call with Dame Darcey Bussell and Angela Rippon



Image: Clarence House

- HRH The Duchess of Cornwall is to become the Vice-Patron of the Royal Academy of Dance, one of the world's leading dance education and training organisations. Her Majesty The Queen is the Patron of the Academy.
- Her Royal Highness announced her new role in a special video call with RAD's President Dame Darcey Bussell DBE and RAD's Silver Swans Ambassador Angela Rippon CBE, where she also discussed her experience taking RAD's Silver Swans classes.
- The Duchess also discussed the importance of keeping active during lockdown, and RAD's new online initiative RAD@Home.
- The video is available to view and download [here](#) (password RAD), and can be used online or for broadcast and social media, or watch on the [RAD's Youtube page](#).

The Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) today announced that HRH The Duchess of Cornwall is to become Vice-Patron of the Academy, effective immediately. She will join Her Majesty The Queen, who has been Patron of the RAD since 1953. The announcement was made in a special video call with Dame Darcey Bussell DBE, who is President of the RAD, and RAD's Silver Swans Ambassador and broadcaster Angela Rippon CBE.

The Duchess was joined by Dame Darcey and Angela Rippon to discuss RAD's initiative to keep older learners moving to the music at home through free, online Silver Swans ballet

tutorials. They discussed how beneficial dance is for maintaining mental and physical wellbeing, at any age, with The Duchess explaining how taking part in RAD's Silver Swans classes has positively impacted her personally. Dame Darcey also had the opportunity to discuss the Academy's mission to inspire the world to dance through excellence in teaching, even under lockdown conditions.

As part of HRH's commitment to championing active ageing, The Duchess previously visited RAD's Headquarters in 2018 where she met a group of Silver Swans, and observed a class in action with the initiative's ambassador Angela Rippon. She has since visited a group of 'Swans' in New Zealand in 2019, as well as participating in classes herself.

As part of the video conversation, HRH The Duchess of Cornwall said : *"I had certainly never done ballet before, and it doesn't matter whether you have done ballet or not, it's something that will make you feel better. It gives you a certain amount of confidence in yourself, it's just a bit of discipline."*

The Duchess went on to discuss her new role as Vice-Patron of the RAD: *" It's a real honour for me to be asked. My visit there was so memorable, first of all because of the Silver Swans, but actually meeting everybody. It had a wonderful feeling of comradeship and also, it's such a happy place. I think dancing makes you happy!"*

The RAD developed Silver Swans in response to a growing demand for ballet classes for older learners, drawing upon research into dance practice for older participants from RAD's Dance for Lifelong Wellbeing project. Silver Swans classes are ballet classes specifically designed for over 55s, delivered exclusively by Silver Swans Licensees who have trained to adapt ballet-teaching techniques for the needs and safety of older adults. Initially launched in the UK and USA in 2017, Silver Swans is now truly global, with classes also available in Australia, Hong Kong, Canada, New Zealand and Mexico. There are over 1,000 Silver Swans Licensees across the world offering classes in their local community.

Dame Darcey Bussell, President of the RAD added: *"We are utterly delighted that The Duchess of Cornwall is going to be the Vice-Patron of the Royal Academy of Dance. It was such an honour to have the opportunity to discuss the work of the RAD in more detail with Her Royal Highness. Ballet is a brilliant tool that you can use in every part of your life; it's perfect for improving stability, posture, your core. It was fantastic to hear how The Duchess has benefited from dancing, and I hope she continues to enjoy her Silver Swans ballet classes."*

The Royal Academy of Dance received its Royal Charter from King George V in 1936. The following year, the RAD was awarded its coat of arms by the College of Arms. The Academy is proud to have Her Majesty The Queen as its Patron, and to now extend its relationship with the Royal Family with HRH The Duchess of Cornwall's Vice-Patronage.

Luke Rittner CBE, Chief Executive of the Royal Academy of Dance said: *"We are delighted that Her Majesty The Queen, our Patron for nearly 70 years, has approved the appointment of HRH The Duchess of Cornwall as our Vice-Patron. We were thrilled to welcome The Duchess to our headquarters in 2018, and her support since, particularly for Silver Swans, has been invaluable. We look forward to many years ahead with Her Royal Highness as our Vice-Patron."*



The RAD is currently offering free online Silver Swans exercise classes every Wednesday at 1pm BST on their website and social media channels. This forms part of the RAD@Home initiative, designed to bring 100 years of dance teaching expertise to your living room through a range of online content for all ages. Find out more at www.royalacademyofdance.org/RADathome

To find your local Silver Swans Licensee via the RAD's interactive map, visit www.royalacademyofdance.org/SilverSwans

-ENDS-

Instagram - [@royalacademyofdance](https://www.instagram.com/royalacademyofdance)
Facebook - [@RoyalAcademyofDance](https://www.facebook.com/RoyalAcademyofDance)
Youtube - www.youtube.com/royalacademydance
Twitter - [@RADheadquarters](https://twitter.com/RADheadquarters)

Media contacts:

For further enquiries please contact:

Celia Moran, Press and Communications Manager, Royal Academy of Dance
(cmoran@rad.org.uk)

Alice White, Lead Press and Communications Officer, Royal Academy of Dance
(awhite@rad.org.uk)

Lucy Mathews, Senior Communications Officer, Clarence House (lucy.mathews@royal.uk)

About the Royal Academy of Dance

With approximately 13,000 members in 89 countries, the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) is one of the largest and most influential dance education and training organisations in the world. Established in 1920 to improve standards and re-invigorate dance training, the Academy 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 Academy 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.

-ENDS ALL-