

Canada's National Ballet School announces visionary leader Mavis Staines will retire as Artistic Director in June 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Toronto, ON, June 16, 2023 – Canada's National Ballet School's (NBS) Board of Directors announced today that, after 35 years of inspiring leadership, Mavis Staines will retire next year in June 2024 from her position as Artistic Director and CEO. Staines is only the second Artistic Director of the organization since its founding in 1959.

"Under Mavis's leadership, NBS has grown to become a pre-eminent dance training institution and a world-impacting arts organization. NBS graduates have become leading dancers, choreographers and arts executives and have leveraged their NBS experiences to make meaningful contributions globally in a broad range of professions beyond dance," said Ed Ogonek, Chair of NBS' Board of Directors. "Throughout a life-spanning career, Mavis has consistently chosen the enduring power of compassion and kindness as the hallmarks of her inspirational leadership style. She is an innovative and trailblazing leader who tackles challenges with systemic change in mind. In the coming year, we look forward to celebrating Mavis' immeasurable legacy."

Staines' deep-rooted beliefs in the power of dance and the strength of relationships have been key drivers at NBS of how ballet is practised and how the life-changing benefits of dance are made accessible to all. She is focused on addressing racism and advancing equity in ballet to make the world of dance open and engaging for all. Upon retiring from this role, Mavis will continue to be an advocate for the priorities that are essential to NBS' evolution, remaining involved in ways that matter to the school.

"I have spent most of my life in the world of ballet and dance. The opportunities I have been afforded to realize systemic changes in ballet education, and to share dance as broadly as possible have been profoundly rewarding on every level," said Staines. "With each year, my privileged role has led to the work becoming evermore meaningful. I continue to be inspired daily by the students, my colleagues, and the outcomes we have collectively achieved. Outcomes reflecting values that are championed by our cherished community of alumni, supporters and partners. Going forward, watching the School's ongoing evolution will be deeply exciting and, when suitable, I look forward to contributing in new ways to NBS' continued growth."

With this announcement, Ogonek will now lead the work on developing the recruitment and transition plan.

"Mavis and the senior management team have a well-defined and enduring vision, strategy, direction and priorities for NBS," said Ogonek. "These provide the foundation to ensure that Mavis' successor brings and builds on the continuity of vision and organizational culture."

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