

# q feature: **BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL**

Presented by Universal Theatrical Group, Working Title Films, Greene Light Stage, Michael Coppel Entertainments and Louise Withers Presents, the 10th Anniversary Australian tour just completed critically acclaimed Sydney and Adelaide seasons and now plays Melbourne's Regent Theatre until April 19 2020 - tickets on sale now at [www.billyelliottthemusical.com.au](http://www.billyelliottthemusical.com.au)

Featuring music by the legendary Elton John, book and lyrics by Lee Hall, choreography by Peter Darling and direction by Stephen Daldry, Billy Elliot the Musical has been seen by over 12 million people worldwide. Acclaimed by audiences and critics alike, it is the recipient of 85 awards internationally, including 10 Tony Awards, 5 Olivier Awards and 8 Helpmann Awards.

Sharing the celebrated lead role are Omar Abiad (12, from Brisbane), River Mardesic (11, from Melbourne), Wade Neilsen (13, from Newcastle) and Jamie Rogers (13, from Canberra). The boys were cast following extensive auditions, and after months of intensive rehearsals will alternate in the role of Billy in the Australian tour of Billy Elliot the Musical. All four boys are making their professional debut playing this most extraordinary and inspiring role.

The hugely successful West End musical premiered in Australia in 2007 as the first international production outside of the UK, prior to its Broadway premiere. With the first Australian tour concluding in Melbourne in 2009, this new 10th Anniversary Tour kicks off in 2019, ten years after the curtain came down in Australia. Billy enjoyed huge critical acclaim with Sydney and Melbourne audiences flocking to the theatre, however the physical design was so complex at the time, that touring beyond those two cities was not possible. Now with some clever adjustments, the Producers are delighted that this incredible stage production is able to tour to other capital cities. Now all of Australia can experience the magic and fall in love with Billy Elliot the Musical.

Based on the film of the same name, Billy Elliot the Musical is a funny, gritty, heart-warming and feel-good celebration following the journey of a young boy raised in a small British mining town. Set against the backdrop of the 1984/85 miners' strike, Billy's journey takes him out of the boxing ring and into a ballet class where he discovers a passion for dance that inspires his family, the whole community and changes his life forever.

Billy Elliot the Musical premiered in London in 2005 and since then has been seen across five continents, winning numerous awards and millions of fans along the way. After winning five Olivier Awards including Best Actor in a Musical for the three Billys and Best Musical, the first international production opened in Sydney in 2007 which garnered eight Helpmann Awards including Best Musical and Best Actor in a Musical for the four boys who shared the role of Billy in 2008. This was followed by an incredibly successful Broadway run which had the extraordinary honour of winning ten Tony Awards in 2009, including Best Musical, Best Direction of a Musical and Best Male Actor in a Musical for the three boys that shared the role of Billy. Productions have been staged all over the world including the West End, Australia, Broadway, North American tour, Chicago, Toronto, The Netherlands, UK & Ireland Tour, Hamburg, Tokyo and Seoul.

