

NY's Les Ballets Eloelle to bring *Men In Tutus* to SA in April

All-male comedy ballet company Les Ballets Eloelle will bring its *Men In Tutus* to South Africa in April. The troupe is set to perform at the Teatro Montecasino in Johannesburg from 12 to 14 April 2019 before heading to Cape Town to showcase its parody at the Artscape Opera House from 18 to 21 April 2019.

Led by founder, artistic director and lead dancer Victor Trevino, Les Ballets Eloelle showcases men dancing roles traditionally reserved for women. Despite its comedic nature, *Men In Tutus* never undermines the challenges of performing the complex choreography.



As Trevino explains: “Men do not traditionally train in *pointe* shoes. We tend to be heavier with our weight distributed differently to female dancers. Women generally begin training in dancing *onpointe* when they are young, about 11 years old, while men are not encouraged to do so as there’s very little opportunity to use that skill in classical dance.”

Trevino – who began his comedic career with Les Ballet Trockadero De Monte Carlo where he performed almost all the female leads in the repertoire as a principal dancer – adds that it is not only the individual proficiency of the dancers that is impressive.

“Learning to work as partners is another challenge,” he notes. “Dancers in any traditional ballet company will appreciate the difficulties here but when men partner men, there are several adjustments to make. Again, you must take into account our weight and physicality, but we also need to learn how to be supported or lifted as we move.”



Worldwide troupe

Men In Tutus features dancers from the US, Spain, Argentina, Mexico, the Philippines, Australia, Colombia, the Isle of Wight and Japan – underlining the global appeal of ballet, dance and comedy. This ties in with the objectives of Ballet Eloelle, which include cultivating new audiences for dance through comedy; performing

for audiences who may not have access to ballet; to preserve the integrity and standards of excellence in the ballets they perform so as to educate audiences about the art form.

Of course, whatever the cultural backgrounds and experience of these dancers – who have trained at revered institutions like the New York Ballet, the American Ballet Theatre, the Royal Ballet, the Paris Opera Ballet, the National Ballet of Canada, the Royal Swedish Ballet, Berlin State Opera Ballet, the English National Ballet, Joffrey Ballet and the Hong Kong Ballet – they're also on stage to entertain.

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