

Ayaka Fujii

Principal Dancer, Czech National Ballet

Ayaka Fujii joined the Czech National Ballet in 2017. In the 2019/20 season, she was appointed a soloist, in April 2021 promoted to first soloist. Teeming with immense energy, she has portrayed lead repertoire roles with extraordinary zest, diligence and accuracy. She is a tender Odette and a passionate Odile, a playful Clara and a devoted Olga. Ayaka has a great stage presence, dazzling audiences as a dancer of great certitude and astonishing expressive mastery.

Besides grand classical ballets, she has excelled in modern and neoclassical choreographies, manifesting an equal degree of professionalism. Always affording her performances an added value, Ayaka is capable of recasting choreographic textures into true artistic spectacles, igniting and conveying the beauty of the dance message.

Born in Osaka, Japan, Ayaka Fujii started to take ballet classes at the age of three. In 2008 and 2009, she was among the top 12 dancers at the Youth America Grand Prix in Osaka and New York, where she was granted a scholarship from the Kirov Academy in Washington, D.C. While still a student, she advanced to the final of the Jackson International Ballet Competition. In 2012, she won the bronze medal at the Boston International Ballet Competition and was also a finalist at the Prix de Lausanne.

After graduating from the Kirov Academy, she was invited to join the Hungarian National Ballet. In 2014, she became a member of the Stuttgarter Ballett. During her time in Germany, she danced in *Onegin*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Initials R.B.M.E.*, *Opus 1*, *The Lady and the Fool* and *The Taming of the Shrew* (John Cranko), *Second Detail* (William Forsythe), *Lucid Dream* (Marco Goetze), *Requiem* (Kenneth MacMillan), *Symphony No. 7 in A* (Uwe Scholz), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (John Neumeier), *The Sleeping Beauty* (Marcia Haydée), *The Firebird* (Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui), *Krabat* (Demis Volpi), *Neurons*, *Dark Glow* (Katarzyna Kozielska), *Six Dances* (Jiří Kylián), *Don Quixote*, *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker* (Marius Petipa), and other ballet productions.

With great energy and precision, she has portrayed the roles of Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake* (John Cranko), Olga in *Onegin* (John Cranko), the Fairy of Wisdom and the Ruby Fairy in *The Sleeping Beauty* (Marcia Haydée), Clara in *The Nutcracker – A Christmas Carol* (Youri Vámos), Nikiya in *La Bayadère* (Javier Torres), and she has also danced in productions *La Fille mal gardée* (Frederick Ashton), *The Snow Queen* (Michael Corder) and *The Little Mermaid* (Jan Kodet).

Moreover, Ayaka has performed in modern and neoclassical choreographies, including *Cacti* (Alexander Ekman), *Bella Figura*, *Gods and Dogs* and *Six Dances* (Jiří Kylián), *Rain* (Radu Poklitaru), *Tremble* (Petr Zuska), *Serenade* (George Balanchine), *Le Sacre du printemps* (Glen Tetley), *Kafka: The Trial* (Mauro Bigonzetti) and *Dos soles solos* (Alejandro Cerrudo). In the spring of

2020, within the *We Will Dance Through It* National Theatre Ballet Gala, she performed alongside Roger Cuadrado in *Mask Duet* (Douglas Lee).