

NEWS

He was inspired to fly by his love of Ukraine

BY JODIE BRUTON

A DANCER who grew up in worn-torn Ukraine is thrilled to grace the stage in Australia for the first time this winter.

Now US-based, Oleksandr Stoianov's family have twice been displaced by war in his homeland.

They fled to the Ukraine capital Kyiv in early 2014 after Russia invaded and annexed the Crimean Peninsula, and then from Kyiv in the latest Russian invasion in February 2022.

"We all hope this war ends and Ukraine wins and that we can rebuild our country," he said.

"Ukrainians have moved all over the world and thousands of people have died in this war.

"In one year and two months of war we have also lost three ballet dancers, one conductor and a musician from the orchestra."

Now living in Seattle, Stoianov continued to work as the principal dancer, artistic director and producer of the Grand Kyiv Ballet.

Since the outbreak of war in Ukraine in 2022, the company has remained outside of Ukraine at the request of families.



Grand Kyiv Ballet principal dancer, artistic director and producer Oleksandr Stoianov, who is renowned for his high jumps and energy, is thrilled about the company's first Australian tour, which will wind up in Albury on June 30.

They now dance all around the world including tours throughout Europe, the US, China and South America.

"We are excited to be touring Australia for the first time this year," Stoianov said.

"All artists love to visit Australia; it has such a special spirit and maybe that is because of the good weather!"

Renowned for his high jumps and energy, Stoianov trained in classical ballet almost by accident.

He had been competing in a ballroom dancing competition aged 11 when he was spotted by a ballet teacher.

"The teacher told my father I could be a talented ballet dancer," he said.

"But I didn't want to train in ballet because I loved ballroom dancing.

"My father told me if I went to Kyiv and trained in ballet I would get a really good bicycle, so I agreed to it!"

Stoianov said it took about

five years to really enjoy his new craft.

"By the age of 16, I loved ballet," Stoianov said.

"Now ballet is my life and my business; I can't imagine my life without ballet in it."

Grand Kyiv Ballet's upcoming 20-venue Australian tour will end at Albury Entertainment Centre on Friday, June 30.

The first act will feature the Ukrainian showpiece, *Forest Song*, which will be

performed in Australia for the first time.

This legendary ballet is a magical love story, full of mysticism alongside the conflict between the human world and nature.

Fittingly, it tells a tale of love and the fearless and brave Mavka, who longs for peace in her world, just as Ukraine longs for peace in her country today.

The Albury show starts at 7.30pm.

MOTORBIKE DEALERSHIP TARGETED

POLICE are investigating an incident involving the theft of \$45,000 worth of motorbikes from a dealership. Investigators believe a stolen blue 2002 Holden utility was driven to a Benalla motorbike dealership on Wednesday last week. Three motorbikes were loaded up and taken from the business. Police were alerted and are examining the circumstances of the theft. Those with information can call the Benalla Police Station on (03) 5760 0200 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

LATEST DAM, RAIN FIGURES

HUME Dam was at 91 per cent capacity on Wednesday, holding 2744GI, at a height of 190.67m. It was at 91 per cent on Tuesday. This time last year the dam was at 85.7 per cent. Dartmouth Dam was holding 3696GI at 96 per cent of capacity. There was no rain recorded in Albury-Wodonga for the 24 hours to 5pm Wednesday. The Bureau of Meteorology is forecasting a mostly sunny day with an expected top temperature of 25C. Weather: P23

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WEATHER

TODAY

 Mostly sunny
 Min: 12°C Max: 25°C

TOMORROW

 Showers
 Min: 15°C Max: 23°C

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The Border Mail is published six days a week and can be read online at www.bordermail.com.au. We welcome your inquiries on the numbers below.

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LOTTO

Wednesday Lotto: Draw 4281
 Winning numbers: 17, 7, 44, 45, 16, 3
 Supplementary numbers: 4, 32
 Division 1: Jackpotted
 Division 2: \$6,694.25
 Division 3: \$456.40
 Division 4: \$27.25
 Division 5: \$14.85
 Division 6: \$12.60

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80 FOR BRADY
 APRIL 27
 REGENT CINEMAS GOLD CLASS
 80 FOR BRADY (M) Today 3:15pm
 SUPER MARIO BROS. (PG) Today 4:15, 5:45, 6:45
 JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 4 (MA15) Today 8:00pm
 EVIL DEAD RISE (R18+) Today 9:15pm

30 FOR BRADY (M)
 Today 11:15, 1:30, 3:45, 6:00
POLITE SOCIETY (M)
 Today 1:45, 6:30, 8:45
SUPER MARIO BROS. (PG) Today 10:45, 1:15, 4:15, 7:00
EVIL DEAD RISE (R18)
 Today 3:45, 6:30, 8:45
AIR (M)
 Today 1:30, 4:00, 8:45
DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES (M)
 Today 10:45, 6:30

JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 4 (MA15)
 Today 11:30, 3:30
SCREAM VI (MA15)
 Today 9:15pm
JESUS REVOLUTION (M)
 Today 11:00, 6:00
MAFIA MAMMA (MA15)
 Today 1:30, 8:15
THE POPE'S EXORCIST (MA15)
 Today 4:15, 9:15
THE SECRET KINGDOM (PG)
 Today 11:00am

SUPER MARIO BROS. (PG)
 Today 11:45, 2:15, 5:00
JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 4 (MA15)
 Today 7:30pm

REGENT EXTRA!
 PONNIYIN SELVAN: PART TWO (MA15) TAMIL
 FRI 8:15PM SAT 8:15PM SUN 12:00PM

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