



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

## **BALLROOM DANCING GOVERNOR'S PERFORMANCE SERIES**

**Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019**

**Ms Anna Longmore**, Chair, DanceSport Victoria

**Mr Max Baker**, Executive Officer, DanceSport Victoria

**Dancers, choreographers**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this afternoon.

Tony and I are delighted to welcome you to Government House today as part of the 2019 Governor's Performance Series.

Over the past four years it has been one of our greatest pleasures to continue to expand the different groups and organisations to which this House is open.

As a part of that, we have hosted a range of cultural performances and activities.

There is much to show off.

In Victoria, we are blessed with such a rich variety of creative industries. We are also fortunate to host a variety of wonderful sporting events. Victorians are great participants and great audiences in both spheres. Melbourne is truly an arts and sports capital.

And that brings me to our choice for this afternoon's performance.

Ballroom dancing. A dancesport. It brings together the best aspects of the spectacle and artistry of dance, with the athleticism and exertion of sport.

And, look where we are. Not every home can host ballroom dancing in an actual Ballroom! And certainly there are few as grand as this one.

This Ballroom was completed nearly 160 years ago.

The first official function held here - to mark the opening of the House in 1876 - was a Queen's Birthday Ball for 1700 people.

We do not know precisely when the last formal Ball was held in this room, but we do know that there were very many across the years, often hosting several thousand people at a time.

With some of the excesses of the Gold Rush, and beyond, there are many accounts of lavish entertaining here, of glamorous ballgowns and sparkling jewellery. Even of women arriving with real gold dust sprinkled through their striking hairdos!

Times have changed. Such events are no longer.

Today, this Ballroom continues to serve the people of Victoria, but with events of another sort. Australian Honours Investiture ceremonies, Landcare or Export Awards, a Red Cross Blood Bank, Circus Oz performing beneath the chandeliers with youngsters newly arrived in Australia or hundreds doing yoga early on the UN's International Yoga Day.

This afternoon though, this beautiful pine floor, original to the House, will again host dance that is fitting for the setting.

We are fortunate to have the ballroom dancers from DanceSport Victoria, juniors through to Masters 3, to perform for us. They showcase speed, balance and strength, but also teamwork and trust.

Thank you to Jason Beaman, Brent Olifent and Anna Longmore, who have choreographed this display of Standard (Waltz, Quickstep, Tango, Foxtrot, Viennese waltz), New Vogue (originated in Australia in 1930 all New Vogue dances are sequences, meaning everyone dances the same steps at the same time) and Latin American dance.

Thank you to DanceSport Victoria, in particular Executive Officer, Max Baker, without whom this event would not be possible, Thank you too to the wonderfully talented performers. And, of course, to all of you for joining us today.

We hope that you enjoy your visit to Government House and this performance today.

But now, it is my pleasure to introduce Brent Olifent, one of the today's choreographers and our DanceSport MC for this afternoon.