

Queensland **Ballet**

# Meet Ivan Gil-Ortega: Queensland Ballet's Artistic Director

Education Resource - Primary Years



*Queensland Ballet acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we train and perform. Long before we arrived on this land, it played host to the dance expression of our First Nations Peoples. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the valuable contribution they have made and continue to make to the cultural landscape of this Country.*

## About

Queensland Ballet is proud to welcome our seventh Artistic Director, Ivan Gil-Ortega. His appointment in February 2025 marks a significant moment for the Company, as it enters a new era of artistic innovation and growth. Gil-Ortega's vision for Queensland Ballet is rooted in artistic excellence, collaboration, and innovation.

*"I am committed to fostering a collaborative and inclusive atmosphere that honours the legacy of ballet while pushing creative boundaries. Queensland Ballet has always dared to dream big, and I am excited to bring my energy and passion to this inspiring company."*

*Cover: Queensland Ballet Artistic Director Ivan Gil-Ortega.*

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### Vocabulary List

Know the meaning of these words before you start! Can you find the below words highlighted blue in this workbook?

Word	Meaning
Prestigious	Something or someone that is really special and respected because it very important.
Collaborated	To work together with someone to create or make something.
Renowned	To be famous or well-known.
Nurture	To help care for something and help it grow and develop.
Significant	Something that is very important or has a special meaning.

# Meet Ivan Gil-Ortega: Queensland Ballet's New Artistic Director

Ivan Gil-Ortega has spent over 25 years in the ballet world as a dancer, teacher, and leader. Throughout his career, he has performed on some of the world's most prestigious stages and collaborated with renowned ballet companies across the globe.

## A Life in Dance

Ivan was born in Spain and trained as a ballet dancer. He became a Principal Dancer, which means he performed some of the most important roles in ballet. He danced with Stuttgart Ballet in Germany, the Dutch National Ballet in the Netherlands, and many other famous companies throughout Europe, Asia, and Australia.

He is known for his graceful dancing, strong technique, and powerful performances.

Numerous choreographers have created special roles specifically for him, and he has been invited to perform in major productions, including *Swan Lake*, *Romeo & Juliet*, and *The Nutcracker*.



*Image: Ivan Gil-Ortega as Armand Duval's Father, Lady of the Camellias 2024.*

## Beyond the Stage

After many years of performing, Ivan transitioned into coaching, directing, and staging ballet productions, guiding other dancers in their craft. He has collaborated closely with renowned choreographers such as Carlos Acosta and Derek Deane to bring ballets to life on stage.

Ivan also contributed to Queensland Ballet's productions of *Strictly Gershwin* in 2016 and 2023. From 2020 to 2021, Ivan worked as Rehearsal Director with the Bolshoi Ballet in Russia, where he helped prepare dancers for a brand-new ballet. He has also played a key role in bringing *Carmen* to the Royal Ballet in London.

## A Leader in Ballet

In addition to dancing and teaching, Ivan has served as a judge for prestigious ballet competitions, including Le Prix de Lausanne in Switzerland and the Youth America Grand Prix., both of which discover and nurture young ballet talent. In 2009, he won a special dance award for his significant contributions to the ballet world.



## A Global Talent

Ivan has worked in numerous countries and speaks five languages: Spanish, English, German, Italian, and Portuguese! His ability to communicate with dancers from different places has helped him build a successful international career in ballet.

As the seventh Artistic Director of Queensland Ballet, Ivan now brings his wealth of experience to the Company. He is committed to helping dancers grow, creating new productions, and continuing to make Queensland Ballet a world-class company.


For more information about Ivan Gil-Ortega, visit:

<https://www.queenslandballet.com.au/company/team/staff/ivan-gil-ortega>


# Learning Activities

## Who is Ivan Gil-Ortega?

Queensland Ballet is excited to welcome its new Artistic Director, Ivan Gil-Ortega. With a dynamic career as a dancer, teacher, choreographer, and leader in the ballet world, Ivan brings a wealth of experience to the role. This worksheet will introduce you to his journey, helping you learn more about his background and what he might bring to Queensland Ballet.

 Read the article 'Meet Ivan Gil-Ortega': Use the information in the article to help you answer the questions and fill in the blanks!

### 01 **Ivan Today: Queensland Ballet's New Leader**

 *Let's find out about Ivan's new job.*

#### 1. **What is Ivan's new role at Queensland Ballet?**

 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. **What do you think an Artistic Director does?**

 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_


\_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. **If you were in charge of Queensland Ballet, what would you change or add?**

 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_


\_\_\_\_\_

## 02 Ivan's Dance Journey

 Fill in the missing words to complete Ivan's story!


- ◆ Ivan started his dance journey in \_\_\_\_\_ (country).
- ◆ He trained as a dancer and later performed with companies like \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ After dancing, he became a \_\_\_\_\_, helping other dancers improve their skills.
- ◆ Before coming to Queensland Ballet, he worked as a \_\_\_\_\_, helping lead ballet companies!

## 03 Dancing Around the World

 Ivan has danced and worked in many different places! Draw a **line** to match the role with the place where he did it.

Ivan's Role	Place (Country)
Dancer	Russia
Rehearsal Director	Switzerland
Competition Judge	Germany


#### 04 Creative Task: Draw Ivan's Dance Journey

 Use a piece of paper or the space below to draw a picture of Ivan's dance journey.

- You can draw him as a dancer, teacher, or Artistic Director!
- Show some of the places he has worked in on a map!
- Add a speech bubble with something he might say about ballet!



## EXTENSION TASKS

 Research Tip: Look for more about Ivan's background in professional bios or interviews.


## 05 Who Inspired Ivan?

 *Every dancer has a teacher or mentor who helps them learn and grow!*

1. Who was one of Ivan's biggest dance teachers? (Find their name!)

 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

2. How do you think teachers help dancers improve?


 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 06 Imagine the Future

 *Now that you know about Ivan's journey, think about the future!*

1. What do you think Ivan will bring to Queensland Ballet?

 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. If you could be a dancer, teacher, or Artistic Director, which one would you choose and why?

 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

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Great job! Now you know more about Queensland Ballet's new Artistic Director, Ivan Gil-Ortega! We hope you can meet him at the ballet one day.