

**UK/DANCE SPACE**

**BIRMINGHAM  
BUILDS A NEW  
FACILITY FOR THE  
SWRB**

Thanks to a £4 million (US \$7 million) grant from the Birmingham City Council and the Arts Council of Great Britain, Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet will become the first resident company housed at the Birmingham Hippodrome. Central to the company's move from its current home at the Royal Opera House in London is the construction of a £3 million (US \$5.25 million) rehearsal/administrative complex at the Hippodrome. Speaking at a press conference, general director Jeremy Isaacs said, "The facilities to be built and the new money to be made available add up to an offer we cannot refuse." The move to Birmingham will enable the company to increase its ap-

pearances in Birmingham to five weeks a season from the current two, and to continue its current 18 week international touring schedule.

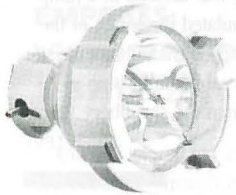
The new 2,160 square meter building will be built on the site of the current Hippodrome administrative offices, which will move to another building nearby, and an adjacent warehouse. According to John Douglas of the architecture firm of Seymour Harris Partnership, "the new space will house 900 square meters of rehearsal space. It will accommodate administrative offices, room for wardrobe storage, a physical therapy room and a gymnasium, as well as plenty of room for storage of technical equipment." Harris Partnership worked closely with members of SWRB on the building's specifications. "Construction of the space will begin in June of 89 and we are planning on Sadler's Well Royal Ballet moving into their new home in August of



1990," states Douglas. Working with Seymour Harris Partnership is structural consultant Cameron Taylor.

The construction of a facility for SWRB is part of an ongoing face-lift for the Birmingham Hippodrome. Built in 1899, the 1,950 seat theatre was closed for sixteen months in May 1980 for a major rebuilding and refurbishing. More than £5 million (US \$8.8 million) was in-

vested in the rejuvenation. Most significantly, in 1984 the stage and fly-tower was doubled in size to 18 meters deep. At the same time, the development of a suite of three spacious dance studios provided on-site rehearsal facilities for visiting dance companies, like the Kirov, opera companies, such as the Welsh National, and West End musicals, such as *Singin' in the Rain*.



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