

## Francesco Ventriglia

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**Francesco Ventriglia** (born 9 June 1978) is an Italian ballet dancer, choreographer and artistic director. He was the Artistic Director of the [Royal New Zealand Ballet](#) from November 2014 until June 2017, and from 29 January 2018, the Adjunto a la Dirección Artística del Ballet Nacional Sodre, Uruguay (Adjunct Artistic Director of the Ballet Nacional Sodre). Ventriglia is also a choreographer of classical and contemporary Ballet, having works performed internationally by companies such as the [Royal New Zealand Ballet](#), [La Scala Ballet](#), [Bolshoi Theatre](#), the [Mariinsky Ballet](#).



### Early life[[edit](#)]

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Ventriglia was born in [Battipaglia](#), Campania Italy on 9 June 1978. He began his Ballet studies at the age of 7. Having gained entry to the [La Scala](#) Ballet School, he moved to Milano to undertake full time studies.

### Career[[edit](#)]

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Ventriglia joined the ballet company of La Scala in 1997, making his debut as a soloist in [William Forsythe's](#) *In The Middle, Somewhat Elevated* at La Scala in 1998, and in 1999 was cast as the Bronze Idol by [Natalia Makarov](#) in her production of *La Bayadère*.

He danced numerous soloist roles with the company, including that of the Toreador in [Roland Petit's](#) *Carmen* and Quasimodo in *Notre Dame de Paris* and also works by [Balanchine](#), [Ailey](#), [Neumeier](#), [Cranko](#), [Preljocaj](#), [Godani](#), [Kylián](#) and [Béjart](#). Internationally, his performances with La Scala included Hilarion at the [Metropolitan Opera](#) in New York and at [Covent Garden](#), opposite [Sylvie Guillem](#) in her creation of *Giselle*.<sup>[1]</sup>

Ventriglia began his chorographic career whilst a dancer at La Scala, having created a diverse repertoire for the Ballet School of La Scala, his own company, Heliopolis and other freelance works. For [Roberto Bolle](#), he created *The Fight* (Curia of the Roman Senate in the Imperial Forum); *New Year's Concert* (La Fenice, Venice, later televised); and *The Myth of the Phoenix* (Teatro Smeraldo, Milan).

The Heliopolis Company made its debut at the [Venice Biennale](#) in 2007, with a new piece "The Sea in Chains", an investigation of eroticism and physical disability with the original music of [Emiliano Palmieri](#), which was nominated for the [Golden Lion](#). The following year he created a new work "Normale", which explored the concept of love and mental health: with these two titles Ventriglia curated a diptych as an investigation of differences present in modern society. Also in 2007, he created *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Jago, the honest poetry of deception*, for the [Arena di Verona](#), with étoile of the [Opéra National de Paris](#), [Eleonora Abbagnato](#) and [Alessandro Riga](#). His pas de deux, *Black* has been performed at the [Bolshoi Theatre](#) by [Svetlana Zakharova](#) and [Andrei Merkuriev](#) (2008) and in New York by [Irina Dvorenko](#) and [Maxim Beloserkovsky](#). In 2008 for the [Mariinsky Theatre](#) in St Petersburg he created *Contradictions* for [Ulyana Lopatkina](#). In 2009 he created a new work specifically for [Svetlana Zakharova](#) titled *Super Game* which is a multimedia collaboration for the prima ballerina and six principal dancers of the [Bolshoi Ballet](#). Additionally, his works included *Immemoria*, a work for 40 dancers to music by [Shostakovich](#), premiering at La Scala in May 2010, and *Sed lux permanent – Transit umbra*, to music by [Schoenberg](#), for the [Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève](#).

Between 2007 and 2012, Ventriglia and [Emiliano Palmieri](#) collaborated on four creations: The Sea in Chains, Normale, Pinocchio and Willy Wonka and Chocolate Factory.

In October 2010 Ventriglia was appointed director of [MaggioDanza](#) [it] in Florence, Italy.

In 2014, for Anna Antonickeva and Andrey Merkuriev (Principals of the [Bolshoi Theatre](#)) he created the evening "*Fortuna vis Lucem: Bolero and Carmina Burana*", performed with the New Ballet Theatre of Moscow, in tour across Russia and Cannes.<sup>[2]</sup>

Ventriglia was appointed as the [Royal New Zealand Ballet](#)'s Artistic Director in November 2014.<sup>[3][4][5][6]</sup>

In 2015 Ventriglia led the Royal New Zealand Ballet on an international tour (The UK and Italy).<sup>[7]</sup> Additionally, he increased the repertoire of the Company, introducing never before performed choreographers to New Zealand audiences such as [Andonis Foniadakis](#), [Alexander Ekman](#) and [Roland Petit](#)<sup>[8]</sup>

In 2016 he created a newly staged, longer version of his work "Wizard of Oz", touring across New Zealand. Originally devised for MaggioDanza, it was never performed after the theatre was closed on opening night due to building structural issues. The restaged production, designed by [Gianluca Falaschi](#), toured New Zealand and was seen by over 38,000 people in its first season. Well received by audiences and critics alike, the production is regarded as one of the most successful productions created for the Royal New Zealand Ballet.<sup>[9]</sup>

Regularly interviewed internationally in both print and radio media as an advocate for ballet and Italian Dance,<sup>[10][11][12][13][14]</sup> Francesco Ventriglia was invited to be a judge of [The Genée International Ballet Competition](#) 2016,<sup>[15]</sup> alongside other judges [David McAllister](#) of the Australian Ballet and [Kevin O'Hare](#) of the Royal Ballet.

Ventriglia's tenure as Artistic Director of the Royal New Zealand Ballet concluded in June 2017, however he continued his artistic relationship with the company, creating a new full length Ballet, Romeo and Juliet to be performed nationally. Designed by triple Academy Award winner [James Acheson](#), the production was both a critical and box office success. Reviewed as his "Love letter to New Zealand", the production was hailed as a "splendid and triumphant" production. <sup>[16] [17]</sup>

In 2018 Francesco Ventriglia was appointed Adjunto a la dirección artística del Ballet Nacional Sodre, Uruguay, alongside Artistic Director [Igor Yebra](#).