

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## HOUSTON BALLET TO PERFORM AT PRESTIGIOUS JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL 2018

**PHOTOS:** <https://bit.ly/2O75uGR>

**VIDEO:** <https://bit.ly/2LSHN8v>

**HOUSTON, TEXAS [August 6, 2018]** — Houston Ballet is proud to perform by invitation at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival 2018—the oldest internationally acclaimed dance festival in the United States—for the first time in nearly 40 years. Referred to as the “hub and mecca of dancing” by *TIME Magazine*, Jacob's Pillow showcases a prestigious lineup of elite dance companies from across the globe and Houston Ballet is thrilled to return to the hallowed stages with performances August 15-18.

Celebrating a wide range of classic and contemporary ballet, Houston Ballet will perform a program featuring Stanton Welch AM's *Clear*, an abstract work set to Bach's score, *In Dreams*, a work by former Choreographic Associate Trey McIntyre, movements from the elegantly emoted *Sons de L'ame*, and the world premiere of *Just* by Welch with a score by David Lang.

Welch's premiere of *Just* was created specifically for the much-anticipated Jacob's Pillow appearance and illustrates the emotional story of a couple struggling to stay in love. The first of three movements depicts a disintegrating romance as the dancers perform to a striking piano melody, followed by a percussive second movement with strong musicality emoting the anger and conflict consuming the couple, and completed by the final movement's emotional reflection upon what the couple first loved about each other back when their relationship was first blossoming. “It's a really interesting ballet,” says Welch, who also uses costuming to convey the couple's emotional journey. “The first movement, Jessica [Collado] is in normal heels and the guys are in regular work shoes. Then the second movement is on pointe, and the final movement is all barefoot, as though everything has been stripped away.”

Houston Ballet has participated in the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival only once before. In 1979, a group of ten dancers under the name of “Soloists of Houston Ballet” performed two different programs, including the world premieres of Ben Stevenson's works *Tchaikovsky Variations* and *Britten pas de deux*, and other works by Rudi van Dantzig and John Cranko. More recently in 2011, Welch premiered a new work at the festival, performed by dancers of The School at Jacob's Pillow Ballet Program rather than Houston Ballet company members. Welch's piece was set to music from Mozart's violin concertos and was created especially for the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival 2011 Season Opening Gala. The following year, the Joffrey Ballet presented the World Premiere of Welch's *Son of Chamber Symphony* at the Jacob's Pillow Festival in 2012, a one-act contemporary ballet set to music by John Adams.

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival 2018 runs from June 20-August 26, 2018 and includes performances, talks, professional dance training at The School at Jacob's Pillow, and community programs for audience engagement and education. For more information, please visit [jacobspillow.org](http://jacobspillow.org).

### ABOUT HOUSTON BALLET

Houston Ballet has evolved into a company of 60 dancers with a budget of \$33 million, making it the country's fifth largest ballet company. With a state-of-the-art performance space built especially for the company—also the largest professional dance facility in America—Houston Ballet's \$46.6 million Center for Dance opened in April 2011, with an endowment of just over \$74.1 million (as of July 2017).

Australian choreographer Stanton Welch AM has served as Artistic Director of Houston Ballet since 2003, raising the level of the company's classical technique and commissioning works from dance makers such as Christopher Bruce, Alexander Ekman, William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Trey McIntyre, Julia Adam, Edwaard Liang, and George Balanchine. Executive Director James Nelson serves as the administrative leader of the company, a position he assumed in February 2012 after serving as the company's General Manager for more than a decade.

Houston Ballet has toured extensively both nationally and internationally. Over the past fifteen years, the company has appeared in renowned theaters in London, Paris, Moscow, Spain, Montréal, Ottawa, Melbourne, New York City, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and in cities large and small across the United States.

Houston Ballet's Education and Community Engagement Program reaches more than 60,000 individuals in the Houston area annually. Houston Ballet Academy teaches more than one thousand students every year, and approximately 50 percent of the current company was trained by the Academy.

For more information on Houston Ballet, visit [www.houstonballet.org](http://www.houstonballet.org).

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