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**HOUSTON BALLET CONTINUES 2022-2023 SEASON WITH “ROMEO & JULIET” AND  
“SUMMER & SMOKE”**

**PHOTOS & VIDEOS:** <https://bit.ly/3WoMJRT>

**HOUSTON, TEXAS [JANUARY 23, 2023]** — Continuing its blockbuster 2022-2023 season, Houston Ballet returns on February 23, 2023 with Stanton Welch’s *Romeo & Juliet*, a lavish production of the Shakespearean star-crossed lovers and their tragic fate. This is only the second time Welch’s ornate production has come to the Wortham stage, returning after its lauded premiere in 2015 and a trip around the world to The Australian Ballet. Following *Romeo & Juliet*, Houston Ballet presents *Summer & Smoke* from March 9-19. The triple-bill program features one of Stanton Welch’s hallmark ballets, *Clear*, as well as the return of George Balanchine’s masterpiece *Concerto Barocco*. Houston audiences will also experience the world premiere of Cathy Marston’s *Summer and Smoke*, a narrative ballet based on the eponymous play by Tennessee Williams. Set in the early 1900s in Mississippi, the story revolves around a minister’s daughter and a doctor who search to find the balance between the contradictory pulls of faith and science that keep them apart. *Summer and Smoke* is a co-production with American Ballet Theatre set to a commissioned score by Michael Daugherty, premiering first with Houston Ballet before making its debut in New York next season.

"We are excited to bring *Romeo and Juliet*, not seen in Houston since its original staging in 2015," says Stanton Welch, Artistic Director of Houston Ballet. "With the iconic score of Prokofiev, Roberta Guidi di Bagno's extraordinary designs, and Houston Ballet's world class dancers and actors, Shakespeare's most loved classic is brought to life. Next, we present a feast of dance with the triple bill *Summer & Smoke*; introducing a new work by Cathy Marston based on the famous play by Tennessee Williams. It is a wonderful addition to our storytelling repertoire, plus the return of favorites, *Clear* and Balanchine's *Concerto Barocco*, the latter of which has not been performed here in over 20 years."

Tickets are available at 713.227.2787 (ARTS) and online at [houstonballet.org](http://houstonballet.org).

***Romeo and Juliet* (2015)**

Choreographer: Stanton Welch AM | Music: Sergey Prokofiev

February 23 - March 5, 2023

Welch’s *Romeo and Juliet* weaves the poignant tale of the ill-fated love exquisitely with lavish sets and costumes by acclaimed Italian designer Roberta Guidi di Bagno. Premiering at Houston Ballet in 2015, Welch’s

brilliantly imagined interpretation of the world's most famous love story pays tribute to Italian Renaissance with classic themes and fresh choreography danced to Prokofiev's romantic score. Hailed by Arts and Culture Texas Magazine as "simply breathtaking – as in, it literally inspired wonderfully stunned intakes of breath among the audience," Welch's take on this Shakespearean classic gives the story new life. [Houston Ballet's performances of *Romeo and Juliet* are generously underwritten by Ted and Melza Barr and sponsored by The Wortham Foundation, Inc., Rand Group, and Sidley Austin LLP]

### **Summer & Smoke**

*Clear* (2001) | Choreographer: Stanton Welch AM | Music: Johann Sebastian Bach  
*Concerto Barocco* (1977) | Choreographer: George Balanchine | Music: Johann Sebastian Bach  
*Summer and Smoke* (World Premiere) | Choreographer: Cathy Marston | Music: Michael Daughtery  
March 9 - 19, 2023

Showcasing the depth of male talent in the Company, *Clear* strips down using flesh-toned costumes to focus on the essence of dance and the male body. Featuring seven men and one woman, this balletic production emphasizes the sheer magnitude of emotion in choreography and reveals the power of transparency in movement. George Balanchine's neoclassical ballet, *Concerto Barocco*, partners with the music of Johann Sebastian Bach's *Concerto in D Minor for Two Violins* to spotlight the relationship between dance and music. Houston audiences will also experience the world premiere of Cathy Marston's *Summer and Smoke*, a co-production with American Ballet Theatre. Based on the Tennessee Williams play of the same name, Houston audiences will experience Marston's unique literary storytelling for the first time. [Houston Ballet's performances of Summer & Smoke are funded in part by The City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance and sponsored by Chevron]

### **ABOUT HOUSTON BALLET**

With more than 50 years of rich history, Houston Ballet returns to its home stage at the Wortham Theater Center for its 2021-2022 season with a company of 59 dancers. With a budget of \$33.9 million and an endowment of \$79.2 million (as of June 2019), it is America's fifth largest ballet company. Its \$46.6 million state-of-the-art performance space, Houston Ballet Center for Dance, opened in April 2011. Houston Ballet's reach is global, touring in renowned theaters in Dubai, London, Paris, Moscow, Spain, Montréal, Ottawa, Melbourne, New York City, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and more.

Houston Ballet attracts prestigious leaders in dance. 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 legends such as Julia Adam, George Balanchine, Aszure Barton, Christopher Bruce, Alexander Ekman, William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Edwaard Liang, Trey McIntyre and Justin Peck. Executive Director James Nelson serves as the administrative leader of the organization, a position he assumed in February 2012 after serving as the Company's General Manager for more than a decade.

Beyond its stage presence, Houston Ballet maintains a strong foothold in continuing to foster a love for dance in future generations. Its Education and Community Engagement program reaches more than 70,000 individuals in the Houston area annually. Houston Ballet Academy trains more than 1,000 students every year, producing more than 64 percent of the elite athletes that comprise Houston Ballet's current Company.

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

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