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HOUSTON BALLET ANNOUNCES AN EXCITING PROMOTION DURING ITS RETURN TO THE WORTHAM

PHOTOS & VIDEO: <https://bit.ly/2RdwBVS>

HOUSTON, TEXAS [December 27, 2018] — Houston Ballet announces that Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM has promoted Soo Youn Cho to the rank of Principal. Formally a First Soloist, Cho was promoted on the evening of December 23, 2018 after starring in Stanton Welch AM's *The Nutcracker* as the Sugar Plum Fairy. This well-deserved promotion is another welcomed celebration and symbol of triumph for the organization during its return to its home stage.

"The night of my promotion was filled with unforgettable moments, and it still feels like a dream to me," said Cho. "I look forward to continuing to develop and grow as a dancer and a person, and I thank everyone in my life that helped me get to where I am today. This would not have been possible without their love and support."

Cho has been with Houston Ballet for seven years and has an extensive repertoire. She joined Houston Ballet as a Demi Soloist in 2012 and was promoted to First Soloist in 2014. During her time at Houston Ballet, Cho has danced lead roles in productions such as Stanton Welch AM's *Giselle*, *La Bayadère* and *Madame Butterfly*, and Ben Stevenson's *Don Quixote*.

Cho has shared her love of dance across the globe and grown her passion into the career she has today. Born in Incheon, Korea, she originally trained at the Sunhwa Arts School. She then attended the Canada National Ballet School on a full scholarship from the 2002 Prix de Lausanne and the John-Cranko Ballet School in Stuttgart, Germany. Her numerous awards include: a gold medal at the 2001 Korea Ballet Competition, being a winner at the 2002 Prix de Lausanne, a bronze medal at the 2002 Varna Competition in Bulgaria, and a gold medal at the 2005 Tanzolymp in Berlin. She danced professionally with Leipziger Ballet in Germany before joining Tulsa Ballet in 2007, where she was promoted to Principal in 2010.

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.

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