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**HOUSTON BALLET PRESENTS PRETTY THINGS, ORIGINALS
AND LA SYLPHIDE TO CLOSE OUT 2022 SEASON**

HOUSTON, TEXAS [May 3, 2022] — Houston Ballet presents an impressive and diverse lineup of repertory this spring to close out its 2021–22 Season. Programming includes *Pretty Things* from May 20 to 29; *Originals* from June 2 to 12; and a reprise of August Bournonville’s *La Sylphide*—last performed in Houston 14 seasons ago—for the 2021–22 season finale, from June 16 to 26. Highlights from the final performances include Stanton Welch AM’s *Orange*, performed with Dance Theatre of Harlem (*Originals*); the world premiere of Stanton Welch’s *Sparrow*, set to music from Simon & Garfunkel (*La Sylphide*); and two world premieres from Principal Dancers Melody Mennite and Connor Walsh, *Florecente* and *A Joyous Trilogy (in flight)* (*Originals*).

Pretty Things

Choreography: Jorma Elo | Christopher Bruce | Trey McIntyre

Music: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | Yo-Yo Ma and Bobby McFerrin | David Bowie

May 20–29, 2022

WHO: Houston Ballet

WHAT: *Pretty Things*

WHERE: Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas Ave, Houston, TX 77002

WHEN: May 20–29, 2022

TICKETS: On sale now at www.houstonballet.org or 713.227.ARTS (2787)

CALENDAR:

May

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					20	21
					7:30 PM	7:30 PM
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
2:00 PM					7:30 PM	7:30 PM
29						
2:00 PM						

PHOTOS: [Dropbox](#)

VIDEOS: [Dropbox](#)

Originally set to open in March 2020, audiences will finally get to see *Pretty Things* come to the stage after a 2-year wait. The mixed repertoire, triple-bill program includes three works created in Houston on Houston Ballet dancers: Christopher Bruce’s *Hush*, Jorma Elo’s *ONE|end|ONE* and the world premiere of Trey McIntyre’s *Pretty Things*. McIntyre has a deep rooted history with Houston Ballet, starting as a student at the Houston Ballet Academy before joining the professional company, where he was named Choreographic Apprentice in 1989 – a position created specifically for him. This will be his seventh world premiere commission for Houston Ballet. In his new work, *Pretty Things*, McIntyre explores a subject

that has weighed on him throughout his career as a dancer: narcissism within men in ballet. He examines the relationship between male performers, especially their “peacocking” behaviors.

“I had been considering the quality of narcissism that is in many ways a part of being a performer,” says McIntyre. “As a spiritual person, I had some conflict in reconciling its necessity for the profession. So, I wanted to make a work that explored and opened up the act of being seen, rather than judging it.”

McIntyre selected music from the iconic David Bowie for exploring this theme. The set is comprised of eight songs by Bowie: *The Man Who Sold the World*, *Life on Mars*, *Oh! You Pretty Things*, *Little Wonder*, *Ashes to Ashes*, *Ziggy Stardust*, *Young Americans* and *Changes*. While the ballet is not about Bowie or his life, there are parallels between the ballet’s message and the singer’s music.

“David Bowie’s music is grand; it’s operatic,” says McIntyre. “Huge in scale. He sings like a peacock walks. There’s great depth and humanity as well. In many ways his voice embodies the conflict I’m looking to work out in this dance.”

Each cast calls for 11 men, who will embody the Bowie vibe thanks to costumes and sets by Thomas Mika.

“This is definitely a once in a lifetime experience to arrive at the premiere of a work 2 years after its creation,” McIntyre concluded. “I think it will be a mixture of joy and melancholy, seeing it onstage, with the perspective of what has unfolded during this unique time.”

Originals

Choreography: Melody Mennite | Stanton Welch AM | Connor Walsh

Music: Benjamin Britten | Vivaldi | Quinn Mason | Rene Aubry | Ezio Bosso | Max Richter

June 2–12, 2022

WHO: Houston Ballet

WHAT: Originals

WHERE: Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas Ave, Houston, TX 77002

WHEN: June 2–12, 2022

TICKETS: On sale now at www.houstonballet.org or 713.227.ARTS (2787)

CALENDAR:

June

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				2 7:30 PM	3	4 7:30 PM
5 2:00 PM	6	7	8	9	10 7:30 PM	11 7:30 PM
12 2:00 PM						

PHOTOS: [Dropbox](#)

VIDEOS: [Dropbox](#)

Known for cultivating dancer-choreographers, Houston Ballet fosters artists both on and offstage for its Originals program. The [previously announced](#) premiere of the one-act ballet by **Principal Dancer Melody Mennite**, *Florecente*, is set to music by Rene Aubry, Ezio Bosso and Max Richter. The piece will feature work from a women-led design team, with costume and scenic design by Mexican-born, Texas-based designer Olga Saldivar and lighting design by Grey Starbird. The scenic design will be comprised of hand-painted artwork, which will be converted into an animated projections, making it the largest animation project that Houston Ballet has taken on to date. Fellow **Principal Dancer Connor Walsh** will also debut the world premiere of *A Joyous Trilogy (in flight)*, with music composed and conducted by Dallas native **Quinn Mason**. Mason will be the first Black conductor to lead the Houston Ballet Orchestra, as well as the youngest at age 26.

Originals also includes two ballets by Stanton Welch: the return of *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, created by Houston Ballet in 2014, and the first-ever joint performance between Houston Ballet and the globally acclaimed [Dance Theatre of Harlem](#) in Welch's *Orange*.

"Stanton Welch's wonderfully musical *Orange* came into the Dance Theatre of Harlem repertoire as part of a collaboration with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre a few years ago. When Stanton invited DTH to share the stage with Houston Ballet in *Orange*, I couldn't have been more thrilled," said Dance Theatre of Harlem Artistic Director Virginia Johnson. "It is a brilliant work that is particularly suited to mixing and mingling two companies. All of us at DTH are looking forward to the collaboration. "

Premiered in 2001 at the Joyce Theater in New York City, *Orange* is part of Welch's color series of ballets inspired by the colors of the chakra, with orange relating to maturity. Welch has choreographed three other "color" ballets set to works by Antonio Vivaldi: *Blue*, *Indigo* and *Green*. While Houston Ballet has performed *Orange* on tour in New Orleans (2006) and performed excerpts in Houston, this will be the first time that the Company has performed this work in its entirety in front of Houston audiences.

Opening night attendees can enjoy a pre-show Dance Talk with Dance Theatre of Harlem Artistic Director Virginia Johnson and Houston Ballet great Lauren Anderson at 6:30 p.m. at the Wortham Theater. The event is open to all ticket holders for the June 2 evening performance.

La Sylphide

Choreography: August Bournonville | Stanton Welch AM
Music: Herman Severin Løvenskjold | Simon & Garfunkel
June 16–26, 2022

WHO: Houston Ballet

WHAT: *La Sylphide*

Featuring the world premiere of Stanton Welch AM's *Sparrow*

WHERE: Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas Ave, Houston, TX 77002

WHEN: June 16–26, 2022

TICKETS: On sale now at www.houstonballet.org or 713.227.ARTS (2787)

CALENDAR:

June

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				16 7:30 PM	17	18 7:30 PM
19 2:00 PM	20	21	22	23	24 7:30 PM	25 7:30 PM
26 2:00 PM						

PHOTOS: [Dropbox](#)

VIDEOS: [Dropbox](#)

August Bournonville's *La Sylphide* originally premiered in November 1836 by the Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen, Denmark. Believed to be the oldest romantic ballet that is still performed today, Houston Ballet has presented the work just four times in the past, with the lead roles of James and The Sylph performed by Houston Ballet greats such as Li Cunxin and Janie Parker (1987 and 1990), Carlos Acosta and Barbara Bears (1999), and most recently Melody Mennite and Connor Walsh (2008). Houston Ballet is pleased to announce that this year's performances of *La Sylphide* will be accompanied by a world premiere from Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM. Titled *Sparrow*, this new work is set to music by Simon & Garfunkel, including popular songs such as *Cecilia* and *The Only Living Boy in New York*, and will feature a large ensemble cast of dancers.

"I fell in love with Simon & Garfunkel while I was at San Francisco Ballet Academy," said Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM. "Their music became part of the soundtrack to my life, so much so that I can't remember a time without it," said Welch. "I think they have an All-American sound that any generation can relate to. I'm looking forward to bringing *Sparrow* to life for our final production of the season and expressing Simon & Garfunkel's music through ballet."

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.

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