

Houston Ballet Celebrates 50th Anniversary Season at City Center, Oct 24—26

“One of The Nation’s Most Renowned Companies”
(CultureMap Houston)

Tickets start at \$35

OCTOBER 1, 2019/NEW YORK, NY—From October 24 through 26, Houston Ballet will celebrate its 50th Anniversary Season at New York City Center with a program of contemporary works showcasing the Company’s diverse talents. Seldom seen on the East Coast, this performance marks the Company’s largest engagement in New York since 2013 and their first program at City Center since 1986. The country’s fifth largest ballet company, Houston Ballet tours globally, most recently becoming the first American ballet company to perform at the Dubai Opera House and returning to Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival after almost 40 years.

On celebrating their 50th Anniversary, Houston Ballet Artistic Director Stanton Welch says, “Our body of work is so rich, and we’ve drawn from it an extraordinary collection of ballets and choreographers. We are so excited to bring our anniversary celebration to New York.”

Highlights of the City Center engagement include the New York premieres of two Houston Ballet Commissions: ***The Letter V*** by **Mark Morris**, set to Symphony No. 88 in G Major by **Joseph Haydn**, and ***Reflections*** by **Justin Peck**, set to a score by **Sufjan Stevens**. The program also features the ensemble piece ***Come In*** by **Aszure Barton**—originally created for Mikhail Baryshnikov’s Hell’s Kitchen Dance project. Rarely seen on the same stage, these three works exhibit each of their choreographer’s unique musicality and are all accompanied by live music from the celebrated Orchestra of St. Luke’s.

Tickets start at \$35 and can be purchased online at NYCityCenter.org, by calling 212.581.1212, or in person at the City Center Box Office (131 West 55th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues).



Houston Ballet

Oct 24—26

Thu at 7:30pm, Fri at 8pm, Sat at 2pm and 8pm

Tickets starts at \$35

The Letter V (NY Premiere, Houston Ballet Commission)

Choreography by Mark Morris

Music by Joseph Haydn (Symphony No. 88 in G Major)

Staging by Noah Vinson

Costume Design by Maile Okamura

Lighting Design by Nicole Pearce

A charming, playful, deliciously mannerly, but not at all mannered dance that is, as the choreographer says, “beautiful, formal, classical,” *The Letter V* made its world premiere in Houston in 2015. Morris calls the world of *The Letter V* “pastoral.” It takes place outdoors, far from urban strife, and “delivers in surprising ways as it juxtaposes earthy space, heavenly grace and a kiss of humanity” (*Houston Chronicle*).

Come In

Choreography by Aszure Barton

Music by Vladimir Martynov (“Come In”)

Staging by Shaun Amyot

Costume Design by Aszure Barton

Lighting Design by Leo Janks

Come In was originally created in 2006 for Mikhail Baryshnikov and 12 young men as part of his Hell’s Kitchen Dance project. This breakout work placed Aszure Barton on the international dance map. The ballet is rich with her signature style of nuanced gestures and idiosyncratic musicality. Barton says of the piece, “It is stillness that carries the work. It is powerful to witness a group of men finding stillness together.” According to Jenny Taylor Moodie of *BroadwayWorld*, “Fourteen dancers execute steps that are measured and spare one moment, only to erupt in whimsical joy the next. The piece brings to mind the search and discovery of identity, and the tension between conformity and self-expression.”



Reflections (NY Premiere, Houston Ballet Commission)

Choreography by Justin Peck

Music by Sufjan Stevens (“Reflections”)

Costume Design by Ellen Warren

Lighting Design by Brandon Stirling Baker

Choreographer Justin Peck says, “there is simplicity, clarity, beauty, and peace found within this ballet, and I like to think of the piece as a moment for audience members to come to the theater, sit down, and for a half hour detach from the world and take in the beauty of ballet as an art form.” *Reflections* features 11 dancers onstage and two pianists and made its world premiere in Houston in March of 2019. *Houston Chronicle* describes *Reflections* as “next-gen Balanchine of the highest order — all fleet-footed, crystalline classicism in an architecturally complex package of movements that cascade and echo continuously.”

Leadership support for Dance at New York City Center is provided by the Howard Gilman Foundation and The Harkness Foundation for Dance.

NEW YORK CITY CENTER (Arlene Shuler, President & CEO) has played a defining role in the cultural life of the city since 1943. The distinctive neo-Moorish theater welcomes over 300,000 annual visitors to experience internationally acclaimed artists on the same stage where legends like George Balanchine, Leonard Bernstein, and Barbara Cook made their mark. Its landmark 75th Anniversary Season (2018 – 2019) paid tribute to this rich history and celebrated the institution’s singular role in the arts today. City Center’s Tony-honored Encores! series has celebrated the tradition of American musical theater for over 25 years. In 2013, City Center launched the Encores! Off-Center series, which brings today’s innovative artists into contact with groundbreaking musicals from the more recent past. Dance has also been integral to the theater’s mission from the start and programs like the annual Fall for Dance Festival, with all tickets \$15, remain central to City Center’s identity. Home to a roster of renowned national and international companies including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (City Center’s Principal Dance Company) and Manhattan Theatre Club, New York City Center is Manhattan’s first performing arts center, founded by Mayor Fiorello La Guardia with the mission of making the best in music, theater, and dance accessible to all audiences. That mission continues today through its dynamic programming, art exhibitions, studio events, and master classes, which are complemented by education and



community engagement programs that bring the performing arts to over 11,000 New York City students, teachers, and families each year. NYCityCenter.org

HOUSTON BALLET has evolved from a Company of 16 dancers to one of 61 dancers with a budget of \$33.9 million and an endowment of \$79.2 million, making it the country's fifth largest ballet company. Its Center for Dance is a \$46.6 million state-of-the-art performance space that opened in April 2011 and remains the largest professional dance facility in America. 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 60,000 individuals in the Houston area annually. Houston Ballet Academy trains more than 1,000 students every year, producing more than 50 percent of the elite athletes that comprise Houston Ballet's current Company. For more information on Houston Ballet, visit houstonballet.org.

Limited press tickets available for each performance. Please submit your request to Emma Bird at CIntern@NYCityCenter.org by Oct 18.

Select photos and videos can be accessed via [Dropbox](#).

PRESS CONTACT:

New York City Center:
Joe Guttridge, Director of Communications
JGuttridge@NYCityCenter.org

Houston Ballet:
Jacalyn Lawton, PR Manager
JLawton@houstonballet.org

Sara Garcia, Publicity Assistant
SGarcia@NYCityCenter.org

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