

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jacalyn Lawton
Public Relations Manager
JLawton@houstonballet.org
Press@houstonballet.org



HoustonBallet
50th ANNIVERSARY SEASON

PRESENTS

Giselle

Generously Underwritten by Lynn Wyatt

HOUSTON BALLET BRINGS BACK THE BALLET THAT STARTED IT ALL, GISELLE

WHO: Houston Ballet
WHAT: Stanton Welch's *Giselle*
WHERE: Wortham Theater Center
WHEN: September 6-15, 2019
TICKETS: On Sale Now at houstonballet.org or 713.227.ARTS(2787)

September 6-15, 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6 7:00 PM	7 7:30 PM
8 2:00 PM	9	10	11	12	13 7:30 PM	14 1:30 PM 7:30 PM
15 2:00 PM						

HOUSTON, TEXAS [September 3, 2019] — This week, Houston Ballet nods to its beginning as it opens its 2019-2020 season with *Giselle*. In 1967, *Giselle* was the first full-length ballet performed by Houston Ballet Foundation, and Houston Ballet Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM is fittingly bringing it back to kick off the 50th anniversary season.

"I really wanted to honor what brought ballet to Houston and what inspired this city to build a professional ballet Company," says Welch.

The Foundation served as a school at the time of its first performance of Marius Petipa's *Giselle*. Its students, other ballet students and hired professionals from another ballet company comprised the cast and danced with a rented set at Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts. Houston's response to this production would lay the foundation for Houston Ballet's professional company and its ongoing legacy.

Coming a long way since those humble beginnings, Welch's version of this iconic ballet has 61 company dancers vying for coveted roles in a production that cost more than \$1 million to build. It first premiered and was last seen at the Wortham Theater Center in June 2016. His signature for projecting a strong female voice echoes through the ballet, as its leading lady's journey spans love, betrayal and redemption.

The two-act ballet is filled with stunning creations by Italian designer Roberta Guidi di Bagno. In addition to these costumes and sets, her designs were seen in last season's *The Merry Widow* and will return later this season in *Romeo & Juliet*.

The score by Adolphe Adam stands the test of time as Welch returned to the 1941 version, which is less edited and commonly known. These additions allowed him to expand on his narrative and gave dancers more time to sink into and exude these deep emotional roles. Just as in 2016, the music will be brought to life by the Houston Ballet Orchestra, conducted by Ermanno Florio.

Join in on Houston Ballet's celebration of 50 years of creativity and the beginning of the 2019-2020 season with Welch's *Giselle*. Learn more and secure your seats at HoustonBallet.org or by calling 713.227.ARTS(2787).

ABOUT HOUSTON BALLET

Celebrating 50 years of creativity, 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 (as of June 2019), 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 70,000 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.

###