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HoustonBallet
50TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

PRESENTS

Forged in Houston

HOUSTON BALLET BRINGS ITS 150TH WORLD PREMIERE TO THE STAGE DURING FORGED IN HOUSTON

WHO: Houston Ballet

WHAT: *Forged in Houston*

WHERE: Wortham Theater Center

WHEN: March 12-22, 2020

TICKETS: On Sale Now at houstonballet.org or 713.227.ARTS(2787)

March 12-22, 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
				12 7:30 PM	13	14 7:30 PM
15 2:00 PM	16	17	18	19	20 7:30 PM	21 7:30 PM
22 2:00 PM						

HOUSTON, TEXAS [February 25, 2020] — Houston Ballet celebrates its 150th world premiere ballet during *Forged in Houston* this March. The mixed repertoire 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*.

It’s fitting that McIntyre’s new work marks this milestone in Houston Ballet’s rich history. McIntyre was a Houston Ballet Academy student before dancing professional with the company, where he launched his choreographic career. He returns to create his seventh world premiere commission for Houston Ballet during its golden anniversary season.

“It’s been interesting to return to the company after so many years and seeing what has remained intrinsic to this company’s style and what has evolved and grown,” says McIntyre. “It has reminded me of beliefs about dance that I

learned and developed here and now I see the company grow just as I have grown as an artist. I'm proud of all of us."

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 has selected music from the iconic David Bowie for exploring this theme. The set is comprised of 8 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. Between the various casts, McIntyre nearly worked with all of the company's 29 male dancers.

"It has been a dream to work on this piece with Houston Ballet," says McIntyre. "The men have been creative, focused, vulnerable and supremely talented. And they work fast! They digest ideas quickly and support me as muses to plumb the depths."

McIntyre will share more about creating this work during Houston Ballet's free Dance Talks lecture series on Tuesday, March 3 at 7:15 p.m. Houston Ballet Executive Director Jim Nelson will lead the conversation, and the panel will also include former Houston Ballet Principal Dancer Dawn Scannell and current company dancers, Principal Connor Walsh and Soloist Harper Watters.

Audiences can get their tickets to see *Forged in Houston* 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.

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