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**HOUSTON BALLET RETURNS TO JACOB'S PILLOW
WITH PILLOW-COMMISSIONED WORLD PREMIERE, AUGUST 15-18**

August 6, 2018 – (Becket, MA) Houston Ballet returns to Jacob's Pillow for the first time in almost 40 years, appearing in the Ted Shawn Theatre August 15-18. Australian Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM has led the respected company since 2003, marking its evolution into a world-class troupe of 60 dancers housed in the largest professional dance facility in the United States. Celebrating a wide range of classic and contemporary ballet, Houston Ballet brings a program featuring Welch's *Clear; In Dreams* by former Choreographic Associate Trey McIntyre; excerpts from Welch's *Sons de L'âme*; and *Just*—a Pillow-commissioned world premiere by Welch, with a music score by one of America's most-performed contemporary composers and co-founder of Bang on a Can, David Lang.

"We're thrilled to welcome Houston Ballet back to the Pillow after nearly four decades and celebrate their return with a Pillow-commissioned world premiere by Stanton Welch," says Jacob's Pillow Director Pamela Tatge.

The performance begins with Welch's *Clear*, a contemporary ballet for seven men and one woman. Originally created for American Ballet Theater in 2001, *The New York Times* praises, "The choreography is explosive, fiercely danced by seven men with no show of diminished energy by the sole woman in the cast. Yet under the almost aggressive exuberance there is a hint of sadness." Choreographed during the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, *Clear* is about the moments of personal clarity that follow a tragedy. Dressed in minimal flesh-toned costumes created by famed fashion designer Michael Kors, the dancers perform virtuosic jumps, effortless turns, and strike their chests, all to music by Bach.

"Clean and elegant, technically brilliant and powerfully emotive," (*Houston Press*) Houston Ballet also performs excerpts from Welch's 2013 work *Sons de L'âme*, created specifically for Houston Ballet. Most recently presented in Paris at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, *Sons de L'âme* is set to 12 piano pieces by Chopin that blend together the delicate and the dramatic parts of the dance. The dancers in *Sons de L'âme* create an easeful and joyous world with intimate solos, elaborate partnering, and emotive ensemble sections.

Following, Houston Ballet performs *In Dreams* by critically-acclaimed choreographer Trey McIntyre. Set to the soulful music of and as a tribute to Roy Orbison, *In Dreams* brings together ballet with bluegrass music. Originally choreographed for Ballet Memphis in 2007, *The New York Times* lauds, "it catches fragments of that heartbreak while never trying to illustrate the songs' words literally. The lyrics say one thing, the dance says another, but they stay in close connection." This contemporary work combines seemingly opposing aesthetics, such as pointe shoes with flexed feet and angular gestures with long lines, quintessential features of McIntyre's genre-breaking choreography.

Houston Ballet closes with the world premiere of *Just*, commissioned by Jacob's Pillow with choreography by Welch and music by David Lang. As co-founder of Bang on a Can, a world-renowned music collective based in New York City, Lang's works are performed around the globe by the BBC Symphony, the International Contemporary Ensemble, the New York Philharmonic, and the Boston Symphony, among many others. A Pulitzer Prize winner for his work *the little match girl passion*, Lang has been called an "American master" (*The New Yorker*). The collaboration between Welch's artistic vision and Lang's innovative score culminates in the world premiere of *Just*.

Jacob's Pillow Connections

Houston Ballet's only prior appearance at Jacob's Pillow was in 1979 when it appeared under longtime director Ben Stevenson. Artistic Director Stanton Welch created a world premiere for The School at Jacob's Pillow Ballet Program in 2011. The Joffrey Ballet presented the world premiere of Stanton Welch's *Son of Chamber Symphony* at the Pillow in 2012.

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.

PERFORMANCE & TICKET DETAILS

Houston Ballet at Jacob's Pillow

Ted Shawn Theatre, August 15-18

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 8pm

Thursday, Saturday, Sunday at 2pm

\$78, \$65, \$45

A limited number of special Under 35 discounted tickets are available for each performance for patrons ages 18-35. Tickets are \$35 in the Doris Duke Theatre. One ticket per person; each guest must show valid I.D. when picking up tickets at Will Call.

Tickets are on sale now; online at jacobspillow.org, via phone 413.243.0745, and at the Jacob's Pillow Box Office at 358 George Carter Road, Becket, MA, 01223.

ALSO THIS WEEK

Sonya Tayeh

Doris Duke Theatre, August 15-19

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 8:15pm

Saturday & Sunday at 2:15pm

Obie and Lucille Lortel Award winner and Drama Desk and two-time Emmy Award-nominated choreographer Sonya Tayeh presents *you'll still call me by name*, an emotionally-charged dance symphony that explores a mystifying, complex, and jagged relationship between a mother and daughter. Tayeh's riveting new work exposes the cellular desire for familial acceptance, intimately investigating and dissecting the heartbreaking chasm that forms when it is lost and the endurance it takes to transcend the space in between. The work is performed by a company of ten dancers and six musicians, including collaborators Jo Lampert (nominated for a Lucille Lortel Award) and indie folk duo The Bengsons, who composed the original score. *Tickets start at \$25.*

Gotta Dance: New Faces For Broadway

A Benefit for The School at Jacob's Pillow

August 19 at 5pm

Ted Shawn Theatre

LIVE MUSIC

Directed by Chet Walker, this lively, heartfelt evening (formerly called *A Jazz Happening*) provides a first-hand glimpse into a new musical theatre work being created by collaborators Director/Choreographer Chet Walker, Playwright Shaun McKenna, and Composer/Lyricist Stephen Schwartz. Original song and dance numbers for the show will be performed by the 2018 Musical Theatre Dance Program and an onstage band. Come see the next generation of performers bound for Broadway, the incubation stage of a Broadway-bound musical, and nurture tomorrow's dance artists by supporting The School at Jacob's Pillow. Tickets start at \$25.

Inside/Out Performance Series: Lida Winfield

Wednesday, August 15 at 6:15pm

FREE

Mixing dance and theater, Lida Winfield presents *IMAGINARY*, in collaboration with Ellen Smith Ahern, Joseph Hall, Laurel Jenkins, and Maree ReMalia—a deep, quirky, innovative, and socially poignant work that explores perception in relation to imagination. Commissioned in part by Jacob's Pillow through the National Performance Network, the work addresses the fact that imagination is a nearly universal human trait, though it is shaped by both personal and environmental factors. Winfield believes that the U.S. is at a critical juncture and that it is hard to know what is real, alleged, and what will unfold. *IMAGINARY* will engage community and audience members on how the imagination assists in shaping the potential and reality of our world.

Imaginary is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation Fund Project co-commissioned by The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts in partnership with Jacob's Pillow, Middlebury Performing Arts

Series, and The Yard.

Class with Inside/Out Artists: David Parker & The Bang Group

Thursday, August 16, 4pm

David Parker & The Bang Group explore new ways of moving in this class. Open to all experience levels, ages 12+; \$10 per person. *Pre-registration is required at jacobspillow.org.* Participants younger than 18 will require a parent/guardian's signature on a liability waiver.

Inside/Out Performance Series: The Bang Group

Thursday, August 16 at 6:15pm

FREE; LIVE MUSIC

Choreographer David Parker returns to Jacob's Pillow with The Bang Group, an adventurous exploration of the sonic potential of the dancing body in a varied, interlocking suite of percussive dances. The new work, *A Mouthful of Shoes*, works with a wide-ranging movement vocabulary drawing from classical and contemporary forms as well as tap dance, taking sets of contemporary and traditional musical scores and re-creating them as choreographic systems embodied by dancers. Thus, they can be played entirely by feet and bodies. Musician Pauline Kim Harris will play violin for an original composition by Dean Rosenthal. The group will also perform a version of Stravinsky's famous experimental jazz composition, *Piano Rag Music*.

PillowTalk: *You'll Still Call Me Sonya Tayeh*

Friday, August 17 at 5pm

Blake's Barn

FREE

Bridging the worlds of television, theater, music videos, and concert dance, Sonya Tayeh discusses the emotionally charged work on view this week and her rocketing career.

Inside/Out Performance Series: Hood Nation

Thursday, August 16 at 6pm at Pittsfield's Third Thursday in the Dance Zone

Friday, August 17 at 6:15pm

FREE

Hood Nation, established in 2016 by Face Da Phlave Entertainment, is a dance company based in Philadelphia, PA. Hood Nation is a synergy of professional dancers from all around the globe and a worldwide movement, with artist representation from the United States, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Undefined by styles, the company brings together dances from Lindy Hop, hip-hop, jazz, contemporary, locking, popping, and breaking. The company dedicates themselves to the preservation of hip-hop culture through educational programs, stage performances, and theater productions. Their goal is to bridge the gap for dancers from different backgrounds by bringing together a group of aspiring artists. They strive to teach younger generations the possibility of having a career through dance as well as guide them with knowledge that will be needed to get through their everyday lives.

PillowTalk: *Bob Fosse: Big Deal*

Saturday, August 18 at 4pm

Blake's Barn

FREE

Kevin Winkler discusses his new book subtitled "Bob Fosse and Dance in the American Musical," offering a behind-the-scenes view of this revolutionary director/choreographer.

Inside/Out Performance Series: The School at Jacob's Pillow Musical Theatre Dance Program
Saturday, August 18 at 6:15pm
FREE

Performers studying in the Musical Theatre Dance Program are participating in the development of a new musical being created by Director/Choreographer Chet Walker, Playwright Shaun McKenna, and Composer/Lyricist Stephen Schwartz. Tonight's presentation features numbers created on The School's performers for *Boy on the Roof*, following three weeks in the Perles Family Studio. Inside/Out performances offer a rare chance to see the participants as they prepare for the August 19 presentation of *Gotta Dance: New Faces for Broadway*, a benefit for The School at Jacob's Pillow held in the Ted Shawn Theatre.

Sunday Master Class: Sonya Tayeh
Sunday, August 19 at 10am
Doris Duke Theatre

Sonya Tayeh will teach a 90-minute master class open to all intermediate and advanced dancers ages 16 and over. Quiet observation is welcome; \$15 per class or \$80 for a 6-class card. Participants younger than 18 will require a parent/guardian's signature on a liability waiver. *Pre-registration is required at jacobsillow.org.*

Gotta Dance: New Faces For Broadway
A Benefit for The School at Jacob's Pillow
August 19 at 5pm
Ted Shawn Theatre
LIVE MUSIC

Directed by Chet Walker, this lively, heartfelt evening (formerly called *A Jazz Happening*) provides a first-hand glimpse into a new musical theatre work being created by collaborators Director/Choreographer Chet Walker, Playwright Shaun McKenna, and Composer/Lyricist Stephen Schwartz. Original song and dance numbers for the show will be performed by the 2018 Musical Theatre Dance Program and an onstage band. Come see the next generation of performers bound for Broadway, the incubation stage of a Broadway-bound musical, and nurture tomorrow's dance artists by supporting The School at Jacob's Pillow. *Tickets start at \$25.*

FESTIVAL 2018 EXHIBITS & ARCHIVES—ONGOING

Gotta Dance, Too!
Blake's Barn, June 20-August 26
Open Wed-Sat noon to final curtain (approx. 10pm) and Sun-Tues noon to 5pm; FREE

This select group of original movie posters follows up on the hugely popular 2014 *Gotta Dance* exhibit with a different set of rarities from the collection of award-winning design director Mike Kaplan. More than 75 vintage posters feature classic films and stars like Fred Astaire, Josephine Baker, Gene Kelly, and other screen legends, excitingly illustrated in vibrant color.

Dance of the Ages
Ted Shawn Theatre Lobby, June 20-August 26
Open 60 minutes prior to every performance
FREE

Commemorating the 80th anniversary of *Dance of the Ages*, a culminating achievement by Ted Shawn and His Men Dancers, this exhibit also highlights a full reconstruction of the work to be performed by Adam H. Weinert at Jacob's Pillow, September 21-23. The exhibit features images, memorabilia, and costumes from the original 1938 production, many on view for the first time.

Paramodernities/Revelations

Doris Duke Theatre Lobby, June 20-August 26

Open 60 minutes prior to every performance

FREE

Netta Yerushalmy has created a new performance work entitled *Paramodernities* with its premiere on deconstructing classic dances by pioneering choreographers. Historic Pillow images from one of these, Alvin Ailey's iconic *Revelations*, are displayed here and juxtaposed with Christopher Duggan's new photos and text from Yerushalmy's 2018 re-examination, premiering August 8-12.

Jacob's Pillow Archives/Norton Owen Reading Room

Blake's Barn, June 20-August 26

Open daily, Wed-Sat noon to final curtain (approx. 10pm) and Sun-Tue noon to 5pm

FREE

This spacious, informal library and reading room allows impromptu visitors to view videos, browse through books, access the Pillow's computer catalog, or peruse permanent collections of Pillow programs and photographs from the Pillow's Archives. The Norton Owen Reading Room also features recent donations and more archival treasures from the Stephan Driscoll Collection. Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive, available on a popular touch-screen kiosk in the Reading Room, provides instant access to rare film clips ranging from the present day back to the 1930s.

Collaborative Exhibit at Williams College Museum of Art

Dance We Must: Treasures from Jacob's Pillow, 1906-1940

June 29-November 11

FREE

The Williams College Museum of Art has created an eye-popping new exhibit with costumes, set pieces, and other historic artifacts from the collections at Jacob's Pillow. On view through November 11, this exhibit offers a rare chance to see items from the dawn of American modern dance, tracing the evolution of this contemporary art form. *More information at wcma.williams.edu*

ABOUT JACOB'S PILLOW: Jacob's Pillow is a National Historic Landmark, recipient of the National Medal of Arts, and home to America's longest-running international dance festival, celebrating its 86th Festival in 2018. The Pillow announced its transition to becoming a year-round center for dance in June 2017 through a five-year strategic plan titled Vision '22. Each Festival includes more than 50 national and international dance companies and over 350 free and ticketed performances, talks, tours, classes, exhibits, events, and community programs. The School at Jacob's Pillow, one of the most prestigious professional dance training centers in the U.S., encompasses the diverse disciplines of Ballet, Contemporary, Musical Theatre Dance, Choreography, and an annual rotating program (Gaga in 2018). The Pillow also provides professional advancement opportunities across disciplines of arts administration, design, video, and production through seasonal internships and a year-round Administrative Fellows program. With growing community engagement programs, the Pillow serves as a partner and active citizen in its local community. The Pillow's extensive Archives, open year-round to the public and online at danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org, chronicle more than a century of dance in photographs, programs, books, costumes, audiotapes, and videos. Notable artists who have created or premiered dances at the Pillow include choreographers Antony Tudor, Agnes de Mille, Alvin Ailey, Donald McKayle, Kevin McKenzie, Twyla Tharp, Ralph Lemon, Susan Marshall, Trisha Brown, Ronald K. Brown, Wally Cardona, Andrea Miller, and Trey McIntyre; performed by artists such as Mikhail Baryshnikov, Carmen de Lavallade, Mark Morris, Dame Margot Fonteyn, Edward Villella, Rasta Thomas, and hundreds of others. On March 2, 2011, President Barack Obama honored Jacob's Pillow with a National Medal of Arts, the highest arts award given by the United States Government, making the Pillow the first dance presenting organization to receive this prestigious award. For more information, visit www.jacobspillow.org.