

HOUSTON BALLET

STANTON WELCH - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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HOUSTON BALLET ANNOUNCES PROMOTIONS TO THE COMPANY

Jessica Collado, James Gotesky, and Lauren Majewski Promoted to Demi Soloist

Houston, Texas – Houston Ballet Artistic Director Stanton Welch promoted Jessica Collado, James Gotesky, and Lauren Majewski from the corps de ballet to the rank of demi soloist onstage at the end of company's performance of **Marie** on March 8, 2009.

Houston Ballet has six ranks of dancers: apprentice, corps de ballet, demi soloist, soloist, first soloist, and principal, the top level in the company.

Jessica Collado joined Houston Ballet in 2004. Born in Coral Springs, Florida, Ms. Collado trained at Gwinnett Ballet Theater and Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy. In January 2009, *Dance Magazine* featured her as one of the "top 25 dancers to watch." Ms. Collado has shined in several featured roles including Stanton Welch's **A Doll's House**, Mr. Welch's **Mediæval Bæbes**, Effie in August Bournonville's **La Sylphide**, and William Forsythe's **The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude**.

Reviewing Houston Ballet's performance of **The Leaves are Fading** for the *Houston Chronicle* on March 14, 2009, dance critic Molly Glentzer wrote, "Jessica Collado captured the ballet's ingénue spirit beautifully."

James Gotesky joined Houston Ballet in 2003. Born in Washington, D.C., Mr. Gotesky trained at the Academy of Ballet and San Francisco Ballet School. Mr. Gotesky's featured roles include the Evil Stepmother in Mr. Welch's **Cinderella**, Sharpless in Mr. Welch's **Madame Butterfly**, the Interrogator in Christopher Bruce's **Swansong**, 6th Pas de Deux in Jiří Kylián's **Petite Mort**, Stanley in Mr. Welch's **The Core**, Gremin in John Cranko's **Onegin**, Winter Husband in Mr. Welch's **The Four Seasons**, 4th Pas de Deux in Antony Tudor's **The Leaves are Fading**, the Madge in August Bournonville's **La Sylphide**,

Count Mercy in Stanton Welch's **Marie**, and lead role of Louis Auguste in **Marie** when Houston Ballet toured to New Orleans.

Reviewing Houston Ballet's performance of Stanton Welch's **Cinderella** in *Arts Houston* in April 2008, dance critic Nancy Wozny observes, "James Gotesky's stepmother showed off a combination of Cruella de Ville and Anne Bancroft in his holier-than-thou strut."

Lauren Majewski joined Houston Ballet in 2004. Born in New York, New York, Ms. Majewski trained at the New Jersey Dance Theatre Ensemble and The National Ballet School of Canada. Ms. Majewski's featured roles include Olga in John Cranko's **Onegin**, Effie in August Bournonville's **La Sylphide**, the Snow Queen in Ben Stevenson's **The Nutcracker**, and a featured role in William Forsythe's **In the middle, somewhat elevated**.

Reviewing Houston Ballet's **Onegin** in the *Houston Press* in September 9, 2008, dance critic Marene Gustin writes, "Corps de ballet member Lauren Majewski more than held her own as Olga against the more seasoned stars. . ."

Houston Ballet is America's fourth largest ballet company. The professional company was founded in 1969, and has been hailed by *The New York Times* as "one of the nation's best ballet companies." Under the leadership of artistic director Stanton Welch, the company features 55 dancers and has a \$20 million annual budget. Over the last decade, Houston Ballet has toured to London, New York, Moscow, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Montreal and The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. With its extensive international touring, Houston Ballet has emerged as one of the city's most effective international ambassadors. For more information about Houston Ballet, visit www.houstonballet.org

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