

HOUSTON BALLET

STANTON WELCH - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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LINNAR LOORIS PROMOTED TO SOLOIST

Houston, Texas – Houston Ballet Artistic Director Stanton Welch has promoted Linnar Looris to the rank of soloist.

In 2007, Mr. Looris joined Houston Ballet as a demi-soloist, and quickly distinguished himself in a number of roles: as the Prince in Ben Stevenson’s staging of **The Nutcracker**, as Pritschitch in Ronald Hynd’s **The Merry Widow** and in several featured roles in the world premiere of Stanton Welch’s **The Four Seasons** in September 2007.

“Linnar is a *danseur noble*, and a lovely partner,” commented Mr. Welch. “In his first season with the company, he has distinguished himself as a superb actor, with a great depth of characterization, impeccable timing and a real flair for comedic roles. In addition, he works hard, and is a lovely team member.”

Mr. Looris was born in Estonia where he trained with Vladimir Artamonov, Ago Herkül and Alexander Basihhin at the Tallinn Ballet School. He won the Philip Morris Young Dancer of the Year in 2002 and Foundation of Culture Scholarships in 2004 and 2006. He joined the ballet company of Estonian National Opera in 2001 where his repertory included **Romeo and Juliet** (Romeo, Mercutio); **The Nutcracker** (Prince, Drosselmeyer); **Swan Lake** (Siegfried, Benno); **The Sleeping Beauty** (Prince Florimund, Bluebird); and **Giselle** (Albrecht). He joined Birmingham Royal Ballet in 2006 where he performed in **Romeo and Juliet** (Romeo, Paris), **Nine Sinatra Songs** (‘Strangers in the Night’, ‘That’s Life’), **The Four Seasons** (‘Summer’), **The Nutcracker** (the Prince) and Balanchine’s **Apollo**.

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