

HOUSTON BALLET

STANTON WELCH - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FOR RELEASE ON
April 7, 2008

CONTACT: DELLA GONZALEZ
ANDREA SANMIGUEL
713 535 3226

HOUSTON BALLET GIVES THREE FREE PERFORMANCES OF CLASSIC *MADAME BUTTERFLY* AT MILLER OUTDOOR THEATRE MAY 9 - 11

Houston, TX – On May 9, 10, and 11, 2008 at 8:00 p.m., Houston Ballet will present three **FREE** performances of **Madame Butterfly** at Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park. The moving tale of a beautiful geisha's love and loss has never been told more eloquently than in Houston Ballet Artistic Director Stanton Welch's exquisite, two-act rendition of the classic story.

While all performances at Miller Outdoor Theatre are **FREE** of charge, Houston Ballet's performances of **Madame Butterfly** require tickets to the seated area. Tickets are available on the day of the performance from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Miller Theatre Box Office. Any tickets remaining are distributed one hour before curtain. There is a limit of four tickets per person. Please call 281.FREE.FUN (281-373-3386) for further ticket information.

Premiered by The Australian Ballet in 1995, **Madame Butterfly** was Mr. Welch's first full-length ballet. The two-act work tells the story of the beautiful geisha Cio-Cio San who renounces her faith and her family to wed Lieutenant Pinkerton, the handsome American naval officer who is betrothed to another. The centerpiece of the work is a ravishing wedding night pas de deux for Pinkerton and Cio-Cio San, which closes the first act.

Since its premiere in 1995, **Madame Butterfly** has become Mr. Welch's international signature piece, having entered the repertoires of Houston Ballet, the National Ballet of Canada, the Royal New Zealand Ballet, Singapore Dance Theatre, Boston Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre.

“**Madame Butterfly** is a wonderful and famous love story, along the lines of **Romeo and Juliet**,” said Mr. Welch.

At the ballet's Houston premiere, Marene Gustin of the *Houston Press* wrote, "Houston Ballet needs more story ballets like this one....the company really danced, flowing through the choreography and shining in the storytelling." (September 26, 2002)

Mr. Welch's **Madame Butterfly** utilizes the score by Puccini, in an arrangement by the late, acclaimed British conductor John Lanchbery. Mr. Lanchbery arranged scores especially for six Houston Ballet productions and was recognized as a world-renowned musician.

###

**HOUSTON BALLET'S FREE PERFORMANCES AT
MILLER OUTDOOR THEATRE
FACT SHEET**

WHAT: MADAME BUTTERFLY (1995)
Music by Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)
Arrangement by John Lanchbery (1923-2003)
Choreography by Stanton Welch
Scenic and Costume Designs by Peter Farmer
Lighting by Lisa Pinkham

**Sponsored by Chevron and the City of Houston
through the Miller Theatre Advisory Board.**

ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

Houston Ballet brings one of the world's great love stories to the ballet stage with a revival of Stanton Welch's critically acclaimed signature work, **Madame Butterfly**, which is in the repertoires of companies across the globe from Hong Kong to Toronto. The two-act work tells the story of the beautiful geisha Cio-Cio-San who renounces her faith and her family to wed Lieutenant Pinkerton, the handsome, but cynical American naval officer who is betrothed to another.

WHEN: At 8:00 pm on May 9, 10, 11, 2008.

WHERE: MILLER OUTDOOR THEATRE in Hermann Park, Houston, TX

TICKETS: **FREE!** Call Miller Theatre Box Office at 281.FREE.FUN (281-373-3386)

**HOW TO GET
FREE TICKETS:**

While all performances at Miller Outdoor Theatre are **FREE** of charge, Houston Ballet's performances of **Madame Butterfly** require tickets to the seated area. Tickets are available on the day of the performance from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Miller Theatre Box Office. Any tickets remaining are distributed one hour before curtain. There is a limit of four tickets per person maximum. Please call 281.FREE.FUN (281-373-3386) for further ticket information.

**PERSON WITH
DISABILITIES:**

Special Arrangements may be made for handicapped seating by calling the Miller Theatre Office at 713-533-3276.

Listening Devices are available for the hearing-impaired at the Miller Theatre Box Office one hour prior to curtain. A valid Texas driver's license or State issued ID card is required for deposit.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION:**

Visit Houston Ballet at www.houstonballet.org
or Miller Outdoor Theatre at www.milleroutdoorthatre.com