

HOUSTON BALLET

STANTON WELCH - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FOR RELEASE
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CONTACT: JOHANNA TSCHEBULL
SHAUNA TYSOR
713 535 3226

HOUSTON BALLET ROCKS THE PARK MAY 13-15

COMPANY GIVES THREE FREE PERFORMANCES AT MILLER OUTDOOR THEATRE

Program Features Three Sexy and Exciting Works Set to the Music of The Rolling Stones, Patsy Cline and The Chieftains

Houston, Texas – On May 13, 14, and 15, 2005 at 8:00 PM, Houston Ballet will present three FREE performances at Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park featuring Houston Ballet Artistic Director Stanton Welch's **Cline Time**, Christopher Bruce's **Rooster**, and Lila York's **Celts**. This crowd-pleasing, fast and furious program will stimulate audience imaginations and highlight the company's contemporary side. Inspired by famous music legends, Houston Ballet's performances have something for everyone. **Cline Time** is a glittering two-stepping, line-dancing tribute to Texas heritage. The rock beat of The Rolling Stones conjures up memories of Mick Jagger's powerful, seductive persona, full of wild energy, in **Rooster**. Celtic music fills Miller Theatre in the exciting, fast paced **Celts**, inspired by traditional Irish folk dancing.

While all performances at Miller Outdoor Theatre are FREE of charge, Houston Ballet's performances of **Cline Time**, **Rooster**, and **Celts** require tickets to the seated area. Tickets are available on the day of the performance from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM 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 713.284.8354 for further ticket information.

Houston Ballet's performances at Miller Outdoor Theatre are sponsored in part by The City of Houston through the Miller Theatre Advisory Board, Inc.

A Little Bit of Country Goes A Long Way In *Cline Time*

Stanton Welch's **Cline Time** follows the romantic misadventures of a group of Texas women in a bar for the broken hearted. Set to the music of country legend Patsy Cline (whose name inspired the title of this work), **Cline Time** gives Houston Ballet dancers the opportunity to demonstrate their skill at the two step, line dancing, and country and western dancing. Choreographed by Mr. Welch in 2004 as part of his evening length production **Tales of Texas**, a celebration of the Lone Star State, **Cline Time** premiered in March 2004.

The dancers will bring Ms. Cline's songs to life, embodying tragic love and broken relationships with humor and wit. "I started looking for the perfect country and western music for the ballet," commented Mr. Welch, "and I kept coming back to Patsy Cline. Her songs have such a bittersweet quality that's perfect for theatrical dance." Some of the music selections include "Crazy," "Walkin' After Midnight" and "Sweet Dreams of You."

Houston Ballet Wardrobe Supervisor Patricia Padilla created bright, fun costumes inspired by country and western style, rodeo attire, and cowboy fashion. Mr. Welch gave Ms. Padilla direction regarding the feeling for each song, and using this as a starting point, she fashioned outfits that range from sweet cowgirls to over-the-top country and western entertainers. Many of the costumes reflect the stage fashions worn by Patsy Cline and other entertainers popular during the heyday of country and western music, brought to life with eye-catching sequins, stones, and fringe.

Christopher Bruce's Wild and Sexy *Rooster* Struts into Miller Theatre

Houston Ballet Associate Choreographer Christopher Bruce's **Rooster** is a fast, furious, and wild evocation of the mating rituals of hip young Londoners during the "Swinging

Sixties.” Set to eight of The Rolling Stones’s most memorable vintage tracks, including “Sympathy for the Devil,” “Paint it Black,” and “Ruby Tuesday,” **Rooster** has become a signature piece for Houston Ballet since its American premiere in 1995.

Originally premiered by the Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève on October 10, 1991, **Rooster** has been performed to overwhelming popular and critical acclaim worldwide. The London opening of the ballet at Sadler’s Wells Theater in November 1992 was a glittering international event. Prince Andrew was in attendance, as was Rolling Stones front man Mick Jagger. When asked what he thought of **Rooster** after the performance, Mr. Jagger responded, “I love it! It was great. I was looking at them and thinking ‘that’s a good move, I must nick that.’” He brought his children back to see a matinee performance of **Rooster**, and hired three of the **Rooster** dancers to appear in his next video.

Celts Celebrates All Things Irish

Lila York’s **Celts** is an abstract history of Ireland complete with Irish music and folk dancing. “**Celts** is a crowd-pleasing ballet, Lila’s most famous work. There’s a lot of difficult material in the ballet, and the men are heavily featured,” commented Mr. Welch, who saw the piece done by Boston Ballet. Houston Ballet first performed the work in September 2004.

Choreographed in 1995, the year before the Riverdance phenomenon hit the U.S., the ballet is a tribute to Ms. York’s Irish roots. Set to a compilation of traditional and contemporary Celtic music, including the award-winning traditional Irish ensemble, The Chieftains, **Celts** is a celebration of all things Irish. A mixture of modern, classical, and Irish folk dance blended into one extraordinary piece of choreography, this large ensemble piece showcases dancers doing an approximation of step dancing. Commissioned by Boston Ballet, it premiered there in 1996 and was well received by critics. Christine Temin, of the *Boston Globe*, called it “an astonishing array of dance images of Ireland, a piece that is both profound and thrilling.” (March 22, 1996)

In **Celts**, Ms. York has tapped into a popular fascination with Irish culture. “I think that the success of the dance has to do with two things: the infectiousness of Irish music, and the resiliency of the Irish people and our connection with them. The phoenix-like emergence of Ireland over the last decade is a testament to their fortitude. Conquered and enslaved, forced to raise crops and livestock for the English while they themselves starved, they eventually said no more and won their freedom. American history and Irish history have something in common. I think we all feel that connection.”

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

WHAT: **CLINE TIME (2004)**
Music by Patsy Cline
Choreography by Stanton Welch
Costumes Realized by Patricia Padilla
Set Realized by Thomas Boyd

ROOSTER (1995)
Music by The Rolling Stones
Choreography by Christopher Bruce
Costumes by Marian Bruce

CELTS (2004)
Music by The Chieftains, Mason Daring, William J. Ruyle,
Bill Whelan, Celtic Thunder, and Dan Ar Braz
Choreography by Lila York
Costume Design by Tunji Dada

Sponsored in part by The City of Houston through the Miller Theatre Advisory Board, Inc.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

On May 13, 14, and 15, 2005 at 8 pm Houston Ballet will present three **FREE** performances at Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park featuring Houston Ballet Artistic Director Stanton Welch's tribute to Texas heritage in **Cline Time**; Christopher Bruce's hard-driving, sexy **Rooster**; and Lila York's exciting, fast paced **Celts**. The crowd-pleasing fast and furious program line up highlights Houston Ballet's contemporary side.

WHEN: At 8:00 PM on May 13, 14, and 15, 2005

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

TICKETS: **FREE!** Call Miller Theatre Box Office at 713 284 8350

HOW TO GET FREE TICKETS:

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limit of four tickets per person maximum. Please call 713.284.8354 for further ticket information.

**PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES:**

Special Arrangements

Special arrangements may be made for handicapped seating by calling the theatre office at 713.284.1321.

Listening Devices

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 on the World Wide Web at:
www.houstonballet.org or Miller Theatre at:
<http://www.milleroutdoortheatre.com/index.htm>