

# HOUSTON BALLET

STANTON WELCH - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FOR RELEASE  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2004

CONTACT: JOHANNA TSCHEBULL  
SHAUNA TYSOR  
713 535 3226

## HOUSTON BALLET REVIVES TREY MCINTYRE'S MAGICAL *PETER PAN*

**Soloists Randy Herrera and Ilya Kozadayev Star in Title Role**

**Andrew Murphy and Nicholas Leschke Perform as Captain Hook**

**Houston, TX --** From September 23 – October 3, 2004, Houston Ballet continues its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration with a revival of Trey McIntyre's smash success, **Peter Pan**. Based upon the popular story by Sir James M. Barrie, the ballet is set to the music of Sir Edward Elgar in an arrangement by Niel DePonte. With elaborate, magical sets by Thomas Boyd and imaginative costumes by Broadway designer Jeanne Button, the production reinterprets the classic story with verve and wit for the new millennium. The ballet features spectacular flying sequences, swashbuckling swordfights, giant puppets, colorful masks, and costumes inspired by punk fashion. Houston Ballet will give seven performances of **Peter Pan** at Wortham Theater Center in downtown Houston.

Houston Ballet premiered **Peter Pan** in March 2002, with dance critic Robert Greskovic of *DanceView* writing, "To call Trey McIntyre's **Peter Pan** the most impressive, original, multi-act ballet created by an American choreographer in recent memory doesn't quite do the three-act production justice...**Peter Pan** is a story ballet that really flies." (Summer, 2002) Molly Glentzer, of the *Houston Chronicle*, called Mr. McIntyre "a superb storyteller with a kid's heart and an adult's appreciation of life's complexities," (March 16, 2002) and Clive Barnes, writing in *Dance Magazine*, described Mr. McIntyre as a

“choreographer of considerable promise...who tackled it [**Peter Pan**] with invention, a sure dramatic instinct, and a very special sensibility.” (July, 2002)

This revival of **Peter Pan** has been generously underwritten by The Boeing Company, Noble Corporation, Vinson & Elkins, L.L.P. and The Wortham Foundation, Inc.

### **McIntyre Restages His First Full-Length Work for the Company**

Mr. McIntyre has decided to revise certain elements of the production, explaining “**Peter Pan** was my first full-length ballet and for as much planning and preparation that was put into it, there are still some things you can only learn when you see it onstage. Plus, there are things I have learned in the time since the premiere; things that have given me perspective on the story that I think will enhance it without detracting from my original vision.”

Houston Ballet Artistic Director Stanton Welch, who has choreographed two story ballets of his own, added, “Story ballets are like wine – they need to age. As companies and choreographers learn to adapt the work, it becomes better and tighter. You never remount your ballet exactly the same. It’s a living art form. It progresses.”

### **A Colorful and Imaginative Interpretation of the Story**

Mr. McIntyre’s **Peter Pan** is told from a child’s perspective, which is evident in the set design and costumes. Many set pieces have a playful sense of scale, representing a pint-sized person’s perspective. The ballet opens with seven-foot, larger-than-life nannies wheeling in huge buggies. Mr. and Mrs. Darling, who wear stiff masks, seem cold and imposing; in this retelling, the adults seem far removed and somewhat frightening.

This **Peter Pan** also emphasizes the connection between children and the dream world. The Darling children sleep in beds festooned with flowers and vines. Right beyond their bedroom lies a massive garden full of pink and purple blooms, inhabited by fairies. The

garden motifs on the beds and other set pieces symbolize their tie to a world full of magical creatures. Fairies are real, shadows become a threatening presence and the children meet a new friend who whisks them away to a fantastical place full of mermaids, pirates, redskins and a very large crocodile.

### **Peter's Breathtaking Flying Sequences**

Houston Ballet Soloists Randy Herrera and Ilya Kozadayev will dance the title role in **Peter Pan**, and their performances will feature numerous spectacular flying sequences. In choreographing the ballet, Mr. McIntyre created solos and pas de deux flights for Peter that are quite complicated and unique to this production. These flying sequences are unusual because they are choreographed dances, not just stunts. In addition, the flying rig is connected to a bungee cord, which gives the dancer the control necessary to perform specific balletic moves.

“Flying on stage is an experience like no other,” commented Mr. Herrera. “The choreography is really fast and the partnering is tricky. It was scary at first; but it is a lot of fun.” In tight coordination with the crew, the Peters jump off scenery, perform back-flips, and mid-air spins. Mr. Herrera, who has a seven-month-old son, said “**Peter Pan** is a story that you hear growing up, so I become a kid all over again on stage in this production. Part of being a kid is that you take risks.”

Mr. Kozadayev, who is debuting in the role, commented “I have flown this past season in **La Fille mal gardée**, but it was nothing like the flying in **Peter Pan**! Just like the role itself, the flying routine is very acrobatic. It will be fun.”

### **New Wendys and Hooks**

Houston Ballet First Soloist Leticia Oliveira, fresh from her appearance at the prestigious international gala performance Gala des Etoiles in Montreal on September 9, will debut

as Wendy. Principal Sara Webb, who created the role of Wendy in the world premiere of the company's 2002 performances of **Peter Pan**, will return to the role.

Houston Ballet Soloist Nicholas Leschke will reprise his memorable performance as the wonderfully evil Captain Hook, and principal Andrew Murphy will debut in the role.

### ***Peter Pan: The Story***

Mr. McIntyre has condensed Mr. Barrie's story about the boy from Neverland into a ballet in three acts. In the first act, Mr. and Mrs. Darling come to bid Wendy, John and Michael good night. They are on their way to a party, leaving the children in the care of their new nursemaid, Liza. That evening, a wild boy with a mane of great red hair bursts into the room, introduces himself as Peter Pan, and teaches the Darling children how to fly. Then Peter and the three young Darling children set off for Neverland.

Peter Pan returns to Neverland with Wendy and the boys in tow. The Lost Boys, who quickly welcome the Darling children into their tribe, and ask Wendy to be their mother. Later, Captain Hook and his pirate crew plot to capture one of the enchanting mermaids, but her cries quickly awaken Peter and the others. A great battle ensues, with the Lost Boys ultimately prevailing. The pirates later kidnap The Lost Boys and the Darling children.

In the final act, Hook tries to lure the Darling children into joining his crusade, but they refuse. He ties them up and abuses them with tales of the horrible things he will do to them. Hook becomes so distracted with his soliloquy that he doesn't notice when Peter sneaks on board. A battle begins, and The Lost Boys quickly gain the upper hand. Sensing the possibility of defeat, Hook tries to escape with Wendy, but Peter intervenes and challenges him to a duel. After Peter ultimately triumphs over him, the Darling children go home and reunite with their parents. Although Peter returns to try to lure Wendy back to Neverland, she refuses. She takes her place in her mother's rocking chair, reflecting on her adventures with Peter as she grows older and has children and a family of her own.

## **Trey McIntyre: A Choreographer Nurtured by Houston Ballet**

Recently named one of the 25 most eligible bachelors in *People*, Houston Ballet Choreographic Associate Trey McIntyre is an award-winning choreographer who has created seven works for Houston Ballet, including **Second Before the Ground** (1996), **Bound** (2000), **The Shadow** (2003) and the full-length **Peter Pan** (2002). In 1987, Mr. McIntyre came to Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy, and two years later was named choreographic apprentice, a position created especially for him. He joined the company as a member of the corps de ballet in 1990 and created his first work for the company, **Skeleton Clock** (1990), at the age of 20. Houston Ballet, which has nurtured and developed his choreographic career, named him choreographic associate in 1995. Other companies he has created works for are: New York City Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, Moscow Ballet Theater, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Washington Ballet, Ballet Florida, Ballet Memphis, and Miami City Ballet. Mr. McIntyre has choreographed four works for Oregon Ballet Theatre, where he served as resident choreographer for the 1998-1999 season, and he is now resident choreographer for Ballet Memphis. In October, Mr. McIntyre will unveil his first commission for American Ballet Theatre as part of their City Center season in New York. He is also creating a new work for the Washington Ballet.

###

**HOUSTON BALLET**  
***PETER PAN***  
**FACT SHEET**

**WHAT: PETER PAN (2002)**  
Music by Edward Elgar, in an arrangement by Niel Deponte  
Choreography by Trey McIntyre  
Scenery by Thomas Boyd  
Costumes by Jeanne Button  
Lighting by Christina R. Giannelli

**Generously underwritten by:**  
The Boeing Company  
Noble Corporation  
Vinson & Elkins L.L.P.

**Additional Support provided by:**  
The Wortham Foundation

**ABOUT THE  
PROGRAM:**

From September 23 – October 3, 2004, Houston Ballet Choreographic Associate Trey McIntyre will restage his first full-length work for the company, which was a smashing success with audiences and critics alike. Based upon the popular story by Sir James M. Barrie, **Peter Pan** tells the story of the boy from Neverland and his adventures with the Darling children and Captain Hook. With elaborate sets by scenic designer Thomas Boyd and magical flying effects by Foy, the production is a perfect introduction to dance for audiences of all ages.

**WHEN:** At 7:30 pm on September 23, 25, and October 1, 2, 2004  
At 2:00pm on September 26 and October 2, 3, 2004

**WHERE:** Brown Theater, Wortham Theater Center  
Texas at Smith Streets in downtown Houston

**TICKETS:** Start at \$17. Call (713) 227 ARTS or 1 800 828 ARTS  
Also available at Houston Ballet Box Office at Wortham Theater Center  
downtown at Texas at Smith Street, or purchase tickets online at  
[www.houstonballet.org](http://www.houstonballet.org)

**FOR MORE**

**INFORMATION:** Visit Houston Ballet on the World Wide Web at  
[www.houstonballet.org](http://www.houstonballet.org)