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HOUSTON BALLET RESTORES WITH NEW, FREE DIGITAL WORK

HOUSTON, TEXAS [Nov. 10, 2020] — Houston Ballet releases a new work created for the camera, Stanton Welch’s *Restoration*. With its dancers back to work after an extended layoff, the Company returns in full force to restore its palace of creation in the COVID era.

“It’s an incredible feeling to be reunited with our craft,” says Connor Walsh, Houston Ballet Principal Dancer. “A professional dancer practices nearly every day for as long as they can remember, and to be separated from that experience without warning was quite a challenge. To be back in the studio is rejuvenating for both our body and minds.”

Completed in just two weeks, the four-minute video is available to view for free on Houston Ballet’s social media channels: [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). It is set to the song “Black Lung” by The Dead South, which Houston Ballet will premiere a longer ballet to in the spring. There are 62 masked dancers in the film between the professional company, Houston Ballet II and artistic staff.

“Art has to reflect what’s happening in the world, and that’s what we’ve done with *Restoration*,” says Stanton Welch, Houston Ballet Artistic Director. “It’s a return to what we do, but in this new and uncharted territory. The strength of our dancers in this piece mirrors the strength of our city and how we press on Houston strong.”

Restoration was filmed at 19 locations iconic to the greater Houston area, such as: Buffalo Bayou Park, Discovery Green, Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, The Menil Collection, Glassell School of Art, Hermann Park and Minute Maid Park. While most locations were filmed with individual dancers or small groups, all dancers came together to film a grand unified scene on Houston Sports Park.

“A company is like a giant family, so to be all together after so many months apart was very comforting,” says Walsh. “Not to mention how good it felt to laugh with each other again. Laughter can be incredibly healing, and when you get a bunch of dancers together there’s usually some good laughs.”

Throughout the filming process, as part of Houston Ballet’s pandemic protocols, dancers and crew upheld strict safety protocols under the advisement of Houston Methodist Hospital. Everyone involved remained masked at all times and practiced social distancing. Dancers and relevant staff are tested every 2 weeks for COVID-19, in addition to the Center for Dance’s entrance policy that includes a daily health survey and temperature check before entering.

“This was a new challenge for all of us, but we are proud of what we accomplished with a small team under the safety guidelines,” says David Rivera, Associate Director of Audio & Visual Services. “The dancers are always moving towards the camera, and this really represents us moving forward as an organization. We are gaining new knowledge and taking it with us into the next project to keep on creating.”

Learn more about *Restoration* and how to support Houston Ballet at houstonballet.org. Currently, donations to the nonprofit are being matched dollar for dollar by The Jerry C. Dearing Family Foundation.

ABOUT HOUSTON BALLET

With more than 50 years of rich history, Houston Ballet has evolved into a 61-dancer Company with a budget of \$33.9 million and an endowment of \$79.2 million (as of June 2019), making it the country's fifth largest ballet company. Its Center for Dance is a \$46.6 million state-of-the-art performance space that opened in April 2011 and remains the largest professional dance facility in America. Houston Ballet's reach is global, touring in renowned theaters in Dubai, London, Paris, Moscow, Spain, Montréal, Ottawa, Melbourne, New York City, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and more.

Houston Ballet attracts prestigious leaders in dance. Australian choreographer Stanton Welch AM has served as Artistic Director of Houston Ballet since 2003, raising the level of the Company's classical technique and commissioning works from dance legends such as Julia Adam, George Balanchine, Aszure Barton, Christopher Bruce, Alexander Ekman, William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Edwaard Liang, Trey McIntyre and Justin Peck. Executive Director James Nelson serves as the administrative leader of the organization, a position he assumed in February 2012 after serving as the Company's General Manager for more than a decade.

Beyond its stage presence, Houston Ballet maintains a strong foothold in continuing to foster a love for dance in future generations. Its Education and Community Engagement program reaches more than 70,000 individuals in the Houston area annually. Houston Ballet Academy trains more than 1,000 students every year, producing more than 50 percent of the elite athletes that comprise Houston Ballet's current Company.

For more information on Houston Ballet, visit houstonballet.org.

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