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PRESENTS

PLAY

AN EVENT CELEBRATING HOUSTON'S RESILIENCE AFTER HURRICANE HARVEY

WHO: Houston Ballet

WHAT: *Play*

WHEN: Friday, June 8 at 7:30 PM • Saturday, June 9 at 7:30 PM • Sunday, June 10 at 2:00 PM

WHERE: General Assembly Hall at the George R. Brown Convention Center

TICKETS: On Sale Now at www.houstonballet.org or 713-227-ARTS(2787)

PHOTOS: <https://bit.ly/2wUeB9P>

VIDEO: <https://bit.ly/2lwM9My>

HOUSTON, TEXAS [May 21, 2018] — Houston Ballet presents the final mixed repertory program of the season, *Play*, an incredible, one-of-a-kind event celebrating the Houston community in an artistic response to the devastation of Hurricane Harvey. After such a historic natural disaster and the destruction it caused for the local community—including flooding Houston Ballet's Center For Dance and home venue, the Wortham Theater—Houston Ballet strives to transform a challenging situation into a positive artistic reaction as they approach the end of the Hometown Tour across the city. This immersive three-sided performance experience has been created specifically for the Hometown Tour's unique venue at the George R. Brown Convention Center's General Assembly Hall, with performances held **June 8-10**.

"Houston is a very resilient city. You can tell that about the fabric of this community by the way we all helped each other through Hurricane Harvey and returned to our lives as best we could so quickly. We shared this experience. We love this city. This is our reaction," said Stanton Welch AM, The Harris Masterson III Artistic Director.

The unprecedented event will include Stanton Welch's *Play* and a reimagined *Bolero Triptych*, and will showcase artistic collaborations with Houston's Poet Laureate, Deborah D.E.E.P. Mouton, and local performance poet Outspoken Bean who have created spoken-word pieces to be performed and premiered. Also premiering at this historic event will be a new work by three of Houston Ballet's own dancers: Oliver Halkowich, Melody Mennite, and Connor Walsh, and rounding out the celebratory evening will be the world premiere of Welch's *class*. The event's complete programming includes:

Play

Performed to Moby's iconic album, Welch's beloved *Play* is a contemporary commentary on the beauty in our daily routines.

-PLUS-

Bolero Triptych

Stanton Welch reimagines this sensational masterpiece for our unique venue as dancers perform to Ravel's famous score.

class

Welch's new work, embodying the grace of in-studio ballet, set to a selection from Bach's legendary "Goldberg Variations."

Revisit, Rebirth, Revolt

Houston's Poet Laureate, Deborah D.E.E.P. Mouton, performs a Hurricane Harvey-themed poem as Welch's choreography brings the reflection to life.

What the H Stands For

Acclaimed local poet Outspoken Bean brings his spoken-word talents to Welch's piece celebrating Houston's resilience.

What We Keep

Houston Ballet dancers Oliver Halkowich, Melody Mennite, and Connor Walsh choreograph a stunning new piece designed specifically for this immersive space.

#HBPlay • #HoustonsResilience • #HBStrong

Public Preview Event:

Learn more about this exciting, one-of-a-kind performance at Houston Ballet's FREE upcoming Dance Talk "Creating with the Community" on **Tuesday, May 29** at 7:00 PM at the Houston Ballet Center for Dance. Audiences will get a behind-the-scenes take on the production from Houston Ballet Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM and some of his collaborators, including performance poet Outspoken Bean and dancers Oliver Halkowich, Melody Mennite, and Connor Walsh.

Houston Ballet's performances of *Play* are made possible through the generosity of underwriters Leticia Loya and Hallie Vanderhider as well as corporate sponsors Sysco Corporation and Green Bank. Houston Ballet's 17/18 Season is generously sponsored by Houston Methodist, United Airlines, Tenenbaum Jewelers, and KPRC.

ABOUT HOUSTON BALLET

Houston Ballet has evolved into a company of 60 dancers with a budget of \$33 million, making it the country's fifth largest ballet company. With a state-of-the-art performance space built especially for the company—also the largest professional dance facility in America—Houston Ballet's \$46.6 million Center for Dance opened in April 2011, with an endowment of just over \$74.1 million (as of July 2017).

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 makers such as Christopher Bruce, Alexander Ekman, William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Trey McIntyre, Julia Adam, Edwaard Liang and George Balanchine. Executive Director James Nelson serves as the administrative leader of the company, a position he assumed in February 2012 after serving as the company's General Manager for more than a decade.

Houston Ballet has toured extensively both nationally and internationally. Over the past fifteen years, the company has appeared in renowned theaters in London, Paris, Moscow, Spain, Montréal, Ottawa, Melbourne, New York City, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and in cities large and small across the United States.

Houston Ballet's Education and Community Engagement Program reaches more than 60,000 individuals in the Houston area annually. Houston Ballet Academy teaches more than one thousand students every year, and approximately 50 percent of the current company was trained by the Academy.

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

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