

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jacalyn Lawton

Public Relations Manager

JLawton@houstonballet.org

Press@houstonballet.org



HOUSTON BALLET ANNOUNCES 2020 SUMMER INTENSIVE PROGRAM AUDITION TOUR

Houston, Texas [November 4, 2019] — Houston Ballet announces its international audition tour for its elite 2020 Summer Intensive Program. The six-week program is scheduled for June 15 – July 25, 2020 and held at Houston Ballet’s Center for Dance, the largest facility specifically built for professional dance in the United States.

Houston Ballet Academy is under the direction of Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM and Academy Director Melissa Bowman. Each year, the Academy trains more than 1,000 students while providing the highest quality ballet training for those enrolled.

“The Academy is the lifeblood of the organization, and we are pleased to have students from all over the world further their dance education with us in Houston,” says Welch.

Houston Ballet Academy produces the majority of Houston Ballet’s professional company members. Currently, 60 percent of the company dancers trained in the Academy. Of those dancers, 46 percent attended Houston Ballet’s Summer Intensive Program.

“Houston Ballet’s Summer Intensive Program solidified that this was absolutely the company I wanted to be a part of,” says Houston Ballet Soloist Hayden Stark.

Students in the Summer Intensive Program learn from distinguished faculty and guest artists, including current and former Houston Ballet dancers. Participants are fully engrossed in dance, with a class schedule comprised of ballet technique, pointe, a dedicated men’s class, classical variations, repertory, modern, jazz, character, musical theater, social dance, strength and conditioning, Yamuna Body Rolling and Pilates.

“Our summer intensive program features not only our outstanding faculty and renowned guest teachers in a world class facility, but we are handcrafting each level’s schedule in order to maximize every dancer’s training experience and help them reach their goals,” says Bowman.

Houston Ballet Academy creates a holistic learning environment by providing an on-site wellness team. Summer Intensive Program participants have access to an athletic trainer, strength and conditioning coach, nutritionist and nurse, among other wellness coaches.

The intensive culminates with the end of summer performances. Students experience performing for a live audience during a professionally produced performance in Houston Ballet's state-of-the-art Margaret Alkek Williams Dance Lab.

"Our final performances are an outstanding way for everyone to showcase all that they learned during the six weeks," says Bowman.

The experience goes beyond preparing students to become professional performers. Select students work with aspiring composers to choreographer original works through the long-standing collaboration with American Festival for the Arts. Throughout the summer, students immerse themselves in the city of Houston through excursions to sites such as NASA, Schlitterbahn Waterpark and the Museum of Natural Science. Their tuition even includes a ticket to watch their idols in action during a live performance at the Wortham Theater Center.

"Getting to rehearse pieces in the company's repertoire and seeing the company dancers perform first-hand inspired me to chase my dreams of joining Houston Ballet," says Stark.

Pre-registration for Houston Ballet's Summer Intensive Program audition is open [online](#), and the 21-city international audition tour commences in January 2020. Learn more about the following tour dates and locations by visiting houstonballet.org/academy.

Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020 San Diego
Sunday, Jan. 5, 2020 Seattle
Friday, Jan. 10, 2020 Boston
Saturday, Jan. 11, 2020 Philadelphia
Saturday, Jan. 11, 2020 Phoenix
Sunday, Jan. 12, 2020 Orange County
Sunday, Jan. 12, 2020 Silver Spring
Friday, Jan. 17, 2020 Indianapolis
Saturday, Jan. 18, 2020 Chicago
Saturday, Jan. 18, 2020 Houston
Sunday, Jan. 19, 2020 San Francisco
Sunday, Jan. 19, 2020 Sydney
Sunday, Jan. 19, 2020 Winston-Salem
Friday, Jan. 24, 2020 Boca Raton
Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020 New York
Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020 Tampa
Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020 Atlanta
Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020 Dallas-Fort Worth
Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020 Brisbane
Sunday, Feb. 2, 2020 Columbus
Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020 Houston
Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020 Denver

ABOUT HOUSTON BALLET

Celebrating 50 years of creativity, Houston Ballet has evolved from a Company of 16 dancers to one of 61 dancers 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.

###