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HOUSTON BALLET ANNOUNCES THE RETIREMENT OF PRINCIPAL DANCER JARED MATTHEWS

PHOTOS & VIDEO: <https://bit.ly/31NtExA>

HOUSTON, TEXAS [June 24, 2019] — Houston Ballet announces the retirement of Principal Dancer Jared Matthews at the end of its 2018/19 season. He took his final bows on the Wortham Theater Center stage during Stanton Welch’s *Marie* on Sunday, June 23 and departs to answer a new calling as the Assistant to the Artistic Director of Estonian National Ballet.

“I’ve had a great career,” says Matthews. “I’ve been very fortunate to work with some very wonderful people and wonderful partners. I’m looking forward to being in front of the room helping dancers achieve their goals and dreams, as my teachers and coaches did for me.”

Matthews spent five years with Houston Ballet. He joined the Company in 2014 as a First Soloist and was promoted to Principal after dancing the role of Lucentio in John Cranko’s *The Taming of the Shrew* on Saturday, June 20, 2015. He performed many beloved roles such as Basilio in *Don Quixote*, The Nutcracker Prince and Drosselmeyer in *The Nutcracker*, Prince Siegfried in *Swan Lake*, Romeo and Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* and Solar in *La Bayadere*.

A native to Houston, Matthews began classical ballet training at age 11 at the Ballet Center of Houston. He was part of the Studio Company of the American Ballet Theatre (ABT) in 2001. Shortly after, he was promoted to Corps de Ballet at ABT in 2002. He achieved the rank of Soloist at ABT in 2007, before joining Houston Ballet in 2014.

During his career, Matthews established himself as a global talent. Internationally, he appeared with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Prix de Lausanne Gala Japan, New National Ballet Gala and the Closing Gala of the Mariinsky Ballet Festival. Nationally, Matthews danced at the TITAS Gala, Santa Fe Dance Festival, West Virginia Dance Festival and the 2007 and 2008 Chicago Dancing Festival. He also performed a Pas de Deux from *Don Quixote* on So You Think You Can Dance. Some of his other repertoire highlights and favorites include Albrecht and Hilarion in *Giselle*, Camille in *The Merry Widow*, Lensky in *Onegin* and George Balanchine’s *Theme and Variations*.

Houston Ballet thanks Matthews for his time with the Company and sends its warmest wishes for his next chapter.

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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