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MEDIA CONTACT:

Elizabeth Sosa Bailey, Houston Ballet
ebailey@houstonballet.org
C: 832-236-3849

Angela Lee, Houston Ballet
alee@houstonballet.org
C: 832-244-2391



MAESTRO ERMANNO FLORIO TO CELEBRATE HIS FINAL SEASON AS HOUSTON BALLET'S MUSIC DIRECTOR IN THE UPCOMING 2023 – 2024 SEASON

PHOTOS: [\[Click Here\]](#)

HOUSTON, TX – June 20, 2023 – After 32 years as Music Director of Houston Ballet, Ermanno Florio will step down from his position at the end of the 2023 – 2024 season. Since joining Houston Ballet in 1992, Florio has been the Principal Conductor for every production – from the classics of Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, and Stravinsky to the many world premieres by Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM and other world-renowned contemporary choreographers.

"It has been a privilege and an honor to have led so many fine performances with the Houston Ballet Orchestra and to have accompanied the wonderful dancers of the Company for more than three decades," said Florio. "I will always treasure the many beautiful and memorable productions we have created together, and I am very proud to have played a part in the musical development and growth of our Orchestra. I feel fortunate to have worked closely with so many dedicated, talented colleagues. Although I'm stepping down as Music Director of Houston Ballet, I will continue with my international conducting career and look forward to the possibility of guest conducting with the Company in the years ahead."

Florio was appointed Music Director of the Houston Ballet in 1992. From 1998 to 2001, he also held the position of Music Director of the American Ballet Theatre. From 2004 to 2012, Florio was Music Director of Het Nationale Ballet in Amsterdam and continues as principal guest conductor with the Company. The highly versatile Florio has impressed both audiences and critics in the world's major centers and maintains an active conducting schedule which has included extensive engagements with major ballet companies all over the world, including New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, Vienna, Berlin, Amsterdam, Milan, Rome, Zurich, and Geneva.

Florio's extensive discography includes video releases of critically acclaimed performances of *Don Quichotte* with L'Orchestre de L'Opera National de Paris, which won the Cannes Classical Music Award for Best DVD in the category of Concert and Ballet Recordings, and *Le Corsaire* with American Ballet Theatre, which won an Emmy for Outstanding Classical Program in the Performing

Arts. Florio's numerous music arrangements include Houston Ballet's very own *Marie* and *La Bayadère* choreographed by Stanton Welch.

“Under his extraordinary musical leadership, Ermanno has been able to bring dancers and musicians closer together and thrill Houston’s audiences with his artistry,” said Artistic Director Stanton Welch AM. “His collaboration with all has resulted in continuous wonderful performances and contributed greatly to our company’s artistic success, all while helping to build the reputation of Houston as one of the greatest cities in the world for art. He is an exceptional musician, conductor and collaborator. I am forever grateful for having had the opportunity to work with him over the last two decades.”

ABOUT HOUSTON BALLET

With more than 50 years of rich history, Houston Ballet has evolved into a company of 61 dancers, with a budget of \$34.6 million and an endowment of \$88.9 million (as of June 2022), making it the country's fourth-largest ballet company. Its \$46.6 million state-of-the-art performance space, the Houston Ballet Margaret Alkek Williams Center for Dance, opened in April 2011. In addition, 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, Tokyo 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 George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Frederick Ashton, and John Neumeier. 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 annually reaches more than 169,000 individuals in the Houston area. Houston Ballet Academy trains more than 1,000 students annually, producing more than 60 percent of the elite athletes comprising Houston Ballet's current Company.

For more information on Houston Ballet, visit houstonballet.org

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