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**BALLETX'S *SUNSET, o639 HOURS* TO MAKE A RETURN FLIGHT
FOR 2016-17 SEASON-OPENING PERFORMANCES**

WHAT: BalletX, Philadelphia's Premier Contemporary Ballet, will reprise *Sunset, o639 Hours* for the launch of its 11th Season at The Wilma Theater in Philadelphia, including 7 performances, November 16-20, 2016. *Sunset, o639 Hours* is a full-length ballet that has traveled the United States since its world premiere, playing such dance venues and festivals as Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Vail International Dance Festival and the Joyce Theater in NYC.

"We have toured *Sunset* to some of the most prestigious venues. It's simply extraordinary and a must-see event for the entire family," says Christine Cox, Co-Founder, Artistic and Executive Director, BalletX.

Sunset, o639 Hours is a co-creation featuring choreography by Matthew Neenan (BalletX Co-Founder) and compositions by Rosie Langabeer (acclaimed New Zealand musician). The full-length world premiere debuted in Philadelphia in the summer of 2014 to sold-out houses and critical acclaim, with *The New York Times* describing the experience as "beautifully elegiac, taking us into the hearts of people who lived decades ago." Inspired by the true story of Captain Edwin Musick – an American pilot who completed the first airmail service between the U.S. and New Zealand in 1938, only to perish tragically on a subsequent delivery – *Sunset, o639 Hours* reimagines this long forgotten story through innovative choreography and an era-defining score, which was co-written by Langabeer and fellow musician Andrew Mars.

The compelling compositions use invented instruments by Neil Feather to weave together original 1930's inspired songs, field tapes, and archival recordings from Musick's flights, which create a world that transports the audience into the lives of the Captain and his crew. Brilliant lighting design by Drew Billiau, timeless costumes by Christine Darch, and enthralling sound design by Nick Kourtides complement inventive sets by Maiko Matsushima to transform the theater into another world. Neenan's signature choreographic flare personifies the characters, objects, and landscape of the story, creating a touching tale of adventure and risk that represents the future of the story ballet in today's ever-changing dance landscape. With a cast of ten dancers and four musicians, the production's unique collaborative nature and magical storytelling has continued to make an impact on dance audiences and critics since its debut.

Sunset, o639 Hours has been applauded in the press for its "untraditional story" (*Vail Daily*), "breezily inventive choreography" (*The New York Times*), "full-throttled" dance (*The Boston Globe*), and musical score "laced with jazzy tunes and Hawaiian beats as well as the hums of wildlife and roars of engines" (*Huffington Post*). As stated by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, the ballet is "one of the finest works created in the company's first decade."

For a closer look at *Sunset o639 Hours*' production, BalletX invites audiences to various audience engagement programming events, known as the *X-Process*. Starting with a pre-show *Conversations with the Artists* on opening night, audiences are also welcome to attend a post-show *Q&A with the Artists* on November 17, and the company's inaugural *Family Day*, a children-friendly matinee on November 19. *Family Day* will include tickets to the ballet and a pre-show "Bird Exploration" assembly by the Philadelphia Zoo that emphasizes the Pacific wildlife reflected in the music, sound score, and choreography. Participants in *Family Day* will also receive discounts at local community partners, including The Franklin Institute and restaurants Matt and Marie's and Sweet Charlie's.

Tickets to *Sunset, 0639 Hours*, are available through The Wilma Theater box office, over the phone at 215-546-7824, and online at <http://www.balletx.org/>.

VISUALS: Critically acclaimed choreography, music, and performances

WHO: Christine Cox (Co-Founder, Artistic & Executive Director), Matthew Neenan (Co-Founder, Choreographer), Rosie Langabeer (composer, musician), BalletX dancers, Christine Darch (costume designer), Drew Billiau (lighting designer), Maiko Matsushima (set designer), Nick Kourtides (sound designer), Neil Feather (sound mechanic, instrument maker) and The Sunset Club (musicians and co-composers) featuring Rosie Langabeer, Joshua Machiz, Andrew Mars, and Isaac Stanford

WHEN and WHERE:

Fall Series 2016, November 16-20 at The Wilma Theater

Wednesday, Nov. 16, 8:00pm

Thursday, Nov. 17, 8:00pm

Friday, Nov. 18, 8:00pm

Saturday, Nov. 19, 2:00pm

Saturday, Nov. 19, 8:00pm

Sunday, Nov. 20, 2:00pm

Sunday, Nov. 20, 7:00pm

About BalletX: BalletX unites world-class choreographers with an outstanding company of professional dancers to forge new works of athleticism, emotion, and grace. Through the daring vision of its award-winning founders, Christine Cox and Matthew Neenan, BalletX challenges the boundaries of classical ballet by encouraging formal experimentation while preserving rigorous technique. The company is committed to producing new works of the highest quality and integrity that bring the combined visions of choreographers and dancers to life, while cultivating in audiences a collective appetite for bold new dance. For more information, visit www.balletx.org.