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BALLETX ANNOUNCES 2016-17 SEASON FEATURING CHOREOGRAPHY FROM AROUND THE WORLD

WHAT: BalletX, Philadelphia's Premier Contemporary Ballet, unveils its 2016-17 Season. Following a decade of world premiere work in Philadelphia, paired with consistent national touring, which most recently included residencies at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Vail International Dance Festival, and The Joyce Theater, BalletX has emerged as "a place of choreographic innovation," according to *The New Yorker*, and "one of the country's primary producers of new ballet," as stated in *The Denver Post*. The 2016-17 Season includes four series in Philadelphia, three at The Wilma Theater – *Fall Series 2016* (Nov. 16-20), *Winter Series 2017* (Feb. 10-19), *Spring Series 2017* (Apr. 26-30) – and *Summer Series 2017* (July 12-16) at the Prince Theater, while the Wilma undergoes renovations in July of 2017.

"I am truly excited about our next season because we have an eclectic range of choreographic voices, telling stories in new and different ways," says Christine Cox, Artistic and Executive Director, and co-founder.

BalletX kicks off its 11th Season with *Fall Series 2016* at the Wilma, featuring full-length ballet *Sunset, 0639 Hours* by Matthew Neenan (choreographer and BalletX co-founder) and Rosie Langabeer (New Zealand composer and musicologist). Praised by *Philadelphia Weekly* for taking "Philly dance to heights it's never experienced before," by *The Boston Globe* for making "perfect, poetic sense," and by *The New York Times* for its "heightened, imaginary tone," this full-length ballet interprets the dramatic, true story of pilot Edwin Musick's fateful 1938 airmail flight across the Pacific in a story of love, loss, and adventure. In addition to poetic and imaginative choreography, *Sunset, 0639 Hours* features live music by The Sunset Club, radical and unusual musical instruments by Baltimore based sound mechanic Neil Feather, and dreamlike lights, staging, and costumes. In the years since its 2014 premiere, this critically acclaimed work has continued to win over audiences as it's toured to prestigious venues and festivals around the country.

Winter Series 2017 at the Wilma will feature a world premiere by internationally renowned Norwegian choreographer Jo Strømngren, whose work has been performed by companies in over 45 countries, including Vienna State Opera Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, and Ballett Nürnberg. Delving into the Smithsonian Archives, Strømngren's world premiere will take inspiration from traditional American music, delivered with his signature "absurd humor" (*Critical Dance*). BalletX will also premiere a new work by former dancer R. Colby Damon, whose choreography has been featured by Opera Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Ballet II, and Brazil's Vivadança Festival. Completing *Winter Series* is the East Coast premiere of Matthew Neenan's *Credo*. Originally premiered at the 2016 Vail International Dance Festival, as part of the *NOW: Premieres* program, Neenan's *Credo* was declared "the last and best premiere of the evening" by *The New York Times*.

With support from the Wyncote Foundation, BalletX's Choreographic Fellowship is an opportunity for emerging artists to develop their craft under the mentorship of established choreographers. 2017's Choreographic Fellowship will coincide with BalletX's *Spring Series* at the Wilma, featuring world premieres by 2017 Choreographic Fellow Tommie-Waheed Evans and mentor Cayetano Soto. Praised for his "stunning originality" (*The Huffington Post*), Spanish choreographer Cayetano Soto is known for his highly technical and intense choreography. He has premiered work at such companies as Nederlands Dans Theater, Ballet BC, and Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. Tommie-Waheed Evans has worked as both a principal dancer and artist-in-residence with PHILADANCO!. His choreography infuses jazz with classical dance, investigating themes of social justice and his own African American culture. For *Spring Series*, BalletX will also reprise Jorma Elo's *Gran Partita*, which

drew inspiration from Orson Welles' film-noir classic *Touch of Evil*, and originally premiered on the company in 2014.

Summer Series at the Prince is noteworthy for its alternative location, a world premiere work by Matthew Neenan, select repertory by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and the eclectic music chosen by choreographer Jodie Gates. Jodie Gates is the Director and Vice Dean of Gloria Kaufman School of Dance at the University of Southern California, as well as the Founder and Artistic Director of Laguna Dance Festival. Her world premiere will feature the music of Son Lux, who has been named "Best New Artist" by NPR, and has risen to prominence after collaborations with indie artists Lorde and Sufjan Stevens, hip hop artist Serengeti, and the Stephen Petronio Dance Company. Matthew Neenan's world premiere will explore themes of communication, conflict, and justice in America, advancing the national conversation on ballet's role in contemporary society. *Summer Series 2017* will also feature the return of *Castrati* (2011) by award-winning choreographer Annabelle Lopez Ochoa. Reflecting on the phenomenon of castrated singers in Italy during the 16th-18th century, *Castrati* has been hailed as "tour de force" ballet by the *Broad Street Review*.

Season subscriptions and single tickets to the first three series are available online at <http://www.balletx.org/>, by phone at 215-546-7824, or in person at the Wilma box office at 265 S. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107. Season subscriptions include *Fall*, *Winter*, and *Spring Series*. Due to renovations at the Wilma, *Summer Series 2017* will be held at the Prince Theater, and is available separately as a single ticket online at <http://www.princetheater.org>, over the phone at 215-422-4580, or through the Prince box office at 1412 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

VISUALS: World premiere choreography and performances

WHO: Christine Cox, Matthew Neenan, Tara Keating, BalletX dancers, Jo Strømgren, R. Colby Damon, Cayetano Soto, Tommie-Waheed Evans, Jodie Gates, Jorma Elo, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Neil Feather, and The Sunset Club featuring Rosie Langabeer, Andrew Mars, Joshua Machiz, 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

Winter Series 2017, February 10-19 at The Wilma Theater

Friday, Feb. 10, 8:00pm

Saturday, Feb. 11, 2:00pm

Saturday, Feb. 11, 8:00pm

Sunday, Feb. 12, 2:00pm

Tuesday, Feb. 14, 8:00pm

Wednesday, Feb. 15, 8:00pm

Thursday, Feb. 16, 8:00pm

Friday, Feb. 17, 8:00pm

Saturday, Feb. 18, 2:00pm

Saturday, Feb. 18, 8:00pm

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2:00pm

Spring Series 2017, April 26-30 at The Wilma Theater

Wednesday, Apr. 26, 8:00pm

Thursday, Apr. 27, 8:00pm

Friday, Apr. 28, 8:00pm

Saturday, Apr. 29, 2:00pm

Saturday, Apr. 29, 8:00pm

Sunday, Apr. 30, 2:00pm

Sunday, Apr. 30, 7:00pm

Summer Series 2017, July 12-16 at the Prince Theater

Wednesday, July 12, 8:00pm

Thursday, July 13, 8:00pm

Friday, July 14, 8:00pm

Saturday, July 15, 2:00pm

Saturday, July 15, 8:00pm

Sunday, July 16, 2:00pm

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.