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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **BalletX Announces 2017-18 Choreographic Fellowship Winner Andrew McNicol And Mentor Matthew Neenan**

**WHAT:** BalletX announces Andrew McNicol as the winner of the company's 2017-18 Choreographic Fellowship. BalletX Co-founder Matthew Neenan will serve as this year's mentor.

Each year, BalletX and a panel of dance leaders from around the country select a fellow from a very competitive field of national and international applicants for the company's Choreographic Fellowship Program. Generously supported by the Wyncote Foundation and entering its third year in the 17/18 Season, the program serves as a unique opportunity for emerging choreographers to set an original work on BalletX's ten dancers with guidance by a highly acclaimed mentor. Both mentor and fellow will create new works for BalletX, to be premiered at the company's forthcoming *Summer Series* at The Wilma Theater in Philadelphia, July 11-22, 2018.

"I enjoy the opportunity to see so many talented choreographers' work from around the world in our Choreographic Fellowship application process," says Christine Cox, BalletX Co-Founder, Artistic and Executive Director. "This year we have selected Andrew McNicol because of his extraordinary ability to develop fresh new movement styles that are based in ballet while challenging the art form. I'm intrigued by his use of space, and the way he has developed interesting material for women in pointe shoes," says Cox.

British choreographer Andrew McNicol began his choreographic work while studying at The Royal Ballet, where he won the Kenneth MacMillan choreographic competition. He then went on to receive his Master of the Arts with Distinction through Ballet Central's Professional Choreographic Programme. McNicol has had the opportunity to choreograph for well-known companies and organizations such as The Royal Ballet of Flanders, Birmingham Royal Ballet, The London Olympics, and New English Ballet Theatre. He has also created work for The New York Choreographic Institute, an affiliate of New York City Ballet. In 2017 he embarked on a new endeavor with his recently launched project, The McNicol Ballet Collective. He aims to connect collaborators and dancers from companies across Europe to create new, experimental works from the collective experiences of the artists.

This will be Matthew Neenan's first year as the mentor. "I look forward to having a meaningful camaraderie with the Choreographic Fellow," says Neenan. "Ultimately, I want their vision to shine through, so it's important that they feel comfortable bouncing ideas off of me for my input. If they encounter any unexpected challenges, I'm there to provide perspective and support," he concludes. Since co-founding BalletX with Christine Cox in 2005, Neenan's choreography has risen to national acclaim. *The New York Times* has described Neenan as "one of the most appealing and singular choreographic voices in ballet today." He has created work on such prestigious companies as Pennsylvania Ballet, Ballet West, Oregon Ballet Theatre, and Washington Ballet. His 2014 BalletX masterpiece, *Sunset, o639 Hours*, has toured to venues across the country, including Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Vail International Dance Festival, and The Joyce Theater, and was named in *The Boston Globe's* "top 10 of the year in dance."

To attend McNicol and Neenan's world premieres, join BalletX for *Summer Series 2018* at The Wilma Theater, July 11-22. Also on the program is a world premiere collaboration by Penny Saunders and composer Rosie Langabeer. Tickets are available online at [www.balletx.org](http://www.balletx.org), by phone at [\(215\) 546-7824](tel:2155467824).

**VISUALS:** Contemporary ballet, music, costumes, stage production

**WHO:** Christine Cox, Tara Keating, BalletX dancers, Matthew Neenan, Penny Saunders, Rosie Langabeer, and 2017-18 Choreographic Fellow, Andrew McNicol

**WHERE and WHEN:** The Wilma Theater, 265 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

Wednesday, July 11 at 8:00 PM

The X-Process Conversations with the Artists, 7:00pm

Thursday, July 12 at 8:00 PM

The X-Process Post-Show Q&A with Choreographers

Friday, July 13 at 8:00 PM

Saturday, July 14 at 2:00 PM

Saturday, July 14 at 8:00 PM

Sunday, July 15 at 2:00 PM

Wednesday, July 18 at 8:00 PM

Thursday, July 19 at 8:00 PM

Young Xers Night, 7:00pm

Friday, July 20 at 8:00 PM

Saturday, July 21 at 2:00 PM

Saturday, July 21 at 8:00 PM

Sunday, July 22 at 2:00 PM

**ABOUT:**

BalletX, Philadelphia's premier contemporary ballet, unites distinguished choreographers with an outstanding company of world-class dancers to forge new works of athleticism, emotion, and grace. Founded in 2005 by Christine Cox and Matthew Neenan, and now under the direction of Cox as Artistic & Executive Director, 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 and cultivate in audiences a collective appetite for bold, new dance. For more information, visit [www.balletx.org](http://www.balletx.org).