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MEDIA ALERT

BalletX Welcomes Memphis Jookin Dance Superstar Lil Buck to Philadelphia, April 16-20, for the Company's First Collaboration in its New Home—the Center for World Premiere Choreography

WHAT:

BalletX, Philadelphia's premier contemporary ballet company, welcomes Memphis jookin' dance superstar Lil Buck to Philadelphia, April 16-20, for the company's first major collaboration in its new home, the **Center for World Premiere Choreography** at 1923 Washington Avenue. Lil Buck will be creating a new work on the company to premiere at the Vail Dance Festival (VDF) in the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater on August 11 in a co-commission by Damian Woetzel, VDF's Artistic Director and President of The Juilliard School, and Christine Cox, Artistic & Executive Director of BalletX.

"Lil Buck exemplifies the kind of innovative collaboration that is possible in contemporary ballet," says Cox. "His exclusive performance at our annual gala last year was a real hit. We can't wait to build on that collaboration and take it to a wider audience."

Charles "Lil Buck" Riley is a Los Angeles-based dancer and model from Memphis, Tennessee. He specializes in jookin' and often ventures into another style of street dance called popping, as well as ballet. Lil Buck has performed with Madonna at Super Bowl XLVI and on her 2012 MDNA World Tour, and he appeared in the Cirque du Soleil show *Michael Jackson: One*. His iconic *iPhone 7* and *Lexus* commercials have established widespread recognition of his unique dance style, and his collaborations with Mikhail Baryshnikov, Benjamin Millepied, and Damian Woetzel have generated crossover appeal in the ballet world. In collaboration with Miami popping star Jon Boogz, he recently created and is touring the country in his first evening-length show, *Love Heals All Wounds* – a work addressing police brutality, mass incarceration, gender and racial equality through dance and poetry. In a recent *New York Times* piece covering the show, Lil Buck said, "There is a solution and a way out of this: love."

The press is invited to cover rehearsals and schedule interviews through Josh Olmstead, BalletX Marketing and PR Specialist, at jolmstead@balletx.org or 215-225-5389 ext. 104 (office) / 267-303-6831 (mobile).

WHERE: BalletX at the Center for World Premiere Choreography, 1923 Washington Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19146

WHEN: April 16-20, 2018

PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES: World premiere choreography, dance, rehearsal, creative process

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES: Christine Cox, Tara Keating, BalletX Dancers, Lil Buck

ABOUT BalletX: 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. Since the company's founding, BalletX has expanded its repertoire to include 65 world premieres by over 30 internationally renowned artists, including Matthew Neenan, Jodie Gates, Trey McIntyre, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and Darrell Grand Moultrie. BalletX presents three annual performance series as the resident dance company of The Wilma Theater in Philadelphia and has performed at such prestigious festivals as Vail Dance Festival in Colorado, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Massachusetts, and The Joyce Theater and City Center in New York City. April 20, 2018 marks the soft opening of BalletX's Center for World Premiere Choreography, the company's new 5,000 square foot studio and administrative home in Philadelphia. Conceived as a place of innovation, creation, inclusion, and education, BalletX's Center for World Premiere Choreography sets the stage for the company's next decade of dance making. For more information, visit www.balletx.org.

BalletX thanks lead season supporters, the William Penn Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, David Haas, Janet & Jim Averill, Al Palmer, Neal Krouse & Liz Knudsen, Barra Foundation, Fierce Advocacy Fund, Michael Soojian & Terry McKissick, Richard & Anna Marie Grossman, Jane Pepper, and Linda & David Glickstein.