



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA ALERT

BalletX Fall Series Presents 3 World Premieres by International Choreographers Marguerite Donlon, Wubkje Kuindersma, and Cayetano Soto

WHAT:

BalletX, Philadelphia's premier contemporary ballet, kicks off its 2018-19 season with *Fall Series 2018* at The Wilma Theater, featuring 12 performances, Nov. 28 - Dec. 9. The company, led by Artistic & Executive Director Christine Cox, will perform three world premieres by international choreographers Marguerite Donlon, Wubkje Kuindersma, and Cayetano Soto. Mark Stanley of the New York City Ballet returns as lighting designer of the *Fall Series*, with costumes by Christine Darch, Mark Eric and Stephen Smith, and original music by Dirk Haubrich, plus a variety of classical and modern selections.

"I am thrilled by the international spirit of our *Fall Series*. We are welcoming choreographers from three countries," says Cox. "I think it's an especially important time to remember world unity, and I look forward to the diverse choreographic voices and worldviews of our visiting artists this fall."

Marguerite Donlon's World Premiere *The Last Lifeboat* tells the true-life story of her grand-aunt, Katherine Gilnagh, who at the age of sixteen survived the sinking of the Titanic thanks to the courageous rescue of James Farrell – a fellow passenger who did not make it off the ship. Featuring a recording of Gilnagh's firsthand account interwoven into original music by Dirk Haubrich, *The Last Lifeboat* is part of a larger narrative about emigration and the will to live. Donlon is an Irish-born choreographer based in Berlin. She danced professionally before serving as the ballet director of Donlon Dance Company at Saarländisches Staatstheater from 2001-2013. As a choreographer, she's created on dance companies worldwide, including the Stuttgart Ballet, Berlin Ballet, and Bolshoi Ballet. *The Huffington Post* has praised her "wit, humor, and playfulness" and ability to portray characters that are "living, breathing human being[s]" in her choreography.

In *Yonder: a Skype ballet*, her first World Premiere on a U.S. company, **Wubkje Kuindersma** imagines the horizon as a place where hopes and dreams live. Hailing from the Netherlands – where nearly a third of the country sits below sea level – Kuindersma contemplates in *Yonder* various obstacles, such as rising sea levels, which threaten our reaching the horizon. Life began imitating art when visa issues delayed Kuindersma's arrival in Philadelphia to begin work with BalletX. Rather than lose time on the project, BalletX and Kuindersma devised an innovative solution, undertaking much of the early phase of *Yonder* via Skype. Soon the travel hurdle proved to be a welcome catalyst for the project's underlying theme of perseverance in pursuit of a distant horizon, with "Skype" even finding its way into the title of the work. Kuindersma had a successful career as a dancer with several prestigious companies before pursuing choreography in 2009. Since then Kuindersma has been called a "new name to watch" and recognized for creating dance that expresses "intimacy with a light touch" (*Financial Times*). Her work has appeared on a number of companies, including Dantzaz, Danish Dance Theatre, and Dutch National Ballet.

Cayetano Soto won over BalletX audiences in recent years with his ballets *Malasangre* and *Schachmatt*. He returns for his first World Premiere on the company with *Napoleon/Napoleon*, a work that pokes satirical fun at the phenomenon of children and adults behaving in society as emperors. Soto is widely celebrated for extremely athletic, high-wire, and precise choreography, exuding a "physical comic magic" (*Huffington Post*) and "nonstop parade of fun" (*Georgia Straight*) even when addressing more serious subject matter. The Barcelona-based choreographer's work has been performed on companies around the world, including Royal Ballet of Flanders, Balé da Cidade de São Paulo, and Companhia Nacional de Bailado. His ballet *ADASTRA* was recently featured in a six-episode documentary broadcast on Arte 1 Brazil, and nominated for *Best Dance Performance of the Year* by the São Paulo press. In 2017, he served as mentor to BalletX's Choreographic Fellow Tommie-Waheed Evans.

The 12-performance *Fall Series* also invites audiences deeper into the world of contemporary ballet through *Conversations with the Artists*, an X-Process opening night pre-show panel with the choreographers. On Dec. 6, BalletX will host Young

Xers Night, a pre-show cocktail reception and after-party for young dance lovers and professionals.

Single tickets to *Fall Series* and subscriptions to BalletX's 2018-19 Season are available now online, by phone, and in-person at The Wilma Theater box office.

Online: <https://www.balletx.org/fall-series-2018/>

Phone: 215-546-7824

In-person: 265 S. Broad Street. Phila, PA

WHERE: The Wilma Theater, 265 S. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

WHEN: Wednesday, Nov. 28, 8pm
• Pre-Show Q&A with Artistic Collaborators, 7:00PM
Thursday, Nov. 29, 8pm
Friday, Nov. 30, 8pm
Saturday, Dec. 1, 2pm
Saturday, Dec. 1, 8pm
Sunday, Dec. 2, 2pm
Wednesday, Dec. 5, 8pm
Thursday, Dec. 6, 8pm
• Young Xers Night, 7:00PM
Friday, Dec. 7, 8pm
Saturday, Dec. 8, 2pm
Saturday, Dec. 8, 8pm
Sunday, Dec. 9, 2pm

PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES: World premiere choreography, dance, stage production, and music

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES: Christine Cox, Tara Keating, Marguerite Donlon, Wubkje Kuindersma, Cayetano Soto, BalletX Dancers

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 68 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 2018 marked the 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.

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