



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BalletX Festival at the
Mann - Showcasing
Community & Power of
Dance**

BalletX presents an outdoor dance festival at the Mann Center celebrating dance, live music, and community from April 26 - 27, with Premiere Party April 24 honoring Catherine M. Cahill and Susan J. Campbell

PHILADELPHIA (April 4, 2024) – [BalletX](#), Philadelphia's premier contemporary ballet company, returns to TD Pavilion at the Mann on **April 26-27, 2024**, for its expanded outdoor series now transformed into ***BalletX Festival at the Mann***. What began in years past as an spring performance series has blossomed into a full festival, celebrating the power of dance and community, highlighting local organizations and

partners in an unforgettable weekend of dance, live music, and art against the backdrop of the Philadelphia skyline. Building on its reputation for innovation and community engagement, the festival promises immersive experiences. Renowned choreographers, Natasha Adorlee, Takehiro Ueyama, and Jamar Roberts will bring performances each married with live music by grammy-nominated singer Jac Ross, Kato Hideki, and ensemble132. Before the dance takes the mainstage, guests can expect an unforgettable celebration of creativity, diversity, and the vibrant spirit of Philadelphia with performances by eleven community groups performing across the Mann's campus. To open the series, BalletX will host The Premier Party, its annual fundraising gala honoring Catherine M. Cahill and Susan J. Campbell for their longtime support of BalletX and the arts and culture sector in Philadelphia.

"BalletX returns to TD Pavilion at the Mann for another year of showcasing the incredible talent and spirit of Philadelphia," stated **Christine Cox, Co-Founder, Artistic & Executive Director of BalletX**. "This festival is not just about the performances - both contemporary dance and live music - on stage; it's about bringing our community together to celebrate the power of dance and art to unite us all. We are especially grateful for the support of our community partners and organizations who help make this event possible, as well as our dedicated team who work

hard to ensure that the arts remain accessible to everyone in Philadelphia."

Headlining the main stage of the festival will be pieces and choreographers including:

- Emmy award winning choreographer Natasha Adorlee will present *Got Soul* with live music by Grammy-nominated singer Jac Ross **World Premiere**

Natasha Adorlee is an Emmy Award-winning choreographer, filmmaker, composer, and Artistic Director of Concept 04 who has collaborated with Pixar Animation, National Geographic, and The New Yorker, among many others. Her world premiere embodies the timeless melodies of soul music, with hits by Sam Cooke and Otis Redding performed live by Grammy-nominated singer Jac Ross.

- Choreographer Takehiro Ueyama presents *Heroes* (2019) with live music by composer Kato Hideki

Set to the evocative score of John Adams' *The Chairman Dances*, *Heroes* is inspired by the resilience of post-World War II Japan, Ueyama's piece is a testament to dedication and perseverance in the face of adversity. Ueyama, a former dancer with

Paul Taylor Dance Company and founder of TAKE Dance, infuses his choreography with depth and emotion, promising an unforgettable performance.

- Choreographer Jamar Roberts' presents *Eros & Psyche* (2023) set to the captivating music of Philip Glass and performed by ensemble132

Returning by popular demand is *Eros & Psyche*. Roberts describes his work, saying, “In Greek mythology the goddess Eros is the personification of love and desire, and the god Psyche personified the human soul or spirit. This work is inspired by the characteristics of the two. Embodying the rhapsodic feeling of when heart and soul unite.”

Before the performances on the main stage, BalletX invites guests to come picnic and enjoy a family-friendly pre-show celebration featuring performances by local dance companies and young, aspiring dancers, including:

- Esperanza Dance Ensemble
- BalletX Dance Fellows
- BalletX Dance eXchange Dream Team
- Bucks County Dance Center
- Metropolitan Ballet
- I.M. Dance Academy

- Gwendolyn Bye Dance fusion2
- Living Arts Dance
- Philadelphia Dance Academy
- Dance Stop Dance Education Center
- and Philadelphia School of Circus Arts.

“Being part of the pre-show performances at The Mann is a genuine privilege for the Dance Stop dancers. It's a remarkable experience to showcase their talents in such a spectacular setting, surrounded by an audience that truly appreciates the beauty of the arts,” stated **Gina Forcella, Director and Owner of Dance Stop Dance Education Center.** “The added dream-come-true moment of sharing the day with the BalletX company elevates the excitement and inspiration for our dancers. This opportunity not only reflects the dedication of the Dance Stop in providing valuable experiences but also exposes our performers to the prestigious world of the arts. It's a proud moment that resonates with the core values of our dance community.”

“Our organization is thrilled to participate in the Festival at the Mann because it provides a unique platform to showcase our passion for dance and connect with a diverse audience. We are excited about the opportunity to celebrate creativity, foster community engagement, and contribute to the vibrant atmosphere of the Festival,” stated **Ashley Rivera, Dance Instructor of Esperanza Youth Troupe.**

“PSCA Youth Troupe is thrilled to participate in the BalletX Festival for the incredible opportunity to collaborate with other local arts organizations and to perform in a beautiful venue,” **stated Elliott Gittelsohn, Director of PSCA Youth Troupe.** “We are proud to showcase our creativity and skills for the greater Philadelphia community and encourage people to expand their ideas of what is possible in performance.”

Prior to the festival, BalletX will host their annual fundraising gala, the Premier Party, on **Wednesday, April 24 at the Mann.** Guests can expect to enjoy cocktails, dinner, and dancing, not to mention special world premieres by the BalletX dancers. The annual celebration of BalletX’s community will honor Catherine M. Cahill and Susan J. Campbell for their significant contributions to the arts community in Philadelphia and beyond. To purchase tickets please visit balletx.org/premierparty.

About the 2024 The Premier Party honorees:

- **Catherine M. Cahill**

A catalyst in Philadelphia's arts and culture community, Catherine M. Cahill brought her leadership experience with major arts and culture organizations to the Mann Center for the Performing Arts when she became President & CEO in 2008. Since then, she

has transformed the Mann's business model, exponentially increased the Man's impact in the community, and has overseen three major capital campaigns. Prior to her role at the Mann, Cahill served as CEO at the Brooklyn Philharmonic, Executive Director of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, General Manager of the New York Philharmonic, and Festival & Artistic Director of Chicago's waterfront Grant Park Music Festival. A trained cellist, she earned a Bachelor of Music at Temple University and then a Master of Science in Arts Administration/Arts Management at Drexel University. She began her career as a Management Fellow of the American Symphony Orchestra League (ASOL, 1983-1984), working with a variety of major orchestras across the country.

- **Susan J. Campbell**

Susan is a lifelong lover of ballet who choreographed her first ballet in 3rd grade and has been following the ballet world avidly ever since from the many locations she has lived. She has a finance/accounting background, working many years in the field for Deloitte and others. She shares her time between Beaver Creek, Colorado, and New York City. She has chaired the Vail Dance Festival since 2018 and sits on the Board,

and Executive Committee of the Vail Valley Foundation, which is how she became a fan and supporter of Ballet. Susan sits on the Board and Executive Committee of the New York City Ballet and supports many other dance organizations including Ballet Collective, SF Dance Works, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Simkin Studios, and Dance Lab NY. She is always looking to support and nurture promising choreographers and organizations that are helping to keep ballet relevant and moving forward in today's world. Her husband Jeff sits on the Lincoln Center and Juilliard Boards, so Arts is truly a family affair.

BalletX's Festival at the Mann 2024 will run approximately 100 minutes, including one intermission. For tickets, student discounts, and more information, contact the BalletX Box Office at 215-225-5389 x250 or boxoffice@balletx.org. More information is also available at balletx.org/festival.

****Note for media: Covering media interested in attending the Mann Festival or advanced interview, please contact: tday@signature57.com ****

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About BalletX

Based in Philadelphia, BalletX is one of the nation's premier contemporary ballet companies, known for commissioning choreographers from around the world to create new ballets that are “fresh, inclusive, and connect to what people want” (Philadelphia Citizen). Led by Artistic & Executive Director Christine Cox, BalletX has been recognized by The New Yorker as a “place of choreographic innovation” producing nearly 130 world premiere ballets and films by more than 70 choreographers in its 18-year history. In addition to virtual works, main-stage performances and international touring, the company offers free community pop ups, dance classes, artist Q&As, open rehearsals and in-school dance education designed to inspire human connection through dance. To learn more about BalletX's programming and dancers, visit BalletX.org and follow the company on social media.

About Natasha Adorlee

Natasha Adorlee is an Emmy Award-winning choreographer, filmmaker, composer, and educator in San Francisco, CA. A first-generation Asian American woman, she is currently the Artistic Fellow with Amy Seiwert's Imagery. Natasha began

choreographing in 2014 while maintaining an award-winning dance career with Robert Moses' Kin, ODC/Dance, Kate Weare and Co., and the San Francisco Symphony. After winning over ten international awards for her acclaimed short film "Take Your Time" in 2018, she has been a sought-after filmmaker, choreographer, and composer ever since. After attending SUNY Purchase and graduating from UC Berkeley, Natasha was invited to join ODC/Dance. As a performer, Natasha has danced a vast repertoire of works and contributed original choreography, sound design, and art direction to over 20+ ODC/Dance repertory works.

In addition, Natasha has created over 20 original dance-based works- spanning stage, film, and immersive performance mediums. Most recently, she was commissioned to create for Joffrey Ballet's Winning Works, Ceprodac (Mexico), Kawaguchi Ballet (Japan), Ballare Carmel, Ballet22, and Imagery. In addition to working for dance companies, Natasha has created original work for Pixar Animation Studios, Oculus, National Geographic, and New Yorker Magazine. Natasha founded [Concept 04](#) to create multimedia dance-based experiences advocating for more accessibility to the arts. Awarded an NEA Grant, Dresher Fellowship, and Jacob's Pillow Choreographic Fellowship in 2023 and a Kansas City Ballet and Groundworks Dance Theatre commission in 2024, Natasha is pursuing a prolific

creation period while sharing her deep knowledge of movement and film with the greater community through Dance on Camera workshops. She is also an Artistic Advisor for Ballet22.

About Takehiro Ueyama

Born and raised in Tokyo, Japan, Takehiro “Take” Ueyama moved to the United States in 1991 to study dance at the Juilliard School in New York City. Upon graduation, he was invited to join the Paul Taylor Dance Company, touring the world with them for 8 years. In 2003 Ueyama debuted his first choreographic work, Tsubasa, performed with fellow Taylor dancers at the McKenna Theatre at SUNY New Paltz, NY, and in 2005 founded TAKE Dance. Ueyama has enjoyed worldwide recognition; his Sakura Sakura was a prizewinner at the International Modern Dance Choreographic Competition in Burgos, Spain, and he was one of four choreographers selected for the 2006 Free to Rep at FSU’s Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography.

In 2010 he was the first choreographer to win the S & R Foundation’s prestigious Washington Award. Ueyama received the 2015 Jadin Wong Award for Emerging Asian American choreographer by Asian American Arts Alliance. Most recently, Ueyama was awarded a 2022 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship Grant.

About Jamar Roberts

Jamar Roberts is a choreographer who has made works on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, LA Dance Project, BalletX, the Juilliard Dance Division, Ailey 2, New York City Center's Fall For Dance and Vail Dance Festival, among others. Mr. Roberts is a graduate of the New World School of the Arts and the Ailey School and has danced for AAADT, Ailey II, and Complexions Contemporary Ballet. Roberts won the 2016 Bessie Award for Outstanding Performer and has performed as a guest artist with the Royal Ballet in London and made multiple television performance appearances. In the fall of 2020 the March on Washington Film Festival invited Mr. Roberts to create a dance on film tribute to the Honorable John Lewis.

Other highlights include Works and Process at the Guggenheim where he created the acclaimed short work on film entitled Cooped and A Chronicle of a Pivot at a Point in Time which first premiered on film in the summer of 2021 and was restaged for a live performance world premiere in March of 2022. Jamar was a Director's Fellow at NYU's Center for Ballet and the Arts in the 2020-2021 season and he has also made a short film for the LA Opera entitled The First Bluebird in the Morning. He was most recently featured on the cover of Dance Magazine in June of 2021, having previously been on the cover in June 2013 and being named "25 to Watch" in

2007. Jamar is a Creative Associate at the Juilliard School.

About Jeremiah Ross

Jac Ross emerges as a powerful voice for change, blending his soul-stirring vocals with messages of hope and unity. Inspired by iconic voices that reshaped culture, he sings uplifting lyrics advocating for social and political issues, drawing from his own life experiences. Raised in Live Oak, FL, Ross's musical talent was nurtured from a young age, influenced by soul and R&B legends and his father's role as a preacher. Despite facing hardships and setbacks, including financial struggles and family crises, Ross persevered with unwavering faith in his musical abilities.

After catching the attention of R&B producer Rodney "Darkchild" Jerkins with his captivating vocals, Ross signed with Darkchild Records and Island Records, embarking on his journey to debut his first EP. His talent has already garnered recognition, with notable figures like Cathy Hughes selecting him to open Urban One Honors, earning him praise from industry heavyweights like Jamie Foxx and Missy Elliott. With his debut project set to shake the world, Jac Ross stands poised as a premier artist poised to make a significant impact in the coming years.

About Kato Hideki

Kato Hideki is a Japanese-born composer, musician, producer and educator. His work is truly diverse, with a wide range of forms, subjects and sounds; from ambient and improvisation to soundtracks and sound design for film, TV, dance and theatre. His music has been released on Tzadik, Joyful Noise, Shimmy-Disc and Virgin UK; and has been broadcast on NPR, WNYC, ABC (Australia) and BBC Radio 3. He has performed at Lincoln Center, MoMA, Miller Theatre, La MaMa, Harlem Stage and the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London.

His compositions include: “There and Here” and “In the Sea of Heaven” for TAKE Dance and the Dallas Black Dance Theatre; “Tokoshieni” for Ballet X and Take Ueyama; and the soundtrack for the award-winning documentary, “The Journey of Monalisa”. His collaborations include: performance at the Christian Marclay Festival at the Whitney Museum of American Art; and with John King for the New York City Ballet and the Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Kato was the music producer of the Bessie award-winning THEM by Ishmael Houston-Jones, Dennis Cooper & Chris Cochrane; the ambient album THE WALK with Kramer; the album I HATE MEMORY by singer-songwriter Ezster Balint; and the album BABA BIBI with the Tony award-winning playwright/songwriter Stew. Kato teaches at NYU Tandon School of Engineering in the Integrated Media & Design program. www.katohideki.com

About ensemble132

ensemble132 is an American collective of 11 soloists and chamber musicians of the highest caliber, uniting with a shared mission to reimagine the chamber music landscape. The only group of its kind to continually create and premiere new standards in the chamber music repertoire with its artist-crafted arrangements, ensemble132 excites the imagination of audiences across the country with its uniquely genre-defying programs.

At every e132 event, audiences can expect a one-of-a-kind chamber music experience characterized by ensemble132's versatile artistry and limitless programming possibilities. Chamber ballets, transcriptions of symphonies and jazz standards, and orchestrations of solo works comprise just a few of ensemble132's programming highlights. Each member of ensemble132's dynamic roster, all with stellar careers and accolades, brings their unique blend of uncompromising individuality and collaborative spirit to traditional masterworks as well as unearthed gems.

The artists of ensemble132 have collaborated closely at music festivals such as Marlboro, Ravinia, Music@Menlo, Verbier, and Taos, and they appear regularly with ensembles such as the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Catalyst Quartet, Borromeo String Quartet, and Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. They are prizewinners at major competitions such as the Paganini, Joseph

Joachim, Tibor Varga, Sibelius, Primrose,
Beethoven Vienna, Vendome Prize, and American
Pianists Awards.

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