

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Houston, TX – **DANCE SALAD FESTIVAL** performances are scheduled for **APRIL 2, 3 and 4, 2015, 7:30 PM at the Wortham Center, Cullen Theater**, 501 Texas Ave. Houston, 77002.

Now celebrating the **20th ANNIVERSARY** season in Houston and the 23rd season since its inception in Brussels, Belgium, Dance Salad Festival promises another gathering of world-class performers. Famous in their own countries, the dance companies/dancers have won praise from critics and audiences wherever they have toured. To download photos, check for more updates, and to buy and print tickets, \$20-\$50, go to: www.dancesalad.org.

Choreographers' Forum, April 1, 7:00 PM @ the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Caroline Weiss Law Building, Brown Auditorium. Free event. Check for details on the last page.

Press Conference, April 1, 11am-2pm @ Wortham Basement Studio Lounge, 510 Preston, Houston, 77002. Check for details on the last page.

USA PREMIERES marked with **, Houston Premieres marked with *

1) DSF is honored to present **Queensland Ballet from Australia** and also welcome its Artistic Director, **Li Cunxin**, former Houston Ballet principal of 13 years and an author of international best-selling autobiography ***Mao's Last Dancer*** which was followed by blockbuster feature film under the same title. Queensland Ballet will perform ***Short Dialogues***** by the highly acclaimed choreographer **Nils Christe**, set to **Philip Glass's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra***, as well as ***Through to You***** by **Andrew Simmons** set to **Arvo Part's *Spiegel im Spiegel***.

"Short Dialogues brought people to their feet when it premiered in Queensland Ballet's International Gala 2011. A provoking glimpse into three couples' relationships, Nils Christe's choreography is fast, sharp and perfectly matched to Philip Glass's pulsing score." www.queenslandballet.com.au

*"Born in Rotterdam, Holland, Nils Christe choreographed his first ballet at age 25 for Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT). He went on to create 12 works for NDT before his departure in 1982, including *Quartet 1*, which won first prize at the Choreographic Competition in Cologne in 1979. From September 1986 to January 1993, Nils was the Artistic Director of Scapino Ballet Rotterdam. He created seven new works, including his first and very successful story ballet, *Pulcinello*. Nils's extensive body of new work now encompasses over 80 ballets. As a freelance choreographer, he has worked with 64 dance companies in 24 countries around the world."* www.queenslandballet.com.au

"Through to You was an absolute gem of a work, sparkling in all dimensions. It was intelligent in conception and subtle in its resolution...The work focuses on the basics of dance; simplicity of expression, technical ability and an emphasis on the form and line of dance..." National Business Review, New Zealand.

Andrew Simmons, choreographer of *Through to You*, writes about his choreography: "For inspiration, I took the name of the music, [*Spiegel im Spiegel* by Arvo Part] which translates loosely to 'Mirror in the Mirror.' I thought that it was an interesting term and started to think about the many ways it could be

interpreted. For example, looking into someone and seeing a part of you in them, or looking into yourself and seeing what you give out as a person. I found that seeing a part of yourself in another person and feeling a connection creates a very comforting feeling, where you are at ease to express yourself fully, in whatever sense. Dancers, I feel, share a uniquely intimate bond, strengthened by the proximity of their work environment and the challenges they all face. This in turn heightens aspects of their relationships with each other, which I was keen to explore deeper with the movement. As for the music, I like that the movement can at times sit comfortably with it and then also seems to skim along the surface. It repeats a theme consistently throughout so that what we are seeing could be just a fraction of something that is infinite in its directions, both previous and ongoing, larger than the few minutes we view - which is again the effect you get looking into two mirrors."

"Andrew Simmons was born in Christchurch and attended the International Ballet Academy between 2001 and 2003. He was a member of the Royal New Zealand Ballet from 2004 to 2008, when he moved to Dresden, Germany. During his time with the RNZB Andrew danced roles in a wide range and style of works, with highlights including pieces in the company's contemporary repertoire by Mark Baldwin, Jorma Elo, Michael Pink and Javier de Frutos, along with participating in the company's choreographic workshops. After creating on his fellow dancers during a 2006 workshop, Andrew was given the opportunity to make his first piece for the company, *Theme and Deviations*, for Tutus on Tour in 2007. *Through to You*, his second commission for the RNZB, was premiered during Tutus on Tour in 2009." www.queenslandballet.com.au

Li Cunxin, named Queensland Australian of the Year 2014, has had a long and diverse career as an internationally acclaimed dancer. At the age of eleven, Li was selected by Madame Mao's cultural advisors to attend the Beijing Dance Academy. In 1979, he joined Houston Ballet as an exchange student and went on to achieve the rank of Principal in 1982. Amongst many awards and accolades, Li won two silver and one bronze medal at three international ballet competitions, and two Princess Grace Awards. He moved to Melbourne in 1995 with his wife, dancer Mary McKendry, to join The Australian Ballet as a Principal Artist. Li retired from dancing in 1999, at the age of 38, but maintained his strong ties to the ballet community. Following his performing career, Li worked in the finance industry as a senior manager at Bell Potter, one of the largest stock broking firms in Australia. Until his appointment as the Artistic Director of Queensland Ballet in 2012, Li sat on the board of The Australian Ballet from 2005." www.queenslandballet.com

"Li's Autobiography, *Mao's Last Dancer*, was published in 2003 and immediately hit the top of Australia's best sellers list. It was number one in the non-fiction category and won the Book of the Year Award in Australia, the Christopher Award in America and it was short-list for the National Biography Award among other prestigious literary awards. It stayed on the top 10 Bestseller List for over one and a half years and it is in the 52nd printing, it has been published and sold in over 20 countries.

Mao's Last Dancer was made into a blockbuster film in 2009 and won several international prestigious awards. His book is a unique story of determination, passion, integrity and love. His journey filled with dreams shattered and revitalized. It is an empowering tale with so many lessons. This combined with the moving supporting ballet sequences and still photographs create an experience to be cherished. In Houston, *Mao's Last Dancer*, set a record of 17 weeks on the big screen at River Oaks Theater in Houston and also was one of the biggest successes of any film ever shown by the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. " www.licunxin.com

Queensland Ballet was established in 1960 by Charles Lisner OBE. It is a vibrant, creative company which connects people and dance across Queensland, Australia. The company offers a program of world-class productions of the best classical ballets and inspired contemporary dance works and engages renowned choreographers and designers from around the world and nurtures emerging local talent by presenting exciting new works in an intimate studio series. With a culture of creativity and collaboration, complemented by an active program of engagement with our communities, Queensland Ballet has become the central hub for dance in the State. www.queensland.ballet

2. EASTMAN, Antwerp, Belgium, will perform **RIGOR MORTIS**, a uniquely curated version* of **Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui's** acclaimed choreographic work that will include selections from: *Genesis*, *Shell Shock*, and *TeZuka*. (*Genesis*, a piece commissioned by Yabin Studio and produced by Yabin Studio and Eastman for its World Premiere in China and globally; *Shell Shock* is a Production of La Monnaie, Co-Produced by Eastman; and *TeZuka* is Produced by Eastman, Sadler's Wells, and Bunkamura). In 2010, Eastman was named the European Cultural Ambassador for 2013. Eastman was set up to produce and spread the work of Cherkaoui, the company's Artistic Director who is one of the leading contemporary choreographers of our time. Seven Eastman dancers will perform with live music played by musicians from around the world including Korean Harpist and Singer, **Park WooJae**; African guitarist and singer: **Kaspy N'dia**; Indian mridangam drum player, **Manju Chandramouli**; pianist, **Barbara Drazkowska** from Poland; US dancer and guitar player **Johnny Lloyd**; and longtime Eastman dancer and singer **Kazutomi Kozuki**. Other dancers include: **Elias Lazaridis**, **Nemo Oeghoede**, **Shintaro Oue**, **Guro Nagelhus Schia**, and **Vebjorn Sundby**.

Genesis uses 'the origin of creation and formation' as its theme and is aimed at discovering the original force coming from constructing and deconstructing, structuring and restructuring an organism, using the metaphoric description of a tree growing, with its root representing history and the past and its branches present and the future; they represent a space-time continuum where past, present and future – influenced by the uncertainties of passing time – evolve, recur and return. The work unveils the ever-lasting humanistic themes of the world on new and old, birth and death, love and hatred, and conveys aesthetic philosophical thoughts via dance. It is a cultivation of consciousness, as well as a renewal of visual sense to enlighten audience to re-understand and re-imagine the meaning of the existence and the expression of dance." Eastman and Yabin Studio, www.prnewswire.com

"...The lab-like set and the dancer's medical masks point to the place where for most people everything begins: the hospital. And we often die there, too. *Genesis* exposes the journey and the human questions between those two milestones of living and dying." www.Julidans.nl

TeZuka: First performed at Sadler's Well, London, UK, visionary Japanese manga artist and animator Osamu Tezuka provided the inspiration for *TeZuka*. In the original production with the cast of 11 performers, 3 musicians and a calligrapher, Cherkaoui explores Tezuka's fascinating world - a blend of tradition, science fiction and contemporary reality. *TeZuka* features a specially commissioned score from award-winning composer Nitin Sawhney with lighting and set design by Willy Cessa and costumes by fashion designer Sasa Kovacevic.

Shell Shock - Whether you call it shell shock or post-traumatic stress disorder, war creates serious psychological wounds. A hundred years after the outbreak of the Great War, the Belgian composer Nicholas Lens has written a dance-oratorio on this theme, using lyrics by the well-known Australian

singer-songwriter, poet and rock'n'roll enfant terrible Nick Cave. In twelve poems or canti he evokes the anonymous protagonists of the war in a highly personal and fluent style : soldiers, mothers, orphans, prisoners, etc. The testimonies of these individual characters, with whom everyone can identify, make the universal call for a humane and peaceful world. This new creation by La Monnaie has been incorporated into the official calendar of the Federal Committee for the Organization of the Commemoration of World War I." www.eastman.be Originally premiered in La Monnaie/De Munt, Brussels, Belgium on Oct. 24, 2014. Current curation for DSF uses choreographic movement from *Shell Shock*.

Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, internationally celebrated, in the past ten years, created over 20 dance works for famous ballet ensembles and theaters including Paris Opera Ballet, Danish Royal Ballet, Ballets de Monte Carlo, Cirque du Soleil, Sadler's Wells Theatre, Teatro Alla Scalla and Le Grand Theatre de Geneve, among which *Sutra*, *Loin*, *Babel (words)* and *TeZukA* have been staged over one hundred times in the world. He has worked with many noted artists including British film director Joe Wright in the film *Anna Karenina*, featuring Keira Knightley and Jude Law, and British sculptor Antony Gormley, Damien Jalet and Marina Abramovic to name just a few.

Curated sections of Cherkaoui's *Myth* and *Origin* came to DSF in 2009 and also in 2010, *Loin* was danced by the Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève. In 2011, DSF presented Cherkaoui's *Faun* which was danced by award winning Daniel Proietto and Daisy Phillips. *Petrus (out of PUZ/ZLE)* was specially curated from the Avignon Festival's commissioned *PUZ/ZLE*, co-produced by Eastman and premiered in DSF 2013 and a US Premiere of Cherkaoui's *Embrace (curated version of milonga)*, a Sadler's Wells production, London, UK, was premiered in USA in Dance Salad Festival last spring.

3) Norwegian National Ballet, Oslo, will mark its 5th appearance in DSF. This top European ballet company will premiere in the USA and in Houston a curated version of a very evocative production, ***Ibsen's Ghosts***** based on Henrik Ibsen's drama *Ghosts*, directed by **Marit Moum Aune**, choreographed by **Cina Espejord**, and set to specially created jazz score by Norwegian jazz trumpeter and composer **Nils Petter Molvær** who will perform his composition live, with another popular Norwegian musician **Jan Bang**.

"*Ibsen's Ghosts* is a psychological thriller in which the characters learn more and more about their own stories,' says director Marit Moum Aune. 'It's about how the unsaid can grow to become insufferable. Immense courage is required to make peace with one's illusions.' Together with the young, critically acclaimed choreographer Cina Espejord, she retells Ibsen's play as a ballet. The pair feel the story is suited to dance because both its inner and outer brutality can be pitted against the power of dance." In this choreographic work, important questions are asked: "Are we ever honest enough to be unaffected by lies? Oswald Alving returns from a bohemian existence in Paris to small-town Norway. Encountering people who do not communicate, Oswald responds by becoming ironic and distant. He gradually learns more of the secrets that weigh on his family, as well as those inside himself. His mother, Mrs Alving, welcomes her much-missed son home – and slowly understands what, or whom, he has brought home with him. www.operaen.no

"You'd expect the Norwegians to get their Ibsen right, but the Norwegian National Ballet's production of *Ghosts*, a tight-knit, intense drama, exceeded all expectations. It doesn't try to tell the story: the convoluted plot of subterfuge and revelation; rather choreographer Cina Espejord and her team have picked up where the text leaves off, prying deep under the skin of the characters to give visceral

readings...Working through improvisation, theatre director, Marit Moum Aune, Espejord and the performers have found a dance language of different registers and dialects that allows them to move fluidly between extreme emotions expressed in punishing physicality and the commonplace of domestic life..." Maggie Foyer, www.criticaldance.org

Director-Marit Moum Aune was born in Trondheim, Norway in 1964. At the age of 20, she became the head of Avant Garden, a local theater in her native city. Moum Aune made her professional debut as a director at the age of 25 with Stravinsky's "The Soldiers Tale". She has since had a remarkable career as a director and has worked on a wide repertoire ranging from modern works to classics like Shakespeare, Brecht and Ibsen. In many of the performances she has used dancers in leading roles alongside actors. In recent years she has also directed major drama productions for television, as part of the Scandinavian wave of quality series. In 2009 she directed the award winning series "Harry and Charles," a historical series produced by NRK, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation in collaboration with the other Scandinavian countries. This year, she directed the critically acclaimed "Struggle For Existence" for NRK. Moum Aune has received several awards, among them: The Hedda Award, The Oslo Prize, Scandinavian National Theatre Award and Liv Ullmann Life Achievement Award. www.operaen.no

Choreographer-Cina Espejord joined the Norwegian National Ballet in 2004, and has danced the role of Clara in *The Nutcracker*, the Winter Fairy in *Cinderella*, and the Lilac Fairy and the pas de quatre in *Sleeping Beauty*. She has also danced leading roles in Forsythe's *Workwithinwork*, Duato's *Multiplicity – Forms of Silence and Emptiness*, Kylián's *Stepping Stones* and *Last Touch First*, Balanchine's *Allegro brillante*, Walerksi's *Chamber* and Ekman's *A Swan Lake*. The choreographers Lidberg and Støvind have created roles especially for her. As a choreographer, Espejord has created six works for the Norwegian National Ballet, including a version of *Romeo and Juliet* for young people together with Kristian Støvind. 2014 saw her Main House debut with *Ibsen's Ghosts*, which she created together with director Marit Moum Aune. In the same year, her Critics' Award-nominated *Over the head beneath the skin* went on tour with Riksteatret." www.operaen.no

"The Norwegian National Ballet is the only classical ballet company in Norway. Besides classics like *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*, the company's repertoire covers works by the international masters like Jiří Kylián, Nacho Duato and Sol León and Paul Lightfoot. The Norwegian National Ballet also focuses greatly on new works created especially for the company by choreographers like Alexander Ekman, Liam Scarlett and associate choreographers Jo Strømngren and Alan Lucien Øyen.

'In a demonstration of notable creativity, Ingrid Lorentzen, Norwegian National Ballet's new director, has scheduled five world premieres for her debut programme', The Financial Times wrote in the autumn of 2013. After many years as principal dancer in the company, Ingrid Lorentzen took over as ballet director in 2012. She has commissioned choreographers such as Alexander Ekman with the full length ballet *A Swan Lake*, Liam Scarlett with *The Firebird*, *Vespertine* and *Carmen*, and Cina Espejord and theatre director Marit Moum Aune with *Ibsen's Ghosts*, the highlights of The Norwegian National Ballet's 2014/15 season program. The company opened this season with a Jiří Kylián program titled *Future Memories*. Now, one of the key companies to perform works by Kylián, the national ballet performed the program in Paris' Théâtre des Champs Élysées and the festival *TranscenDances* autumn 2014. After visiting Houston, the Company will tour Grenada this summer.

The company was founded in 1958 as part of The Norwegian Opera with Kirsten Flagstad as its first director. The institution originally performed in Oslo's Folketeatret, before moving into Norway's first opera house, designed by the Norwegian architectural firm Snøhetta in 2008. As the first opera house in

the world to let visitors walk on the roof, it has become one of Norway's foremost tourist attractions and over 11 million have visited the house. The building has received many awards and has aroused enormous international attention.

Today the opera and ballet company are equal art forms in The Norwegian Opera & Ballet with around the same amount of performances. Last year The Norwegian National Ballet danced 190 performances for an audience close to 140 000. The company has 60 dancers from 18 countries and a ballet school for dancers aged between 6 and 16." www.operaen.no

4) Introdans from Arnhem, Netherlands, will debut in Houston with a very exquisite and lively choreography *Trompe l'Oeil** choreographed by **Jiri Kylian** and set to music by **Claudio Monteverdi Overture** from: *Orfeo*, **Steve Reich's Clapping Music**, **Johann Sebastian Bach's Sarabande from the Partita in d-minor**, **Zap Mama's A song**, **Pjotr Tchaikovsky's The Swanlake and Opus 20**, **Thomas Morley's Madrigal**. "As things have diverse qualities and the soul has diverse tendencies, nothing which concerns our soul is easy. So the behavior of the soul towards objects is equally complex. That is why we can laugh and cry about the very same thing. Theatre - the eternal seducer, luring us into believing our own fantasies. Theatre - the ultimate Trompe l'œil...." Jiří Kylián. Trompe l'œil in French means -deceives the eye.

"The name of **Jiří Kylián** (Prague, 1947) is inseparably linked to the Nederlands Dans Theater, where he held the post of artistic director for almost 25 years and took the company to major international success. It was in 1973, as a guest choreographer, that he made his first creation for the group in The Hague: *Viewers*. By now he has notched up 75 choreographies for the Nederlands Dans Theater, as well as some twenty works for other companies. Kylián's oeuvre can be divided into various periods of style. He became world famous in the 1970s and 1980s with his neoclassical choreographies with folkloric motifs, strongly emotional atmospheres and plenty of virtuoso and supple partner work. In the 1990s his vocabulary became more unpredictable and even capricious, often featuring dark emotions and a sense of unease. Gradually his dance idiom became more sober – with influences of Japanese and minimalistic aesthetics – but no less complex. In Kylián's work, each movement seems to arise from an inner emotion, and each detail, no matter how lightning-fast and transient, bears witness to a restrained tension and complete control.

Kylián received his dance education at the school of the National Ballet and the conservatory in Prague, his place of birth, and in 1967 he was awarded a scholarship for the Royal Ballet School in London. After completing his training he danced at the Stuttgarter Ballett, where he also created his first ballets. In 1975, after having made three guest choreographies in The Hague, he was appointed artistic director of the Nederlands Dans Theater, initially together with Hans Knill. The overwhelming success of Kylián's work *Sinfonietta* (1978) put the company on the map internationally. Kylián was also responsible for founding the junior company NDT2 as well as NDT3, a company with unique status in the world but now discontinued and which presented the specific qualities of 'older' dancers. In 1999 Kylián transferred the artistic direction of the Nederlands Dans Theater but remained linked to the company as the house choreographer until 2009. He currently focuses his attention more on small-scale projects.

Works by Kylián have been performed by prestigious companies all over the world, including the Stuttgarter Ballett, Ballet National de l'Opéra de Paris, the Bayerisches Staatsballett in Munich and the Tokyo Ballet. To date, Introdans Ensemble for Youth has nine works by the master choreographer in its repertoire. In the 2006/07 and 2010/2011 seasons the group danced two complete Kylián programmes

under the title KYLIÁN4KIDS, the first of which won the Zilveren Krekel (Silver Cricket) in the category 'Most Impressive Production'. In late 2014 Introdans Ensemble for Youth is celebrating its 25th jubilee with a new Kylián programme entitled JARIG, featuring the Introdans premiere of *Trompe l'Oeil* and the complete version of *Children's Games*.

Kylián has received countless awards for his major services to dance, including a Sir Laurence Olivier Award, a Medal of Honour from the President of the Czech Republic, the appointment as Chevalier du Legion d'Honneur from the French state, a Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement from the Biennale in Venice, a Royal Medal of Honour for Art and Science and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Czech Ministry of Culture. In 1995 he received a knighthood in the Order of Officers of Orange Nassau." www.introdans.nl

"Introdans, one of the three biggest dance companies in the Netherlands, was founded by Hans Focking and Ton Wiggers in 1971. A flourishing company with over 70 employees and a tightly-knit ensemble, Introdans is acknowledged as the city of Arnhem's flagship company. Since 2009 Introdans has been designated part of the basic national infrastructure of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science." www.introdans.nl

5) Semperoper Ballett, Dresden, Germany, is coming back to Dance Salad Festival with their First Soloists Courtney Richardson and Fabien Voranger to perform **Opus.11*** choreographed by **David Dawson** and set to music by **Greg Haines**, and the **Pas de deux from Workwithinwork** choreographed by **William Forsythe**, set to **Luciano Berio's Duetti for Two Violins**, (usually performed as part of Semperoper Ballet's *New Suite*, a multi-composite work by W.Forsythe).

Dawson writes about his work, "*Opus 11* is a love letter to two artists whom I have had the privilege of knowing and working with the most during my choreographic life. Together we have experienced a connection that for me cannot ever be matched. Both share a special and natural talent that goes far beyond technique, partnered by an ability to use their bodies intelligently thus becoming instruments of the purest physical emotion. Making music become a truly visible presence. We have shared a deep love for our art form since we first met, hungry to learn and constantly questioning our beliefs and knowledge to try and discover new ways to move within classical technique. In the studio it sometimes feels as if we can read each others minds, they inspire and push me to challenge them with the best ideas I can think of. From piece to piece we have developed and informed each other how to go further. They have always brought out the very best in me which they then transform into unforgettable transcendent performances that have captivated audiences all over the world. This partnership is one of a kind. Without them both, who in my opinion are superstars, I would not have been able to have created the works the way we see them, and I would not have been able to have had the experience of existing in a little corner of heaven while creating them. Yumiko Takeshima and Raphaël Coumes-Marquet - I thank you." www.dawsonarts.org

"Opulent in its sparseness, William Forsythe's pas de deux from *Workwithinwork*, is a breathtaking study in pliancy and time. To the sweet lilt of "Aldo" from Luciano Berio's *Duetti for Two Violins*, a lush, tender courtly duet unfolds as the dancers twine and unfurl," writes W. Forsythe.

"British choreographer **David Dawson** is one of the most innovative dance makers working in classical ballet today. His personal choreographic style transforms classical ballet in new ways, and his signature

works are atmospheric, emotionally physical, abstract/narrative pieces that have been praised by critics and audiences worldwide. Dawson's works have been performed in more than 25 countries and entered repertoires of many ballet companies. Dawson was honored with the Prix Benois de la Danse Award for choreography and nominated for the UK Critics' Circle National Dance Award as Best Classical Choreographer for *The Grey Area*. The process of choreographing this ballet was vividly illustrated in Tim Couchman's film '*The Grey Area*' in *Creation*. Dawson created *Reverence* for the Mariinsky (Kirov) Ballet, for which he was awarded Russia's highest theatre prize for visual art, the Golden Mask Award, as Best Choreographer, and became the first British choreographer to create a ballet for this legendary company. He received the Choo San Goh Award for Choreography for *The Gentle Chapters* and was nominated for The Golden Swan Award, as Best Choreographer for *00:00*. For his re-imagining of *Faun(e)*, created for the English National Ballet's Ballets Russes Festival at the Sadler's Wells in London, Dawson has been nominated as Best Classical Choreographer for the UK Critics' Circle National Dance Award and the Prix Benois de la Danse Choreography Award. David Dawson and his *Faun(e)* were featured in the BBC documentary 'For Art's Sake: The Story of the Ballets Russes'." www.dawsonarts.net

“William Forsythe, raised in New York and principally trained in Florida with Nolan Dingman and Christa Long, Forsythe danced with the Joffrey Ballet and later the Stuttgart Ballet, where he was appointed Resident Choreographer in 1976. Over the next seven years, he created new works for the Stuttgart ensemble and ballet companies in Munich, The Hague, London, Basel, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, Paris, New York, and San Francisco. In 1984, he began a 20-year tenure as director of the Ballet Frankfurt, where he created works such as *Artifact*, *Impressing the Czar*, *Limb's Theorem*, *The Loss of Small Detail*, *ALIE/NA(C)TION*, *Eidos: Telos*, *Endless House*, *Kammer/Kammer* and *Decreation*.

After the closure of the Ballet Frankfurt in 2004, Forsythe established a new, more independent ensemble. The Forsythe Company, founded with the support of the states of Saxony and Hesse, the cities of Dresden and Frankfurt am Main, and private sponsors, is based in Dresden and Frankfurt am Main and maintains an extensive international touring schedule. Forsythe's most recent works are developed and performed exclusively by The Forsythe Company, while his earlier pieces are prominently featured in the repertoire of virtually every major ballet company in the world, including The Kirov Ballet, The New York City Ballet, The San Francisco Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, England's Royal Ballet, and The Paris Opera Ballet. Awards received by Forsythe and his ensembles include the New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award (1988, 1998, 2004, 2007) and London's Laurence Olivier Award (1992, 1999, 2009). Forsythe has been conveyed the title of Commandeur des Arts et Lettres (1999) by the government of France and has received the German Distinguished Service Cross (1997), the Wexner Prize (2002) and the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement in Venice (2010).

Forsythe has been commissioned to produce architectural and performance installations by architect-artist Daniel Libeskind, ARTANGEL (London), Creative Time (New York), and the City of Paris. His installation and film works have been presented in numerous museums and exhibitions, including the Whitney Biennial (New York), the Venice Biennale, the Louvre Museum, and 21_21 Design Sight in Tokyo. His performance, film, and installation works have been featured amongst others at the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, the Migrosmuseum für Gegenwartskunst in Zurich, the Deichtorhallen Hamburg, The Museum of Modern Art New York and the Hayward Gallery in London.

In collaboration with media specialists and educators, Forsythe has developed new approaches to dance documentation, research, and education. His 1994 computer application *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye*, developed with the Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie, is

used as a teaching tool by professional companies, dance conservatories, universities, postgraduate architecture programs, and secondary schools worldwide. 2009 marks the launch of Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing, reproduced, a digital online score developed with The Ohio State University that reveals the organizational principles of the choreography and demonstrates their possible application within other disciplines. As an educator, Forsythe is regularly invited to lecture and give workshops at universities and cultural institutions. In 2002, Forsythe was chosen as the founding Dance Mentor for The Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. He currently co-directs and teaches in the Dance Apprentice Network aCross Europe (D.A.N.C.E.) program, an interdisciplinary professional insertion program based at Dresden's Palucca Schule. Forsythe is an Honorary Fellow at the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance in London and holds an honorary doctorate from the Juilliard School in New York." www.williamforsythe.de

"The Baroque city of Dresden has always been a center of dance. After an early artistic blossoming in the 1920s, many great choreographies have been performed on the SemperOper Ballett stage. The Canadian born Aaron S. Watkin, Ballet Director since 2006, has brought, through his unique artistic vision, an extremely diverse repertoire to the SemperOper Ballett, Dresden." www.semperoper.de

6) Houston Ballet principal dancers, **Connor Walsh** and **Melody Mennite** will premiere a very special duet, *Shadow Lovers*,** choreographed by **Anabelle Lopez Ochoa** and set to **Henry Purcell's** opera **Dido and Aeneas**. This pas de deux is the final section of Lopez's ballet *Cylindrical Shadows* which was originally created in 2011 for Whim W'Him Dance Company in Seattle, USA. The duet has been re-choreographed to become an independent and special piece for Melody Mennite and Connor Walsh. Annabelle Lopez Ochoa describes it as a piece "about the memory of a lost love and the consoling power of letting go."

"The Colombo-Belgian **Annabelle Lopez Ochoa** completed her dance education at the Royal Ballet School of Antwerp, Belgium. After a 12-year long career in various European dance companies Annabelle decides in 2003 to focus solely on choreography. In that same year she was hailed "rising star of the Dutch dance scene" (NRC newspaper) and only 7 years later the Temecula Performing Arts Examiner wrote: 'Ochoa is truly a masterful choreographer with an edge for what dance can and should be in this constantly changing industry'.

Annabelle has so far created works for many companies around the world such as the Scapino Ballet Rotterdam, Dutch National Ballet, Djazzex, Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, The Royal Ballet of Flanders, Gran Canaria Ballet, the Gothenborg Ballet, Modern Dance Theater Ankara, BalletX, Luna Negra Dance Theater, Ballet National de Marseille, Ballet Hispanico, Le Jeune Ballet du Québec, BJM-Danse Montréal, Jacoby&Pronk, Saarbrücken Ballett, Chemnitzer Ballett, Whim W'him, Incolballet de Cali, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Finnish National Ballet, Compania Nacional de Danza, Scottish Ballet, The Washington Ballet, Ballet Nacional Dominicano, Ballet Austin, Atlanta Ballet, Augsburg Ballet, Ballet Nacional Dominicano, Ballet Nacional de Cuba, Grand Rapids Ballet, Ballet Moscow, West-Australian Ballet, Ballet Manila and Ballet Nacional Chileno.

In April 2012, she creates her first full-length Ballet *A Streetcar named desire* in collaboration with theater director Nancy Meckler for the Scottish Ballet. The piece was acclaimed by both press and public, and received several awards. It had an extended tour through the UK. In 2014 & 2015, the Scottish ballet will be touring the piece in the States.

Ms Lopez Ochoa is a versatile choreographer who works regularly within the dance field but also creates for theatre, opera, musical theatre and in 2006, for the celebrated Dutch fashion designers Viktor & Rolf's project in the Van Gogh Museum. She belongs to the Theater-Dance collective "Fantasten" with whom she created successfully 5 full-length pieces, which have been performed in numerous theaters and festivals throughout the Netherlands.

The critically acclaimed piece *Before After* which Annabelle created for the Dutch National Ballet in 2002, and which is known as her signature piece, has been performed at the Dance Passion Festival in the Netherlands, the New York Fall for Dance Festival, the Houston Dance Salad Festival, the 2007 Orange County Fall for Dance Festival, throughout Sweden by the Gothenburg Ballet, at several galas in Spain and is currently on the repertoire of Ballet Nacional Dominicano, Whim W'Him, Ballet Hispanico, Finnish National Ballet, Dutch National Ballet and Pacific Northwest Ballet.

Ms Lopez Ochoa has won several choreography awards and top list nominations including: First prize and public's prize with the piece *Replay* in International Choreographer's Competition of Bornem (Belgium); *Zip Zap Zoom* was included in the 10 best dance moments of the year by the Pittsburg Gazette (2010) and 10 best Dance highlights of the year in the Montreal Gazette (2011); Dance Magazine US named her work *Cylindrical Shadows*, created for Pacific Northwest Ballet, as one of the highlights of 2012; Awarded 'Best Classical Choreography' by the Circle of Critics of the National Dance Award UK (2013) for her full-length ballet *A Streetcar named desire*, created for the Scottish Ballet; the same work was awarded the South Bank Sky Arts Award and nominated for an Olivier Award (2013); *Sombrerissimo* created for Ballet Hispanico, and one of the three commissions for Fall For Dance NYC 10th anniversary, has been included in the 'Best of 2013' of US Dance Magazine." www.annabellelopezchoa.com

“Connor Walsh began his training at the age of seven under the direction of his mother Constance Walsh. He has trained at some of the best schools in the nation including The Harid Conservatory and Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy as well as at the Kirov Academy of Ballet in Russia. During his time at Houston Ballet he has received the Rudolf Nureyev Foundation Scholarship and the Ben Stevenson Scholarship award. In 2004, he won the first annual gold award from the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA), and was given the award of encouragement at the Shanghai International Ballet Competition. Mr. Walsh was promoted to soloist in March 2006 and then to principal dancer in September 2007. Over the last five years, he has been in demand as a guest star, making appearances in Argentina, Australia, and Philippines, as well as in galas in New York City, Mexico and Malaysia. He is equally at home performing works by such contemporary masters as Christopher Bruce, Jiri Kylian, and Glen Tetley as he is in the roles of the great classical repertoire such as Albrecht in *Giselle*, the Prince in *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker*; Basilio in *Don Quixote*, and Colas in Sir Frederick Ashton's *La Fille mal gardee*. Jorma Elo created the male lead in his ballet *ONE/end/ONE* in May 2011 for Mr. Walsh, and Stanton Welch created the leading male roles of Swedish Count Axel Fersen in the world premiere of his full length-work *Marie* in February 2009 and Solor in Mr. Welch's new staging of *La Bayadere* in February 2010 especially for Mr. Walsh.” www.houstonballet.org

“A native of Santa Cruz, California, **Melody Mennite** trained at Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre under Robert Kelley and Diane McLarty and at Pacific Northwest Ballet. She also attended summer intensive programs with Suzanne Farrell. At the age of 13, Ms. Mennite began her training with Houston Ballet's Ben Stevenson Academy and also attended three consecutive summer intensive programs with the academy. In the 2000-2001 season, she spent one year in Houston Ballet II on full scholarship and stipend. Ms. Mennite also won a scholarship award from Regional Dance America in 2000. She was invited to tour with Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre through Tansonmer, Austria. Prior to joining Houston

Ballet, she performed numerous leading roles with Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre: the Sugar Plum Fairy and Snow Queen in *The Nutcracker*; Kitri in *Don Quixote* and Odette in *Swan Lake*. She has performed a number of featured roles with Houston Ballet including: Olga and Tatiana in John Cranko's *Onegin*, Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Nutcracker*, Neopolitan Princess in Stanton Welch's *Swan Lake*, the Spring Fairy in Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella*, Swanilda and Dawn in *Coppelia*, Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*, Cio-Cio San and Kate in *Madame Butterfly*, and Cinderella in Stanton Welch's *Cinderella*. Ms. Mennite has also been featured in contemporary roles including the white pas de deux in Jirí Kylián's *Forgotten Land*, and *Petite Mort*; Stanton Welch's *Velocity*, *Indigo*, *Wildlife*, and *Brigade*; Christopher Bruce's *Ghost Dances*, *Rooster and Hush*; Harald Lander's *Etudes*; Paul Taylor's *Company B*; William Forsythe's *In The Middle*, *Somewhat Elevated*; George Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments and Serenade*; and Mark Morris's *Sandpaper Ballet*. Melody Mennite danced the role of Marie in Stanton's *Marie*, Rosie in *The Core*, Nikya in *La Bayadère*, Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake* and Spring in *The Four Seasons*, *Divergence*, *Falling*, *Carmina Burana*, *Velocity*; The Sylph in August Bournoville's *La Sylphide*; Lise in Sir Frederick Ashton's *La Fille mal gardée*; Jerome Robbins' *Fancy Free*; Principle Roles in Balanchine's *Rubies*, *Emeralds*, and *Ballo De Regina*; William Forsythe *The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude*; Principle role in Christopher Wheeldon's *Carousel*; Younger Daughter in Christopher Bruce's *Hush*, *Rooster*, *Sergeant Early's Dream*; Jiří Kylián's *Falling Angels*, *Petit Mort*; Manon in Sir Kenneth McMillan's *Manon*; Blue Bird in Ben Stevenson's *The Sleeping Beauty*. She frequently appears as a guest artist in galas and with companies nationally and internationally and performs in Seattle with Whim W'Him in *Cylindrical Shadows* by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa and *Monster* by Olivier Wevers." www.houstonballet.org

7) Armitage Gone! Dance Company, New York, USA will present a beautiful Pas de Deux from **Karole Armitage's *Ligeti Essays*** set to music by **György Ligeti**. Armitage is renowned for pushing boundaries to create contemporary works that blend dance, music and art to engage in philosophical questions about the search for meaning. Armitage writes about the curation presented in DSF: "The duets on tonight's program are excerpted from *Ligeti Essays* choreographed to a compilation of three song cycles written by György Ligeti throughout his long career, set to the poetry of fellow Hungarian, Sandor Weöres. As a composer, Ligeti used sources from all schools of thought to create some of the most arresting music of the late 20th century. In the songs that make up *Ligeti Essays*, Ligeti uses haiku like compression to reveal different states of mind - from the sarcastic and humorous to the trivial or languorous. The dancers capture thought through movement based on a curvilinear, calligraphic dance vocabulary punctuated by rough, raw accents."

"Karole Armitage is the Artistic Director of the New York-based Armitage Gone! Dance Company founded in 2004. She was rigorously trained in classical ballet and began her professional career as a member of the Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, Switzerland (1973-1975), a company devoted exclusively to the repertory of George Balanchine. In 1976, she was invited to join Merce Cunningham's company, where she remained for five years, (1975-1981) performing leading roles in Cunningham's landmark works. Through her unique and acute knowledge of the aesthetic values of Balanchine and Cunningham, Armitage has created her own "voice" in the dichotomy of classical and modern dance, and is seen by some critics as the true choreographic heir to the two masters of 20th century American dance.

Known as the "punk ballerina," Armitage created her first piece in 1978, followed by the iconic *Drastic-Classicism* in 1981. Throughout the 80s, she led her own New York-based dance company, The Armitage Ballet. Commissions from the Paris Opera Ballet and American Ballet Theatre led to choreographic

commissions in Europe throughout the 80s, 90s and into the early 2000s. She set new works on companies including the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow, the Ballet de Monte Carlo, Lyon Opera Ballet, Ballet Nacional de Cuba, The Washington Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, The Kansas City Ballet, The Greek National Company, The Bern Ballet and Rambert Dance Company. Armitage served as Director of the 45-member MaggioDanza, the Ballet of Florence, Italy (1996-2000), the Biennale of Contemporary Dance in Venice (2004), and as resident choreographer for the Ballet de Lorraine in France (2000-2004). After her company's successful season at the Joyce in 2004, Armitage's focus shifted to creating her New York-based company, Armitage Gone! Dance.

Armitage joins a legacy of process-focused experimental dance that embraces the ballet and modern dance heritage as well. She is inspired by disparate, non-narrative sources, from 20th century physics, to 16th century Florentine fashion, to pop culture and new media. In her hands, the classic vocabulary is given a needed shock to its system, with speed, fractured lines, abstractions and symmetry countermanded by asymmetry. Music is her script and she has collaborated with contemporary and experimentalist composers such as Rhys Chatham, Vijay Iyer, Lukas Ligeti and John Luther Adams. The scores can be marked by extreme lyricism as well as dissonance, noise and polyrhythms. The sets and costumes for her works are often designed by leading artists in the contemporary art world, including Jeff Koons, David Salle, Phillip Taaffe and Brice Marden. Armitage's work is at once both esoteric and the popular. Having choreographed two Broadway productions (*Passing Strange* and *Hair*, which garnered her a tony® nomination), videos for Madonna and Michael Jackson, several Merchant-Ivory films and Cirque du Soleil's 2012 tent show, *Amaluna*. In 2009, she was awarded France's most prestigious award, *Commandeur dans l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres*. She is the 2012 recipient of the prestigious artist-in-residence grant at the Chinati Foundation, founded by artist Donald Judd in Marfa, Texas.

She has directed operas from the baroque and contemporary repertoire for prestigious houses of Europe, including Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, the Lyric Opera in Athens, Het Muzik Theater in Amsterdam. She choreographed *The Cunning Little Vixen* in 2011 and *A Dancer's Dream* in 2013 for the New York Philharmonic and provided choreography for *Marie Antoinette*, by playwright David Adjmi, at the American Repertory Theater Harvard and Yale Repertory Theater. Her work has been the subject of two documentaries made for television: *The South Bank Show* (1985), directed by David Hinton and *Wild Ballerina* (1988), directed by Mark Kidel. Armitage is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of the Arts from the University of Kansas in 2013.

A Brief History of Armitage Gone! Dance

Over the past 30 years, Karole Armitage and her dancers have shaped the evolution of contemporary dance through the creation and performance of new works. The most recent incarnation of the company, Armitage Gone! Dance, was launched in 2004 when Karole Armitage returned to the U.S. after 15 years of working abroad." www.armitagegonedance.org. In Dance Salad Festival 2005, Armitage's *Time is the Echo of an Axe Within the Woods* was the first work presented in USA after working and living in Europe.

"Dedicated to redefining the boundaries and perception of contemporary dance, the company extends the mandate of innovation that characterizes both her earlier Armitage Ballet, founded in 1985, and her first full time company, Armitage Gone!, founded in 1979.

Dubbed the 'punk ballerina' in the 1980s, Armitage distinguishes her company from its contemporaries through her extreme versatility and originality. Building on classical and modern idioms from the Balanchine to the Cunningham traditions, Armitage infuses experimental thinking in the geometric

balance, speed, rhythm and beauty of dance steps. Jennifer Dunning, dance critic for the New York Times, wrote of *Time is the echo of an axe within a wood* which premiered in 2004, "one of the most beautiful dances to be seen in New York in a very long time." She derives inspiration from sources such as physics, Japanese aesthetics, fashion, pop culture, new media, and from her dancers, of diverse cultural and dance backgrounds. Armitage Gone! Dance is well known for its collaborations with innovators in music, science, and the visual arts, including artists David Salle and Jeff Koons and string-theory physicist Brian Greene. The company regularly performs to live music and has commissioned many scores since its 2004 debut. Known for their free spirited panache, Armitage Gone! Dancers bring unique flavors and strong personality to the stage. The company's wide ranging projects include poetic ballets set to 20th and 21st century scores, work with the African pop band Burkina Electric (*Itutu* 2009), opera, (notably the 2008 collaboration with Gotham Chamber opera on *Ariadne Unhinged* and the New York Philharmonic production of *The Cunning Little Vixen*), *Made in Naples* (a comedy centered on Pulcinella) and Armitage "punk ballet" classics danced to loud, live music.

The core of the company output centers on a series of dance 'dreamscapes' that take the viewer on a poetic journey to evoke mysterious landscapes of reverie, dream and altered consciousness. Having worked as a choreographer for Cirque du Soleil, Madonna, Michael Jackson and on Broadway, Armitage's interests are wide ranging, mixing the popular with the marginal as well as the technique and traditions of both ballet and modern dance. Since its launch in 2004, Armitage Gone! Dance has presented several New York seasons each year at venues that include Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Joyce Theater, The Kitchen, The Miller Theatre, New York City Center, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Lincoln Center. The company offers educational (k-12) programs at the Abrons Art Center/Henry Street Settlement. The company also regularly performs at premier festivals and venues throughout the United States, Europe and Central America, from Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival to the Venice Biennale Festival of Contemporary dance, which Armitage directed in 2005."

www.armitagegonedance.org

8) Bereishit Dance Company from Seoul, South Korea will debut in USA with ***Balance and Imbalance***** created by company's Artistic Director, choreographer **Park Soon-Ho**. This work will be accompanied with live music performances by the famous Korean traditional drummers of the internationally known drum ensemble, **Noreum Machi** from Seoul, led by its Artistic Director, Kim Juhong.

Balance and Imbalance is an experiment between East and West, a study of differing movement sensations. Whipped on by drums, two then four, and finally six dancers drive themselves on and on. A master of ceremonies bellows orders. People follow these orders – or not. We get the impression that these people are intimately rooted in their far-eastern cultural circles. To the unbroken rhythm of the drums they develop a clarity and power that go beyond national borders as their unabashed physical control – somewhere between breakdance, artistry and urban coolness – simultaneously illuminates and criticizes their traditions." <http://bsd7.wordpress.com/>

Bereishit Dance Company was founded in 2000 by its Artistic Director and Choreographer Park Soon Ho. Graduating from Han-sung University and its Graduate school in Korea, Park Soon Ho completed a Choreographers' course of EDDC European Dance Development Center in Netherlands. He participated in many projects such as PACT Zollverein Atelier in Germany, as well as in The Anatomy of Extreme with Arepo Group and more. His recent works are appreciated by many international festivals such as Dies de Dansa, Trayectos Zaragoza, Lekuz Leku festival, Contemporary Dance Festival in Poland as well as contemporary dance festivals in UNAM, Mexico, U.K, India, Brazil, Uruguay, Canada, Israel and Russia.

Recently Park Soon-Ho received the best choreography award from The Korean Dance Researchers and Critics Association as well as from ChangMu Arts Center.

“Thrilling dancer Park Soon Ho touches us with fascinating Korean tradition.” His amazing performance finds out calmness from the lost space. Soon-Ho’s performance is unforgettable and impressive enough to make us hesitate what to choose between Ray Charles or Baroque string music,” writes Gesa Polert of Rheinische Post, Germany

“He [Park Soon Ho] has an amazing sensitivity towards space and rhythm; as well as meticulous attention to details and precision. His choreographies are delivered with kinesthetic clarity and power; and always, intentionally or unintentionally, manifest the cultural synergy in contemporary Korea. Soon-ho has had a lot of encounters with contemporary dance in the western world,” writes Kwong Wi-lap, the former artistic director of Gwangdong Modern Dance Festival.

“What distinguishes him from others is the way of his approaching to the traditional culture from the contemporary view to touch the Korean’s universe sentiment of today. He puts focus on keeping the fundamental value of things, not simply borrowing or transforming them. This way of his working may be an alternative to the dance productions, which sometimes are too abstract or serious. PARK Soon-ho is a choreographer, having both sincerity and artistic values.”- Lee Jong-Ho, the dance critic and the artistic director of SIDance (Seoul International Dance Festival.)

Noreum Machi is an internationally recognized and award winning professional ensemble of traditional Korean drummers. “Noreum Machi” comes from the jargon of Korean minstrels, a combination of skill and timing attained only by the best players. The ensemble was founded by professional singer and percussionist Kim Juhong in 1993. The collaboration between Noreum Machi and Bereishit Dance Company started on Park Soon Ho’s choreography *Balance and Imbalance* in 2013 and since then the two groups performed together at numerous occasions such as the celebration of diplomatic relations between Korea and China and Japan as well as at the international Tanzmesse in Dusseldorf, Germany, US-Korea concert for USA Army in Seoul and opening performance for Incheon International Dance Festival in South Korea.

Other Important Events in Dance Salad Festival Week

Press Conference: Wednesday, April 1, from 11 AM - 2 PM, @ Wortham Basement Studio Lounge, 510 Preston, 77002, one floor down from the entrance level, signs will be posted. Please RSVP directly to Christina Levin at dsfassist@aol.com or 832.533.4826 to arrange your name to be listed with the Wortham Center’s back stage security desk and book an individual time slot from 11 am to 2pm with a particular company’s dancers/choreographer or Director of the festival, Nancy Henderik and have access to rehearsals on stage for photo and video shoots. Individual interviews can be arranged on other days/times depending on artists’ availability. Please contact Christina Leven to arrange.

Choreographers’ Forum: A Conversation, Wednesday, April 1, 7:00 PM @ the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Caroline Weiss Law Building, Brown Auditorium. The Forum will honor the work of Jiri Kylian featuring a film of his recent work *Anonymous* and the documentary *Forgotten Memories* with Kylian’s own personal narration. **Free event.**

Kylian created Anonymous especially for two dancers who have been a great influence on his work and personal life: Sabine Kupferberg and Cora Bos-Kroese. He captures the dancers in a sea of gold paper.

Above them, a film is shown by video artist Jason Akira Somma, who zooms in on two internal worlds: the world we show to others and the world we keep hidden. A piece of music by an unknowns composer serves as inspiration. These elements inspired Kylian to a world of questions. Are we remembered? And if so, how do we wish to be remembered. Who really knows me? Do I know my friends? The makers hope that the audience – that for them is largely anonymous – leaves its daily troubles behind and for that moment, is no longer anonymous, but together. (Kylian Festival in Korzo)

Partnership event with Asia Society of Texas: presenting a screening of the blockbuster film ***Mao's Last Dancer*** based on best-selling autobiography of Li Cunxin, former Houston Ballet's principal of 13 years and now the Artistic Director of **Queensland Ballet, Australia**, which will perform in the upcoming Festival. Li Cunxin, Charles Foster, who helped Li Cunxin stay in the USA, and Nancy Wozny (editor of Arts + Culture Texas) will speak about the film and answer questions following the screening.

More info at <http://asiasociety.org>

WHEN: April 4, 2PM

WHERE: 1370 Southmore Boulevard, Houston, TX 77004

Classical, modern and contemporary dance share the Dance Salad Festival stage to form a mix of movement and compelling choreographic invention. Members of some of the world's best dance companies come to the city to participate in this week-long Festival. Each night's production is uniquely curated and designed as a coherent, expressive performance. To see the full range of the choreography we highly recommend you attend at least two of the three evenings.

This multicultural presentation has received international recognition for its quality and innovativeness and because of the Festival's broad international nature, it has consistently been a source of cultural pride for many of the expatriate and ethnic communities that reside in Houston. The city's Consular Corps is a community partner and many foreign members serve as sponsors and hosts. Director Nancy Henderek strongly believes that through the arts, bridges can be built between different countries and cultures.

Dance Salad Festival has been praised by local, national and international publications. Dance Magazine said: "Producer Nancy Henderek's eye for some of the best international dance is unparalleled." In a special section of The Houston Chronicle entitled "Houston's Ultimate People," Nancy Henderek is described as a "one-woman United Nations."