

DANCE SALAD FESTIVAL 2018

Now celebrating the 23rd anniversary in Houston and the 26th season since its inception in Brussels, Belgium, Dance Salad Festival promises another gathering of world-class performers. Famous in their own countries, classical, modern and contemporary dance companies/dancers share the Dance Salad Festival stage to form a mix of movement and compelling choreography.

****Note the new location.*

-PERFORMANCES: **March 29, 30 and 31, 7:30 PM**, in the new location due to flood damage on the Wortham Center.

Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby, Houston, TX, 77002.

-TO BUY TICKETS, \$25-\$58 (including fees) go to www.dancesalad.org.

Don't delay as fewer seats will be available in Zilkha Hall. Arrive early for downtown parking.

-SPECIAL DISCOUNT PACKAGE for out-of-town visitors:

As a recipient of the special marketing grant through Houston First Corporation's Tourism Incentive Program, Dance Salad Festival is partnering with the DoubleTree by Hilton Downtown Houston and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston to offer a special package for our out of town guests that will include:

- **Special Discount** on Dance Salad Festival tickets for live performances on March 29, 30 and 31, 2018, 7:30PM, Zilkha Hall, the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts.
- **Special room rate** at the DoubleTree by Hilton Downtown Houston with free breakfast and valet parking for two.
- **Free passes** to the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.

-CHOREOGRAPHERS' FORUM – March 28, 2018, 7:00 PM featuring the dance art and choreography of **Christian Spuck, Zurich Ballett (Switzerland); Brenda Way and KT Nelson, ODC (San Francisco,USA);** and **Garrett Smith, Norwegian National Ballet.** Discussion panel and Q/A will be moderated by Maggie Foyer, dance writer from London, UK.

Free Admission. Museum of Fine Arts Houston, The Caroline Wiess Law Building, Brown Auditorium Theater

FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES:

Dance Salad Festival will present two different takes on Shakespeare's epic love story. **Royal Swedish Ballet** will show a Houston premiere of the Balcony pas de deux from **Mats Ek's Julia & Romeo**, set to selected works by **Tchaikovsky**, while **Ballet Zurich** will show a US premiere by Artistic Director, **Christian Spuck**, who spins the same story yet under its traditional title of **Romeo and Julia** set to the widely used score of **Prokofiev**, also presenting the Balcony pas de deux.

1. Mats Ek's Julia & Romeo: Ek, master of reinterpretation of the great classics into contemporary dance says: "It's time to turn the tables...I tried to go back to the source, which is Shakespeare—but before that was an Italian short story called *Juliet and Romeo*. If you read the play, the major conflict takes place in the family of Juliet... With something we know so well, the title also becomes almost a label, and to turn it around may open the door to rethinking it."

“Mats Ek sees movement rather as a way of individual expression than being primarily of aesthetic value: ‘Dance is thinking with your body,’ says the artist. In addition to dance, Ek produces plays, operas and dance theatre in which he makes actors dance and dancers act. He received various awards for the ballets he made especially for television, like the Dance Screen Award, two Emmy Awards, Prix Italia.” *Julia & Romeo* received the 2015 Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production and Czech Crystal Award at Golden Prague Festival in 2014.” www.operan.se

2. Christian Spuck’s *Romeo and Julia*: set to Prokofiev’s score was the first ballet created for Ballett Zurich after he was appointed as Artistic Director in 2012, holding a special place in his heart. Spuck says: “*Romeo and Juliet* has followed me throughout my life... The first ballet music I ever heard was Prokofiev’s score, and I still think it is the most exciting and moving ballet music that exists.”

“Is it an irony of history that his ballet, once rejected by Moscow’s Bolshoi Theatre as insufficiently dance-like, has become an indispensable fixture in today’s international ballet repertoire? Inspired by Prokofiev’s vivid music and the timeless quality of Shakespeare’s tragedy, Christian Spuck uses deeply emotional images to tell the most famous love story in world literature. A theatre-in-theatre situation rooted in drama creates an immediacy of feeling from which we cannot escape.” www.opernhaus.ch

3. Spellbound Contemporary Ballet, Rome, will mark its 4th appearance in Dance Salad Festival with a Houston premiere of the curated version of *Rossini Overtures*, comic and imaginative piece set to music by **Gioachino Rossini**. **There will also be a performed curation of mysterious and introspective *Hesitation Day*** set to music by **Norn** and **Amon Tobin**. Both pieces are choreographed by company Artistic Director, **Mauro Astolfi**.

Astolfi writes about *Rossini Overtures*: “Such a powerful and unique character, who composed the *Barber of Seville* in just 13 days, literally filled my mind with ideas, images, symbols and settings... It could certainly be argued that Rossini’s aesthetic ideals – in search of the sublime – are in perfect harmony with the “anti-realism” sought by modern audiences. With this in mind, I read the story of this extraordinary composer who suddenly disappeared from the scene... as if he had left a discussion and then returned saying... “So where were we?” *Rossini Overtures*, premiered at Teatro Rossini, Pesaro, on Feb. 25, 2017, is a Spellbound production with the contribution of the Ministry of Heritage and Culture of Italy in cooperation with Amat/Teatro Rossini, Pesaro.

“*Hesitation Day* is that day in which action, thinking and judgment are temporarily suspended. A precious moment in which we take a fresh start, we try to remember what we want to accomplish in this world. In its etymological sense, “hesitate” also means to carry something towards a destination... The dual and apparently, opposite meaning of the word has been the inspiration of this work... sometimes, despite our inability to decide, our inputs disperse and somehow, someone will receive them in one way or another,” notes Astolfi. Premiered at The Egg/Albany, NY, USA, on Oct. 23, 2015, *Hesitation Day* was created with the subsidy of the Ministry of The Heritage and Culture of Italy in cooperation with The Egg Albany/NY.

“Astolfi’s choreographic vision is to continually develop works that equally embodies pure gestural expressiveness structured by classical technique and training: poetry and precision are at the core of the success of his works... **Spellbound Contemporary Ballet**, was established in 1994 and has toured extensively all around the world. With Mauro Astolfi’s rich artistic direction, and Valentina Marini’s constantly evolving and dynamic vision, the company has produced a wide variety of works in different fields: from galas to cultural television programs, on stage performances, to worldwide festivals. The company is one of the most renowned and active Italian artistic ambassadors. Since 2000, Spellbound Contemporary Ballet has been supported by the Ministry of Heritage and Cultural Affairs of Italy.” www.spellboundance.com

4. Semperoper Ballett Dresden, Germany, makes its 5th appearance at Dance Salad Festival with **David Dawson's** Pas de Deux from *On the Nature of Daylight* set to music by **Max Richter** and **Vertigo Maze** choreographed by Belgian choreographer **Stijn Celis** set to music by **J. S Bach**. *On the Nature of Daylight* is Dawson's one of the most well known and long lived works that explores the eternal theme of love: "It is something we all seek in life: true love. Yet, how are we to find our ideal partner? By chance or by choice? And what happens if we simply fail to meet up with the right person? A piece about the perfectly ordinary yet extraordinary mystery of love, choreographed to music by Max Richter that is balm to the soul," writes David Dawson. Born in London, UK, David Dawson, is one of the leading 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.

In *Vertigo Maze* choreographer and stage designer **Stijn Celis** questions freedom amidst restrictions and searches for a place of harmony. In this abstract ballet, tension develops between the bodies, their movements, and the barely tangible, but present 'mysterious labyrinth' of the human soul. According to the choreographer, never before has he so thoroughly placed the beauty of the human body at the center of the choreography. Since 2014, Stijn Celis, has been Artistic Director of the Saarland State Ballet in Saarbruecken, Germany, where he also began to direct operas and musicals. Stijn Celis has created pieces for companies such as Cullberg Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Nederlands Dans Theater 2, Royal Swedish Ballet, and Vancouver-based Ballet BC among others.

5. Guillaume Cote, Principal Dancer of the National Ballet of Canada, Toronto and Friedemann Vogel, Principal Dancer of Stuttgart Ballet, Germany, will perform **Maurice Béjart's** *Songs of a Wayfarer* (*Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*) set to the music of Gustav Mahler, created in 1971 for Rudolf Nureyev and Paolo Bortoluzzi. It tells an expressive story of a romantic wanderer set on a journey full of adversity and solitude, confronting his own Destiny, the other character in the pas de deux. This work debuted in the Houston Ballet gala performance in 2004 in Houston.

"This ballet was inspired by a series of melodies for baritone and orchestra by Gustav Mahler (« Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen ») and Béjart imagined a duo in four sequences, bringing together his best classical dancer, Paolo Bortoluzzi and Rudolf Nureyev. One was dressed in a maroon costume and the other in white (or black on some evenings !). Bejart commented, « He is a wayfarer like the young apprentices of the Middle Ages, who went from town to town in search of their destiny and their master : here we have a romantic student (Nureyev) pursued by his destiny (Bortoluzzi), who suffers as he learns to use Mahler's words (Mahler also wrote the words), 'as if he had a knife plunged into his chest', which is what the constant battle against oneself and against loneliness is like ». The four songs ("When my love", "This morning I crossed the field", "I have a burning blade in my breast", "My beloved's blue eyes", in English) opposed Bortoluzzi, virtuoso, light and brilliant as the relentless Destiny to Nureyev, feline, supple and tormented, as the romantic hero looking for freedom but condemned to unhappiness, in an expressive, lyrical and highly intense duo." www.nureyev.org (The Nureyev Foundation).

Guillaume Côté, born in Lac-Saint-Jean, Québec, Canada, joined the National Ballet of Canada in 1998, became a Principal Dancer in 2004 and Choreographic Associate in 2013. Côté has danced most of the principal roles in both the classical and contemporary repertoire and has been a guest artist at major ballet companies around the world, such as Teatro alla Scala, English National Ballet, The Royal Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, The Mikhailovsky Theatre, The Hamburg Ballet and Stuttgart Ballet, as well as at numerous galas. Mr. Côté is also an accomplished choreographer, musician and composer. Awards for his choreography include the Audience Choice Award for Best Choreography at The Tenth International Competition for The Erik Bruhn Prize for *Enkeli* in 2012, third prize at Ballet Society Hanover's 25th International Competition for #24 in 2011 as well as Gemini Award in 2007, Galileo in 2000, and A Life for Music Prize in 2008. In 2012, Guillaume Côté was awarded La Médaille de l'Assemblée nationale du

Québec for his work in the arts. Mr. Côté is also Artistic Director of the Festival des Arts de Saint-Sauveur, one of the largest summer dance festivals in the country.

Friedemann Vogel, born in Stuttgart, Germany, joined the Stuttgart Ballet in 1998 and quickly rose through the ranks. He is an award winner of numerous competitions including Prix de Lausanne, the Gold medal in the Prix de Luxembourg, Eurocity competition in Italy (1997), Jackson Competition USA (1998), as well as Erik Bruhn Prize in Toronto Canada (2002). Vogel has been elected Dancer of the Year 2010 by the international dance magazine TANZ and Best Male Dancer by the Italian dance magazine Danza&Danza in 2012. In September 2015 he was awarded the national title of "Kammertänzer," the highest honor for a dancer given by the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts of the Federal State of Baden-Württemberg, Germany, as well as the "Prix MAYA" in 2016. Vogel was invited to dance as a guest artist by the most prestigious companies like the Mariinsky Theater St.Petersburg, the Bolshoi Ballet Theatre Moscow, Teatro alla Scala Milano, the English National Ballet, the National Ballet of China, the Tokyo Ballet, the Finnish National Ballet, Staatsballett Berlin, Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, Royal Swedish Ballet, the Vienna State Ballet, the Korean National Ballet and the Béjart Ballet Lausanne among others. Since September 2014 Friedemann Vogel is a Guest Principal with the Mikhailovsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

6. Norwegian National Ballet, Oslo, will perform a US premiere of *Imitations*, an energetic creation that explores the role of gender and traditional forms in art among other interesting questions. *Imitations* was created for NNB by Houston Ballet's former dancer /choreographer **Garrett Smith**, and is set to music by Michael Gordon. Smith created three works for Houston Ballet with the latest being *Reveal* which premiered in 2015.

Garrett Smith writes about his work: "The focus on Gender in ballet has played a huge factor on what decisions and choices have been made throughout the history of dance. I also find it interesting that dance is an art form learned by (Imitating) others and what we have seen created before us. What would our "normal" be if it wasn't Balanchine, or Petipa who created the steps, ideas, and structures. What would dance look like if it had been someone else? What would the "rules" be? why put a woman in a tutu.... would it be normal for us now if it had been decided to put men in tutus from the very start of ballet?" Garrett was selected to create on New York City Ballet for the 2015 New York Choreographic Institute Fellowship. Most recently he choreographed a new work for the Bolshoi Ballet as part of winning the outstanding choreographer award at the Youth America Grand Prix Nationals.

7. Guillaume Hulot, dancer and choreographer from France, the ballet master of Gauthier Dance Company Theaterhaus Stuttgart, Germany, will premiere in USA his two works *BEANS*, set to music by Kurt Cobain and Camille Saint-Saëns, and *Tuning Another Being* set to music by Christian Grifa, performed by dancers from Spain, USA, Germany and Japan.

"*BEANS* tells the story and the journey of a lost soul. A tormented soul isolated and denied by love, seeking a way back to its owner," writes Hulot. Created for Gauthier Dance Theaterhaus Stuttgart in the program called "Meet The Talents" *BEANS* premiered at the "Colours International Dance Festival 2017" in Stuttgart, Germany. Hulot describes *Tuning Another Being* as "imaginary world of two notes from the same piano keyboard trying to tune each other and become one. The motion they create is the result of the sound they are supposed to make as keynotes. The reality of a world where two human beings are creating their own path to assimilate and understand each other on every side of motion and emotion. The seeking of a perfect match and the curiosity of the unknown becomes the essence of their existence."

Guillaume Hulot, born in Corsica, France, is a graduate of École de danse de l'Opéra de Paris and the Conservatoire National de Musique et de Danse de Paris, France. He danced in such companies as Opéra de Nice, Staatstheater Am Gärtnerplatz, National Theater Mannheim, Staatstheater Mainz and created roles in works by such choreographers as Marius Petipa, Leonide Massine, George Balanchine, William Forsythe, Jiri Kylián, Ohad Naharin, Kevin O'Day, Pascal Touzeau, Jacopo Godani, Johan Inger, Rafael Bonachela, Nils Christie, Youri Vamos, Angelin Preljocaj, Lar Lubowitch, Ashley Page, Richard Wherlock among others. He started creating his own choreography in 2006 and since 2015 has worked as the Ballet Master and rehearsal director of Gauthier Dance Company Theaterhaus Stuttgart, Germany.

8. ODC, San Francisco, will debut in Dance Salad Festival with a curation of *boulders and bones* choreographed by **Brenda Way**, Founder and Artistic Director of ODC and **KT Nelson**, Co-Artistic Director. Inspired by the work of visual artist **Andy Goldsworthy** and set to a commissioned score by acclaimed avant-garde cellist **Zoë Keating**, Way and Nelson's fearless choreography touches on transformation in both art and nature.”www.odcdance.org.

"boulders and bones dances along the edge of shifting light, gravity, and natural chaos. And, like Goldsworthy, ODC makes artistry appear entirely natural, leaving ample room for reflection.” *SF Weekly*.

Founded in 1971 by Brenda Way, who trained under the legendary George Balanchine, ODC originated as Oberlin Dance Collective—named after Oberlin College in Ohio where Brenda was on faculty. The adventurous artists loaded up a yellow school bus and relocated to San Francisco in 1976. Brenda's goal was to ground the company in a dynamic, pluralistic, urban setting. Known nationally for entrepreneurial savvy, ODC was the first modern dance company in the United States to own its home facility, the ODC Theater, built in 1979 and expanded in 2010. In September 2005, ODC also opened the ODC Dance Commons, which houses ODC/Dance, ODC School, administrative offices, and the Healthy Dancers' Clinic.