

BOSTON BALLET

MIKKO NISSINEN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jill Goddard, 617.456.6236, jgoddard@bostonballet.org

Lillian I, 617.456.6235, li@bostonballet.org

BOSTON BALLET SCHOOL PRESENTS ANNUAL NEXT GENERATION PERFORMANCE FEATURING WORLD PREMIERE BY HARVARD DANCE DIRECTOR JILL JOHNSON AND BALANCHINE'S WALPURGISNACHT

April 26, 2017 (BOSTON, MA)—Boston Ballet School presents its annual Next Generation performance. This year's program includes the famous Peasant Pas de Deux in *Giselle*, a world premiere by Harvard Dance Director and choreographer Jill Johnson, *Strut*, George Balanchine's *Walpurgisnacht*, Jaime Sierra's *Legión*, and opens with *Les Passages*, which showcases all levels of the Pre-Professional Program in works created by BBS faculty members demonstrating the progression of training. The performance also features dancers from Boston Ballet II, Boston Ballet's second company, and members of the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. The one-night-only performance will take place on Wednesday, May 24 at 7:00 p.m. at the Boston Opera House.

"Next Generation showcases the future of the dance," said Boston Ballet Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen. "It is a wonderful opportunity for our community to support young talent. It provides a sneak peek at future Boston Ballet dancers."

Many Pre-Professional students will continue their professional dance careers with major companies such as Boston Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, and Pennsylvania Ballet. Currently, approximately 20 percent of Boston Ballet's dancers are graduates of the Pre-Professional Program. In addition, approximately 70 percent of Pre-Professional Program graduates secure jobs in professional ballet companies, with this percentage increasing each year.

"This year's programming has been chosen specifically to highlight the depth and breadth of talent that has developed within the Pre-Professional Program, while also revealing the curriculum expertise behind our methodology," said Boston Ballet School Director Margaret Tracey. "By featuring 27 male students in *Legión*, and 24 female students in *Walpurgisnacht* we aim to demonstrate not only the quality of training at BBS, but also its real impact on the cultivation of tomorrow's leading dancers."

Next Generation features 98 Pre-Professional Program students from across the United States and around the world. This year's program includes *Les Passages*, a 17-minute piece featuring

the entire Pre-Professional Program at every level, beginning with students at age 13 and ending with the oldest students at age 19.

Following *Les Passages* will be the *Peasant Pas de Deux* from *Giselle* choreographed by Jean Coralli. With music by Freidrich Burgmüller, this is one of the most renowned excerpts from *Giselle*. The evening will continue with *Strut*, a world premiere and newly commissioned work by Jill Johnson featuring music by Thom Willems. *Strut* received a generous grant from Virginia B. Toulmin foundation through an initiative to foster emerging women choreographers. Johnson was a principal dancer and researcher with Ballet Frankfurt. She is also a world-renowned expert on choreographer William Forsythe and has been a close collaborator with Forsythe for more than two decades. Johnson was appointed Harvard Dance Director in 2011 where she has choreographed 13 original works.

Following *Strut* will be Jaime Sierra's *Legión* featuring music by Zoë Keating. This all-male ensemble of 27 will feature BBII members and Pre-Professional Program students. Balancing the masculinity of *Legión*, the evening will conclude with George Balanchine's *Walpurgisnacht*, which features 24 women and one man. Balanchine choreographed this work in 1975 for a production of *Faust* by the Théâtre National de l'Opéra, danced by the Paris Opéra Ballet.

Dance and music critics are encouraged to attend and review the May 24 performance of Next Generation at the Boston Opera House.

Promotional videos for Next Generation can be viewed [here](#), which includes an interview with Jill Johnson on her world premiere.

Performance Details:

Wednesday, May 24 at 7:00 p.m.
Boston Opera House
539 Washington Street
Boston, MA 20111

Tickets start at \$29. For more information, visit bostonballet.org or call 617.695.6955.

Boston Ballet would like to thank *The Boston Globe* and *WBUR* for being media partners and helping us to educate and celebrate the arts in Boston.

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About Boston Ballet

Since 1963, Boston Ballet's internationally acclaimed performances of classical, neo-classical, and contemporary ballets, combined with a dedication to world class dance education and community

initiative programs, have made the institution a leader in its field, with a 53-year history of promoting excellence and access to dance.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen and Executive Director Meredith Max Hodges, the Company maintains a diverse repertoire, ranging from full-length ballets to new works by some of today's finest choreographers. Boston Ballet's second company, Boston Ballet II, is comprised of dancers who gain experience by performing with the Company and independently, presenting special programs to audiences throughout the Northeast.

Boston Ballet School, the official school of Boston Ballet, has a long-standing dedication to providing exceptional dance education and ballet training to students across three studios in Boston, Newton, and the North Shore. Led by Director Margaret Tracey, the School reaches more than 5,000 students (toddler to adult) each year through its four core programs: Children's Program, Classical Ballet Program, Adult Dance Program, and Pre-Professional Program.

Boston Ballet's Department of Education and Community Initiatives (ECI) provides programming, events, and activities that connect the community to dance. ECI reaches more than 4,000 individuals in Boston, North Shore, and the surrounding communities each year through Citydance, ECI on Location, Adaptive Dance, and other community programs.

For more information, please visit bostonballet.org.

About Boston Ballet School

Boston Ballet School, the official school of Boston Ballet, provides unparalleled dance education for students (toddler to adults) through its Children's, Classical Ballet, and Adult Dance Programs, and trains the next generation of professional ballet dancers. With an internationally-renowned faculty led by Boston Ballet Artistic Director, Mikko Nissinen, and School Director, Margaret Tracey, the school's acclaimed, and highly competitive, Pre-Professional Program attracts elite students from around the globe, and prepares them for a professional career with Boston Ballet and in the ballet industry. The school operates three state-of-the-art facilities; at Boston Ballet's headquarters in the South End of Boston, in the Salem/Marblehead area of the North Shore, and in the Metro West town of Newton. Established in 1953 by E. Virginia Williams as a small regional dance school, Boston Ballet School is now an international leader in the field and reaches more than 5,000 students annually.

For more information, please visit bostonballet.org/school.

About Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra

In September 2012, the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (BPYO) was formed under the auspices of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra. Conducted by Benjamin Zander, the BPYO's motto is "Shaping Future Leaders through Music." The 120 enthusiastic and talented young musicians of the Boston Philharmonic Youth Orchestra range in age from 12 to 21. The wide range of ages affords younger members of the orchestra the chance to collaborate with older students who have already begun their professional careers. In turn, collegiate members of the group are offered the opportunity to nurture and coach the future generations.

For more information, please visit bostonphil.org.

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