

ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET

Continues Three-Year Residency at VPAC

World Premiere Commission

Eudaemonia (2017)

Choreography by Cherice Barton

Little mortal jump (2004)

Choreography by Alejandro Cerrudo

Sleepless (2016)

Choreography by Jiří Kylián

Music by Dirk Haubrich, composition based on Mozart

Friday, March 3 at 8:00pm

Los Angeles, CA Feb 9, 2017 - Aspen Santa Fe Ballet (ASFB) celebrates the second year of its three-year residency at Valley Performing Arts Center with a program of new works that celebrates the company's commitment to creating new contemporary dance on Friday, March 3 at 8:00pm. ASFB will unveil the world premiere of *Eudaemonia (2017)* by renowned-choreographer Cherice Barton as well as perform *Little mortal jump (2016)* by ASFB favorite Alejandro Cerrudo created for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and *Sleepless (2004)* from Jiří Kylián, Artistic Director of Nederlands Dans Theater to music of Dirk Haubrich, based on Mozart.

ASFB was founded over 20 years ago by Executive Director Jean-Philippe Malaty and Artistic Director, Tom Mossbrucker.

"This second year of our three year residency with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet is especially significant as it marks the world premiere of Cherice Barton's new work, which VPAC co-commissioned." said Thor Steingraber, Executive Director of VPAC. "We are proud to tap a Los Angeles-based choreographer for this commission, especially one as versatile as Cherice. Her choreography is perfectly suited to the dancers, their technical excellence as well as their personalities. The piece has a nod to Hollywood in it too. In addition, we are also presenting works from world-renowned choreographer Jiří Kylián, as well as Alejandro Cerrudo, whose breathtaking piece, *Silent Ghost*, was in our program last year. This is an outstanding trio of 21st century dance makers"

Cherice Barton explains the inspiration behind her return to ballet; "This work is very personal to me. Happiness is simple, but the way in which we seek it is complicated." Barton continues, "The greeks define eudaimonism as a moral philosophy which seems to encompass exactly the truth in what I am seeking (as a person and as an artist). Eudaemonia is the epitome of a well-lived life and something to strive for – a virtuous, spiritual and personally successful life."

The sound design for *Eudaemonia*, by Jeremy Jurin (Barton's husband) consists of singers like Jimmy Durante, Nick Cave and Warren Ellis delivering gems of the American songbook like "Make Someone Happy" and "(Smile) When Your Heart is Breaking)." In addition, Jurin has mixed in vocal fragments from his own family, musing on the importance of this seemingly simple subject.

Cherice Barton is the oldest of the three Barton sisters, all successful artists. In addition to choreographing for the stage, she also is a commercial and concert choreographer. Barton's performance career has spanned over twenty years in over thirty countries across six continents. In 2015, she choreographed Katy Perry's critically acclaimed appearance at the Staples Center in Los Angeles for the 57th Grammy Awards. As a choreographer and creative consultant, Barton has a unique eye for transforming dance into inspired, emotional work, from the stage to the screen.

Barton recently joined the creative team of *America's Got Talent* as Choreography Associate following choreographing Disney's *Strange Magic*, by Lucasfilm Animation/ILM and released by Touchstone Pictures in January of 2015. She choreographed *Wearing Lorca's Bowtie*, at the off-Broadway Duke on 42nd Street, and was on the original creative team of the Julie Taymor Broadway *Spider-Man, Turn Off the Dark*.

This multi-year residency by a major performing arts company furthers the mission of Valley Performing Arts Center to become the cultural hub of the San Fernando Valley. Long-term relationships between artists and audiences are crucial to the success of emerging arts institutions and the communities they serve. Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, one of the nation's most important contemporary ballet companies, is the first company to embark on a residency at VPAC. ASFB is presently enjoying worldwide renowned with a recent debut at Teatro La Fenice, the historic opera house in Venice, Italy, and will open the season at Jacobs Pillow, one of the most important dance festivals in the world.

About Aspen Santa Fe Ballet

ASFB was founded over 20 years ago by Executive Director Jean-Philippe Malaty and Artistic Director, Tom Mossbrucker, both former dancers at The Joffrey Ballet. Described by the *New York Times* as "A breath of fresh air," Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Company stands out as a model of what a small ballet company should be with its "musicality, athleticism, and technique-conscious delivery."

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's repertoire, ranges from accessible to sophisticated, resonating with energy and eclecticism. A house-style emerges across this diverse dance menu, layering American athleticism on a base of European refinement. The company's identity is tethered to its repertoire, which speaks a complex language, challenges audiences, and advances the art form.

The company's pioneering spirit arises from a dual set of home cities: Aspen, nestled in the Rocky Mountains, and Santa Fe, gracing the Southwestern plateau. Shaping the cultural landscape of these communities – and influencing the dance field at large – is a contemporary ballet company now two decades old.

About Cherice Barton, Choreographer: *Eudaemonia*

Cherice Barton choreographed Katy Perry's critically acclaimed appearance at the 57th Grammy Awards at the Los Angeles Staples Center. As a choreographer and a creative consultant, Barton has a unique eye for transforming dance into inspired, emotional and visually stunning work, from the stage to the

screen. Cherice recently joined the creative team of *America's Got Talent* as Choreography Associate following her work with George Lucas, choreographing Disney's *Strange Magic*, by Lucasfilm Animation/ILM and released by Touchstone Pictures in 2015. She choreographed the Off Broadway production, *Wearing Lorca's Bowtie*, at the Duke on 42nd Street and is proud to have been on the original creative team of Julie Taylor's epic Broadway show, *Spider-Man, Turn Off the Dark*. Cherice and her sister Charissa recently founded Barton Movement, a creative production company under the umbrella of which we created Axis Connect, an emerging professional program for aspiring dancers. Prior to Barton's return to NYC from Las Vegas, she was the resident choreographer and casting evaluator for Franco Dragone's cirque aquatic spectacle, *Le Reve*, at the Wynn Resort Hotel and Casino.

Barton has collaborated on projects with American Ballet Theater, the Grammy Awards, Disney, Lucasfilm, Aszure Barton & Artists, Ballet British Columbia, Dragone Entertainment Group, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and the Chutzpah! Festival. She has worked with George Lucas, Katy Perry, Julie Taymor, Franco Dragone, Mia Michaels, Vincent Paterson, Aszure Barton, Danny Ezralow, Serge Denancourt, Giuliano Peparini, John Carrafa, and Crystal Pite. She has lectured and conduct master classes at the Juilliard School, New York University Tisch School of the Arts, Pace University, Marymount Manhattan College, Suny Purchase College, Barnard College at Columbia University, Adelphi University, and The Banff Center School of Fine Arts.

Cherice Barton's performance career has spanned 20 years in over 30 countries across six continents. The eldest of the three Barton sisters, all successful artists, she is keeping the crazy Barton tradition alive as a creative force of her own.

About Alejandro Cerrudo, Choreographer: *Little mortal jump*

Born in Madrid, Spain and trained at the Real Conservatorio Profesional de Danza de Madrid. His professional career began in 1998 and includes work with Victor Ullate Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet and Nederlands Dans Theater 2. Cerrudo joined Hubbard Street Dance Chicago in 2005, was named Choreographic Fellow in 2008, and became the company's first Resident Choreographer in 2009. Thirteen works choreographed to date for Hubbard Street include collaborations with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Nederlands Dans Theater. These pieces and additional commissions are in repertory at companies around the U.S. as well as in Australia, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands; touring engagements have brought his work still further abroad, to audiences in Algeria, Canada, Morocco and Spain. In March 2012, Pacific Northwest Ballet invited Cerrudo to choreograph his first work for the company, *Memory Glow*, upon receiving the Joyce Theater Foundation's second Rudolf Nureyev Prize for New Dance. Additional honors include an award from the Boomerang Fund for Artists (2011), and a Prince Prize for Commissioning Original Work from the Prince Charitable Trusts (2012) for his acclaimed, first evening-length work, *One Thousand Pieces*. Cerrudo is one of four choreographers invited by New York City Ballet principal Wendy Whelan to create and perform original duets for "*Restless Creature*," and he was recently announced the 2014 USA Donnelley Fellow by United States Artists.

About Jiří Kylián, Choreographer: *Sleepless*

The world-renowned choreographer Jiří Kylián (Czechoslovakia, 1947) has been artistic director and house choreographer with Nederlands Dans Theater for more than thirty years. After the creation of three ballets for NDT (*Viewers*, *Stoolgame* and *La Cathédrale Engloutie*), Kylián became the company's artistic director in 1975 together with Hans Knill. During the 1978 Charleston Festival in the United States Kylián put NDT on the international map with *Sinfonietta* (Leoš Janáček). That year he and Carel

Birnie founded NDT 2, meant to offer young dancers the opportunity to develop their skills and talents. In 1991 he initiated NDT 3; a company that created opportunities for 'older' dancers. NDT stood out as the first company worldwide that showed the three dimensions of a dancer's life. After an extraordinary record of service Kylián handed over the artistic leadership in 1999, but remained associated to the company as a house choreographer until 2009.

Since his last piece *Mémoires d'Oubliettes* for NDT in 2009 Kylián's creative focus has shifted to more small scale projects. Besides 75 choreographies for NDT he created various other pieces for companies worldwide such as the Stuttgart Ballet, the Paris Opéra, the Munich Bayerisches Staatsballett and the Tokyo Ballet. Kylián received many prestigious, international awards and honors, such as Officer of the Royal Dutch Order of Orange-Nassau, honorary doctorate of the Juilliard School in New York and the Honorary Medal from the President of the Czech Republic. Nowadays, Kylián's masterpieces are being performed by numerous companies and schools worldwide.

Calendar Listing for Aspen Santa Fe Ballet

Venue: Valley Performing Arts Center
18111 Nordhoff Street
Northridge, CA 91330

Date: Friday, March 3 at 8:00pm

Tickets: **Prices:** Start at \$33

In Person: VPAC Ticket Office, located in the VPAC Courtyard

By Phone: (818) 677-3000

Online: ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org

Press Contacts: Tim Choy, Davidson & Choy Publicity

323-954-7510 | t.choy@dcpublicity.com

Gary W. Murphy, Public Relations Consultant

310-914-0178 | gmurphypr@gmail.com

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About Tom Mossbrucker, Artistic Director

Tom Mossbrucker, has been artistic director of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet since 1996. For the past eighteen years Tom has built a prestigious arts organization sharing two homes in Aspen and Santa Fe. In his role as artistic director, Tom cultivates highly sophisticated and challenging works of contemporary ballet. His shining achievement is ASFB's roster of 28 ballets created on commission by leading global choreographers. Tom began to dance at four, studying tap in his hometown of Tacoma, Washington. He pursued classical ballet training at the School of American Ballet and Joffrey Ballet School. His twenty years as a principal dancer with the Joffrey Ballet, performing in over 70 ballets under the direct coaching of founders Robert Joffrey and Gerald Arpino, coincided with a period of high artistic achievement for the company. Tom danced in works by great twentieth century choreographers: Fredrick Ashton, George Balanchine, Laura Dean, William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Mark Morris, Paul Taylor and Twyla Tharp. Signature roles included Iago in Jose Limon's *The Moor's Pavane*; Champion Roper in Agnes DeMille's *Rodeo*; Billy in Eugene Loring's *Billy the Kid*; and Romeo in *John Cranko's Romeo and Juliet*. This rich dance heritage Tom brings to coaching dancers today. In 2013, Tom shared an honor

with Executive Director Jean-Philippe Malaty when the Santa Fe Community Foundation bestowed its Piñon Award on the company. In 2010, in recognition of ASFB's contribution to the field of dance, Tom and Jean-Philippe were honored with the Joyce Theater Foundation Award. A former board member of Dance USA, Tom currently serves on the board of The Gerald Arpino and Robert Joffrey Foundation.

About Jean-Philippe Malaty, Executive Director

Jean-Philippe Malaty was born in the Basque region of France. After receiving his baccalaureate in dance, he accepted scholarships to study at Mudra, Maurice Béjart's school in Brussels and at John Cranko's ballet academy in Stuttgart. Invited by acclaimed instructor David Howard to study in New York, Jean-Philippe traveled to America under Howard's tutelage. Jean-Philippe's performance career began with Joffrey II. He also danced as a guest artist with Los Angeles Classical Ballet, Ballet Hispanico, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Jean-Philippe segued from the stage to an administrator role while still in his twenties. A key member of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's start-up team, Jean-Philippe has been central to developing the company's unique dual-city business model. He directs operations in two locations, overseeing a \$4.2 million budget that he allocates to the company, two schools, an esteemed presenting series, and an award-winning folkloric outreach program. In a daring managerial move, in 2014, Jean-Philippe added Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe as a second performance company under the ASFB umbrella. Over the last decade, Jean-Philippe has received multiple accolades from the field. He has served as panelist for both the Colorado Council for the Arts and National Endowment for Arts. The Denver Bonfils-Stanton Foundation granted him their Livingston Fellowship in recognition of his significant leadership role in Colorado's non-profit sector. Jean-Philippe and Tom were also co-honored with the Joyce Theater Foundation Award in recognition of ASFB's contribution to dance. He shared an honor with Artistic Director Tom Mossbrucker when the Santa Fe Community Foundation bestowed its Piñon Award on the company. Jean-Philippe's first love is teaching, and when his schedule permits, he teaches company class and is a guest instructor at schools and universities. A naturalized U.S. citizen, Jean-Philippe is proud to have forged a dance company infused with American energy, invention, and eclecticism.