

ASPEN SANTA FE BALLET Continues its Four-Year Residency at The Soraya

Celebratory Program to be accompanied by Pianist Joyce Yang

Half/Cut/Split by Jorma Elo

Where We Left Off by Nicolo Fonte

Return to a Strange Land by Jiří Kylián

Saturday, April 7 at 8:00pm

Los Angeles, CA March 19, 2018 - Aspen Santa Fe Ballet (ASFB) celebrates the third year of its four-year residency at the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the performing arts (The Soraya) with a program of works that celebrates the company's commitment to creating new contemporary dance on Saturday, April 7 at 8:00pm. ASFB will perform the new work *Half/Cut/Split* by world-renowned Finnish choreographer Jorma Elo, as well as *Where We Left Off* (2011) commissioned by ASFB and choreographed by Nicolo Fonte, and *Return to a Strange Land* (1975) from Jiří Kylián, Artistic Director of Nederlands Dans Theater with music by Leoš Janáček.

The entire evening will be performed to live piano by Joyce Yang, a Van Cliburn International Piano Competition silver medalist and Avery Fisher Career Grant Recipient. *The Washington Post* says, "[Yang's] attention to detail and clarity is as impressive as her agility, balance and velocity."

"This landmark third year of our residency with Aspen Santa Fe Ballet is especially significant as the entire evening is accompanied by world-renowned pianist, Joyce Yang." said Thor Steingraber, Executive Director of The Soraya. "We're also excited to host a new work by Jorma Elo, one of dance's most sought-after choreographers. In addition, we are also presenting works from Jiří Kylián, who continues to be a trailblazer and inspiration in the dance world as well as Nicolo Fonte, a favorite of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet. This is an outstanding trio of 21st century dance makers."

This multi-year residency by a major performing arts company furthers the mission of The Soraya 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 The Soraya. ASFB enjoys worldwide acclaim with invitations to perform at noted venues around the world, from Teatro La Fenice, the historic opera house in Venice, Italy, to The Joyce Theater and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in the U.S.

About the Program

Half/Cut/Split

Choreography: Jorma Elo

Music: Robert Schumann

Lighting Design: Seah Johnson

Costume Design: Nete Joseph

Dancers: Sadie Brown, Jenelle Figgins, Seia Rassenti Watson, Evan Supple, Anthony Tiedeman, Joseph Watson

Premiere: April 5, 2018, Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Orange County, CA

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's production of *Half/Cut/Split* is made possible through the generosity of the Orange County Philharmonic Society, Aspen Music Festival & School, The City of Aspen, and Bunni & Paul Copaken.

Where We Left Off

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Commissioned Work

Choreography: Nicolo Fonte

Music: *Mad Rush, Metamorphosis No. 2* by Philip Glass

Costume Design: Mark Zappone

Lighting Design: Seah Johnson

Staging: Emily Franc

Dancers: Katherine Bolaños, Sadie Brown, Emily Franc, Anna Gerberich, Seia Rassenti Watson, Austin Reynolds, Evan Supple, Anthony Tiedeman, Pete Leo Walker, Joseph Watson

Premiere: February 11, 2011, Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Aspen CO

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's production of *Where We Left Off* is made possible through the generosity of Toby Devan Lewis.

Return to a Strange Land

Choreography: Jiří Kylián

Music: Leoš Janáček

Costume and Décor Design: Jiří Kylián

Lighting Design: Kees Tjebbes

Staging: Jeanne Solan

Dancers: Katherine Bolaños, Anna Gerberich, Evan Supple, Anthony Tiedeman, Pete Leo Walker, Joseph Watson

World Premiere: May 17, 1975, Stuttgart Ballet

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet's production of *Return to a Strange Land* is made possible through the generosity of Sherry and Eddie Wachs.

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 Jorma Elo, Choreographer: *Half/Cut/Split*

Jorma Elo is one of the most sought-after choreographers in the world. He has created works for companies including American Ballet Theatre, San Francisco Ballet, New York City Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, Royal Ballet of Flanders, Vienna State Opera Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, Netherlands Dance Theater and Finnish National Ballet, among others. Elo trained with the Finnish National Ballet School and the Kirov Ballet School in Leningrad. He danced with Finnish National Ballet and Cullberg Ballet until joining Netherlands Dance Theater in 1990, where he enjoyed a 15-year career.

Elo was appointed Resident Choreographer of Boston Ballet in 2005, where he has created many world premieres, including *Sharp Side of Dark* (2002), *Plat to B* (2004), *Carmen/Illusions* (2006 & 2009), *Brake the Eyes* (2007), *In on Blue* (2008), *Le Scare du Printemps* (2009), *Sharper Side of Dark* (2012) and *Awake Only* (2012). Boston Ballet premiered a full-length performance titled, “Elo Experience” in 2011. Elo was awarded the Bois de la Danse prize for best choreography in 2010, for his production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, commissioned by Vienna State Opera Ballet, and *Slice to Sharp* for the Stanislavsky Music Theatre.

In 2012, the Finnish Government awarded Elo the Dance Artist Prize. Elo has also been awarded the Choreography prize in the 2005 Helsinki International Ballet Competition, and he was the recipient of the Prince Charitable Trust Prize and the Choo-San Goh Choreographic Award in 2006. He was nominated for a 2008 Isadora Duncan Dance Award. Elo has been featured in *Esquire*, *Dance* and *Pointe* Magazines. Elo was awarded the 2015 Pro Finlandia Medal of the Order of the Lion of Finland, one of Finland’s highest honors.

About Nicolo Fonte, Choreographer: *Where We Left Off*

Choreographer Nicolo Fonte is known for his daring and original approach to dance. His work has been noted by critics for a unique movement language as well as a highly developed fusion of ideas, dance and design. Born in Brooklyn New York, Fonte started dancing at the age of 14. He studied at the Joffrey Ballet School in New York as well as at the San Francisco Ballet and New York City Ballet Schools while completing a Bachelor Degree of Fine Arts at SUNY Purchase. Upon graduation he danced with Peridance in NYC and later joined Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in Montreal. Fonte subsequently joined Duato's Compañia Nacional de Danza in Madrid and choreographed three ballets for the company including, *En los Segundos Ocultos*, (*In Hidden Seconds*).

Since 2000, he has created or staged his ballets for The Dutch National Ballet, Houston Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Ballet West, Royal Ballet of Flanders, Stuttgart Ballet, The Australian Ballet, The Göteborg Ballet, The Finnish National Ballet, Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, The Perm Tchaikovsky Ballet, The Washington Ballet, Ballett Mainz, Ballett Nürnberg, Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, TANZ Ensemble Cathy Sharp, North Carolina Dance Theatre, Tulsa Ballet, Ballet British Columbia, Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal and Queensland Ballet. Fonte received a Choo San Goh award for his 2002 collaboration with Pacific Northwest Ballet, *Almost Tango*. *Almost Tango* was also voted as one of Dance Europe's "Best Premieres" when it was re-staged for The Australian Ballet in 2004.

From 2002 to 2006 Nicolo enjoyed an ongoing creative partnership with The Göteborg Ballet in Sweden. While in Göteborg he created his first full-length ballet, based on the life of Tchaikovsky, *Re: Tchaikovsky*, which appeared on the "Best of 2005" lists of both Ballett-Tanz and Dance Europe. Fonte

has also played an important role in the ongoing development of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet (ASFB) as one of that company's most popular guest choreographers. To date he has created eight highly successful works for ASFB that have toured throughout the US and overseas. Nicolo Fonte is currently the Resident Choreographer for Ballet West, in Salt Lake City, which began with the 2012-2013 season. He also became Resident Choreographer at Oregon Ballet Theatre beginning with the 2016 - 2017 season.

About Jiří Kylián, Choreographer: *Return to a Strange Land*

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.

About Joyce Yang, Piano

Blessed with "poetic and sensitive pianism" (*Washington Post*) and a "wondrous sense of color" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), pianist Joyce Yang captivates audiences with her virtuosity, lyricism, and interpretive sensitivity. As a Van Cliburn International Piano Competition silver medalist and Avery Fisher Career Grant recipient, Yang showcases her colorful musical personality in solo recitals and collaborations with the world's top orchestras and chamber musicians.

In 2017, Yang received her first Grammy nomination (Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance) for her recording of *Franck, Kurtág, Prokofiev & Schumann* with violinist Augustin Hadelich. She first came to international attention in 2005 when she won the silver medal at the 12th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. The youngest contestant at 19 years old, she took home two additional awards: the Steven De Groote Memorial Award for Best Performance of Chamber Music (with the Takács Quartet) and the Beverley Taylor Smith Award for Best Performance of a New Work.

Since her spectacular debut, she has blossomed into an "astonishing artist" (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*). She has performed as soloist with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, the Baltimore, Detroit, Houston, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Sydney, New Jersey, and Toronto symphony orchestras, Royal Flemish Philharmonic, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, and the BBC Philharmonic (among many others), working with such distinguished conductors as Edo de Waart, Lorin Maazel, James Conlon, Manfred Honeck, Jacques Lacombe, Leonard Slatkin, David Robertson, Bramwell Tovey, Peter Ondjian, and Jaap van Zweden. In recital, Yang has taken the stage at New York's Lincoln Center and Metropolitan Museum, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Chicago's Symphony Hall and Zurich's Tonhalle.

In the 2017/2018 season, Yang embarks on a journey of debuts, collaborations, and premieres. Highlights include her 12th consecutive appearance as a guest artist at the Aspen Music Festival, her debut with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra under Edo De Waart performing Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 3 in five New Zealand cities, a reunion with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for three performances of Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3, and her first collaboration with the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet on a new work for dancers and solo piano choreographed by Jorma Elo. The work will receive its world premiere in Aspen (March 24) with repeat engagements in Santa Fe (March 31), Costa Mesa (April 4-5) and Los Angeles (April 7).

This season Yang will also perform alongside the Nashville Symphony Orchestra, Lexington Philharmonic, Eugene Symphony, Santa Rosa Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Milwaukee Symphony, Reno Philharmonic, Allentown Symphony, Oklahoma City Philharmonic, Vancouver Symphony, and Asheville Symphony. She continues her enduring partnership with longtime collaborators Alexander String Quartet with performances of works by Schumann and Brahms in California and New York

Recent recordings include Yang and Hadelich's collaborative *Works for Violin and Piano* for Avie Records ("One can only sit in misty-eyed amazement at their insightful flair and spontaneity," – *The Strad*) and the world premiere recording of Michael Torke's Piano Concerto, created expressly for Yang and commissioned by the Albany Symphony. Yang has also "demonstrated impressive gifts" (*New York Times*) with the release of *Wild Dreams* (Avie Records), on which she plays Schumann, Bartók, Hindemith, Rachmaninoff, and arrangements by Earl Wild; a pairing of the Brahms and Schumann Piano Quintets with the Alexander Quartet; and a recording of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 with Denmark's Odense Symphony Orchestra that *International Record Review* called "hugely enjoyable, beautifully shaped ... a performance that marks her out as an enormous talent." Of her 2011 debut album for Avie Records, *Collage*, featuring works by Scarlatti, Liebermann, Debussy, Currier, and Schumann, *Gramophone* praised her "imaginative programming" and "beautifully atmospheric playing."

Other recent season highlights include debuts with the Minnesota Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, and Charleston Symphony. She was featured in a five-year Rachmaninoff cycle with Edo de Waart and the Milwaukee Symphony, to which she brought "an enormous palette of colors, and tremendous emotional depth" (*Milwaukee Sentinel Journal*). Yang has joined the Takács Quartet for Dvorak in Lincoln Center's Great Performers series and impressed the *New York Times* with her "vivid and beautiful playing" of Schubert's "Trout" Quintet with members of the Emerson String Quartet at the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center. She has performed solo recitals across the United States and Canada, including a recent performance at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in Beverly Hills that was hailed by the *Los Angeles Times* as "extraordinary" and "kaleidoscopic."

Yang has fostered enduring partnerships with the Alexander String Quartet, with whom she has recorded the Brahms and Schumann Piano Quintets (recent appearances in New York and Charlottesville) and violinist Augustin Hadelich (recent appearances in Palm Desert, La Jolla, Costa Mesa, Santa Barbara, Saint Paul, Dallas, New York, San Francisco, Cincinnati and Hong Kong). "It was hard to imagine finer performances by any violin-and-piano pairing," wrote *The Dallas Morning News* of one of Yang and Hadelich's recent recitals.

Born in 1986 in Seoul, South Korea, Yang received her first piano lesson from her aunt at the age of four. She quickly took to the instrument, which she received as a birthday present, and over the next few years won several national piano competitions in her native country. By the age of ten, she had entered the School of Music at the Korea National University of Arts, and went on to make a number of concerto

and recital appearances in Seoul and Daejeon. In 1997, Yang moved to the United States to begin studies at the pre-college division of the Juilliard School with Dr. Yoheved Kaplinsky. During her first year at Juilliard, Yang won the pre-college division Concerto Competition, resulting in a performance of Haydn's Keyboard Concerto in D with the Juilliard Pre-College Chamber Orchestra. After winning the Philadelphia Orchestra's Greenfield Student Competition, she performed Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto with that orchestra at just twelve years old. She graduated from Juilliard with special honor as the recipient of the school's 2010 Arthur Rubinstein Prize, and in 2011 she won its 30th Annual William A. Petschek Piano Recital Award.

Yang made her celebrated New York Philharmonic debut with Maazel at Avery Fisher Hall in November 2006 and performed on the orchestra's tour of Asia, making a triumphant return to her hometown of Seoul, South Korea. Subsequent appearances with the Philharmonic included the opening night of the Leonard Bernstein Festival in September 2008, at the special request of Maazel in his final season as music director. *The New York Times* pronounced her performance in Bernstein's *The Age of Anxiety* a "knockout."

Yang appears in the film *In the Heart of Music*, a documentary about the 2005 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. She is a Steinway artist.

About The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)

The Soraya opened its 2017-2018 season on September 16 with a performance of *AMADEUS Live* (Milos Foreman's 1984 Academy Award-winning Best Picture with live orchestra) with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and members of the LA Opera Chorus. The evening honored the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Foundation in recognition of the family's recent \$17 million gift that will rename VPAC as the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Performing Arts Center, known as The Soraya. The gift is one of the largest in the history of the California State University and the system's largest single gift to support the arts; gift to support the programming and operations of the award-winning Valley Performing Arts Center – which has become one of the cultural jewels of the region in the six years since it opened.

The 2017-18 Soraya season signals a new era for the premier event venue. Under the leadership of Executive Director Thor Steingraber, the renamed Younes and Soraya Nazarian Performing Arts Center expands its programming and outstanding multidisciplinary performances. The mission of The Soraya is to present a wide variety of performances that not only includes new and original work from the Los Angeles region but also work from around the world that appeal to all of LA's rich and diverse communities.

Located on the campus of California State University, Northridge, The Soraya's season offers a vibrant performance program of nearly 50 classical and popular music, dance, theater, family and international events that will serve to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley, and further establish itself as one of the top arts companies in Southern California. The award-winning, 1,700-seat theatre was designed by HGA Architects and Engineers and was recently cited by the Los Angeles Times as "a growing hub for live music, dance, drama and other cultural events."

Calendar Listing for Aspen Santa Fe Ballet

Venue: Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)
18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330

Date: Saturday, April 7 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

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About Tom Mossbrucker, Artistic Director

Tom Mussbrucker, 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.