

Dance Salad Festival will celebrate its **25th Anniversary in Houston** and the 28th season since its inception in Belgium within the Festival week of events. Performances will take place on **April 9, 10, 11, 2020 @ Wortham Center's Cullen Theater** and the **Choreographer Forum on April 8, 2020 @ the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.**

Exciting line up of performances by **Hofesh Shechter Company, London, UK; Semperoper Ballett Dresden, Germany; Royal Danish Ballet's Kammerballetten, Copenhagen, Denmark; Dortmund Ballett Guest Stars, Lucia Lacarra and Matthew Golding, Germany; Donlon Dance Collective Berlin, Germany; Royal Ballet of Flanders, Antwerp, Belgium; Sydney Dance Company, Australia; Dunia Dance Theatre, Zimbabwe/Belgium and Laboration Art Company, France.**

For updates, photos, videos and to buy tickets, \$25-\$59, go to: www.dancesalad.org. Arrive early for downtown parking.

Press Contact:

Christina Levin, PR/Marketing Manager and Assistant to Director, Dance Salad Festival
dsfassist@aol.com

To acknowledge such a momentous milestone in the life of the Festival we asked our loyal dance writers to share their thoughts and speak their hearts about what their experience with Dance Salad has meant for them.

Molly Glentzer, Houston Chronicle's Senior Writer and Critic of Arts & Culture who has been masterfully and devotedly covering DSF since 1999, reflects: "As a journalist with a lean travel budget, would I have ever seen Mats Ek and Anna Laguna, Drew Jacoby and Rubinald Pronk, or Paul Lightfoot and Sol León performing their signature collaborations? Would I have witnessed as many unforgettable dancers in their prime – among them Sofiane Sylve, Marie Agnes Guillot, Xing Liang and Vladimir Malakhov? Would I have become familiar with such a diverse choreographic pantheon of contemporary ballet masters or been able to follow the development of the next generation, including Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Mauro Astalfi, David Dawson, Susanna Leinonen, Willy Tsai, Marguerite Donlon and Henrique Rodovalho?...As far as I know, there is still nothing like this festival anywhere else in America – or any other dance gathering that is simultaneously so global and intimate...What an exhilarating, virtuosic ride Nancy has given all of us for 25 years, and such an inspired education. I am forever grateful."

Maggie Foyer, our cherished writer and moderator of the Choreographers Forum of many years, from London, UK, writes: "Dance Salad Festival is like no other. At other festivals, you run from one theatre space to another, catching a matinee here, a late-night performance there, and maybe meeting briefly at the hotel. At Dance Salad Festival, the shared class and afternoon meal breaks forge friendships, bonding artists across the language and cultural barriers. It is a uniquely special event...[Nancy's] determination in persuading choreographers to bring their curated works to Houston is legendary. Dance survives through cross-fertilization: being introduced to new audiences and for those audiences to spread the word on new names. Houston's Dance Salad Festival has done sterling work in this respect."

Choreographer's Forum: April 8, 2020, 7:00 PM @ Museum of Fine Arts Houston. The Forum will feature **Sebastian Kloborg** guest choreographer of the Royal Danish Ballet, along with **Rafael Bonachela**, Artistic Director of Sydney Dance Company, Australia and choreographer **Harold George**, founder and Artistic Director of Dunia Dance Theater Brussels, Belgium/ Harare, Zimbabwe. As always, the Forum will be moderated by Maggie Foyer, dance writer from London, UK. Free event.

Performances: April 9, 10 & 11, 7:30 PM Wortham Center, Cullen Theater.

1. **Hofesh Shechter Company, London, UK**, will premiere in Houston, one of the highly prized and talked about choreographic works of 2017, *Grand Finale*, choreographed and set to music by **Hofesh Shechter**, accompanied by live music on stage. Spectacularly bold and ambitious, *Grand Finale* is at once comic, bleak and beautiful, evoking a world at odds with itself, full of anarchic energy and violent comedy. Filtering this irrepressible spirit, Shechter creates a vision of a world in freefall, featuring an exceptional ensemble of dancers and a live band of musicians.

Premiered at La Villette Paris with Théâtre de la Ville on 14 June 2017, *Grand Finale* was nominated for an Olivier award for Best New Dance Production and for Outstanding Production in the Bessies. It was also named Production of the Year by tanz magazine. This year *Grand Finale* won a 2019 Dora Award for Outstanding Touring Performance and was nominated for Best Dance Production in the 2019 Helpmann Awards.

★★★★ ‘heart-stopping...Hofesh Shechter’s [Grand Finale] has arrived with a bang’ - Laura Cappelle, Financial Times

‘Choreographic fireworks... Set, music, pounding percussion and dancers’ bodies soaring high, the apocalypse of *Grand Finale* shakes the compass of tribal dance. A must see.’ - Rosita Boisseau, Le Monde

‘An epic fresco of body and emotion ... Hofesh Shechter is the king of dramatic contrast’ - Marie Soyeux, La Croix

★★★★★ ‘A mature and magnificent work ... sulphurous, visceral and surprisingly tender’ - Neil Norman, The Stage

★★★★ ‘a wild waltz for the end of time ... (*Grand Finale*) ranks among Shechter’s most sophisticated creations’ - Judith Mackrell, The Guardian

Choreographer Hofesh Shechter is recognized as one of the most exciting artists making stage work today, renowned for composing atmospheric musical scores to compliment the unique physicality of his movement. Shechter has also staged and choreographed works on leading international dance companies including the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Batsheva Ensemble, Candoco Dance Company, Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theater 1, Paris Opera Ballet, Royal Ballet and Royal Ballet Flanders. He has choreographed for theatre, television and opera, notably at the Metropolitan Opera (New York) for Nico Mulhy’s *Two Boys*, the Royal Court on *Motortown* and *The Arsonists*, the National Theatre on *Saint Joan* and for the Channel 4 series *Skins*. As part of #HOFEST, a 4 week festival celebrating Shechter’s work across 4 iconic London venues, he co-directed Gluck’s *Orphée et Eurydice* with John Fulljames at the Royal Opera House. In 2016 he received a Tony Award nomination for his choreography for the Broadway revival of *Fiddler on the Roof*. In 2018 Hofesh Shechter was awarded an honorary OBE for Services to Dance and the company's first dance film, *Hofesh Shechter’s Clowns*, was broadcast by the BBC in September to great acclaim.” www.shechter.co.uk

2. Semperoper Ballett Dresden, Germany, will make its 7th appearance at Dance Salad Festival with a pas de deux from the highly acclaimed piece *The Four Seasons*, created by one of Festival's most featured choreographers, **David Dawson**, set to music by **Max Richter**, which premiered in March 2018.

"The spherical music of Max Richter's recomposed Vivaldi's The Four Seasons inspired Dawson to create something about the cycle of life, piece is set within constantly changing display of shape, color and light. This work can be experienced as a bridge between present and past, or an answer from the future to the past. A journey that is shaped by the bodies of the dancers, held within a space assigned to each of the four elements. The focus is on a human being and aesthetic approach is always born out of profoundly human feelings: 'I always associate the change of the seasons with the journey of life – from birth to death, beginning and end, and in between everything human: joy, love, fear, and loss,'" writes David Dawson, daviddawson.com.

Dawson is one of the leading dance makers working in classical ballet today. His choreographic style transforms classical ballet in new ways, and his signature works have been praised by critics and audiences worldwide. His creations have joined the repertoire of many companies including Boston Ballet, English National Ballet, Semperoper Ballett Dresden, Finnish National Ballet, Kirov Ballet, National Ballet of Marseille, Royal Ballet Flanders, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Singapore Dance Theatre, Royal Swedish Ballet and Norwegian National Ballet. Dawson created *The Grey Area* for Dutch National Ballet in 2002, and had its US premiere at Dance Salad Festival in 2003 before showing in Boston, Moscow, London, Edinburgh, Brussels, Stockholm, and Tokyo. From 2004-2012 he was Resident Choreographer for Dutch National Ballet where he created significant new works including *Morning Ground*, which was performed at Dance Salad Festival in 2006. For *Faun(e)*, performed at Dance Salad Festival in 2010, Dawson was nominated as Best Classical Choreographer for the UK Critics' Circle National Dance Award and the Prix Benois de la Danse Choreography Award. Dance Salad Festival audiences had also enjoyed sections of Dawson's *Opus.11* in 2015 and most recently *On the Nature of Daylight* in 2018.

3. Dancers of the Royal Danish Ballet's Kammerballetten are excited to come back to DSF, with the work *Chorale Dances* choreographed by **Tobias Praetorius** set to music by J. C Bach performed by **Alexander McKenzie** on piano, and *Absolute Pitch Black* choreographed by **Sebastian Kloborg** set to music by F. Chopin, accompanied by **Nicklas Walentin** on violin and again, Alexander McKenzie on piano. "Are they in love? Are they naive? Or do these youthful dancers and musicians in Kammerballetten simply possess a very rare talent? In any case, they are clearly in love with both dance and music, and their audience is smitten with this love for classical ballet technique and classical music. The musicians play themselves close to the dancers bodies, so that music and choreography melt together. Just as when pianist Alexander McKenzie sits on his piano chair, while ballerina Emma Håkansson embraces him - and nevertheless, his hands continue to play on," exclaims Anne Middleboe Christensen of information.dk

4. Dortmund Ballett Guest Stars, Lucia Lacarra and Mathew Golding will debut an elegant pas de deux *Finding Light* choreographed by Taiwanese-American **Edwaard Liang**, set to **Vivaldi's Concerto in B Major**. Inspired by the Aurora Colorado Shooting in 2012, where 4 men lost their lives protecting their girlfriends, *Finding Light* symbolizes the women spirits accompanying their men to find the eternal light.

Spanish born, **Lucia Lacarra**, former principal of Roland Petit's Ballets de Marseille has embodied many leading roles created specifically for her by Petit, including the famous *Le Jeune homme et la Mort* with well-known dancer, Nicolas Le Riche. (This work was presented in DSF 2012). In her pursuit of

classicism she also worked at the San Francisco Ballet under direction of Helgi Thomasson. She joined Bayerisches Staatsballett in Munich in 2002 and danced leading roles in many of John Neumeier's ballets. Lacarra is a recipient of such awards as Prix Nijinsky in Monte Carlo, 2002, followed by the Prix Benois de la danse, Moscow, 2003, the Spanish Premio Nacional de Danza 2005, as well as the title of Honorary Citizen and Cultural Messenger of her home town San Sebastián, Basque Country, Spain. In 2008, she was awarded the honorary title 'Prima Balerina' by the Bavarian Ministry of Culture. In 2011, at the World Ballet Stars Gala in St Petersburg, she was named the Dancer of the Decade. In 2016 she left Munich and joined Ballett Dortmund as a permanent guest star.

Canadian born, **Matthew Golding**, trained at the Universal Ballet School, formerly known as Kirov Academy in Washington, DC and The Royal Ballet School of London. Matthew won the Youth America Grand Prix Ballet Competition and the Prix de Lausanne in 2002 and then joined American Ballet Theatre in 2003. He was promoted to Principal Dancer at Dutch National Ballet of Holland in 2010 and then continued on as Principal dancer with The Royal Ballet, London from 2014-2017. Matthew performed as a guest with Bavarian State Ballet, Norwegian National Ballet, Mariinsky Ballet, Staatsballett Berlin, The National Ballet of Canada, English National Ballet, Universal Ballet of Korea, Ukraine National Theatre of Kiev and currently works with the Hong Kong Ballet. He was nominated for the Prix Benois de la Danse in 2012.

A former dancer with New York City Ballet and Nederlands Dans Theater, Taiwan born and California raised **Edwaard Liang** has built an international reputation as a choreographer and over the last decade, he has created work for the Bolshoi Ballet, Houston Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, Kirov Ballet, New York City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Shanghai Ballet, Singapore Dance Theatre and Washington Ballet. In 2013, Mr. Liang was named Artistic Director at BalletMet where he continues to choreograph new works for companies both domestically and abroad. In 2017, he received an Emmy® Award for his short dance film, "Vaulted." In 2018, he created a new ballet with Roberto Bolle for the opening of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland.

5. Royal Ballet of Flanders, Antwerp, Belgium will premiere *Jack* in the USA, choreographed by one of their highly acclaimed contemporary dancers and the company's former principal dancer, **Drew Jacoby**, set to music by George Gershwin. This work premiered at Linbury Theater Royal Opera House, London in April 2019. The solo from *Jack* will be performed at DSF 2020 by the Royal Ballet of Flanders's dancer, Tiemen Bormans.

"For all its shock value, Jack was a highly intelligent, tightly structured piece, one that really did shine a new light on contemporary culture and dance's place in it." Culture Whisperer, London.

Born in Boise, Idaho (USA) in 1984, Drew Jacoby studied at San Francisco Ballet and Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle. Her professional career began at age 17 with Alonzo King's Lines Ballet in 2002. In 2005 she was invited to join Sylvie Guillem's Japan tour, performing alongside dancers from The Royal Ballet and Paris Opera Ballet. She founded her own company with former Dutch National Ballet soloist Rubinald Pronk, which was based in New York City and toured to venues such as Jacob's Pillow and Holland Dance Festival from 2007-2012. While in New York, she also danced with Christopher Wheeldon's Morphoses, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, and Lar Lubovitch. In 2012 Drew was invited to join Nederlands Dans Theater, where she stayed for three years before joining the Royal Ballet of Flanders as a principal dancer in 2015. In 2016 she collaborated on a dance film with choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and musical/visual artist **Woodkid** in Paris. She has performed works by choreographers including William Forsythe, Jiri Kylian, Maurice Bejart, George Balanchine, Jean Christophe Maillot, and Pina Bausch, and has had original works created on her by Christopher Wheeldon, Lightfoot/Leon, Marco Goecke, Crystal Pite, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Alonzo King, Dwight

Rhoden, Lar Lubovitch, Edouard Lock, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and Mauro Bigonzeti. In 2018 she was nominated for a Benois de la Danse award for her performance in Pina Bausch's *Cafe Muller*. She was featured as a dancer and choreographer in the official music video *Cold*, by the Editors and played the role of Loie Fuller in the 2020 feature film, *Radioactive*, directed by Marjane Satrapi. Her choreography has been performed at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, Lucent Dans Theater in The Hague, the Royal Opera House in London, and the Joyce Theater in New York. Duet Jacoby & Pronk performed *One* choreographed by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa in Dance Salad Festival 2008 and *Softly As I Leave You* choreographed by Paul Lightfoot and Sol Leon was presented in Dance Salad Festival 2010.

6. Dunia Dance Theatre, an Afro-contemporary dance company, based in Brussels, Belgium/ and Harare, Zimbabwe, will debut in the USA with ***Making Men***, created and directed by Sierra Leonean choreographer **Harold George** & film director **Antoine Panier**. The choreographer reflects: "I chose dance because it was the least masculine artistic activity I could find. I had no reason to love masculinity. ...Can failure to fit the stereotype of masculinity lead young men to the unease and violence we witness in many societies today? Are they free to choose to do so in any way they deem appropriate, or are they forced into a mold? According to Canadian author Michael Kaufman, in the patriarchal system that dominates most of the world, the male child must always repress his 'femininity' or anything resembling his mother to affirm his masculinity. The feminine is seen to contradict the masculine and therefore must be denied. This leads to a defensiveness arising from the refusal of femininity and all things feminine. As a result, later in life, he hates women as they represent what he hates in himself. Among the results of this process is violence in general and violence against women in particular." duniadance.net. The film section of *Making Men* has received the 1st prize at Verve Dance Film Festival.

Dunia Dance Theatre is based in Brussels, Belgium since 2001 and presents work in which storytelling and elements of African mythology merge with modern and African dance techniques to create a contemporary dance experience. Harold George incorporates plastic arts as well as new media techniques in his dance work ideas, the result speaks to the emotions through an aesthetic emerging from a diaspora experience.

7. Sydney Dance Company from **Australia** will debut in Houston with a pas de deux from ***ab [intra]***, choreographed by company's Artistic Director, **Rafael Bonachela**, set to music by **Peteris Vasks**. Premiered in Sydney in February 2016, ***ab [intra]***, meaning 'from within' in Latin is 'an exploration of our primal instincts, our impulses and our visceral responses', says choreographer. From tenderness to turmoil, ***ab [intra]*** is a journey of intense human existence that will command your attention. This work is an exploration of light and darkness, with fierce physical movement..."

"Bonachela says in the program that he wanted *ab [intra]* 'to capture the energy and drive I feel each time I walk into the studio'. He and his company have succeeded brilliantly." The Daily Telegraph

Rafael Bonachela was born in Barcelona where he began his early dance training before moving to London, and in 1992 joined the legendary Rambert Dance Company. He remained with Rambert as a dancer and Associate Choreographer until 2006 at which time he successfully set up the Bonachela Dance Company (BDC) to concentrate on the rapid rise of his choreographic career. Rafael Bonachela's internationally recognized talent has seen him work with contemporary dance at the highest level creating dance pieces for Sydney Dance Company. Also Rafael has been commissioned to make works for Candoco, George Piper Dances, ITDANSA Danza, Contemporanea de Cuba, Transitions Dance Company and Dance Works Rotterdam amongst others. sydneydancecompany.com

8. Donlon Dance Collective Berlin, Germany is coming second year in a row, with **Marguerite Donlon**'s special curation for DSF of her earlier work **Ruff Celts**, set to original score by Claas Willeke and Sam Auinger. *"The calm after the storm! In Ruff Celts this solo/duet appears like a chiselled sculpture out of a wild rock which has tumbled into the foreground without warning. From the madness and skirmish of the Celts in the previous sense we find ourselves in an emotional farewell.... A memory and the shadow of a love which never dies.... Breathing past and present all at once,"* writes Donlon.

Native of Ireland, multi-awarded, an innovative, contemporary choreographer and performer, Marguerite Donlon is known for her humor and profound creativity which thrills an unusually broad audience. With stylistic innovation, Irish wit and the combination of different art forms, Marguerite Donlon has pushed artistic limits to secure a place in the international dance scene.

9. Laboration Art Company, France will premiere the choreography **ANNA** in Houston for two female dancers, created by choreographer, company's Founder and Artistic Director, **Laura Arend**. **ANNA** is an expression of respect towards five exceptional female personalities, little recognized or forgotten, yet described by choreographer as those who "take control of their destinies, live their dreams..." These five women, Lise Meitner, Sophie Scholl, Clarenore Stinnes, Pina Bausch and Clara Schuman are at the source of inspiration of this choreographic work. *"Her work on nuclear physics and radio activity has made Lise Meitner famous, although the Nobel Prize Committee has never rewarded her work. Sophie Scholl's integrity in the face of Nazism inspires... reflection on our choices, our determination..."* It was Clarenor Stinnes' bravery that made her travel the world by car, thus becoming an example of physical and mental non-renunciation: it is to move forward in spite of the difficulty of the task that allows liberation. Pina Bausch's creativity leads us to consider the place of beauty within a scenic creation process and its relationship to the public. Clara Schuman, wife of the famous pianist and composer Robert Schuman, gave up her career in favor of the one of her husband... Mother of eight children, she remains one of the greatest pianists of the 19th century." laborationartcompany.com. In **ANNA**, the choreographer inquires, how does the determination of these women influence or frustrate us today and what lessons can we learn from that.

"A 'dance that dances' dear to the choreographer who puts her body technique and that of her dancer at the service of her art. A round trip between tension and fluidity, engagement and commitment, and acceleration through the portraits drawn. ...] The simple and effective scenography builds an effective storyboard for a danceable and poetic journey through her portraits of women. " cccdanse.com

Trained at Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Lyon and at Jeune Ballet, Laura then continued studying at Merce Cunningham Studio in New York City, NY. In 2011 she joined the Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company (KCDC) in Israel, same year that she created her Laboration Art Company.

Check photos, videos and updates at www.dancesalad.org