

# MEDIA RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## STEPHEN MILLS' *CINDERELLA* DANCES INTO THE LONG CENTER MAY 12-14

*FOUR PERFORMANCES MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND*

AUSTIN, Texas (April 5, 2023) – Ballet Austin closes the 2022/23 season with one of Stephen Mills' most treasured full-length works, *Cinderella*. This classic fairy tale showcases Mills' enchanting storytelling, exquisite classical choreography, and signature humor that makes this ballet one of Austin's all-time audience favorites. With a compiled score by Alexander Glazunov performed live by the Austin Symphony Orchestra, Stephen Mills' *Cinderella* includes two evening performances and two matinees over Mother's Day weekend at the Long Center for the Performing Arts May 12-14.

### A CLASSIC FAIRYTALE BALLET

*Cinderella* made its premiere at Bass Concert Hall in Austin in 1997, as the first full-length ballet conceptualized and choreographed by Stephen Mills, Ballet Austin's Sarah & Ernest Butler Family Fund Artistic Director. Creating a compilation from select works by Russian composer Alexander Glazunov (1865-1936), Mills brings his timeless story to life with an enchanting musical score that departs from Sergei Prokofiev's 1944 score often associated with the fairytale ballet. Excerpts selected by Mills come from a variety of Glazunov's most popular compositions, including *Raymonda*, *Scenes de Ballet*, *Concert Waltz No. 2*, and *The Seasons*.

While there are many variations on the theme of *Cinderella*, including prominent storylines from Chinese, Italian, French, and German cultures, Charles Perrault, a French author, wrote the most recognized story of *Cinderella*. Written in 1697, Perrault's version is said to have been the version used by Walt Disney to create his animated masterpiece. Francois Decombe Albert choreographed the first known ballet based on Perrault's tale, which premiered at the Kings Theatre in London in 1822.

Mills' production of this fairy tale follows the classic *Cinderella* storyline and her path from "rags to riches." The evil stepsisters, beloved fairy godmother, and magical pumpkin that transforms into a carriage all delight audiences. Filled with timeless humor and enduring romance, the ballet features exquisite choreography, elaborate costumes, and lavish set designs that create a charming experience for the whole family.

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## BEFORE THE CLOCK STRIKES SHOWTIME

Mills says of the ballet: “Audiences adore Ballet Austin’s *Cinderella* because it is romantic, humorous, and true to the story you remember about a young woman who, thanks to a kind heart, generous spirit, and fairy godmother, trades her unfortunate circumstances for the love of her life and her own chance at ‘happily ever after.’ If you are new to ballet, *Cinderella* is a great introduction to the classics in terms of choreography and music. *Cinderella* is perfect for all ages and a fun-filled way to mark both Mother’s Day weekend and the conclusion of Ballet Austin’s 2022/23 performance season.”

*Cinderella* is a timeless ballet filled with whimsical fantasy. The enduring rags-to-romance story offers the promise of “happily ever after” with a dose of humor, mixed with the majesty of classical ballet. As the final production of Ballet Austin’s 2022/23 season, audiences of all ages will enjoy this classic fairy tale of perseverance and love.

**Run Time:** 2 hours & 10 minutes, including two 20-minute intermissions

**Dates:** Friday, May 12 at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 13 at 2:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 13 at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 14 at 3:00 p.m.

## TICKETS ON SALE

Tickets for all four performances are on sale now and range from **\$15-\$125**. Visit [balletaustin.org](http://balletaustin.org) to reserve seats online, or contact Ballet Austin’s Box Office at **512.476.2163**, weekdays from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. CT for personalized assistance.

## ABOUT STEPHEN MILLS

**Sarah & Ernest Butler Family Fund Artistic Director**

Known for his innovative and collaborative choreographic projects, Stephen Mills has dance works in the repertoires of companies across the United States and around the world. From his inaugural season as Artistic Director in 2000, Mills attracted attention from around the United States with his world-premiere production of *Hamlet*, hailed by Dance Magazine as “...sleek and sophisticated.” The Washington Post recognized Ballet Austin as “one of the nation’s best-kept ballet secrets” in 2004 after Ballet Austin performed Mills’ world premiere of *The Taming of the Shrew*, commissioned by and performed at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. The Company was first invited to perform at the Kennedy Center in January of 2002 with the Mills production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and at The Joyce Theater in New York City in 2004. In 2005 after two years of extensive research, Mills led a community-

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wide human rights collaboration that culminated in the world premiere work *Light / The Holocaust & Humanity Project*. In 2006, *Light / The Holocaust & Humanity Project* was awarded the Audrey & Raymond Maislin Humanitarian Award by the Anti-Defamation League. In September of 2013, the work made its international debut with a tour in three cities across Israel.

In 1998, Mills was the choreographer chosen to represent the United States through his work, *Ashes*, at Les Rencontres Chorégraphiques Internationales de Seine-Saint-Denis in Paris. Most recently, Mills was awarded the Steinberg Award, the top honor at Le Festival des Arts de Saint-Sauveur International Choreographic Competition for *One / the body's grace*. Mills has created more than 40 works for companies in the United States and abroad. His ballets are in the repertoires of such companies as Hong Kong Ballet, Ballet Augsburg, American Ballet Theatre Studio Company, Atlanta Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, Washington Ballet, Cuballet in Havana, Cuba, BalletMet Columbus, Dayton Ballet, Sarasota Ballet, Ballet Pacifica, Dallas Black Dance Theater, Louisville Ballet, Nashville Ballet, Colorado Ballet, Texas Ballet Theater, The Sacramento Ballet, and Dance Kaleidoscope. He has worked in collaboration with such luminaries as the eight-time Grammy Award-winning band, Asleep at the Wheel, Shawn Colvin, and internationally renowned flamenco artist José Greco II.

As a dancer Mills performed with a wide variety of companies such as the world-renowned Harkness Ballet and The American Dance Machine under the direction of Lee Theodore. He also performed with the Cincinnati Ballet and The Indianapolis Ballet Theatre before becoming a part of Ballet Austin. Mills has danced principal roles in the Balanchine repertoire, as well as works by Choo-San Goh, John Butler, Ohad Naharin, Vicente Nebrada, Domy Reiter-Soffer, and Mark Dendy.

In addition to his work as a choreographer, Mills is a master teacher committed to developing dancers. He has been invited as guest faculty at many pre-professional academies including Jacob's Pillow, Goucher College, Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing Arts in Dallas, The Virginia School of the Arts, The New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts, Stephens College and Point Park University in Pittsburgh. Mills is a member of the national dance service organization Dance / USA and has served both in leadership roles and on the Board of Trustees for the organization.

## ABOUT BALLET AUSTIN

As distinctive and dynamic as the city it calls home, Ballet Austin welcomes audiences near and far to participate in its "classically innovative" vision for the creation of original artworks, classical ballet instruction, and life-long health and wellness through dance and fitness. With a rich history spanning six decades, acclaimed productions, a commitment to creating access to programs, and a large, classical ballet academy, the organization is poised for an even greater future. From their home at the Butler Dance Education Center in downtown Austin, Ballet Austin and Stephen Mills, Ballet Austin's Sarah & Ernest Butler Family Fund artistic director, actively engage the

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community, dancers, and audiences alike. The New York *Times* proclaims Ballet Austin “a company with big ambitions” originating work that is “absorbing.” For additional information on Ballet Austin and to purchase tickets and classes, visit [balletaustin.org](http://balletaustin.org)

## ABOUT OUR SPONSORS

### ***Cinderella* Production Sponsors**

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### **Government Funding Sponsors**

Ballet Austin is supported in part by the Texas Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

## ATTENTION MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES

Arrange interviews or access high-resolution images and videos by contacting **Sarah Pace** at **512.476.9151 ex. 137**, or via e-mail at [sarah.pace@balletaustin.org](mailto:sarah.pace@balletaustin.org). Did you know Ballet Austin is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization? [Learn more.](#)

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