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BALLET THEATRE OF MARYLAND BUILDS *MOMENTUM* THROUGH STREAMED AND IN-PERSON PERFORMANCES

April 17, 30, and May 1, BTM celebrates a season of innovation and hope through audience-favorite repertory, four new works, and a North American premiere.

ANNAPOLIS, MD (March 23, 2021) - Demonstrating what a nimble dance company can do when faced with the limitations of a global pandemic, Ballet Theatre of Maryland caps their Season of Hope with two performance options certain to satisfy all of their audience members: a free streaming event filmed from Prince George's Community College's state-of-the-art performance center, and live outdoor performances at Maryland Hall.

Artistic Director Nicole Kelsch says that catching both viewing options is a great way to see everything the company has to offer. "Our program for *Momentum* is incredibly diverse. The PGCC livestream will be the only opportunity to catch *American Ballads* and *Shades of Blue*, two audience favorites by my predecessor, Dianna Cuatto. This livestream event truly invests in the choreographic talents already inside the company, as it will also feature one contemporary work and one neoclassical work by our company artists Isaac Martinez and Lindsey Bell."

At the Maryland Hall performances, Martinez and Bell's works will be joined by a new piece by former company dancer Meagan Helman, now the school director of Tallahassee Ballet, another piece by Marinna Kus, founding director of Digital Dance Project, and the North American premiere of Pavlo Virsky's *Podolyanychka*. Bell says that she is excited to be included alongside so many other new works.

Says Bell, "I am very fortunate to be choreographing a new work for BTM. It seemed like perfect timing to explore being an in-house choreographer while helping our organization keep performing as safely as we can. We are expanding our resources from the inside out and continuing to push forward through this new time."

Momentum will stream online for free through Prince George's Community College on April 17 at 7pm. To catch the dancers performing live outside of Maryland Hall in Annapolis on April 30 and May 1, audience members may purchase tickets for the livestream or for in-person, socially-distanced seating. For tickets and more information, visit www.balletmaryland.org.

Ballet Theatre of Maryland, founded in 1978, is designated as Maryland's premier professional ballet company and conservatory. The company is comprised of 14 professional dancers, 18 apprentices, and 8 trainees. Professional faculty members of the Conservatory of Dance are current in their field, most with degrees or certifications in dance education. The conservatory offers a full curriculum of classes in ballet, jazz, modern, tap, partnering, and conditioning while providing students with professional performance opportunities. For more information about BTM, please visit www.balletmaryland.org or call (410) 224-5654.

Nicole Kelsch is originally from Dallas, PA where she trained with Peter and Kristin Degnan at Ballet Northeast. She graduated with a B.A. in Ballet from Point Park University in Pittsburgh, PA. After graduation, she danced professionally with Columbia City Ballet, Atlanta Festival Ballet, and Connecticut Ballet before joining Ballet Theatre of Maryland in 2006. Nicole has been featured as Clara and the Snow Queen in *The Nutcracker*, Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*, the Firebird in *The Firebird*, Swanhilda in *Coppelia*, Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, as a Principal in Antony Tudor's *Continuo*, the Principal Couple in *Italian Symphonette*, Titania and Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Magdalena in *An American Southwest Carmen*, Cinderella in *Cinderella*, Guinevere in *Excalibur*, Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Pearl in *The Little Mermaid*, and has performed the *Don Quixote Pas de Deux*. Nicole also served as the Ballet Mistress for the company and the School Principal. This is Nicole's first season as Artistic Director.

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