

**With Critical Acclaim, Sold Out Houses and Awards
Ballet Austin celebrates success of *Cult of Color: Call to Color***

**An Original Ballet by Stephen Mills
Story and Visual Concept by Trenton Doyle Hancock
Original Score by Graham Reynolds**

WHAT: Completion of a New Collaborative Work by Three Visionary Texas Artists
WHO: A partnership between Ballet Austin and Arthouse at the Jones Center with additional support from The Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia, James Cohan Gallery in New York, Dunn and Brown Contemporary in Dallas.
WHERE: AustinVentures StudioTheater at Ballet Austin's Butler Dance Education Center

AUSTIN, TEXAS – The inaugural production of *Cult of Color: Call to Color* presented at Ballet Austin's AustinVentures StudioTheater drew art, dance, and music luminaries near and far. The production, a collaboration between Ballet Austin artistic director Stephen Mills, Houston-based contemporary visual artist Trenton Doyle Hancock and nationally acclaimed Austin composer Graham Reynolds, has been praised by audiences and critics alike.

Cult of Color: Call to Color's critical praise stemmed from all angles including visual art, dance industry, and general interest press.

ARTnews calls the ballet "a thematic extension of Hancock's mixing of opposites – abstraction and representation, painting and collage, words and images."

Pointe Magazine hails the production for the way it "bring(s) to life Hancock's ongoing mythology."

Austin American-Statesman, writes that "Mills created a movement vocabulary that was wholly and wonderfully otherworldly. Here was ballet-based modern dance that was sensuous, yes, but also simian and earthbound; funky but also feline."

Aielli Unleashed on KUT Radio (Austin's NPR carrier) praises the original score as "ranging from intimate and sweet to broad and tragic"

The Austin Chronicle, lauds the production as "An hour of electrifying art in motion, all the words fell away."

Cult of Color: Call to Color performed to sold out houses filled with a national and international audience including critics, artists, collectors, musicians, and fans from as far away as Milan.

The Austin Critics' Table Awards ceremony held in Austin June 2nd honored the production with five awards including: Dance Concert, Choreographer (Stephen Mills), Costume Design (Trenton Dole Hancock), Dancer (Anthony Casati), and Lighting Design (Tony Tucci).

Ballet Austin Executive Director Cookie Ruiz says, "The success of this project exceeded our wildest expectations. The project has already generated several inquiries about touring and we are excited to see where it will perform next."

The collaborative creative process also produced several independent artistic components. Arthouse at the Jones Center organized a concurrently running exhibition entitled *Cult of Color: Call to Color - Notes on a Collaboration*, on view March 22 – April 27, 2008; a scholarly catalogue is currently being published. The backdrop measuring 17 feet high by 60 feet long designed by Hancock, created in collaboration with Philadelphia's The Fabric Workshop and Museum, is in discussions regarding exhibition. Graham Reynolds' highly original score, created by layering small acoustic ensembles with sound design and otherworldly effects,

CULT OF COLOR: CALL TO COLOR

was released on CD on April 3 and is available on iTunes now. A DVD of the production is also forthcoming from Emmy-winning producer, director, cinematographer, and editor for PBS, Dutch Rall.

Stephen Mills, choreographer, Artistic Director Ballet Austin

Known for his innovative and collaborative choreographic projects, Stephen Mills has works in repertoires of companies across the country and around the world. From his inaugural season as Ballet Austin's Artistic Director in 2000, Mills attracted attention with his world-premiere production of *Hamlet*, hailed by *Dance Magazine* as "...sleek and sophisticated." For his debut in New York City's renowned Joyce Theater in 2005, *The New York Times* wrote that Mills can "...innovate by using the body in ways that depart from balletic convention." Mr. Mills was also awarded the Steinberg Award, the top honor at Quebec's *Festival des Arts de Saint-Sauveur* International Choreographic Competition for *One/The Body's Grace*. With *Cult of Color: Call to Color*, Stephen Mills continues to establish his ground-breaking approach to dance creation.

Trenton Doyle Hancock, visual artist

Trenton Doyle Hancock, the 2007 recipient of the Joyce Alexander Wein Artist Prize from the Studio Museum in Harlem, has shown in exhibitions nationally and internationally, including the 2000 and 2002 Whitney Biennials. Solo exhibitions of his work have been mounted at the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston; the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami. He has also shown internationally at the Lyon and Istanbul Biennials. Most recently the solo exhibition *Trenton Doyle Hancock: The Wayward Thinker* was at the Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh in 2007 and traveled to the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam.

Graham Reynolds, composer

A composer, bandleader, pianist and drummer who works constantly in theater, dance, film, concert halls, and nightclubs – Reynolds entered the international stage in 2006 when he was selected by Richard Linklater to compose the motion picture soundtrack to the animated sci-fi feature film, "A Scanner Darkly." His other compositions include four symphonies, two operas, a violin concerto, more than a dozen one movement string quartets and countless chamber music pieces. Graham is also co-artistic director of the Golden Hornet Project, which commissions and produces concerts of new work, and composer in residence at Salvage Vanguard Theater.

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 democratization of dance. With a rich history spanning five decades, acclaimed productions, and one of the nation's largest classical ballet academies, the organization is poised for an even greater future. From their new home at the Butler Dance Education Center and Community School in downtown Austin, Ballet Austin and artistic director Stephen Mills actively engage the community, dancers, and audiences alike. *The New York Times* proclaims Ballet Austin "a company with big ambitions" originating work that is "absorbing."

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