

# BALLET *Austin*

FINAL

## **Ballet Austin Kicks Off Season With Visit To The Kennedy Center And Visit From The Suzanne Farrell Ballet**

***Episodes* to prominently feature Ballet Austin dancers in principal roles.**

- WHO:** Ballet Austin  
**WHAT:** *Inaugural Season Opener* featuring *Nine Sinatra Songs*, Choreography by Twyla Tharp  
*Episodes* in artistic partnership with The Suzanne Farrell Ballet, Choreography by George Balanchine, Music by Anton Webern  
*Liminal Glam* from Stephen Mills, Music by Philip Glass  
**WHEN:** Week of October 24-26, 2008, 8 pm Fri/Sat, 3 pm Sun  
**WHERE:** The Long Center for the Performing Arts  
**TICKETS:** \$24 to \$74 at 512.476.2163, live ticketing 24/7 at [balletaustin.org](http://balletaustin.org), or at Ballet Austin's Butler Dance Education Center at W. Third and San Antonio Streets, 10 am - 6 pm weekdays

**AUSTIN, TX** – Ballet Austin opens their season with its *Inaugural Season Opener* at The Long Center for the Performing Arts with three works sure to get Austin on its toes. Audiences will be treated to *Nine Sinatra Songs* from Emmy and Tony award-winning choreographer, Twyla Tharp, along with a world premiere entitled *Liminal Glam* from Artistic Director Stephen Mills. Finally, The Suzanne Farrell Ballet (Suzanne Farrell, Artistic Director) flies in from their home at John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to join Ballet Austin in performing George Balanchine's *Episodes*—considered one of the greatest choreographers of all time with a work never before presented in Austin; and rarely performed anywhere.

The performances with Ballet Austin are part of The Suzanne Farrell Ballet's Artistic Partnership initiative. Ballet Austin is currently in Washington, D.C. (September 29 – October 13) to join The Suzanne Farrell Ballet for four performances in the Eisenhower Theater at The Kennedy Center. The Suzanne Farrell Ballet will reciprocate by traveling to Austin to perform the work in with Ballet Austin for the season opener at The Long Center. Ms. Farrell cast Ballet Austin's company dancers Paul Michael Bloodgood and Ashley Lynn in principal roles for both the Kennedy Center and Long Center performances.

With a tip of the fedora to ballroom and Old Blue Eyes, Ballet Austin's *Inaugural Season Opener* brings Twyla Tharp's *Nine Sinatra Songs* to Austin audiences. Following the workings of her Sinatra-inspired duo, Once More Frank, and in the wake of her investigation of the methods of turn-of-the-century exhibition/ballroom dancing for the movie "Ragtime," Tharp created her *Nine Sinatra Songs*. Each of the songs she has chosen has its own musical and dance/theater character. The dance has become a wildly popular Tharp classic, presenting its view of 1950s social dancing through the nostalgic and yet sharpened eyes of today. The costumes for this work are Oscar de la Renta's dresses and tuxes, which flash with a then and now sensibility.

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Stephen Mills' *Liminal Glam* is a new work for 14 dancers choreographed to 'Concerto Fantasy for Two Timpanists' by Philip Glass. Mills described the world premiere as "a non-narrative dance that is situated somewhere between classical ballet and modern," adding, "It's fast and sexy..."

## **More on The Suzanne Farrell Ballet and Ballet Austin at the Kennedy Center**

Suzanne Farrell is one of the most noted ballerinas of the 20th century. In 1959, she was selected to study at George Balanchine's School of American Ballet and became his muse - on which many of his masterpieces were set. *Episodes* is an homage to Anton Webern and music that "leaves the mind free to see the dancing," as Balanchine put it.

In 2002, Ballet Austin first performed at The Kennedy Center to seven sold-out houses with Mr. Mills' production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In 2004, The Kennedy Center commissioned *The Taming of the Shrew* and as a result, Ballet Austin was recognized by *The Washington Post* as 'one of the nation's best-kept ballet secrets.' This artistic partnership with The Suzanne Farrell Ballet comes in only the second year of the Kennedy Center initiative, which pairs companies to allow larger ballets such as Balanchine's *Episodes* to be performed for more audiences.

## **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."

## **NEW CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**WEB:** <http://www.balletaustin.org>

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