



**Ballet Austin's  
Fête & fête\*ish 2011**  
Highly Anticipated Gala Fundraiser at W Austin

**WHO:** Ballet Austin  
**WHAT:** *Fête / fête\*ish 2011*  
**WHEN:** Friday, September 23, 2011  
*Fête 2011* ~ 6 pm  
*fête\*ish 2011* ~ 8 pm – midnight  
**WHERE:** W Austin  
**TICKETS:** [www.balletaustin.org/fete](http://www.balletaustin.org/fete)  
*Fête:* Tables from \$5,000+  
Limited tickets available: \$500, \$750 and \$1000  
Contact: Suzie Carter: 512.476.9151, ext. 109  
*fête\*ish:* Tickets \$125 [\$100 until June 30 (early bird)]

**AUSTIN, TX**—Ballet Austin announces its annual gala fundraiser *Fête 2011*, as well as its encore event *fête\*ish*. Ava Late, co-owner of BMW and MINI of Austin, chairs this year's festivities featuring Grammy award-winning jazz vocalist Kurt Elling and nationally recognized visual performance artist Norton Wisdom—all at the new W Austin. With a star-studded supporting committee of nearly 50 Austin luminaries, *Fête 2011* promises to shine with Ballet Austin's pulsating spirit of innovation and creativity.

Each fall Ballet Austin's *Fête* opens both the Company's performance season and Austin's gala line-up where business leaders, social mavens and arts patrons of all ages gather to mix, mingle, dine, dance and to raise funds for Ballet Austin's educational programs that reach over 57,000 children each year across Central Texas.

"Light," this year's theme, is a nod to Artistic Director Stephen Mills' award-winning production of *Light / The Holocaust & Humanity Project* which reprises this season. The evening's theme will highlight a dazzling décor that will radiate through an illustrious evening of reflection among the City's chic and shining stars.

***Fête Gala Dinner***

*Fête 2011* guests—limited to 250 seats in Austin's most exciting new hotel— will enjoy custom cocktails and signature "Wow" cuisine by W Austin. The evening features live music, exciting performances and exclusive VIP access to the Ballet Barre & lounge at *fête\*ish*.

The elegant dining hour will feature the Austin premier performance of visual artist Norton Wisdom, with his unique artistic genre that pairs music with painting and leaves audiences spellbound. For over three decades, Wisdom has collaborated with the like of Daniel Lanois, Steven Perkins and David Navarro (Jane's Addiction), Ivan Neville, Flea (Red Hot Chili Peppers), George Clinton (Parliament Funkadelic), Nels Cline (Wilco), Beck, and Mike Watt.

***fête\*ish After Party***

Ballet Austin's *Fête* evolves over the course of the evening into its encore event *fête\*ish*. This popular after party turns up the volume and turns down the lights with fabulous food, libations, entertainment, dancing and its own spectrum of celebration. This year, *fête\*ish* 2011 features recent Grammy award-winner Kurt Elling, declared by *The New York Times* as a "standout male vocalist of our time." Elling is currently

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promoting his album *The Gate* (Concord Records), his follow-up to the Grammy-winning *Dedicated to You*.

Finally, *fête\*ish* lights up the night with a dance party ignited by Austin's best dueling DJs. This late night dance club party rocks until midnight.

## **Fête Committee**

*Fête 2011* is chaired by Ava Late—community volunteer, and co-owner of BMW and MINI of Austin. The *Fête 2011* Committee consists of Val Armstrong, Becky Beaver, Amanda Beck, Donna Campbell, Ann & Robert Canon, Eric Copper, Suzanne Court, Julie Crenshaw, Tamra Gorman, Susan Hackney, Daniel Hamilton, Debbie & Mark Hanna, Leslie Haydon, Paul Hilliard, Candace Honey, Jana Howden, Lisa Jessup, Sheri Krause, Steve Late, Jason Leiker, Kim Mansour, Linda McCaul, Andrea McWilliams, Lance Avery Morgan, Shelli Ozdil, Jeanne Parker, Liz Redwine, DK & Mike Reynolds, Jonny Rodgers, Jennifer Rozas, Julie & Scotty Sayers, John Schweitzer, Rita & Sandy Senter, Leslie Sieswerda, Tyler Sieswerda, Harriett & Steve Smith, Lindsay & Ford Smith, Jenna Stotts, Jennifer Sutton, Kathy Taylor, Tessa & Brandon Tilford, Wendy Topfer, and Lisa Youngblood.

## **Fête 2011 Chair**

Ava Late is a wife, mother, community volunteer, and co-owner of BMW of Austin. She has been a media spokesperson for 20 years in the Southwest United States and owner of a Music Publishing Company for 15 years. Since the birth of her daughter, Olivia, Ava has only worked for her family businesses. Presently she is the Director of Marketing and Public Relations and Community Affairs at BMW of Austin. A graduate of The University of Texas, she has volunteered and served in various capacities with the Susan G. Komen Foundation, Hospice Association, Alzheimer's Association, Women's Symphony League, Ballet Austin Guild, Bridge Point Booster Club, Good Shepherd Episcopal School, The Sam Houston Society of Friends of the Governor's Mansion, The Littlefield Society, the Chancellor's Council of UT, Austin Country Club Women's Association, Board Member of Summit Homeowner's Association, and the Alzheimer's Association.

## **Kurt Elling**

Kurt Elling is an American jazz vocalist, composer, and lyricist. Born in Chicago, Illinois, and raised in Rockford, Elling recorded a demo in the early 1990s and was signed by Blue Note Records, releasing a total of seven albums with the label. He has been nominated for nine Grammy Awards, winning Best Vocal Jazz Album for *Dedicated to You* (2009) on the Concord Jazz label. Elling often leads the *Down Beat* critic's poll, and he was awarded the Prix Billie Holiday from the Académie du Jazz. Since 1995, Elling has collaborated with pianist, composer, and arranger Laurence Hobgood, leading a quartet that regularly tours the world.

## **Norton Wisdom**

Since 1979, performance painter Norton Wisdom has worked with musical ensembles and spontaneously paints images that capture the essence of the moment and has exhibited and collected by museums and galleries around the world. He has performed at the Disney concert hall with organist Christoph Bull; at Monterrey Jazz Fest; Lincoln Center's United Nations "Bloodless Diamonds"; Winter Olympics 2002; opening of the Bellagio Hotel Las Vegas, and the premier of the Cirque Du Soleil, Las Vegas. He has collaborated with many including Daniel Lanois, Steven Perkins and David Navarro (*Jane's Addiction*), Ivan Neville, Bernard Fowler (Rolling Stones backing vocalist), Flea (Red Hot Chili Peppers), P-funk's George Clinton, Beck, Mike Watt. His work is in the collections of Santa Barbara Art Museum, Skerball Museum, Orange County Art Museum, San Diego Museum, World Music Womad, Milwaukee Museum Art, New Port Museum of Art, Sledian Museum of Art Nebraska, Santa Clarita Museum of Art

## **Stephen Mills, Artistic Director**

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Mr. 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 The Atlanta Ballet, Washington Ballet, Cuballet in Havana, Cuba, BalletMet Columbus, The DaytonBallet, The Sarasota Ballet of Florida, Ballet Pacifica, Dallas Black Dance Theater, The Louisville Ballet, The Nashville Ballet, Fort Worth/Dallas Ballet and Kaleidoscope. He has worked in collaboration with such luminaries as the eight-time Grammy Award-winning band, Asleep at the Wheel, and Shawn Colvin. In addition to his work as a choreographer, Mr. Mills is committed as a master teacher to developing dancers. He has been a teacher at many pre-professional academies including 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 College in Pittsburgh. Mr. Mills also serves on the Board of Trustees of the national dance service organization, Dance USA. The 2011/12 season marks Mr. Mills' 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary as Artistic Director of Ballet Austin.

## **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, a commitment to creating access to programs 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 & 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."

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**WEB:** [www.balletaustin.org/fete](http://www.balletaustin.org/fete)

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