

BALLET *Austin*

**Discover the next generation of dance talent! *That Spring Thing*
A Presentation of New Works by Ballet Austin II and Ballet Austin's Trainees**

- WHO:** Ballet Austin II, Professional Division Trainees,
and Young Artists of the Ballet Austin Academy
- WHAT:** Ballet Austin's 10th Annual Performance of *That Spring Thing*
- WHERE:** Ballet Austin's AustinVentures StudioTheater,
501 W. 3rd Street, Austin, TX
- WHEN:** April 17 at 7pm and April 18 at 2pm
- TICKETS:** \$10 at 512.476.2163, balletaustin.org or
at Ballet Austin's Box Office at 501 W. 3rd Street,
10am - 6pm weekdays and 10 am - 2pm Saturdays
- NEW:** Choreography by Stephen Mills, Viktor Kabaniaev,
Thang Dao, Jennifer Hart and many more!

AUSTIN, TEXAS - Ballet Austin is honored to present their 2009 graduating class of Apprentices and Trainees in the 10th annual production of *That Spring Thing*, a dynamic mix of contemporary and classical work performed at the AustinVentures StudioTheater. *That Spring Thing* features 30 talented program graduates, ages 17-23, who were selected through a highly competitive national audition process to study at Ballet Austin during the 2008-09 season.

Artists from Ballet Austin's second company, Ballet Austin II, and Trainees from Ballet Austin Academy's Professional Division participate in more than 25 hours of classes and rehearsal each week. With nearly half of Ballet Austin's current roster of main company dancers culled from these two programs, *That Spring Thing* offers a unique opportunity to preview the next generation of professional artists. *That Spring Thing* will also include performances by the Young Artists of Ballet Austin, students from the Ballet Austin Academy selected to augment the Ballet Austin II and Trainee dancers at this annual spring event.

Working with choreographers on the creation of a new work is a particularly significant element in the training of professional dancers and the members of both programs had extensive opportunity to explore this process in preparing for *That Spring Thing*. The production includes the premiere of three original works for Ballet Austin II contributed by Artistic Director/Choreographer, Stephen Mills, and New American Talent/Dance winners Victor Kabaniaev and Thang Dao. Mr. Dao and Ballet Austin received a fellowship grant from the Princess Grace Foundation in New York for the creation of his new work to the music of Felix Mendelssohn. The pas de trois from Marius Petipa's Paquita

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brings a traditional element to the production and highlights the stylistic range of these emerging artists.

Ballet Austin's Professional Division Trainees will also premiere new work including a ballet by Jennifer Hart, a member of the Ballet Austin Academy faculty whose choreography was recently presented by both Ballet Nouveau in Colorado and the Ballet Builders choreographic showcase in New York. Guest teacher Kimmary Williams, Ballet Austin faculty member Greg Easley, and company dancer Christopher Swaim will also contribute new work. This amazingly diverse and exciting production will be performed in the Austin Ventures Studio Theater - a 287-seat performance venue designed to bring ballet to the community in an urban setting.

BALLET AUSTIN II

Ballet Austin II, Ballet Austin's 10-member apprentice program and second company, was launched in 1999. The dancers perform as the corps de ballet in full-length performances with the main company as well as presenting their own extensive roster of touring and educational programs across the state. Ballet Austin II graduates have gone on to dance with the main Ballet Austin Company as well as with other professional ballet companies around the nation.

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."

This production sponsored by a grant from the Texas Commission for the Arts and The Princess Grace Foundation.

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BALLET *Austin*

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