



Ballet Austin Guild hosts
"Women On Their Toes"
Dance Comes Alive!

*Invites Central Texas to Welcome Famous Ballerina Cynthia Gregory
and to honor those who serve our communities*

- WHO:** Ballet Austin Guild
WHAT: *Women On Their Toes*, annual spring luncheon honoring outstanding volunteers and benefiting Ballet Austin
WHEN: April 6 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
WHERE: Renaissance Austin Hotel
TICKETS: Start at \$85. Sponsorships are available starting at \$1,000. For more information, contact Ballet Austin Guild at 512.476.9151, ext.200 or balletguild@aol.com

AUSTIN, TX--The Ballet Austin Guild is excited to announce that Cynthia Gregory will be the guest speaker at *Women On Their Toes*, the Guild's 16th annual spring luncheon honoring outstanding community volunteers and benefiting Ballet Austin.

"Dance Comes Alive!" is the theme of this year's event, to be held April 6 at the Renaissance Austin Hotel at the Arboretum from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The theme reflects both the spirit of the Guild's work on behalf of Ballet Austin and the crucial role volunteers play in our community.

Ms. Gregory, hailed as "*America's prima ballerina assoluta*" by Rudolf Nureyev, has dedicated herself to bringing dance to life, in the most literal sense. From performer, choreographer, artistic director and master teacher to author, pen-and-ink/watercolor artist, and long-time Board Chairman of the non-profit organization, Career Transition for Dancers, Ms. Gregory embodies the spirit of excellence and dedication we honor at this eagerly awaited annual event.

The esteemed American dancer, whose roles in classical ballets still define those works, danced with American Ballet Theatre (ABT) for over 25 years. Over a dozen modern works were created specifically for her. Her outstanding achievement throughout a brilliant and extensive dance career has garnered her numerous prestigious awards.

In 1991, she became Chairman of the Board of the non-profit organization Career Transition for Dancers at a time when she herself was transitioning from on-stage to "next stage." Now as Chair Emerita, Ms. Gregory remains committed to the invaluable work of assisting dancers facing imminent career change.

Continuing to share her artistry and extensive repertoire with dance companies and audiences worldwide, Ms. Gregory stages classical ballets, coaches, and conducts master classes. Her books, *Ballet is the Best Exercise* and *Cynthia Gregory Dances Swan Lake*, are both well regarded and widely distributed. Her pen-and-ink and watercolor drawings, inspired by her own best-loved dance roles, have been shown in galleries and commercially via posters and CD covers.

Women On Their Toes raises over half of the Guild's annual donation to support Ballet Austin's mission of providing exceptional artistic programming, arts education and access for the entire Central Texas Community. This fundraiser also helps provide over \$150,000 to Ballet Austin Academy students and helps fund Ballet Austin's many community access and education programs, which serve over 35,000 people in Central Texas each year.

This year's event emceed by KVUE News anchors Tyler Seiswerda and Terri Gruca, honors 10 exemplary volunteers in the Austin area who are carefully chosen from dozens of nominations submitted by local non-profit organizations. The goal is to recognize these volunteers as well as highlight their tireless devotion to better our communities.

For more information on *Women On Their Toes*, or to purchase tickets or ask about sponsorships, please go to the Ballet Austin Guild's website: www.balletaustinguild.org. You may also call Leslie Cox, the Guild's President at 512.459.8515 or e-mail her at coxford@grandecom.net

Ballet Austin Guild

The Ballet Austin Guild is a volunteer organization whose mission is to work together to support and promote the interests of Ballet Austin in Greater Austin and surrounding communities through educational programs, fundraising and special events. The Guild's largest fundraiser of the year is *Women On Their Toes*.

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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