

Dominic Walsh Dance Theater

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HOUSTON—Contemporary ballet company Dominic Walsh Dance Theater will dish up the juicy *First Course* of its 2010-2011 season of “cultural dining” on October 21, 22, and 23, 2010 at 7:30 PM at the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Zilkha Hall located at 800 Bagby Street in Houston, Texas.

The centerpiece of this tantalizing mixed repertory program is an excerpt from *27'52"* by icon Jiří Kylián. Born in Prague, Kylián served as artistic director of the prestigious Nederlands Dans Theater (NDT) from 1975 to 1999, and brought unprecedented recognition and success to this Dutch company. After stepping down as artistic director, he remained with NDT as chief choreographer and artistic adviser until bidding a final farewell to the company in 2009. Kylián redefined ballet on an international scale. He is considered to be amongst the most prominent and brilliant choreographers in the world today and it is a major coup for Dominic Walsh Dance Theater to add another of his works to its repertoire (his *Double You* was added in 2008). “Kylián is a craftsman who continues to explore the depths of his own heart and mind, therefore creating work with a strong and powerful aesthetic as well as abstract emotional content,” says DWDT Founder/Artistic Director Dominic Walsh.

27'52" (a reference to its full 27 minute and 52 second running time) was created in 2002 for three couples and is the most recent Kylián work being performed in the U.S. today. And although a pas de deux from *27'52"* was presented in Houston at the 2004 Dance Salad Festival by Nederlands Dans Theater II, the version that Dominic Walsh Dance Theater will present has never been performed in Houston or anywhere else in the Southwest.

27'52" has been described as "unmistakably Kylián," full of whimsical, dazzling detail and deeply moving partner work. The piece is accompanied by poetic texts that blend eastern spirituality with western notions and the music is also a mix of cultures. Dirk Haubrich based his electronic composition on lyrical motifs by Gustav Mahler, which results in wispy, melodic threads. "In addition to how profound I believe this work to be, the physical vocabulary of movement and what Kylián has created is astounding in its intricacy and simplicity," says Walsh.

This *First Course* also includes the U.S. premiere of Walsh's *Medea*, a new work commissioned by Teatro San Carlo that premiered in Italy in 2009. Set to *Medea in Corinto* by Giuseppe Simone Mayr, Walsh uses three women to characterize this horrific act from ancient mythology of the betrayed and angry Medea taking revenge on a husband who leaves her by murdering him and their two sons. Walsh's three women demonstrate different archetypal behaviors of a woman's suffering and the journey towards her commitment to avenge herself.

Rounding out this savory *First Course* is Walsh's *Terminus* that he created in 2008 as a part of the company's *E_Merging II* program. With this program, Dominic Walsh Dance Theater built on its long tradition of collaboration by working with local visual artists to produce unique works that meld different disciplines into coherent pieces. Named after the Roman god of boundaries and location, *Terminus* is motivated by Nicola Parente's "The Edge of Urban Time" series and features a video/painting installation created by the artist. Born in Italy, Parente draws from a rich Italian heritage and a deep well of cross-cultural experiences to bring his art to life. "Upon reviewing his series, I knew immediately that I wanted to collaborate with Nicola. His abstract paintings speak of urban life, time, and distance and are the perfect complement for this piece," says Walsh.



Terminus will feature all of the DWDT Company Members including Domenico Luciano as the lead, Marissa Leigh Gomer, Felicia McBride, Rachel Meyer, Ty Parmenter, and Randolph Ward. This collaborative work is set to a score composed and performed live by Houston's own Two Star Symphony. Two Star Symphony is a unique string ensemble founded in 2002, and its members are Jo Bird (viola/toy piano), Debra Brown (violin), Margaret Lejeune (cello/harp), and Jerry Ochoa (violin). Walsh first worked with the group in 2004 when they composed and performed the score for his *Alchemy*, a work he created for New York's American Ballet Theatre Studio Company. Walsh's creative association with Two Star continued with *Terminus* and most recently with his *Titus Andronicus* in 2008.

"With an entertaining mix of dance, theater, visual art, and live music, this innovative program will stimulate all of your senses," says DWDT Executive Director Leigh McBurnett. **Tickets for this *First Course* are available for \$25, \$39, and \$52 through www.dwdt.org or by calling 713-315-2525.** A VIP Opening Night package, including priority seating and an exclusive post-show cocktail reception with the performers at Artista is available for \$82. Season subscriptions are also available. PLEASE NOTE: 27'52" CONTAINS NUDITY.

***Photo credit** (top to bottom): Jiří Kylián's 27'52" photo by Daisy Komen Photography. Dominic Walsh's *Terminus* photo by Gabriella Nissen Photography. Dominic Walsh's *Terminus* photo by Amitava Sarkar Photography. **To access high resolution images, visit "Press Room" at www.dwdt.org. Go to "Media Access" and enter User name = media and Password = 1highres1.**

As a principal dancer with Houston Ballet for over a decade, **Dominic Walsh** received national and international praise for his interpretations of both classical and contemporary roles. Walsh burst onto the choreographic scene when he won the prestigious Choo-San Goh Award in 1998, and he is now hailed as a leading choreographer who is pushing the boundaries of ballet into new realms of theatricality. He won a second Choo-San Goh Award in 2007 and received a 2008 Princess Grace Award. **Dominic Walsh Dance Theater**, launched by Walsh in 2002, is also racking up accolades and honors and was most recently named "Best Dance Company" by the *Houston Press*. This contemporary ballet company has built a stellar reputation for taking the techniques and skills of classical ballet into more inventive territory. The company's diverse repertoire features works by Walsh and such iconic choreographers as Mauro Bigonzetti, Jiří Kylián, and Matthew Bourne and its roster includes dancers of the highest caliber. In addition to producing a Houston season of performances and educational programs that enliven the senses, the company tours the U.S. and Europe. With its unique mix of innovation and collaboration, Dominic Walsh Dance Theater is one of this country's leading contemporary ballet companies.