

SAINT LOUIS **BALLET**

Contact:
Cindy Lander Wallach
314-922-8060
cindy@sagemarketingpr.com

Saint Louis Ballet Season Opens October 1-2 with *Of Note* with Chamber Music Society of Saint Louis



(Saint Louis, MO) – Tony Winner Christopher Wheeldon’s rarely performed ballet *Within the Golden Hour* makes its Saint Louis debut October 1-2 at the Touhill as 14 dancers perform with inspiration from Gustav Klimt’s shimmering gold paintings. Most recently recognized as best choreographer for Broadway’s *MJ the Musical*, Wheeldon set his ballet to music by Vivaldi—to be performed here live by the renowned Chamber Music Society of Saint Louis. Saint Louis Ballet raised funds last year to support the inclusion of live music.

Twenty-two string players, under the baton of Darwin Aquino, will demonstrate what the Saint Louis Post-Dispatch in 2019 called their “instrumental brilliance”. Many are members of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

“It is an honor to be able to perform ballets by Christopher Wheeldon,” said Saint Louis Ballet executive and artistic director

Gen Horiuchi. “He is considered to be one of the top choreographers in the world today.”

A former dancer with Royal Ballet and New York City Ballet, Wheeldon retired from dancing in 2000 to devote full time to choreography. He was the first resident artist with New York City Ballet. Eminent companies such as the Bolshoi, Royal Ballet and San Francisco Ballet have commissioned his works.

Chamber Music Society’s Davin Rubicz (cello), Carolyn White (bass), Brian Woods (piano) and Tom Stubbs (drums) collaborate on the jazzy *Romantique* ballet by Gen Horiuchi. It was last performed by the company in 2016 and received a standing ovation.

Of Note performances take place at the Touhill Performing Arts Center.

WHAT *Of Note: Within the Golden Hour and Romantique*
Tickets now on sale at metrotix.com (\$31-\$79)

WHEN Saturday, October 1 at 7:30pm
 Sunday, October 2 at 2:30pm

WHERE Touhill Performing Arts Center
 On the campus of the University of Missouri-St. Louis
 1 University Drive, Saint Louis



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MORE ABOUT SAINT LOUIS BALLET

Saint Louis Ballet is the region's only professional ballet company. Under the direction of former New York City Ballet principal dancer Gen Horiuchi, its 21 classically trained dancers are selected in a competitive national audition and come to St. Louis from training programs and ballet companies throughout the world. The company's repertoire includes full-length ballets such as *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Don Quixote* and *Swan Lake* as well as contemporary work from renowned choreographers such as George Balanchine, Christopher d'Amboise, Jessica Lang, Twyla Tharp, Tom Gold, Emery LeCrone, Amy Seiwert, Nilas Martins, and Michael Uthoff. In addition to a season of fully mounted productions, Saint Louis Ballet operates a ballet training program and conducts an outreach program, Pointe to Succeed, for students at select urban schools.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Gen Horiuchi has been the artistic director of the Saint Louis Ballet Company and School since 2000. He has created over 20 original works for the company and has spearheaded the growth of the School based in Chesterfield. Raised in Tokyo, Japan by parents who were professional ballet dancers, he won the prestigious Prix de Lausanne, the international ballet competition in Switzerland in 1980 (and since 1993 has been a judge for the competition). He then received a scholarship to study at the School of American Ballet. In 1982, he was invited by George Balanchine to join the New York City Ballet, where he became a principal dancer in 1989. He's danced on Broadway in *Song and Dance* and was also Mr. Mistoffelees in the musical *Cats*, both on Broadway and in London's West End. He choreographed the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan in 1998. In 2004, he was honored in New York City with the Seventh Cultural Bridge Award together with Harold Prince, (director of *Phantom of the Opera*). He has directed the Aoyama Ballet Festival in Tokyo with artists in major companies from around the world. And since 2010, he has been directing Gen Horiuchi's Ballet USA each summer in Osaka, Japan where he sets his own choreography on professional dancers and brings guests like Miyako Yoshida, former Royal Ballet principal, to dance alongside him to sold out houses.

