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MEDIA CONTACT:
Moriah Camenker
Publicist
The PR Group
727-447-4992 x201
moriah@theprgroup.com

JESSICA LANG DANCE PRESENTS THE WANDERER AT JORGENSEN

Thurs, Nov 19, 2015 at 7:30 pm / Q&A session after show

Hailed as “a master of visual composition” by Dance Magazine, award winning choreographer and artistic director Jessica Lang creates a wondrous, romantic world of music, forms, and motion when she brings The Wanderer to UConn’s Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts on Thursday evening, November 19th. Set to Franz Schubert’s moving operatic song cycle Die schöne Müllerin (The Beautiful Miller’s Daughter), performed live by pianist and baritone soloist, the enchanting sixty-five minute presentation showcases the talents of Lang’s nine extraordinarily expressive dancers, and demonstrates Lang’s own ability to blend classical ballet language and striking design elements for an evening of artfully crafted and emotionally engaging storytelling. The performance begins at 7:30 pm. Doors open at 7:00 pm. There will be a Q & A session with Jessica Lang and the performers following the presentation.

The Wanderer is based on a story originally told in a series of poems published in 1820 under the title Die Schöne Müllerin by German poet and writer Wilhelm Müller. The poems were later set to music by Austrian composer Franz Schubert and published in 1924 as a cycle of songs. The songs tell of a man wandering happily through the countryside who comes upon a brook, which he follows to a mill. There, he meets and falls in love with a beautiful girl, the miller’s daughter. Intoxicated by the girl’s beauty and gentle features, he tries to impress her, but discovers that she and a hunter are in love. He despairs, and then drowns himself in the brook. The hauntingly beautiful Die schöne Müllerin song cycle is one of Schubert’s most admired works.

Lang says she conceived of The Wanderer when the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s executive producer Joseph Melillo asked for a piece to fill an hour. Although a master of shorter, abstract repertoire, Lang nevertheless chose to accept his test: for 60 minutes, she would turn her dancers into a company of storytellers who incarnated love, loss, and the eternal persistence of a grand universe.

“I hope that when my audience sits down that they’re willing to watch and engage,” says Lang, who last year received the Outstanding Emerging Choreographer Award at the 2014 New York Dance and Performance Awards (The Bessies) for her work as independent choreographer and artistic director for her recently formed dance company, Jessica Lang Dance. “I know not everyone wants an emotional experience, but I think that’s what you experience through my movement.”

Assisting Lang to create her enchanting story world with their expressive interpretation of Shubert’s music and Müller’s lyrics are pianist Brian Moll and baritone vocalist Ryan F. Burns.

Moll is Chair of Vocal and Keyboard Studies at the Longy School of Music of Bard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he teaches classes in chamber music, vocal repertory, and diction. As a keyboardist he has worked with Emmanuel Music, Boston Baroque, and

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the Handel & Haydn Chorus and Orchestra, and has also served as Assistant Conductor for productions by Boston Lyric Opera, Opera North, and Boston Midsummer Opera.

Burns, a doctoral candidate (ABD) in vocal performance at the University of Connecticut, has sung with the former Opera Boston, Opera Theater of Connecticut, Connecticut Lyric Opera, Hartford Opera Theater, Greater Worcester Opera and Opera del West. Some of his operatic credits include Schaunard in La bohème, Figaro in Il barbiere di Siviglia, Sid in Albert Herring, Masetto in Don Giovanni, John Proctor in The Crucible, Papageno in Die Zauberflöte, General Boum in La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein, Maximilian in Candide, Father in Hänsel und Gretel, and Frank in Die Fledermaus.

Since 1999, Lang has created more than 85 works for companies worldwide including Birmingham Royal Ballet, The National Ballet of Japan at the New National Theatre Tokyo, Joffrey Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Colorado Ballet, Ballet San Jose, Richmond Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Aliley II, ABT II, Hubbard Street 2, and New York City Ballet’s Choreographic Institute, among many others. American Ballet Theatre has presented her work at the Metropolitan Opera House, and she has received commissions from the Dallas Museum of Art and the Guggenheim Museum for its Works and Process series. For opera, Lang received outstanding acclaim for her directorial debut and choreography of Pergolesi’s Stabat Mater at the 2013 Glimmerglass Opera Festival.

Lang is a New York City Center Fellow for 2015 and the recipient of a prestigious 2014 Bessie Award. Her ballet Lyric Pieces, commissioned and performed by Birmingham Royal Ballet earned a nomination for a coveted 2013 Manchester Theatre Award in the UK. Lang has received numerous grants for her work on ballet companies from organizations including the Jerome Robbins Foundation, the NEA, and the Choo San Goh Foundation. Her receipt of a 2010 Joyce Theater Artist Residency supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation helped launch her own company, Jessica Lang Dance (JLD) in 2011.

For more information about the artist please visit www.jessicalangdance.com.

This year the University of Connecticut’s Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts proudly celebrates its 60th anniversary. Established in December of 1955, Jorgensen has grown to become the largest college-based presenting program in New England. Each season Jorgensen enriches the lives of students, faculty, staff, and area residents with 30 to 35 diverse performances from nationally and internationally acclaimed artists and ensembles ranging from classical music to world music and dance, classical ballet and contemporary dance, comedy, family programming, and contemporary entertainment. Dedicated to University of Connecticut president Albert N. Jorgensen, Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts continues to follow his vision of the University as the state’s educational and cultural leader.

Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts is located at 2132 Hillside Road on the UConn campus in Storrs. Tickets are available now online. Prices are: Floor seats - $40, Mezzanine - $37, Balcony - $34.

For tickets and information, call the Box Office at 860.486.4226, Monday through Friday, 10 am - 5 pm, and 90 minutes prior to events, or order online at jorgensen.uconn.edu. Convenient $5 event parking is available in the North Garage. Free parking is available in Lots 9, F, and L. For a detailed parking map, go to park.uconn.edu.

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