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7/15/22
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BOULDER BALLET APPOINTS NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
BEN NEEDHAM-WOOD TO LEAD THE COMPANY STARTING AUG 2022**

BOULDER, CO - Boulder Ballet is excited to announce that Ben Needham-Wood has been selected as the company's new Artistic Director ahead of their 40th anniversary season. Needham-Wood is an EMMY® Award-winning choreographer, filmmaker, and dance educator who recently relocated to Colorado following more than 10 years of performance and arts leadership in the San Francisco Bay Area. His experience in both classical and contemporary ballet, coupled with his expertise in film and arts management brings a uniquely innovative new direction to Boulder Ballet's long-term vision.

Needham-Wood was first introduced to the Boulder Ballet community in the fall of 2021 when he spent two weeks coaching the company in *The Devil Ties My Tongue* by Amy Seiwert. His leadership style values collaboration and empathy, and his instruction has already supported technical and artistic growth in the company dancers. Boulder Ballet has made many changes in recent years, becoming a local arts leader celebrated for excellence and inclusivity. With the addition of Needham-Wood's leadership, experience, and network, Boulder Ballet moves into a new chapter that will deepen the connections to their existing community and broaden their reach to more national audiences.

STATEMENT FROM CLAUDIA ANATA-HUBIAK (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR):

"We are excited to see Boulder Ballet flourish under Ben's leadership with his track record of creating positive culture and an inclusive environment. He is an outstanding dance maker and deeply dedicated to excellence through training, progressive curation, and the priority of mental health in the field."

STATEMENT FROM BEN NEEDHAM-WOOD:

"I am deeply honored to be selected as Boulder Ballet's new Artistic Director. The opportunity to support the next generation of artists is a rare gift that I am proud to inherit. As a dance educator, I believe that the values of trust, respect, and appreciation are essential for progress. These fundamental values will guide my vision for the performance company, our school, and our outreach to the community we serve. We will amplify the incredible talents of our artists by engaging repertoire that feeds their technical growth as much as their artistic hunger. Their success will inspire the youth in our school to drive towards greater dreams. Collectively, our success will be celebrated with our community through powerful performances that make precious memories. This is the beginning of a beautiful chapter, and I am proud to be joining Boulder Ballet."

ABOUT BEN NEEDHAM-WOOD:

Ben Needham-Wood is an EMMY® Award-winning choreographer, filmmaker, and dance educator. Originally from Massachusetts, Needham-Wood danced professionally for Louisville Ballet, Smuin Contemporary Ballet, and Amy Seiwert's Imagery in addition to many guest performances across the United States and Canada. He graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music with a BFA in Ballet. His performance repertoire includes works by Val Caniparoli, Twyla Tharp, Robert North, Amy Seiwert, Ma Cong, Trey McIntyre, and Jiri Kylian among others. As a dancer with Smuin Contemporary Ballet, Needham-Wood was nominated for an Isadora Duncan Dance Award in 2018 for his individual performance in Trey McIntyre's *Be Here Now*, and again in 2019 as part of the ensemble in Amy Seiwert's *Renaissance*. In addition, Needham-Wood is an established choreographer and has created works for the Louisville Ballet, Smuin Contemporary Ballet, Amy Seiwert's Imagery, Dance Theatre of San Francisco, and Dimensions Dance Theater in Miami, among others.

In 2015, Needham-Wood collaborated with Weston Krukow to create and choreograph the TV special *BaseBallet* and the subsequent program *BaseBallet: Into the Game*. Combined, these programs have won five EMMY® Awards in Northern California and been featured in the National Museum of Dance and Hall of Fame. Needham-Wood recently launched his own non-profit company, Redirecting Dance, in order to produce dance that amplifies critical social issues and inspires empathy. Through Redirecting Dance, Needham-Wood has been researching how dance and movement impact mental health. This research is ongoing and will continue to inform his leadership of Boulder Ballet.

ABOUT BOULDER BALLET:

Boulder Ballet is a classical, contemporary, and uniquely theatrical ballet company entertaining Boulder audiences for 40 years. Devoted to cutting-edge performance, high-caliber training, inclusivity and community outreach, Boulder Ballet is Boulder County's foremost professional dance company and ballet school. Boulder Ballet is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

WEBSITE: www.BoulderBallet.org

SEASON PERFORMANCES: <https://boulderballet.org/202223-season/>

September 24, 2022: FALL PASSAGES, Chautauqua Auditorium

November 25-27, 2022: THE NUTCRACKER, Macky Auditorium

February 23-26, 2023: NEW MOVES, Dairy ARTS Center

May 18-21, 2023: CLASSICAL STORY BALLET (TBA), Dairy ARTS Center

June 2-3, 2023: BALLET IN THE PARK, Huntington Bandshell, Boulder

June 4, 2023: BALLET IN THE PARK, Civic Center Park, Highlands Ranch

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