



**CONTACT:**

Nicole Doll

Vice President of Marketing + Brand Strategy

513-562-1127

[ndoll@cballet.org](mailto:ndoll@cballet.org)

## **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR VICTORIA MORGAN TO STEP DOWN AFTER 21-22 SEASON**

*Company to celebrate her 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season will ambitious and nostalgic programming*

Link to photos, video and graphics: <https://bit.ly/3bWTtlr>

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**(Cincinnati, OH, May 262021)** -- After 25 years of leadership, Victoria Morgan announced today she will step down as Cincinnati Ballet Artistic Director at the conclusion of the 2021-2022 Season. Next season will also mark her 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season, generously presented by PNC. “It will be a poignant season for me, as it will also be my last year as Artistic Director of this beloved Company,” Morgan said. “I have deep gratitude for how the Cincinnati community has steadfastly supported Cincinnati Ballet through these many years. I am so proud of this organization and the work we have accomplished and continue to build upon – elevating our artistry, growing a healthy endowment, championing female choreographers, and the imminent opening of the new Cincinnati Ballet Margaret and Michael Valentine Center for Dance. I will cherish being with you next season, as I have done so many seasons before. Nothing will give me greater joy than raising the curtain on this remarkable season together one last time for my grand finale.” Cincinnati Ballet’s Board of Trustees has formed a committee to conduct a national search for a suitable replacement. The transition of leadership will take place at the conclusion of the 2021-2022 Season. “On behalf of the board, dancers, and staff, I want to thank Victoria for her tireless commitment to Cincinnati Ballet,” said Scott Altman, Cincinnati Ballet President + CEO. “We look forward to making many more cherished memories with her this upcoming season as we celebrate her incredible achievement.”

Morgan's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season will open with free performances of *The Kaplan New Works Series* in a community setting at Seasongood Pavilion in Eden Park, September 23-26, 2021. ***Kaplan New Works in the Park*** will feature groundbreaking choreography in a welcoming, outdoor space. This ambitious program will include four world premieres created by DANCEFIX founder and Cincinnati choreographer Heather Britt and three company dancers -- Melissa Gelfin De-Poli, Daniel Baldwin, and Taylor Carrasco – as well as the return of Resident Choreographer Jennifer Archibald's popular work, *Sit*. Celebrations for Victoria Morgan's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will continue with the return of her ***King Arthur's Camelot*** to Cincinnati Music Hall, November 5-7, 2021. Travel once again to the Land of Sweets with family favorite, ***The Nutcracker***, at Music Hall, December 16-26, 2021. Dreams come true in February with Victoria Morgan's ***Cinderella*** at Cincinnati Music Hall, February 17-27, 2022. In the Spring, enjoy our ***Family Series: Snow White***. The hour-long, narrated production is the perfect introduction to ballet for dance lovers of all ages at the Aronoff Center, April 7-10, 2022. The 2021-2022 Season will conclude with the launch of something completely new – the Company's first-ever ***Bold Moves Festival*** at the Aronoff Center, May 12-22, 2022. The immersive dance experience will feature six rotating mainstage productions accompanied by a variety of activities and interactive events that will educate and inspire discerning dance-lovers and families alike. Guest companies including Dayton Contemporary Dance Company and Dancing Wheels will also be featured during the production. ***Bold Moves Festival*** will bring back a community favorite, Ohad Naharin's seminal work, *Minus 16*, along with a world premiere, *Our Story*, from Company soloist David Morse. Continuing our commitment to female choreographers, the program will feature the regional premieres of Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's *Bloom* and Helen Pickett's *Petal*, the return of Twyla Tharp's *Nine Sinatra Songs* and Morgan's *Boléro*.

The 2021-2022 Season marks Victoria Morgan's 25<sup>th</sup> Season as Cincinnati Ballet's Artistic Director. Morgan took on the additional role of executive leader in 2008, serving as both the Artistic Director and CEO. Under her leadership, after years of growing deficits, the company stabilized their finances, built a healthy and sizeable endowment fund, created an operating reserve, and presented several million-dollar capital projects. During this time, the Company also expanded the Otto M. Budig Academy, as well as education and community engagement programming. In 2017 with the arrival of Scott Altman as President + CEO, Morgan transitioned to full-time Artistic Director, giving her the opportunity to focus exclusively on artistic excellence. Morgan's artistic contributions to Cincinnati Ballet are myriad. During her tenure, she has choreographed numerous one-act and full-length ballets, including world premieres of *King Arthur's Camelot*, the new *Nutcracker*, and her revised choreography for *Cinderella*. With her deep roots in the Cincinnati community, Morgan was instrumental in fundraising efforts to secure support for the new 57,000-square-foot Cincinnati Ballet Margaret and Michael Valentine Center for Dance in Walnut Hills. While construction was underway for the new Dance Center, 2020 challenged Morgan's artistic leadership

in unprecedented ways. She responded to the global pandemic in a creative and science-based way, working closely the Company's artistic and administrative teams to safely present one of the nation's first ballet performances to an in-person audience following the shutdown. *Ballet in the Park* was staged at the Procter & Gamble Pavilion in September 2020 and was lauded by The National Endowment for the Arts for its innovation. Prior to joining Cincinnati Ballet, Morgan was resident choreographer for the San Francisco Opera and a principal dancer for San Francisco Ballet and Ballet West. She has and continues to serve on numerous boards including Dance USA, Dance Magazine, the NEA evaluation panel, and was a judge for several International Ballet Competitions. Morgan graduated Magna Cum Laude with an M.F.A. from University of Utah and was honored as a YWCA Career Woman of Achievement in 2009.

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### **About Cincinnati Ballet**

Since 1963, Cincinnati Ballet has been the cornerstone professional ballet company of the region, presenting a bold and adventurous array of classical, full-length ballets and contemporary works, regularly with live orchestral accompaniment. Under the artistic direction of Victoria Morgan, Cincinnati Ballet has become a creative force within the larger dance community, commissioning world premiere works and exploring unique collaborations with artists as diverse as Grammy winning guitarist Peter Frampton and popular, Ohio-based band Over the Rhine. With a mission to enrich, expand, and excel in the art of dance through performance, a high-caliber academy, and impactful education and engagement in local to global communities, Cincinnati Ballet reaches beyond the stage in programs that allow every person in the region to be part of the continued evolution of dance. To that end, Cincinnati Ballet presents exhilarating performances, provides extensive education and community engagement programs, and offers top-level professional ballet training at Cincinnati Ballet Otto M. Budig Academy.

**Victoria Morgan's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season is proudly presented by PNC.**

**Cincinnati Ballet 2021-2022 Season Sponsors:** Rhonda & Larry A. Sheakley, Margaret and Michael Valentine, ArtsWave, Mercy Health, Louise Dieterle Nippert Musical Arts Fund, Ohio Arts Council, The Austin E. Knowlton Foundation