

The Wallis Presents a World Premiere of Award-winning Director and Choreographer Daniel Ezralow

Primo Passo

July 13 and 14, 2017

(Beverly Hills, CA June 29) Los Angeles native and award-winning director and choreographer **Daniel Ezralow** returns to the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts for the **world premiere** of *Primo Passo* on Thursday, July 13 and Friday, July 14 at 8pm. *Primo Passo* examines ‘first steps’ in life, and presents a career retrospective as well as an investigation of what’s next for the choreographer.

Primo Passo revisits and reimagines some of Ezralow’s most powerful works to explore their initial artistic impulse. Ezralow’s expansive and award-winning career—as a director, choreographer, writer and performer—has masterfully traversed the mediums of theater, film, music and television, from modest venues to the world’s greatest stages. *The Huffington Post* called his recent production of *PEARL* at Lincoln Center “a stunning collaborative spectacle of dance, theater, film, music, multi-media and history.” Ezralow has also created works for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, The Paris Opera Ballet, Batsheva Dance Company of Israel, Cirque du Soleil, and the opening ceremony of the Sochi Olympics. He has choreographed Broadway’s *The Green Bird* and *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*, as well as the seminal musical film *Across the Universe*. He collaborates and creates spectacles with artists, from the legendary designer Issey Miyake to the musical icon Katy Perry. Ezralow is the Founder and Artistic Director of **Ezralow Dance**, a movement based ensemble known internationally for its explosive physicality, original thought and playful humor.

“It is such a delight to welcome Daniel and his company back to The Wallis for *Primo Passo* this season,” said Paul Crewes, The Wallis’ Artistic Director. “Daniel’s lifetime of work embraces such a wide mixture of styles, whether he’s creating modern dances, or choreographing for Broadway, the Oscars or the Olympics. This extraordinary evening will bring all of these skills and influences together for this brand new world premiere and an exciting night of dance.”

“My work is ever-changing and redefining itself,” said Ezralow. “*Primo Passo* is Italian for ‘first step’ and this work will examine that first step in life, the first step in a career, the first step in love and the first step in dance. Looking at some of our first steps helps us to see where we have come from and where we might be going.

“A hybridization has occurred in recent years in the world of dance,” he continues. “Blending avant-garde and commercial, ballet and hip hop, modern and street, has brought us a wider canvas of possibilities in concert dance work. *Primo Passo* takes a look at some of the hybrid creative evolutions of my work.”

Single tickets are now available for \$39 – \$99. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit TheWallis.org/Ezralow, call 310.746.4000, or stop by in person at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Services located at 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Ticket prices subject to change.

About *Primo Passo*:

**The program will feature a selection from the following works, all choreographed by Daniel Ezralow unless otherwise noted.*

BROTHERS

CREATED IN 1982.

DANCED BY Gerald Espinosa and Re’Sean Pates

CHOREOGRAPHED BY Daniel Ezralow and David Parsons

MUSIC BY Igor Stravinsky’s Concertino for Twelve Instruments

Two lead dancers in the Paul Taylor Dance Company borrowed the studio key and snuck in during the wee hours of the night to create this choreography. It is an homage to being a Brother and having a Brother, which they both have.

FOREIGN TAILS

CREATED BY ISO DANCE THEATER IN 1985.

DANCED BY Junji Dezaki, Isaac Huerta, Kelsey Landers, Anthea Young

CHOREOGRAPHY BY Daniel Ezralow, Jamey Hampton, Ashley Roland and Morleigh Steinberg – ISO Dance

ORIGINAL COSTUMES BY ISO Dance

MUSIC BY Claude Debussy

From the family tree of Pilobolus and MOMIX, co-mingled with Paul Taylor and pure gymnastic talent, Daniel Ezralow, Jamey Hampton, Ashley Roland and Morleigh Steinberg created the magical *Foreign Tails* in an old Connecticut barn, surrounded by nature and rural farmlands. Classical whimsy mixed with movement invention.

SVSPLKT

COMMISSIONED FOR BATSHEVA DANCE COMPANY IN 1986.

DANCED BY Kelly Allen, Will Clayton, Junji Dezaki, Raymond Ejiolor, Gerald Espinosa, Isaac Huerta, Kelsey Landers, Vanessa Nichole, Re’Sean Pates, Sasha Rivero, Anthea Young

MUSIC BY Tom Waits

This was number two of five commissions Daniel did for Batsheva Dance company. Juxtaposing western urban lifestyles with Balinese rural country gives this piece a conflicted internal feeling. At the time of the commission, Russian immigrants were streaming across Israel's borders and the dance explores the experience of being accepted and of being left out. The title was designed to reveal as little as possible about the work, so as not to have expectations.

SUPER STRAIGHT is coming down

COMMISSIONED BY HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO IN 1989.

DANCED BY Will Clayton, Gerald Espinosa, Kelsey Landers, Vanessa Nichole, Raymond Ejiofor, Sasha Rivero

COSTUMES BY Jackson Lowell

MUSIC BY Thom Willems

ORIGINAL LIGHTING DESIGN BY Howell Binkley

Daniel's first of five commissioning works by Hubbard Street Dance Chicago is inspired by Artist Robert Longo's work titled "Men in the Cities" and the mathematical thesis "The Divine Proportion." This work is about modern humanity and the necessity of structure and form. Influenced by architecture books and the inevitability of gravity, soft balls were thrown at dancers during rehearsals to explore their reflexive reaction and codify it into movement. With a commissioned score by Thom Willems, longtime collaborator of William Forsythe's. "Daniel Ezralow's 'SUPER STRAIGHT is coming down' is a dance to bring the house down-which is what it did Friday night at the opening of Hubbard Street Dance Company's two-weekend spring season in the Civic Opera House." – Richard Christiansen, *Chicago Tribune*, April 30, 1989

SF

COMMISSIONED BY HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO IN 2004.

DANCED BY Kelly Allen, Will Clayton, Junji Dezaki, Raymond Ejiofor, Gerald Espinosa, Isaac Huerta, Kelsey Landers, Vanessa Nichole, Re'Sean Pates, Sasha Rivero, Anthea Young

COSTUMES BY Jackson Lowell

MUSIC BY Leonard Bernstein

ORIGINAL LIGHTING BY Ryan O'Gara

To move... to jump... to dance... to escape gravity and the homogeneity of society and become yourself. Life is a marvelous kaleidoscope of countless simple actions that are as unique as each and every one of us. The expression of life is in itself a dance...even the most imperceptible shiver can be beautiful. – Daniel Ezralow

SPARK (excerpts)

COMMISSIONED BY BALLET FLORIDA IN 1999.

DANCED BY Kelly Allen, Will Clayton, Junji Dezaki, Gerald Espinosa, Isaac Huerta, Anthea Young

PULSE

COMMISSIONED BY RIVER NORTH CHICAGO DANCE COMPANY IN 2000.

DANCED BY Kelly Allen, Will Clayton, Junji Dezaki, Raymond Ejiofor, Gerald Espinosa, Isaac Huerta, Kelsey Landers, Vanessa Nichole, Re'Sean Pates, Sasha Rivero, Anthea Young

MUSIC BY David Lang

COSTUMES BY Jackson Lowell

ORIGINAL LIGHTING DESIGN BY Ryan O'Gara

"Ezralow gives the process of creation its due in 'Pulse,' a playful and profound homage to the great unknown. Company members, clad in Jackson Lowell's shimmering diaphanous costumes, repeat a mesmerizing series of slides across the stage. At times, a magnetic force seems to draw couples together then swiftly break them apart. David Lang's spherical compositions entwine with Ezralow's propulsive choreography to create an almost molecular sense of quietude. The dancers, through flowing gestures, appear to spin imaginary helixes." - *Chicago Tribune*, 2006

CHROMA

CREATED IN 2013.

DANCED BY Kelly Allen, Will Clayton, Gerald Espinosa, Isaac Huerta, Kelsey Landers, Vanessa Nichole, Re'Sean Pates, Anthea Young

MUSIC BY Strauss, Blue Danube Waltz

COSTUMES BY American Apparel

About Ezralow Dance:

Ezralow Dance is a movement based ensemble known internationally for its explosive physicality, originitive thought and playful humor. Founding director and choreographer Daniel Ezralow has assembled a diverse and talented group of world class performers to fuel invention, collaboration and play, while making a creative home for his expansive and eclectic body of work. The breadth of Ezralow's creative work includes the development and touring of signature works, a catalogue of international commissions spanning and mingling the disciplines of dance, theatre, film, visual arts, opera and performance; unique workshops designed to awaken and inspire individuals through breath, movement and creative expression; mentoring and internship programs; explorative research projects combining storytelling, technology and the arts, probing the questions of dancing and humanity. Ezralow Dance collaborates with performers, composers, visual artists, writers, filmmakers, technicians and designers, interweaving contemporary dance with provocative ideas and striking visuals.

For more information about Ezralow Dance, please visit: EzralowDance.com.

For more information about The Wallis, please visit: TheWallis.org.

For downloadable photos, please visit TheWallis.org/Press.

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TICKET INFORMATION:

What: *Ezralow Dance: Primo Passo*
Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
Bram Goldsmith Theater
9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210

When: July 13 – 14, 2017 at 8pm

Tickets: Single tickets: \$39 – \$99 (prices subject to change)
Online – TheWallis.org/Ezralow
By Phone – 310.746.4000
Box Office – Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Service
9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210

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