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Media Contact:

Hermitage Media Relations; 941-475-2098, Ext. 8;
Communications@HermitageArtistRetreat.org



**The Hermitage Announces New March Program
Featuring Hermitage Fellow and American Ballet Theatre
Principal Dancer James Whiteside**

*“Dancing through Life with James Whiteside,” featuring A.B.T. Principal Dancer **James Whiteside**, will be presented at the Hermitage on **Monday, March 4th at 5:30pm.***

February 7, 2024 — **The Hermitage Artist Retreat** (Sarasota County, Florida) announces a new program featuring returning Hermitage Fellow and **American Ballet Theatre** principal dancer **James Whiteside**. Whiteside will offer a special hour-long program at the Hermitage Palm House Studio on Monday, March 4th at 5:30pm, where he will share a candid and entertaining look at his life as a celebrated dancer, choreographer, playwright, and entertainment impresario.

Whiteside defies genre classification and is redefining the meaning of multihyphenate as a principal dancer and choreographer for American Ballet Theatre, pop music performer, podcast host, and author of *Center Center*, which he adapted into the play *Dead Center* during a previous visit to the Hermitage. He began his ballet training at age nine and was a principal dancer with the Boston Ballet until 2012. Since 2013, Whiteside has been principal dancer with **American Ballet Theatre**, where he has danced principal roles in *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Giselle*, and more. Whiteside has choreographed for pop stars Mariah Carey, Taylor Swift, and more. He performs pop music under the stage name JdDubs. In addition to writing and producing his own music, Whiteside also choreographs digital performances and music videos, which have viewership in the millions.

“We are incredibly excited to welcome James Whiteside back to the Hermitage,” says Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg**. “In addition to being one of the nation’s premier dancers, he has taken the entertainment and media world by storm with his many talents and irresistible personality. This promises to be an unpredictable and unforgettable program that Gulf Coast audiences will not want to miss.”

Whiteside's talents extend well beyond the world of dance, with growing celebrity as a playwright, podcast host, and brilliant performer who has captured and energized *millions* online with his dynamic and hilarious content. Whiteside will engage with Hermitage audiences for a creative exploration and candid conversation about wearing his many glamorous hats, arts entrepreneurship, and the transcendent power of dance.

"Dancing through Life with James Whiteside" will be presented at the Hermitage on **Monday, March 4th at 5:30pm**. This program is free and open to the public (with a \$5/person registration fee). **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org**. *Capacity will be limited, and registration is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Early registration is strongly encouraged.*

(Full program details are provided below.)

A leading national arts incubator, the Hermitage is the only major arts organization in Florida's Gulf Coast exclusively committed to supporting the development and creation of new work across all artistic disciplines. The Hermitage hosts artists on its Gulf Coast Manasota Key campus for multi-week residencies, where diverse and accomplished artists from around the world and across multiple disciplines create and develop new works of theater, music, visual art, literature, dance, film, and more. As part of their residencies, Hermitage Fellows participate in free community programs, offering Gulf Coast audiences a unique opportunity to engage with some of the world's leading artists and to get an authentic "sneak peek" into extraordinary projects and artistic minds before their works go on to major galleries, concert halls, theaters, and museums around the world. These free and innovative programs include performances, conversations, readings, interactive experiences, open studios, school programs, teacher workshops, and more, serving thousands in our regional community each year.

For more information about the Hermitage and upcoming programs, visit: **HermitageArtistRetreat.org**.

FULL PROGRAM DETAILS

"Dancing through Life with James Whiteside," Monday, March 4 @ 5:30pm at the Hermitage: Hermitage Fellow and internationally renowned dancer-choreographer **James Whiteside** defies genre classification. Many know him as a principal dancer and choreographer for **American Ballet Theatre** and have seen him perform principal roles in such iconic works as *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, *Romeo & Juliet*, and *Giselle*. He is also a playwright, podcast host, and brilliant performer whose dynamic and hilarious content has engaged millions online. Join Whiteside and the Hermitage for a creative exploration and candid conversation about wearing his many glamorous hats, arts entrepreneurship, and the transcendent power of dance. **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org (\$5/person registration fee). Hermitage Palm House Studio (Manasota Key), 6660 Manasota Key Road, Englewood, FL 34223.**

ARTIST BIO

James Whiteside

Returning Hermitage Fellow **James Whiteside** is redefining the meaning of multihyphenate as a principal dancer and choreographer for **American Ballet Theatre**, hilarious pop-music performer, drag queen, podcast host, and author of *Center Center* – adapted into the play *Dead Center* during a previous visit to the Hermitage (which went on to debut in 2023 at Theatre Aspen). Whiteside began his ballet training at age nine at the D’Valda & Sirico Dance and Music Centre in Connecticut. After completing his training, he was a principal dancer with Boston Ballet until 2012 and has been a principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre since 2013, dancing principal roles in *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Giselle*, and many more. Additionally, Whiteside has choreographed for pop stars Mariah Carey, Taylor Swift, and Fischerspooner. He continues to choreograph for music videos, commercials, film, and ballet including *New American Romance* and *City of Women* for American Ballet Theatre, *Past Present Future* for Boston Ballet and *Marilyn’s Funeral* for The Juilliard School. Off the ABT stage, Whiteside performs pop music under the stage name JbDubs. He writes and produces his own music and choreographs his performances and music videos, which have viewership in the millions. Whiteside’s social media channels have nearly one million followers and his sponsorships include brands such as St. Germain, Sonos, Uber, and more. He also hosts his own popular podcast, “The Stage Rightside with James Whiteside.” Whiteside has completed Harvard Business School’s Crossover Into Business program.

The Hermitage Artist Retreat

Sarasota County, Florida

Andy Sandberg, Artistic Director and CEO

The Hermitage is a leading national arts incubator and nonprofit artist retreat located on Manasota Key, Florida. For more than two decades, the Hermitage has invited accomplished artists across multiple disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Hermitage artists are invited to interact with the local community, reaching thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors each year with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage Fellows have included 15 Pulitzer Prize winners, Poets Laureate, MacArthur ‘Genius’ Fellows, and multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy, and Oscar winners and nominees. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse and accomplished group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. Each year, the Hermitage awards the Hermitage Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, the Hermitage Major Theater Award for an original theater commission, and the Aspen Music Festival’s Hermitage Prize in Composition.

For more information, visit HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

The Hermitage is supported by:

Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues; the State of Florida through the Division of Arts and Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts; as well as the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

ALL ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY AND MARCH HERMITAGE PROGRAMS:

Friday, February 9 @ 5:30pm, “Script, Screen, and Stage: The Many Roles of Nambi E. Kelley,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Nambi E. Kelley**, at Booker High School (Sarasota)

Presented in partnership with Booker High School and Manasota ASALH

Nambi E. Kelley's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by Judith & John Manocherian

Monday, February 19 @ 10:30am and 3pm, “Music Mondays: Hermitage Alum Doug Wright Writes Broadway,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Doug Wright**, at Church of the Palms (Sarasota) @ 10:30am and again at Venice Presbyterian Church (Venice) @ 3pm. *Presented in partnership with Sarasota Institute of Lifetime Learning*

Please Note: This program is part of the SILL “Music Monday” series, and tickets are available at the door on the day of the event for \$15/person.

Friday, February 23 @ 5pm, “Live Arts in Museum Spaces,” with Hermitage Curatorial Council Member **Limor Tomer**, at the Ringling Museum (Sarasota)

Presented in partnership with The Ringling Museum

Friday, March 1 @ 5:30pm, “Stories in Light and Sound,” with 2023 Hermitage Greenfield Prize finalist **Maura Brewer** and returning Hermitage Fellow **David ‘Doc’ Wallace**, at the Hermitage Beach (Manasota Key)

***NEWLY ANNOUNCED!* – Monday, March 4 @ 5:30pm, “Dancing through Life with James Whiteside,”** with Hermitage Fellow and American Ballet Theatre Principal Dancer **James Whiteside**, at the Hermitage Palm House Studio (Manasota Key)

Tuesday, March 12 @ 7pm, “Hermitage Writes @ Ringling College: Mesha Maren,” with Hermitage Fellow **Mesha Maren**, at Ringling College of Art and Design (Sarasota)

Presented in partnership with Ringling College of Art and Design

Thursday, March 14 @ 6:30pm, “Hermitage Sunsets @ Nathan Benderson Park: More than Music,” featuring Hermitage Fellows **Etienne Charles** and **Kamala Sankaram**, at Nathan Benderson Park (Sarasota / Bradenton)

Presented in partnership with Nathan Benderson Park Conservancy

Friday, March 22 @ 12pm, “Hermitage Writes @ Venice Writers Festival,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Elisa Bocanegra**, at William H. Jervy, Jr. Venice Public Library (Sarasota / Bradenton) *Presented in partnership with the Venice Writers Festival*

Tuesday, March 26 @ 7pm, “Hermitage Writes @ Ringling College: Brandel France de Bravo,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Brandel France de Bravo**, at Ringling College of Art and Design (Sarasota) *Presented in partnership with Ringling College of Art and Design*

Thursday, March 28 @ 7pm, “Crosby Alumni Music Initiative: Piano Classics Remade,” featuring Hermitage Fellow **Conrad Tao**, at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (Sarasota)

Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

Conrad Tao's concert and Hermitage residency are made possible through the Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage

HermitageArtistRetreat.org

Facebook / Instagram: **@HermitageArtistRetreat**

