

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 26, 2021

**Digidance celebrates its launch with the presentation of
Crystal Pite's *Body and Soul* in Exclusive Canadian Film Premiere,
Performed by Legendary Paris Opera Ballet**

Formed in response to industry challenges presented by COVID-19, Digidance's partnership of leading presenters will contribute to the preservation and longevity of dance in Canada

Vancouver, BC – DanceHouse, in partnership with **Digidance**, announce the exclusive Canadian film premiere of ***Body and Soul***, from internationally-lauded choreographer **Crystal Pite** and performed by **Paris Opera Ballet - streaming online February 17-23, 2021**. Filmed live during the November 2019 world premiere performance at Palais Garnier, Paris, the work marks Pite's second full-length creation for the eminent French company - following 2016's acclaimed *The Seasons' Canon*. Canadians will be the first international audience since its premiere to experience the work, due to the coordinated effort of Digidance, a new initiative formed in response to COVID-19 between four of Canada's leading dance presenters: DanceHouse (Vancouver), Harbourfront Centre (Toronto), the National Arts Centre (Ottawa), and Danse Danse (Montreal).

"Dance, perhaps more than other disciplines, faces an uphill battle with the challenges presented by COVID-19. Yet despite the hurdles, the pandemic has also acted as a powerful catalyst for change born out of necessity. Digidance was formed out of such a need - to contribute to the sustainability and longevity of dance in Canada," says Jim Smith, Artistic and Executive Director of DanceHouse and Digidance Partner. "We're immensely grateful and proud to be officially launching Digidance with Crystal's extraordinary work, *Body and Soul*. We look forward to sharing many more presentations with our audiences, while building a rich legacy of dance in Canada - and internationally - for future generations."

"While the pandemic has brought deep challenges to artists, it has also encouraged all kinds of innovation and creativity in our industry," says Pite. "I'm heartened to know that Digidance is providing an opportunity for people to experience dance on screen. The creation of *Body and Soul* was a significant chapter in my creative life. It was an honour to work with the sublime dancers of the Paris Opera Ballet, and a thrilling challenge to face the history and possibility of the institution itself. I'm so happy to be able to share *Body and Soul* with my fellow Canadians."

Body and Soul is a work in three distinct parts for 36 dancers that immediately captivates with its force and virtuosity. The work articulates Pite's ongoing fascination with conflict, connectedness, and the embodiment of the human spirit. The performance begins with voice-over text that describes, in purely physical terms, a scene of conflict between two individuals.

As the work progresses, the script's meaning morphs and deepens with each iteration: conflict creates a vital, compelling tension between individuals, between groups, between species. The Paris Opera Ballet's mastery as an ensemble is evident in Pite's complex choreographic swarms; individual dancers are virtuosic in breathtaking solos and duets. The dancers evoke scenes of epic protest, profound personal struggle, and collective survival. *Body and Soul* is a portrait of the human condition that is timeless, vast and heartbreakingly intimate.

The full-length film (85 minutes) was produced by the Paris Opera Ballet, directed by Tommy Pascal, and is presented with English and French subtitles. Before the streamed performance, there will be a 15-minute pre-recorded interview with Pite and the Kidd Pivot creative team, all of whom contributed artistically to the creation of *Body and Soul*: Owen Belton (Composer), Eric Beauchesne (Assistant to the Choreographer), Nancy Bryant (Costume Designer), Jay Gower Taylor (Set Designer), Jermaine Spivey (Assistant to the Choreographer), and Tom Visser (Lighting Designer). The interview was produced in Vancouver by Collide Entertainment and Kidd Pivot.

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In addition to the online screening of *Body and Soul*, February will feature the return of DanceHouse's popular *Speaking of Dance* event series. Taking place Feb. 26, the online edition will continue the format established this past fall, featuring interviews with four past DanceHouse artists giving video presentations on inspiration and plans for the future; answering questions around creative practice; and engaging with online audiences directly via live chat.

For tickets and information on *Body and Soul* and Digidance, visit: dancehouse.ca.

Stay tuned for details on a host of Digidance presentations to be announced this spring. Further information at: dancehouse.ca

About Digidance

Digidance is a new joint initiative of Canadian dance presenters to deliver exceptional, full length Canadian and international dance content online to patrons across the country. Created in July 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Digidance consists of the following leading dance presenters: [DanceHouse](https://dancehouse.ca) (Vancouver), [Harbourfront Centre](https://harbourfrontcentre.ca) (Toronto), the [National Arts Centre](https://nationalartscentre.ca) (Ottawa), and [Danse Danse](https://danse-danse.ca) (Montreal).

By joining expertise, experience, and international networks, the partner organizations are better equipped to pivot to presenting work online - a first for all four organizations. Beyond the short term response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions placed on presenting live work in theatres, Digidance will ensure a rich legacy of dance in Canada for future years through continued presentations and access to Canadian and international dance works without the barriers of transportation, physical mobility, and affordability.

LISTING INFORMATION

Body and Soul

Choreographed by Crystal Pite | Performed by Paris Opera Ballet

Dates:	February 17–23, 2021 (Link Available for 7 Days) Streaming in Canada Only
Price:	From \$15 + applicable taxes
Event Link:	dancehouse.ca/event/body-and-soul

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