

For Immediate Release

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**AMY SEIWERT'S IMAGERY ANNOUNCES 8th ANNUAL SKETCH SERIES
JUNE 28-30, 2018 ODC THEATER AND
NEW ARTISTIC FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM FOR 2019 SEASON**

SAN FRANCISCO, February 20, 2018 – **Amy Seiwert's Imagery**, a contemporary ballet company, announces today it's **8th annual SKETCH series: SKETCH 8 | Origin Stories, June 28-30, ODC Theater.**

In addition, the Company also announces today the beginning of a **new Artistic Fellowship program** for the **SKETCH series beginning in 2019**. The **first Artistic Fellow of the SKETCH program is Ben Needham-Wood (Louisville Ballet, Smuin Contemporary American Ballet).**

AMY SEIWERT'S IMAGERY'S ARTISTIC FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Starting July 2018 Amy Seiwert will assume the position of Artistic Director at Sacramento Ballet. With the new appointment comes an exciting opportunity for the future of Imagery's SKETCH series.

"Imagery's new Fellowship program is a natural progression for the company, the SKETCH series will continue to foster risk in ballet based choreography. In addition, we will be serving the field by fostering the next generation of arts leaders. Our Fellowship offers both artistic and administrative mentorship, offering the tools needed to make the jump from a performing career to an artist's next step," said Artistic Director Amy Seiwert. "I am thrilled that Ben Needham-Wood has been selected as the first Artistic Fellow. Ben has been an integral part of Imagery since its inception in 2011. I have much respect for him as a dancer and choreographer."

Amy Seiwert's SKETCH series provides a unique opportunity for dancers, choreographers, the Bay Area Dance Community, and the field at large. It will also continue to exist as a place where Ms. Seiwert can create and take creative risks.

The Artistic Fellowship position, which is a two-year rotation, will provide an emerging dancemaker with two commissions during the SKETCH series, artistic mentorship from Amy Seiwert, and arts administration mentorship from Managing Director Annika Presley. The new Fellowship program will offer Artistic Fellows the experience and tools to further their careers as artists and choreographers and become the next leaders in the field.

“I am beyond thrilled to be selected as Imagery’s first Artistic Fellow,” says Ben Needham-Wood. “As a young artist it was my experience with Imagery’s inaugural SKETCH program that helped me reimagine my potential, and the company has continued to nurture and inspire me ever since. Amy Seiwert has been at the center of this journey and I could not be more grateful for the opportunity to follow her leadership. This fellowship is an exciting new chapter for Amy Seiwert’s Imagery and I’m so excited to be part of its growth.”

About Amy Seiwert and Amy Seiwert’s Imagery

Amy Seiwert enjoyed a nineteen-year performing career dancing with the Smuin, LA Chamber and Sacramento Ballets.

As a dancer with Smuin Ballet she became involved with the “Protégé Program” where her choreography was mentored by the late Michael Smuin, and became Choreographer in Residence there upon her retirement from dancing in 2008. Named one of “25 to Watch” by Dance Magazine, her first full evening of choreography was named one of the “Top 10” dance events of 2007 by the SF Chronicle.

Twice she has worked with dancers from New York City Ballet, participating in the NY Choreography Institute. Collaborations include works with visual designers Marc Morozumi and Matthew Antaky, composers Daniel Bernard Roumain and Mason Bates, media designer Frieder Weiss and spoken-word artist Marc Bamuthi Joseph.

She is honored to have been an Artist in Residence at ODC Theater from 2013-15 and to have works in the repertory of Ballet Austin, BalletMet, Smuin, Washington, Atlanta, Oakland, Sacramento, Colorado, Louisville, Cincinnati, Carolina, Oklahoma City, Dayton, Milwaukee and American Repertory Ballets as well as AXIS Dance and Robert Moses KIN.

Amy Seiwert’s Imagery, a contemporary ballet company in San Francisco, believes that ballet is an expressive and vital voice relevant to our times. Imagery’s artists share the belief that through collaboration and experimentation, vibrant and courageous ideas are expressed. Habitual reactions are discouraged. Imagery’s mission is to expand the definition of ballet by exploding preconceptions of what ballet is and can be.

In July 2018, Seiwert begins her appointment as Artistic Director of Sacramento Ballet.

About Ben Needham-Wood

Ben Needham-Wood is a San Francisco based dancer, choreographer, and dance educator. In his performance career he has worked predominantly with the Louisville Ballet, Amy Seiwert’s Imagery, and Smuin Contemporary American Ballet where he currently serves as a dancer and rehearsal assistant. Ben received a regional Emmy Award for his choreographic work on the TV segment BaseBallet (CSN Bay Area) and has had his choreography performed throughout the United States and Canada.

About The SKETCH Series

The SKETCH series began the summer of 2011 with SKETCH: New Works. Performed at Z Space, SKETCH brought together four choreographers and eight dancers in an incredibly intense but amazingly fertile environment. SKETCH has offered world premieres created by acclaimed choreographers Julia Adam, Marc Brew, Val Caniparoli, Adam Houglan, Matthew Neenan, Gina Patterson, Susan Roemer, KT Nelson, Nicole Haskins and Seiwert.

The purpose of the SKETCH series is to provide a safe environment for risk-taking in contemporary ballet choreography. The performances take place in intimate theaters, and works-in-progress showings with moderated Q&As occurring throughout the process. The dancers chosen for this series are incredibly open and generous collaborators, highly invested in the creative process. It is Imagery's hope that by fostering environments that allow choreographers to take chances, we can do our part to further innovation in our art form.

For more information about Amy Seiwert's Imagery and the SKETCH series visit <http://asimagery.org/>

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