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**Media Contact:** Motley Crew Media for the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts

Nicole Shiro | 512.740.6665 | [nicole.shiro@motleycrewmedia.com](mailto:nicole.shiro@motleycrewmedia.com)

Amy S. Layton | 512.695.0799 | [amy.layton@motleycrewmedia.com](mailto:amy.layton@motleycrewmedia.com)

**THE HOBBY CENTER PRESENTS URBAN SOULS DANCE COMPANY**  
**“SOULS OF BLACK HOUSTON”**  
**CELEBRATING STORIES AND STRENGTH OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY**  
**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 10, 2024**

**WHO:** The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts  
**WHAT:** Urban Souls Dance Company with *Souls of Black Houston*  
**WHEN:** February 10, 2024 at 7:30 pm  
**WHERE:** The Hobby Center | Sarofim Hall | 800 Bagby Street | Houston, TX 77002  
**TICKETS:** Start at \$38. Available online at [www.TheHobbyCenter.org](http://www.TheHobbyCenter.org) and in person at the Hobby Center Box Office (800 Bagby, Houston, TX 77002).

**Houston, TX – The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts** presents **Urban Souls Dance Company** (Urban Souls) with *Souls of Black Houston*, a dance concert dedicated to honoring Black history. This particular performance marks the company’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season and pays tribute to two decades of sharing the powerful stories of the African-American experience. *Souls of Black Houston* will play **Saturday, February 10, 2024** at 7:30 pm at the Hobby Center. Tickets are available at [thehobbycenter.org](http://thehobbycenter.org).

Highlighting the program is “Colored Carnegie” (originally commissioned by Performing Arts Houston in 2021), created and directed by Urban Souls Founder and Artistic Director Harrison Guy, featuring an original score by Dr. John Cornelius and stunning set design by Edgar Guajardo. Inspired by the history of the segregated Houston Colored Carnegie Library, this piece is a poignant reminder of the resilience and strength of the Black community.

“*Souls of Black Houston* is a love letter to the many Black Houstonians who have contributed to the vibrancy of this great city,” said Guy. “Colored Carnegie,” the story of Houston’s first Black library, reminds us of the importance of leaning into local Black History.”

In addition to “Colored Carnegie”, the program includes four other captivating works. “Sugar Shack”, choreographed by Walter J. Hull, II, draws inspiration from the evocative paintings of Ernie Barnes and the recent high-drama purchase of the painting “Sugar Shack” by Houstonian Bill Perkins. Harrison Guy’s “Black Bodies in White Spaces” - developed in collaboration with Rice University’s Center for Engaged Research & Collaborative Learning - explores the complexities and beauty of self-acceptance and self-love.

*Souls of Black Houston* will also feature two alumni works. “Distract me from the Mirror,” choreographed and performed by former Urban Souls Dancers Uwazi Zamani and Trent Williams, Jr. and “M/W: lessons” choreographed by former dancer Dwayne Cook, who is now a Teaching Artist at Houston Ballet.

“Houston is home to an amazing array of artists, and as part of our mission to connect audiences to artmakers, the Hobby Center is committed to amplifying the work of artists who reflect the full scope of our community,” said Deborah Lugo, Vice President of Programming and Education for the Hobby

Center. "We are thrilled to present Urban Souls Dance Company as they begin their 20th anniversary celebration with a program that will highlight Houston's Black artists and history. We can't wait for audiences to experience this inspiring reflection on our city's history."

Celebrating 20 years of commitment to Community, Culture, and Creativity, Urban Souls Dance Company solidifies the unity of Black Experience and Black Expression. The mission of Urban Souls is to foster connection and build community through dance, education and advocacy. Urban Souls builds upon community assets to tell stories of the Black experience, prioritizing racial equity and advancing healing and justice.

**TICKETING:** Tickets start at \$38, plus applicable fees and are available online at [www.TheHobbyCenter.org](http://www.TheHobbyCenter.org) and in person at the Hobby Center Box Office (800 Bagby, Houston, TX 77002). Discounts available for groups of 10 or more by calling 713-315-2525, option 4.

Patrons can become a "Hobby Center Insider" by signing up at [thehobbycenter.org/news/stay-connected](http://thehobbycenter.org/news/stay-connected) where they receive perks such as access to purchase tickets before public on sale.

**The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts** serves as a connector, convenor and incubator for all Houston audiences, artmakers and arts organizations. Opened in 2002, the campus houses two theaters including the 2,650-seat Sarofim Hall and the 500-seat Zilkha Hall. Delivering a best-in-class patron experience, the Hobby Center welcomes over 400,000 audience members annually to engage with high-quality arts programming including the Memorial Hermann Broadway at the Hobby Center series. The Hobby Center is also home to a full season of musical theatre produced by Principal Resident Company Theatre Under the Stars, as well as a variety of diverse performances from both Houston-based and touring artists and companies. Education and accessibility initiatives are central to the Hobby Center's impact in Houston through programs like the ExxonMobil Discovery Series that welcomes thousands of students to performances every season. Please visit [TheHobbyCenter.org](http://TheHobbyCenter.org). Follow the Hobby Center on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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