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**PRESS RELEASE – IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Eliot Smith Dance (ESD) Announces the Third Edition of ESD Presents: A Celebration of Sir Robert Cohan CBE**
Celebrating the Founding Father of British Contemporary Dance

Eliot Smith Dance (ESD) is proud to announce the third edition of ESD Presents, a biennial event that celebrates the work of influential dance makers. Taking place from **28 July to 03 August 2025** at Dance City’s purpose-built dance house in the heart of Newcastle upon Tyne, this year’s event will honour the extraordinary legacy of **Sir Robert Cohan CBE**, the renowned choreographer and pioneer of British contemporary dance. The event is held in partnership with the **Sir Robert Cohan Dance Legacy**.

A towering figure in the dance world, Sir Robert Cohan was born in New York in 1925. He joined the Martha Graham Dance Company in 1947, later moving to London in 1968, where he became the founding Artistic Director of **The Place** and the **London Contemporary Dance Theatre**. His work reshaped the landscape of British dance and earned him the title of the "founding father of British contemporary dance." Sir Robert's tireless advocacy for contemporary dance and his commitment to nurturing new generations of dancers and choreographers continues to inspire and resonate across the global dance community.

**2025 marks the 100th anniversary of Sir Robert’s birth**, making this a timely celebration of his extraordinary contributions to the art form. Despite his passing in 2021, his legacy endures, with his works remaining a cornerstone of contemporary dance.

**ESD Presents 2025 Highlights:**

1. **2025 Summer Intensive**
Open to dancers aged 18 and older, this intensive is designed for dancers-in-training and professionals. The program offers a deep dive into the **Cohan method of Graham-based technique** along with Cohan Repertory, Ballet, Performance, Lectures, and more. Classes will be taught by world-class dance professionals, including **Anne Donnelly** and **Kenneth Tharp**, both of whom were former dancers of Cohan and are leaders in their field.
2. **Gala Performance - Saturday, 02 August 2025 at 19:00**
The grand finale of the week-long event, the Gala Performance will feature a captivating collection of excerpts from Cohan’s masterworks, performed by a dynamic mix of **intergenerational dancers,** including professional dancers from Eliot Smith Dance. The performance will be a powerful tribute to Sir Robert Cohan’s lasting influence on the world of contemporary dance.

The event would not be possible without the support of **The Abderrahim Crickmay Charitable Settlement, Dance City, Sir Robert Cohan Dance Legacy, Friends of ESD,** and anonymous donors.

**For more information and tickets, visit** www.eliotsmithdance.com/esdpresents

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

Venue, Date and Time for Tunbridge Wells:

* Intensive 28 July - 02 August – Dance City, Newcastle
* Lecture: A brief history of Robert Cohan 28 July 15:30 – Dance City, Newcastle
* Gala Performance 02 August 19:00 – Dance City, Newcastle
* Open Forum Discussion 02 August 20:15 – Dance City, Newcastle

**Available for interview:**
Eliot Smith, Creative Director at Eliot Smith Dance, and Director at ESD Presents

Dr Roy M Vestrich, Chair at Sir Robert Cohan Dance Legacy

For further information, images, or to arrange interviews, please contact:
Eliot Smith by email at eliot@eliotsmithdance.com or by phone on 07956 404 187

**About Eliot Smith Dance (ESD):**
Eliot Smith Dance is a leading contemporary dance company based in the North East of England. The company, led by Creative Director Eliot Smith, has performed for audiences across the UK and internationally, with invitations to perform in Paris, Rome, and New York. ESD's diverse repertoire, created by Smith and guest choreographers from around the world, reflects the company's commitment to dynamic, relevant, and boundary-pushing work.

In addition to their live performances, ESD made an impressive return to digital offerings in 2020, engaging audiences globally through virtual platforms. The company celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2021 and won the inaugural Green Dance Award at the One Dance UK Awards in 2022.

For more information, please visit [www.eliotsmithdance.com](http://www.eliotsmithdance.com/)

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