

## Ballet Austin presents new dance film 'Preludes/Beginnings' free of charge



Ballet Austin's "Preludes/Beginnings" was filmed in Scottish Rite Theatre. Dancer Paul Martin. Film still by Paul Michael Bloodgood and Jordon Moser."

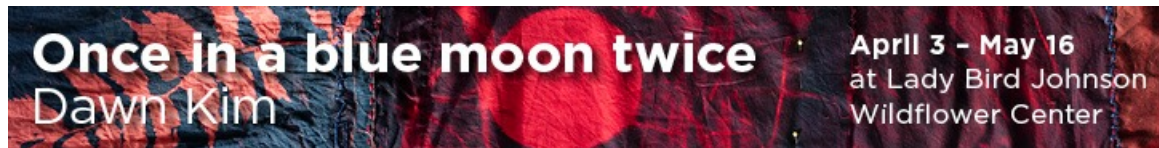
By **Sightlines** April 9, 2021

Having spent more than a year unable to perform for a live audience, Ballet Austin will debut a new work by artistic director Stephen Mills choreographed for film and presented to the public for free.

"Preludes/Beginnings" screens for free online April 15 through 25. Sign up at [balletaustin.org/performances/preludes](https://balletaustin.org/performances/preludes)

Set to Chopin's 24 preludes for Solo Piano, the performance was filmed on-site at Austin's historic Scottish Rite Theater. The 45-minute ballet is both a reflection of the history of the theater — the city's oldest — and an acknowledgment of the difficult times everyone has experienced since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic.

Built in 1871, the Scottish Rite Theater was used to house convalescents during the 1918 influenza pandemic. Like all historic theaters, Scottish Rite is said to be haunted, including by spirits of the convalescents who supposedly still roam the corridors to this day.



“Preludes/Beginnings” is also centered around the theatrical tradition of a “ghost light” that’s placed on stage at night while the theater is empty to keep the ghosts from haunting. Shuttered Broadway venues in New York [have reportedly kept ghost lights](#) on since the COVID-19 pandemic began. In Mills’ ballet, the ghosts come out to dance returning to the rafters before dawn.

The film is directed and edited by Paul Michael Bloodgood.