

OREGON BALLET THEATRE

CHRISTOPHER STOWELL / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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**OREGON BALLET THEATRE'S
2009/2010 EMERALD ANNIVERSARY SEASON
TO OPEN WITH A RETROSPECTIVE OF
20 YEARS OF SIGNATURE WORKS**

Portland, Ore... Oregon Ballet Theatre Artistic Director Christopher Stowell announced today that the company's **20th anniversary season** will open in October with a retrospective of works created for OBT during its first two decades. A wide range of choreographers who have had a major influence on the history of the company will be represented on the program. In honor of the milestone, OBT's opening program will also include the company premiere of George Balanchine's *Emeralds*.

Other season highlights include:

- **OBT's first work by 2008 Kennedy Center Honors recipient Twyla Tharp.**
- **Nicolo Fonte's breathtaking *Bolero*.**
- **Christopher Stowell's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.**
- **And the return of Trey McIntyre's breezy, bossa nova hit, *Like A Samba*, last seen at OBT in 2003.**

It was also announced that, in light of the current economic climate, OBT has not raised subscription prices for the upcoming season. Subscribers will pay the same amount as they did during 2008/2009. For the first time ever, season ticket holders will also have the option of paying for their seats in two installments.

Season tickets for 2009-10 are available today, with four-program subscription packages once again starting at just \$51. Individual performance tickets are available exclusively to subscribers until July. To purchase season tickets, contact the OBT box office at 503-2-BALLET (222-5538) or 888-9-BALLET (922-5538), or visit www.obt.org.

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The 2009/2010 20th Anniversary Season

PROGRAM 1: EMERALD ANNIVERSARY

October 10-17, 2009 / Keller Auditorium / Full Orchestra

***Emeralds* (1967) – Company Premiere**

Gabriel Fauré / George Balanchine

20th Anniversary Retrospective

Choreographers and Composers To Be Announced

A celebration of two decades of dance at Oregon's premier ballet company, with a look back at a selection of works created specifically for OBT during the past 20 years. Ballets by some very notable contributors to the repertoire will be represented on this once-in-a-generation program. The OBT premiere of George Balanchine's elegant, French-flavored masterpiece, *Emeralds*, opens the evening and sets the stage for an exciting future.

"The dancing was marvelous...[Oregon Ballet Theatre is] a cohesive company that is well on its way to becoming one this community can point to with pride." - OBT's first review, *The Oregonian* (1989)

"There must be something in the air or water in the Northwest, given the number of imaginative choreographers and dance troupes the area has produced. The latest company to suggest that is Oregon Ballet Theatre." - *The New York Times* (1999)

"Oregon Ballet Theatre is the...youngest of the companies in *Ballet Across America*, established less than 20 years ago. It set itself a hefty challenge...But the result was a revelation: Here is a group of talented and winsome dancers to watch." - *The Washington Post* (2008)

PROGRAM 2: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

February 27-March 6, 2010 / Keller Auditorium / Full Orchestra

***The Four Temperaments* (1946)**

Paul Hindemith / George Balanchine

***A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2007)**

Felix Mendelssohn / Christopher Stowell

OBT takes the edge off winter's chill with Christopher Stowell's lighthearted retelling of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. With sets and costumes echoing the leafy heart of Oregon's Opal Creek Forest, this timeless tale of impish fairies and hapless lovers is a whimsical treat that is at turns witty, comical, and charmingly romantic. It's paired on the program with George Balanchine's exhilarating, 1946 modern classic, *The Four Temperaments*.

"Stowell's new *Midsummer Night*...deftly blends a contemporary comic sensibility with the enchantment of Shakespeare's play and Felix Mendelssohn's music." - *The Oregonian*

"A sparkling new version." - *Willamette Week*

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PROGRAM 3: DUETS

April 17-May 2, 2010 / Newmark Theatre / Soloist Musicians

Tolstoy's Waltz (2008)

Various Composers / Christopher Stowell

Known By Heart ("Junk") Duet (1998) – Company Premiere

Donald Knaack / Twyla Tharp

Duo Concertant (1972)

Igor Stravinsky / George Balanchine

Like a Samba (1997)

Astrud Gilberto / Trey McIntyre

The work of American choreographic icon, and 2008 Kennedy Center Honors recipient, Twyla Tharp enters the OBT repertoire in the form of a clever *pas de deux* for an unlikely couple from wildly different social circles. Its counterpoint is Balanchine's *Duo Concertant*, a poignant ballet in which two dancers share the stage (and the spotlight) with an accompanying violinist and pianist. A pair of audience favorites round out the program: Christopher Stowell's striking series of Russian-tinged duets and Trey McIntyre's breezy homage to the music of samba chanteuse Astrud Gilberto.

"Ferociously imagined...some of the finest choreography [Tharp] has made." –*The Guardian UK*

"*Like a Samba* spools out like silk." - *The New York Times*

"[*Tolstoy's Waltz* is] a striking blend of the hyper-romantic and the abstract." – *The Oregonian*

PROGRAM 4: BOLERO

June 4-6, 2010 / Keller Auditorium / Soloist Musicians

Raymonda (2008)

Alexander Glazounov / Yuri Possokhov

James Kudelka 2009 World Premiere

Rodney Sharman / James Kudelka

Bolero (2008)

Maurice Ravel / Nicolo Fonte

When Nicolo Fonte's stunning *Bolero* premiered in 2008, it received immediate standing ovations at every performance. From its haunting opening, the ballet's tension builds steadily, along with Ravel's sultry score, until bursting in a vivid, satisfying wash of movement, color and emotion. It closes the season along with two more OBT-only works unavailable anywhere else: former Bolshoi principal Yuri Possokhov's opulent nod to Russian classicism, *Raymonda*, and our recently commissioned premiere by James Kudelka to a dreamlike score for two harps.

"[*Bolero* is] one of the troupes finest moments...Breathtaking." – *The Portland Tribune*

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“...A bubble of romantic idealism, within which the dancers shine.” – *The Oregonian*, about *Raymonda*

“[Kudelka is] the most imaginative voice to come out of ballet in the last decade.” – *The New York Times*

GEORGE BALANCHINE’S THE NUTCRACKER (1954)

December 12-27, 2009 / Keller Auditorium / Live Orchestra (8 of 20 performances)

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky / George Balanchine

“Mr. B’s” captivating Christmas classic draws its inspiration from the choreographer’s childhood recollections of dancing the original version of the *Nutcracker* in Russia. Today, his enchanting vision of Marie and the Nutcracker Prince and their thrilling journey to the candy-coated realm of the Sugarplum Fairy is famous the world over and has been a New York City Christmas tradition for more than 50 years.

“The Queen of Portland’s Christmas Season.” – *The Oregonian*

Founded in 1989, **OREGON BALLET THEATRE** is a not-for-profit, professional ballet company, with a school, based in Portland, Oregon. On July 1, 2003, **Christopher Stowell** became **OREGON BALLET THEATRE**’s artistic director and **Damara Bennett** joined OBT as school director. **OREGON BALLET THEATRE** offers the highest quality ballet, in a repertoire of classic and contemporary work, to the people of Oregon, the Pacific Northwest and the United States.

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