

OREGON BALLET THEATRE

CHRISTOPHER STOWELL / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 29, 2010

MEDIA CONTACT
Erik Jones
503.227.0977
erik.jones@obt.org

**OREGON BALLET THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2010-11 SEASON
HEADLINED BY A WORLD-PREMIERE PRODUCTION OF
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY, NEW *HOLIDAY REVUE* AND A
STRAVINSKY-THEMED COLLABORATION**

Portland, Ore... Oregon Ballet Theatre Artistic Director Christopher Stowell today unveiled the company's 2010-11 season, which will open in October with a full-length world-premiere production of *The Sleeping Beauty*. To be choreographed by Stowell, the work will become the third of the three great Tchaikovsky story ballets to enter Oregon Ballet Theatre's repertoire, joining *The Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake*, which Stowell created for the company in 2006.

Stowell also revealed that this year OBT will realign its performance season, shifting its June performance series to December to run concurrently with *The Nutcracker*. The move will eliminate an existing performance gap in the company's subscription schedule between the months of October and February.

With the introduction of the December program OBT will debut a new *Holiday Revue*. The work will be choreographed by Stowell and will feature **vocalist Susannah Mars and pianist Richard Bower**. Set to traditional holiday standards made popular by the likes of Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald and Bing Crosby, it will provide a hip, holiday dance alternative to OBT's traditional *Nutcracker* performances.

Other highlights of Oregon Ballet Theatre's 2010/11 season include:

- **A collaborative new work danced to the music of Igor Stravinsky and jointly choreographed by OBT Principal Dancer and Artistic Coordinator Anne Mueller, Jamey Hampton and Ashley Roland of Bodyvox and Rachel Tess of Rumpus Room Dance.**
- **The return of Christopher Stowell's critically acclaimed *The Rite of Spring* and perennially popular *Eyes On You*.**
- **The revival of Trey McIntyre's *Speak*, which was excerpted to overwhelming audience approval at OBT's 2009 20th-Anniversary retrospective performances.**
- **Nicolo Fonte's sultry *Left Unsaid*, a highlight of the company's 2008-09 Newmark Theatre performance series.**

-more-

Season tickets for 2010-11 go on sale February 5th, with four-program subscription packages starting at just \$64. **Individual performance tickets to all shows, including *The Sleeping Beauty*, 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.

In addition to OBT's regular subscription package, the company will once again offer a special **children's series**, with three-performance subscriptions available for as little \$75. Designed for families, the 2010-11 offering consists of a reduced-length performance of *The Sleeping Beauty*, *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*, and the School of OBT's Annual Spring Performance.

The 2010/2011 Season

PROGRAM 1: SLEEPING BEAUTY

October 9-16, 2010 / Keller Auditorium / Full Orchestra

***The Sleeping Beauty* (2010) – World Premiere
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky / Christopher Stowell after Petipa**

"OBT artistic director Christopher Stowell's world premiere adaptation [of Act III] of the 1890 Tchaikovsky/Marius Petipa touchstone, is a tribute to purity of form, the lush look and sound of classicism in love with itself." – The Oregonian

"...Traditional, fun with some lovely dancing. It holds great promise for, what I presume to be, a future staging of the entire shebang." – Critical Dance

Danced to Tchaikovsky's finest score, *The Sleeping Beauty* is the apex of 19th-Century classical ballet. This four-act fairytale classic is a large, challenging work with scintillating choreography and sparkling roles that will make use of the entire company as well as apprentices and students of the School of OBT. It is the first full-length story ballet to enter the OBT repertoire since *Swan Lake* in 2006.

PROGRAM 2: A HOLIDAY REVUE

December 11-18, 2010 / Keller Auditorium / Soloist Musicians

***A Holiday Revue* (2010) – World Premiere
Holiday Standards / Christopher Stowell**

Reminiscent of Stowell's instant-hit, *Eyes On You*, this revue-style show will feature a range of popular holiday tunes and entertaining choreography designed to let the dancers' individual characters shine. A warm, entertaining evening for all ages the work will be created in collaboration with local musicians and vocal artists, including Portland's Susannah Mars and Richard Bower.

-more-

PROGRAM 3: THE STRAVINSKY PROJECT

February 26 - March 6, 2011 / Keller Auditorium / Soloist Musicians

***Firebird* (2004)**

Igor Stravinsky / Yuri Possokhov

"The evening ended on a storybook note..." – Willamette Week

*"...OBT has a **sure-fire audience pleaser** on its hands."* – Critical Dance

*"Yuri Possokhov's darting choreography clicked neatly with Stravinsky's **fierce music**."* – The Oregonian

Yuri Possokhov's *Firebird* is a one-act story ballet steeped in Russian folklore and tradition. Widely popular with Portland audiences, *Firebird* features roles for both the company and students of the School of OBT.

A New Work (2011) – World Premiere

Igor Stravinsky / Anne Mueller, Jamey Hampton and Ashley Roland, Rachel Tess

*"The choreography is dense with ideas -- the athletic leap, the dramatic embellishment and the subtle gesture all threaded together with a **confident dynamism**."* – The Oregonian, about Rumpus Room Dance

*"A **freewheeling, multi-media, boundary-bending movement troupe**, BodyVox's unique approach to theater assimilates all possibilities for movement; endows it with breathtaking physicality; enriches it with striking imagery and embellishes it with humor, wit and whimsy to create **refined dancing that knows no boundaries**."* – Yelp

*"Mueller, a former Alabama Ballet dancer now with Oregon Ballet Theatre, choreographed with **honesty and earthiness**..."* – The Birmingham News

*"Stowell's choreography with which Mueller assisted is **flawless** in its complex transitions and use of space."* – The Oregonian

Portland audiences love local collaboration. The new work on The Stravinsky Project will bring together four of Portland's most innovative choreographers: OBT's own Anne Mueller, Rachel Tess of the Portland/Sweden based Rumpus Room Dance and Jamey Hampton and Ashley Roland of renowned contemporary troupe BodyVox. This world premiere will be an engaging contemporary addition to OBT's stage and touring repertoire

***The Rite of Spring* (2009)**

Igor Stravinsky / Christopher Stowell

*"'Rite' is an exciting and strong choreographic showcase for the company. It's **one of Stowell's best**."* – Critical Dance

*"...It's a **big, bold, fascinating** bunch of movement, a piece that looks like it's **as fun to dance as it is to watch**."* – Willamette Week

*"**OBT has hit the jackpot** [with] Stowell's own surprisingly dark, out-of-character take on Stravinsky's iconic 'Rite of Spring.'"* – Willamette Week

-more-

“Stowell’s own bold Rite of Spring is a large-scale spectacle of writhing bodies and angular movement set to a dynamite live piano duet from Carol Rich and Susan DeWitt Smith. The piece makes use of nearly every member of the company at some point, as lighting and design ace Michael Mazzola slices up the stage with a series of huge lime-colored squares, sliding and lowering the screens to creating boxes and barriers to trap the dancers – most notably in a squirming knot of bodies near the end of the piece.” (Willamette Week)

PROGRAM 4: SONG AND DANCE

April 21 – May 1, 2011 / Newmark Theatre / Soloist Musicians

***Left Unsaid* (2003)**

Johann Sebastian Bach / Nicolo Fonte

“*The unquestionable program hit was Brooklyn-born choreographer Nicolo Fonte’s ‘Left Unsaid’ ...*”
– Portland Mercury

“*What emerges in this piece is the precision and passion of all six dancers... It’s truly a joy to watch.*”
– Willamette Week

“*‘Left Unsaid’ ...drew the evening’s loudest and most enthusiastic applause....*” – The Oregonian

Nicolo Fonte’s breathtaking contemporary work, *Left Unsaid*, was a standout hit at its OBT premiere in 2009. The piece features a series of shifting patterns for dancers moving on and around folding chairs set on a dusky stage.

***Speak* (1998)**

Bloodhound Gang / Trey McIntyre

“*...A duet that’s energized and fresh, not stuffy or cutesy.*” – Willamette Week

“*Anne Mueller and Lucas Threefoot delivered some down-and-dirty street dancing in the duet from Trey McIntyre’s ‘Speak’ ...*” – The Oregonian

“*Set to the Bloodhound Gang’s sardonic jazzy hip-hop song Shut Up, McIntyre’s dance manages to capture an edge of urban danger and lightly mock it at the same time.*” – Art Scatter

An unconventional exploration into the world of hip-hop by celebrated choreographer and former OBT resident choreographer Trey McIntyre.

***Eyes On You* (2005)**

Cole Porter / Christopher Stowell

“*Set to a selection of Cole Porter tunes, Stowell’s choreography blends the sweeping grace of classical ballet with the flirty, frothy feel of an escapist pop romance. It’s a dream of sexy sophistication and high-life ease, and it gives the dancers a great chance to flash some personality.*” – The Oregonian

“*‘Eyes On You’ is a feel-good romp through classic Americana...*” – Willamette Week

Eyes On You is a company-sized work that conjures up memories of early Broadway and Hollywood musicals. The combination of nostalgic recordings and live solo vocal and piano accompaniment kicks the evening into high gear and gives the dancers the opportunity to place their personalities at center stage.

-more-

TBD

Additional work to be determined

GEORGE BALANCHINE'S THE NUTCRACKER (1954)

December 11-24, 2009 / Keller Auditorium

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky / George Balanchine

"The Queen of Portland's Christmas Season." – The Oregonian

"...A masterpiece of construction that repays endless viewings." - The New York Times

"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.

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.

###