

OREGON BALLET THEATRE

CHRISTOPHER STOWELL / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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DIANE SYRCLE NAMED NEW OREGON BALLET THEATRE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Portland, Ore... Oregon Ballet Theatre Board Chair Melissa G. Peterman announced today that, following an exhaustive international search, the company's Trustees unanimously selected Diane Syrcle to become OBT's new Executive Director. Syrcle joins the organization from the Portland Youth Philharmonic, where she has been Executive Director since 2003. Prior to that, she was Director of Education at Portland Opera, a position she held for seven years following a career as a professional opera singer. She will officially take up her new role at OBT on May 10, 2010, becoming just the fourth administrative head of the company in its 20-year history. In addition to leading the OBT staff, she will serve as the organization's chief fundraising officer and also oversee budgeting and board development.

Syrcle holds an MBA in Organizational Development from Marylhurst University, a Master's of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of North Texas and a Bachelor's of Music/Music Education from West Texas A&M University. She chairs the Best Practices Task Force on the State of Oregon Leadership Council for K-12 Arts Education, as well as the Professional Development Committee of the Right Brain Initiative Arts Integration Program. She also serves on the board of directors of both the Youth Orchestra Division of the League of American Orchestras and the Business for Culture and the Arts. On April 23, she will receive a Young Audiences Sunburst Award for Arts Education Advocacy.

At the Portland Youth Philharmonic, Syrcle's responsibilities included budgeting, staff oversight, fundraising, acting as primary company spokesperson and teaming in a creative partnership with the music director to realize the organization's goals. Under her watch, PYP saw contributed revenue grow by 123% in two years and its accumulated debt completely retired. It has operated with a positive cash flow since 2005. Syrcle also secured two significant NEA grants, successfully administered a Music Director Search and oversaw the orchestra's Carnegie Hall debut, as well as its first tour to Taiwan. In addition, she built and implemented an organizational strategic vision and developed a successful board member training program.

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“As we evaluated candidates, Diane consistently rose to the top,” said Peterman. “She is well-regarded in the community with a strong track record of establishing relationships with donors, board members and community leaders.”

“Diane is a fantastic addition to the OBT team as we enter our third decade,” remarked OBT Artistic Director Christopher Stowell. “Her background as a performer and years of dedication as an arts advocate and administrator are an ideal combination of qualities for us in this auspicious moment in our history. Like everyone at OBT, she is ambitious, highly motivated and believes in our vision of OBT as a preeminent arts institution.”

“Diane Syrcle is a truly gifted artist and administrator and very well respected in the arts community,” said Regional Arts & Culture Council Executive Director Eloise Damrosch, whose organization integrates art into community life and stewards funding in the Portland tri-county area. “I know she will ably guide OBT into a positive future.”

“I’m eager to get started at OBT and join a team of highly skilled and dedicated staff,” Syrcle said, adding, “I’m inspired by the dancers and Christopher’s artistic leadership and look forward to my partnership with the board of directors as we build relationships and develop resources to further the mission of OBT.”

Syrcle succeeds OBT Interim Executive Director and former Board Chair Kathleen Curtis Cosgrove, who was at the helm of the company as it successfully recovered from a June, 2009, financial crisis. Curtis Cosgrove was instrumental in securing new funding for the organization and steps down having led Oregon Ballet Theatre to much firmer ground. OBT’s most recent financial figures show the company 24% ahead of the previous season in contributed revenue and, eight months into its fiscal year, \$177,000 below budget in expenses.

“I can’t thank Kathleen enough for her years of dedication to OBT and for her bravery in wearing such a variety of hats depending on what the organization needed,” said Stowell. “She has been an enthusiastic supporter at every level and we will always consider her one of the family.”

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Oregon Ballet Theatre's 2009-2010 Season

“Emerald Retrospective”

October 10-17, 2009 • Keller Auditorium
Emeralds—Gabriel Fauré / George Balanchine
20th Anniversary Retrospective

“George Balanchine’s The Nutcracker™”

December 12-27, 2009 • Keller Auditorium

“A Midsummer Night’s Dream”

February 27-March 6, 2010 • Keller Auditorium
The Four Temperaments—Paul Hindemith/George Balanchine
A Midsummer Night’s Dream—Felix Mendelssohn/Christopher Stowell

“Duets”

April 22–May 2, 2010 • Newmark Theatre
Tolstoy’s Waltz (2008)—Russian composers/Christophe Stowell
Known By Heart (“Junk”) Duet (1998)—Donald Knaack/Twyla Tharp—**Company Premiere**
Duo Concertant (1972)—Igor Stravinsky/George Balanchine
Like A Samba (1997)—Astrud Gilberto/Trey McIntyre
Divergence (2010) – Joby Talbot / Emery LeCrone – **World Premiere**

“Bolero”

June 4-6, 2010 • Keller Auditorium
Raymonda (2008)—Alexander Glazounov/Yuri Possokhov
Hush (2009)—Rodney Sharman/James Kudelka
Bolero (2008)—Maurice Ravel/Nicolo Fonte

COMPANY ROSTER

Principal Dancers

Yuka Iino • Gavin Larsen • Kathi Martuza • Anne Mueller • Chauncey Parsons • Alison Roper • Artur Sultanov • Ronnie Underwood

Soloists

Candace Bouchard • Brennan Boyer • Ansa Deguchi • Adrian Fry • Steven Houser

Company Artists

Leta Biasucci • Martina Chavez • Andrea Cooper • Olga Krochik • Mia Leimkuhler • Matthew Pippin • Julia Rowe • Grace Shibley • Brian Simcoe • Christian Squires • Lucas Threefoot • Javier Ubell • Raychel Weiner

Apprentices

Ashley Smith • Adam Hartley • Olivia Ornelas • Hanh Pham • Cyrstal Serrano • Brent Slack-Wolfe

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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