

OREGON BALLET THEATRE

CHRISTOPHER STOWELL / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

M E D I A R E L E A S E

*WORLD PREMIERE DOUBLE BILL REINVENTS TWO CLASSIC TALES FOR A MODERN AGE
A Beloved Opera Gets a Bold Ballet Twist and Stravinsky Gets Polished to a Sexy New Shine in Oregon
Ballet Theatre's World Premiere Re-envisioning of Stravinsky's Petrouchka and Bizet's Carmen,
Opening October 8th at the Keller Auditorium*

September 15, 2011 – PORTLAND, OR. The kaleidoscopic visuals of a mirrored puzzle-box set, stripped-down storylines and world premiere choreography from Nicolo Fonte and Artistic Director Christopher Stowell combine with the full power of the OBT Orchestra to create strikingly new perspectives on Igor Stravinsky's 100-year-old landmark ballet and George Bizet's opera classic at Oregon Ballet Theatre's season opener [Petrouchka/Carmen](#), playing October 8th through the 15th at the Keller Auditorium.

DATES AND TIMES

Petrouchka/Carmen premieres on **Saturday, October 8, 2011** and runs for 5 performances through **Saturday, October 15, 2011**. Show times: Saturday, October 8 at 7:30pm; Sunday, October 9 at 2:00pm; Thursday, October 13 at 7:30 pm; Friday, October 14 at 7:30pm and Saturday, October 15th at 7:30pm.

TICKET PRICES

Tickets start at \$23.00 Visit [**www.obt.org**](http://www.obt.org) or dial **503.2.BALLET** for tickets.

- NEW **"Pay Your Age"** discount is offered for all patrons under 35 years old. Patrons receive best available seating at the same price as their age when they order by phone or in person and give their birthdate and email address. Patrons under 15 pay \$15.
- Oregon Ballet Theatre participates in the **Arts for All** program, providing \$5 tickets to patrons with the Oregon Trail Card.

ABOUT PETROUCHKA



This traditional Russian tale of the puppet who discovers he has a soul contains one of the quintessential leading roles for male dancers. The Stravinsky score is hailed as one of the world's great ballet scores.

However, the rest of the storyline as originally envisioned by Fokine (with a love triangle subplot that features a stereotypical savage character played in blackface and dubbed "the Moor") has serious challenges for a modern audience.

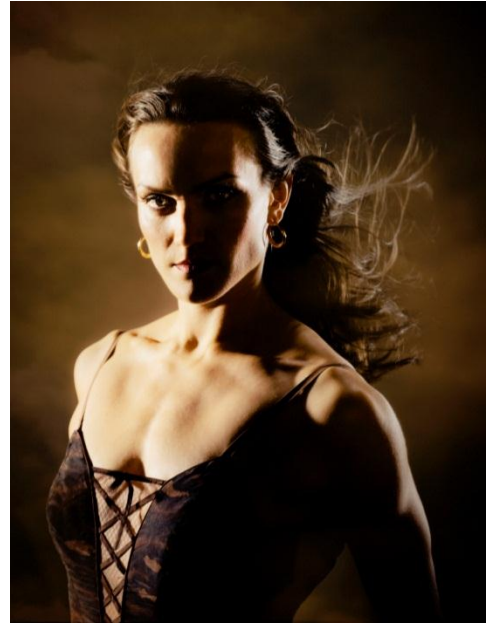
For this reason choreographer Nicolo Fonte has chosen to completely transform the work, stripping it of its cultural context to reveal a starkly modern, sexy, soulful examination of one man's struggle against the masks we wear and the strings that bind us to the artificiality of our lives.

(continued)

ABOUT CARMEN

Beloved by opera lovers (and fans of *The Aristocats*) this tale of a fiery gypsy who seduces and betrays a forthright soldier was truly scandalous when it first appeared on the Opéra-Comique's stage in 1843. Not only was the title character not an aristocrat, she was a decidedly violent and un-ladylike heroine. *Carmen* has since become one of the enduring classics of the opera stage with a score that has become as much a part of our pop cultural lore as *Ride of the Valkyries* or Beethoven's 9th.

How do you transform a classic with this much history into something truly new? Artistic Director Christopher Stowell (a serious opera lover himself) has tackled the project by stripping away the story's Spanish trappings and shifting the focus to the character he sees as the true protagonist of the piece, Don José. With a fluid contemporary set design that continually reshapes itself around the characters and nuanced choreography that draws out the essential emotional truths of the story, Stowell seeks to create an ever-shifting world in which we can all see ourselves reflected.



For **high-resolution images** of *Petrouchka/Carmen* rehearsals, costume renderings and opening night photos visit **OBT's Flickr page** <http://www.flickr.com/photos/oregonballettheatre>.

The world premiere of Christopher Stowell's *Carmen* is sponsored by Jeannine Cowles. The world premiere of Nicolo Fonte's *Petrouchka* is sponsored by the OBT New Works Fund.

Oregon Ballet Theatre's 2011/12 season is funded in part by the **Regional Arts & Culture Council** and Work for Art; the **Oregon Arts Commission**; the **Oregon Cultural Trust**; **The Oregonian** and **Kink.fm**

ABOUT OREGON BALLETTHEATRE

Founded in 1989, OBT is the region's largest full-time professional ballet company. Christopher Stowell joined the company as Artistic Director in 2003. Since then, OBT has added over 50 ballets to its repertoire, including nearly two dozen world premieres; providing a compelling and diverse five-program season of work that reflects the broadest spectrum of what great ballet can be. Annually, OBT offers eleven experiential arts education programs for youth and adults, as well as a professional ballet school for students, ages 4-18. Through all the programs offered, OBT reached over 145,000 members of the community last year. For more information about OBT go to: www.obt.org.

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