

OREGON BALLET THEATRE

CHRISTOPHER STOWELL / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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13TH ANNUAL *OBT EXPOSED* TO INCORPORATE
CHOREOGRAPHERS INSTITUTE
EXPANDED 2007-08 COMPANY ROSTER
AND DANCER RANKINGS ANNOUNCED

OBT Exposed

August 27 – September 1, 2007

South Park Blocks between Main and Salmon Streets, Portland
Free

Portland, Ore. – Each summer since 1995, *OBT Exposed* has moved the Oregon Ballet Theatre studios outdoors to an informal, tented rehearsal space in Portland's South Park Blocks. OBT's dancers take company class and rehearse while audiences of all ages come and go freely. As many as fifteen thousand people pass through the tent each year. Many experience ballet for the first time; others are loyal fans who plan their summer vacations around this unique opportunity to see the behind-the-scenes daily regimen of a professional ballet company.

This August, *OBT Exposed* will incorporate Oregon Ballet Theatre's annual **Choreographers Institute**. For the past two years, **Artistic Director Christopher Stowell** has invited OBT company dancers to create new work on their colleagues, culminating in an informal performance for friends of the company. This year, the Institute will take place in the *OBT Exposed* tent and feature **guest choreographers Pam Tanowitz and Tom Gold**.

Pam Tanowitz is a New York-based choreographer with her own company (www.pamtanowitzdance.org). Her work has been performed at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, the Guggenheim Museum and Central Park Summerstage. Tom Gold is a Soloist with the New York City Ballet. He appeared in the film version of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker* and performed in two *Live from Lincoln Center* productions on PBS.

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Tanowitz and Gold will each choreograph on OBT's apprentices and professional division students. **The public is invited to attend rehearsals** every day and watch as new work is created. **On Saturday afternoon, there will be an informal showing of the works in progress**, along with a **discussion and question-and-answer session** with both choreographers and their dancers.

Other Exposed highlights include:

Free Adult Ballet Class, Wednesday, August 29th, 6:00 pm – OBT Principal Dancer Alison Roper will teach a beginning ballet class onstage in the tent for high school students and adults. Immediately following the class, **Roper and Principal Dancer Ronnie Underwood will give a sneak peek performance of a pas de deux from Christopher Stowell's *A Midsummer Night's Dream***, which receives its world premiere as part of OBT's season opening Germanic Lands program, October 13th-20th in Portland's Keller Auditorium. This adult class is made possible by **lululemon athletica**.

Free Ballet Class for Kids, Friday, August 31st, 10:00 am - Children are invited onstage in the tent for an hour-long beginning ballet class with **Damara Bennett, Director of the School of Oregon Ballet Theatre**.

Free Movie (TBA), Friday, August 31st, 7:00 pm – Oregon Ballet Theatre will present a free screening of a dance movie personally selected by OBT Artistic Director Christopher Stowell. Complimentary popcorn will be provided.

OBT Exposed Daily Schedule

Monday through Friday

Company Class – 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

First Rehearsal Period – 1:15 to 3:30 pm

Second Rehearsal Period – 3:45 to 6:00 pm

Saturday

Company Class – 11:00 am to 12:30 pm

First Rehearsal Period – 12:45 to 1:40 pm

Second Rehearsal Period – 1:50 to 2:45 pm

Choreographers Institute Informal Showing – 3:00 to 5:00

OBT Exposed is sponsored by the **Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund** and the **Oregon Cultural Trust**.

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2007-08 Company Roster and Dancer Rankings Announced

Oregon Ballet Theatre has expanded its 2007-08 dancer roster from 25 to 28 artists.

“Increasing the size of the company gives us greater flexibility as we continue to develop our repertoire and tackle larger and more sophisticated ballets,” said Artistic Director **Christopher Stowell**. Reflecting the company’s growth and maturation, **its dancers have also been ranked for the first time in OBT’s 18-year history.**

Jon Drake, Yuka Iino, Gavin Larsen, Kathi Martuza, Anne Mueller, Alison Roper, Artur Sultanov and Ronnie Underwood have been selected by Stowell as the company’s first eight **Principal Dancers**. Mueller and Roper are OBT’s longest-tenured artists, having both joined the company in 1996. Iino, Larsen, Martuza and Sultanov were hired upon Stowell’s arrival in 2003, and Drake and Underwood began dancing with OBT in 2005.

Stowell also awarded the rank of **Soloist** to **Brennan Boyer, Ansa Deguchi, Daniela Deloe, Steven Houser and newcomer Ilir Shtylla**. A native of Albania, Shtylla comes to OBT from Ballet Arizona where he danced from 2003 to 2007. Houser, a Portlander who joined OBT in 2005, was trained at the **School of Oregon Ballet Theatre**.

Additionally, former Apprentices **Martina Chavez, Grace Shibley and Lucas Threefoot** have been promoted into the Company. Other new Company Artists are **Matthew Pippin**, a native of North Carolina who danced with Nevada Ballet Theatre from 2005 to 2007; and **Jacqueline Damico and Javier Ubell**, both recent graduates of New York City Ballet’s **School of American Ballet**. Shibley and Threefoot received their training at the School of OBT.

Company Artist **Holly Zimmerman** was recently married and has changed her surname to **Tolbert**.

Apprentices for the upcoming season are **Michael Davis, Kate Kearney, Patrick Kilbane, Mackenzie Martin and Abby Relic**.

COMPANY ROSTER

Principal Dancers

Jon Drake • Yuka Iino • Gavin Larsen • Kathi Martuza • Anne Mueller • Alison Roper • Artur Sultanov • Ronnie Underwood

Soloists

Brennan Boyer • Ansa Deguchi • Daniela Deloe • Steven Houser • Ilir Shtylla

Company Artists

Candace Bouchard • Martina Chavez • Andrea Cooper • Jacqueline Damico • Damian Drake • Adrian Fry • Olga Krochik • Mia Leimkuhler • Matthew Pippin • Grace Shibley • Brian Simcoe • Emily Tedesco • Lucas Threefoot • Holly Tolbert • Javier Ubell

Apprentices

Michael Davis • Kate Kearney • Patrick Kilbane • Mackenzie Martin • Abby Relic

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Oregon Ballet Theatre's 2007 – 2008 Season

“The Germanic Lands”

October 13-20, 2007 • Keller Auditorium • with Full Orchestra

The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude (1996)—Franz Schubert/William Forsythe—**Company Premiere**

Almost Mozart (2006)—W.A. Mozart/James Kudelka

A Midsummer Night's Dream (2007)—Felix Mendelssohn/Christopher Stowell—**World Premiere**

“George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™”

December 8-24, 2007 • Keller Auditorium • with Full Orchestra

“France”

February 23-March 1, 2008 • Keller Auditorium • with Full Orchestra

Zais (2002)—Jean-Philippe Rameau/Christopher Stowell—**Company Premiere**

Afternoon of a Faun (1953)—Claude Debussy/Jerome Robbins—**Company Premiere**

A New Pas de Deux (2008)—Léo Delibes/Christopher Stowell—**World Premiere**

Bolero (2008)—Maurice Ravel/Choreographer TBA—**World Premiere**

“America”

April 18–27, 2008 • Newmark Theatre • Music: Ensembles

Through Eden's Gates (2007)—William Bolcom/Kent Stowell

Just (2006)—Henry Cowell/Trey McIntyre

Slaughter on Tenth Avenue (1968)—Richard Rodgers/George Balanchine—**Company Premiere**

“Russia”

June 6 -8, 2008 • Keller Auditorium • Music: Ensembles

Rubies (1967)—Igor Stravinsky/George Balanchine

Tolstoy's Waltz (2008)—Various/Christopher Stowell—**World Premiere**

Raymonda (2008)—Alexander Glazounov/Yuri Possokhov, after Marius Petipa—**World Premiere**

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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