

OREGON **BALLET** THEATRE

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

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Oregon Ballet Theatre Announced Today Hiring of New Artistic Director

Kevin Irving will join Oregon Ballet Theatre July 15, 2013

Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT) is excited to announce the hiring of Kevin Irving as its new Artistic Director, following an exhaustive international search.

Kevin Irving brings a wealth of experience as a dancer, teacher and Artistic Director, along with a depth of knowledge and connections in the dance world. "Kevin has very high standards and will not rest until they are met, whether in regards to artistic matters or balancing a budget," stated one of his dance colleagues.

Kevin's training and track record as an outstanding dancing talent on an International level, as well as his proven abilities in management and artistic direction, education, fund raising and marketing, combine to make him an extraordinarily qualified leader to help take OBT to the next level of excellence, for Portland, the Region and Nationally. The contacts he has made over his illustrious career will enable OBT to present well-established classics as well as ballets from the major choreographers of today and emerging talents in the world of Dance.

Kevin began his career as a dancer in 1980 with the Alvin Ailey Company. Subsequently, he was a principal dancer with Elisa Monte Dance, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, and Twyla Tharp Dance. In 1994 Kevin joined noted choreographer Nacho Duato's Compania Nacional de Danza in Spain, where he served for eight years as Head of Artistic Department and primary rehearsal director. From 2002 to 2007, Kevin was the Artistic Director of The Goteborg Ballet, which under his leadership was named the most important dance company in Sweden by Ballet International Magazine. Since then he has worked as a consultant, serving as President/Owner of Dance Masters Consulting. During that time he has worked as Associate Director of Morphoses and guest teacher for such notable companies as Alvin Ailey, Aspen/Santa Fe Ballet, New York Theatre Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, and Juilliard Dance. He has staged works by many of the most distinguished choreographers in the world, including those of his partner, Nicolo Fonte, who has created works for OBT. Additionally, Kevin started the not-for-profit

organization I-DANCE, which creates relationships between US-based choreographers and Latin American dance communities.

Kevin earned his Bachelor of Arts in Dance Performance and Choreographic Studies from Empire College/SUNY, NY, has studied crisis management, work environments, conflict management and is fluent in Spanish, French and has conversational abilities in Swedish and Portuguese.

OBT Board Chair, Ken Hick, says, "We are particularly gratified that the reputation and success of OBT has been able to attract a leader of such extraordinary success, experience, taste and skills. We welcome Kevin and his partner, Nicolo Fonte, as major additions to the Portland community and cultural scene and we are all looking forward to an exciting next chapter for OBT."

Speaking on behalf of the Board of Directors, Mr. Hick added, "We also want to take this opportunity to thank Anne Mueller for the exceptional work she has done as Interim Artistic Director for the past six months. OBT is indebted to her for her passion, creativity and inspiration during the transition. Her participation at OBT as a dancer and leader has been tremendously important in OBT's success."

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Founded in 1989, OBT is the state's largest full-time professional ballet company, dedicated to creating and preserving the art of ballet through the highest quality performance, training and educational programming. OBT is committed to producing compelling and diverse works that consistently inspire and entice audiences. 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 it offers, OBT reaches over 130,000 members of the community each year. For more information about OBT go to: www.obt.org.