

# OREGON **BALLET** THEATRE

## KEVIN IRVING / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### PROMOTION OF MICHAEL LINSMEIER AT OREGON BALLET THEATRE:

*Raised to soloist after stellar debut in Nutcracker principal role*

**December 19, 2013 - Portland, OR**

**Oregon Ballet Theatre Artistic Director Kevin Irving** announced at the conclusion of last night's performance of **George Balanchine's "The Nutcracker"** that company member Michael Linsmeier was promoted to the rank of **Soloist** following Linsmeier's premier performance in the role of the Cavalier. This demanding role for a principal dancer was "danced with aplomb, elegance, and determination - all qualities we have come to expect and admire in Michael's dancing", said Irving once the curtain had fallen. Onstage surrounded by his colleagues, Michael received a bouquet of both exotic and simple flowers, a reflection of his dynamic personality, as well as the congratulations of the entire cast and crew of the evening's performance.

Linsmeier is currently in his **third season** with OBT, after spending seven years dancing professionally with Milwaukee Ballet. Raised on a dairy farm in rural Wisconsin, he attributes many of his positive traits as a dancer to this upbringing. Known among his fellow dancers for his outstanding work ethic, patience, and strong sense of self (as exhibited by numerous tattoos, piercings, and a warm, confident air), Linsmeier has been heavily relied upon to perform featured roles during his time with the company. He has originated featured roles in Trey McIntyre's "Robust American Love" and Matjash Mrozewski's "The Lost Dance", and has performed many other notable roles in ballets including Val Caniparoli's "Lambarena", Lola de Avila's staging of "Giselle", Christopher Stowell's "Swan Lake", "A Holiday Revue" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream", William Forsythe's "The Second Detail", Nacho Duato's "Por Vos Muero" and George Balanchine's "The Nutcracker".

Regarding the news of his promotion, Linsmeier says "I feel very fortunate to have the support of the organization. I'm about to call my mom and I'm pretty excited to have that conversation. This rekindles my fire and determination to go in every day and work as hard as I can to make everyone proud."

### DATES AND TIMES:

**Michael Linsmeier** will appear in a variety of roles in every performance of **George Balanchine's "The Nutcracker"** at the **Keller Auditorium**, playing now **through December 24<sup>th</sup>**. He will dance the **Cavalier** to Ansa Deguchi's Sugarplum Fairy again on **Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.** and **Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00 p.m.**

## TICKET PRICES:

Tickets start at \$17. Visit [www.obt.org](http://www.obt.org) or call **503.2.BALLET** for tickets.

OBT also participates in the **Arts for All** program, providing \$5 tickets to patrons carrying an Oregon Trail Card.

## About Oregon Ballet Theatre:

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. OBT offers 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](http://www.obt.org).

## About Kevin Irving:



As a dancer, Kevin Irving appeared with the Alvin Ailey Training Ensemble, Elisa Monte Dance Company, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens (as a soloist and principal dancer) and with American icon Twyla Tharp. In 1994, Kevin retired from the stage to take a position as ballet master and head of the artistic department with Nacho Duato's Compañía Nacional de Danza in Spain. From 2002 to 2007, Kevin was the Artistic Director of The Goteborg Ballet; the company under Kevin's leadership was named the most important dance company in Sweden by Ballet International Magazine. Since 2007 Kevin has been based in the U.S., while still maintaining a vast network of contacts abroad. Irving has been a frequent guest teacher with companies and schools such as, The Royal Danish Ballet, Alvin Ailey, Aspen Santa Fe, Juilliard, etc. Mr. Irving was also Associate Director at dance company Morphoses (2011-2012). He continues to stage ballets by Nacho Duato and American choreographer Nicolo Fonte and is the Founder/Director of I-DANCE, a non-profit organization that sends teachers and choreographers to Latin American dance communities. He was appointed Artistic Director of Oregon Ballet Theatre in June 2013.



## About Michael Linsmeier:

**Michael Linsmeier** grew up on a small dairy farm in Wisconsin, and began his training with the Jean Wolfmeyer School of Dance. He attended the Virginia School of the Arts during high school. After graduating he joined the Milwaukee Ballet Company, and danced there for seven years. Linsmeier joined Oregon Ballet Theatre as a Company Artist in 2011.

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