

OREGON BALLET THEATRE

OBT/25

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OREGON BALLET THEATRE CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF THRILLING DANCE

World Premieres by Nicolo Fonte and Darrell Grand Moultrie, A Trilogy of Duets by Influential OBT Choreographers, The Debut of OBT II, and Our First Full-Length Cinderella Anchor This Landmark Season

February 22, 2014 - Portland, OR

The 2014-2015 Season marks a milestone for Oregon Ballet Theatre as it celebrates a quarter century of entertaining, exciting, and inspiring audiences in Portland and around the world. The 25th Anniversary season will also be the first programmed solely by Artistic Director Kevin Irving, who joined OBT in July 2013. Irving fills the season with nods to an impressive past while offering a clear vision of the company's bright future.

OBT 25, October 11-18, 2014, at the Keller Auditorium, will open this year of celebration. For the first time in over 12 years, **George Balanchine's** athletic contest for eight women and four men, **Agon**, will appear on the OBT stage. Created in 1957 and set to an original score by Balanchine's frequent collaborator, Igor Stravinsky, *Agon's* experimental nature remains fresh and challenging, even over half a century later. In tribute to three choreographers who have shaped OBT to date, we include **Love x 3**, featuring pas de deux by former Resident Choreographer **Trey McIntyre**, former Artistic Director **Christopher Stowell**, and for the first time since 2003, the work of Founding Artistic Director **James Canfield**. The capstone of this program covering past, present, and future will be a **world premiere** for the whole company by Portland favorite **Nicolo Fonte**, set to **live music**.

Of course, no holiday season is complete without at least one viewing of **George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker***. In recent years, Portlanders have shown us just how much they enjoy this grand tradition, and we're responding by adding two performances after Christmas to ensure visiting friends and family have a chance to share in the wonder of little Marie's larger-than-life adventure. Six performances will feature the stellar **OBT Orchestra**. A total of seventeen shows of George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker* will be presented between **December 13 and 27, 2014**, at the **Keller Auditorium**.

There's no time like the 25th Anniversary to add a full-length ballet to our repertoire. **February 28 – March 7, 2015**, will see the company premiere of **Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella***. Colorful and full of magic, Stevenson's version of this classic tale is one of the ballet world's most popular, performed by companies world-wide including American Ballet Theatre and Queensland Ballet of Australia, and Prokofiev's dramatic score demands repeat listening. We invite Portland to fall in love with *Cinderella*, from the hilarity of her Ugly Stepsisters to the fantasy of her Fairy Godmother, the opulent pumpkin carriage to the despair of losing one precious glass slipper, all resolving in the heart-warming promise of happily-ever-after with her Prince Charming. An entrancing experience for adults and children alike, we're thrilled to offer six memorable performances at the **Keller Auditorium**.

Wrapping up the main-stage programming for the season is **Impact** at the **Newmark Theatre, April 16 – 25, 2015**. Focused on the power of the relationship between audience and performer, patron and ballet

company, we present three striking works. The company premiere of **Nacho Duato's** compelling **Rassemblement**, set to the songs of Haitian artist Toto Bissainthe and inspired by the strength and resistance of slaves longing for a home where they could be free from oppression, offers a chance to see OBT's dancers at their most emotionally bare. We also tie our past to our future with performances of our first Resident Choreographer **Dennis Spaight's Crayola**. Signifying a bright new direction for OBT's current Professional Division and Apprentice programs, we launch the newly established **OBT II** with this work. Rounding out this exciting program will be a world premiere by Darrell Grand Moultrie. A Princess Grace Choreography Award winner, Moultrie is known for his ability to weave between genres, and has created works for a great range of ballet companies as well as Beyoncé and Savion Glover.

SEASON AT A GLANCE:

OBT 25 – October 11-18, 2014, Keller Auditorium

Agon – Balanchine / Stravinsky

Love x 3 – McIntyre, Stowell, Canfield / Various

World Premiere – Fonte / TBA

George Balanchine's "The Nutcracker" – December 13-27, 2014, Keller Auditorium

**Including six performances with the OBT Orchestra*

Cinderella – February 28-March 7, 2015, Keller Auditorium

– Stevenson / Prokofiev

Impact – April 16-25, 2015, Newmark Theatre

Rassemblement – Duato / Bissainthe

Crayola – Spaight

World Premiere – Grand Moultrie / TBD

ADDITIONAL EVENTS:

OBT:Exposed – August 25-29, 2014, Pioneer Courthouse Square

OBT at Wolf Trap: "Face of America" Celebration – August 27, 2014, Filene Center at Wolf Trap, VA

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:

3-show subscriptions for Oregon Ballet Theatre's 25th Anniversary season start at \$66, or the full season can be seen for \$88. Subscribers also receive benefits like flexibility in exchanging tickets and the ability to purchase additional tickets at a discount, with no service fees. OBT season ticket holders may take advantage of discounts at Portland Opera, Oregon Symphony, Portland Center Stage, Artists Repertory Theatre, and White Bird. Patrons can call the OBT Box Office at 503.222.5538, visit at 818 SE 6th Ave. Portland, OR 97214 or go to www.obt.org for more information on becoming a subscriber.

NEW FACES AMONG THE CHOREOGRAPHERS:

Ben Stevenson (Cinderella):



Photo by Ellen Appel

Ben Stevenson began his dance training in London, England, at the Arts Educational School. After graduation he was invited to join Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet, now known as the Royal Ballet. He then joined the London Festival Ballet where he eventually became a Principal Dancer. Mr. Stevenson has directed several companies including Harkness Ballet, the National Ballet in Washington D.C., and Houston Ballet. It was under his direction that Houston Ballet grew to be one of the most respected ballet companies in the country and around the world. Mr. Stevenson is now the current Artistic Director of Texas Ballet Theater.

Besides being a successful director, Mr. Stevenson is an accomplished choreographer having received numerous awards including three gold medals at the International Ballet Competition and his work has been set on multiple companies around the world. For his contributions to the world of international dance, he was named an Officer of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II. He was also presented with the Dance Magazine Award, which is one of the most prestigious honors in the American dance scene.

Darrell Grand Moultrie (World Premiere):



Photo by Frank Tompson

Darrell Grand Moultrie is one of America's very diverse and much sought-after choreographers and master teachers. A recipient of a Princess Grace Choreography Fellowship Award, he is one of the few choreographers working in the theater, modern, ballet, and commercial dance genres simultaneously.

Darrell has created and staged multiple works for The Juilliard School, Colorado Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, BalletMet Columbus, Ailey2, Sacramento Ballet, and Milwaukee Ballet. His work has also been commissioned by North Carolina Dance Theatre, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble, Atlanta Ballet, The August Wilson Center Dance Ensemble, Tulsa Ballet, Richmond Ballet, and Smuin Ballet. He has taught and choreographed at many universities throughout America such as Ailey B.F.A, Fordham, Point Park University, CalArts, New York University, and Stanford University.

Most recently, Grammy Award winning recording artist Beyoncé selected Darrell as one of her choreographers for her "Mrs. Carter" World Tour. He also recently collaborated with Tony Award winning hooper Savion Glover on a new dance project, and choreographed the original musical *Witness Uganda*, directed by Tony Award winner Diane Paulus.

As a performer, Mr. Moultrie was seen in *West Side Story* in Milan, Italy, at the world famous La Scala Opera House. He has also appeared on Broadway in the smash hits *Hairspray: The Musical* with Harvey Fierstein, and *Aida* where he understudied the role of Mereb, performing opposite Toni Braxton. Darrell was also an original cast member of the Tony Award winning musical *Billy Elliot*. Darrell is a proud New Yorker, born and raised in Harlem. He is a graduate of Laguardia High School and The Juilliard School.