

OREGON **BALLET** THEATRE

KEVIN IRVING / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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OREGON BALLET THEATRE PRESENTS *CLOSER*

May 24 – June 3, 2018
BodyVox Dance Center

Program features three new works choreographed by Company dancers and set to original music by Grammy-award winner André Allen Anjos (RAC).

Oregon Ballet Theatre continues a 2017-18 season that is shattering recent records for both ticket sales and ticket revenue, with a production designed to surprise its audience in many new ways.

In the first-ever collaboration with **Grammy-award winner André Allen Anjos (RAC)**, the performance includes three new works created by Company dancers Katherine Monogue, Makino Hayashi, and Peter Franc. These new works, along with **Helen Simoneau's *Departures*** will be performed in the intimate BodyVox Dance Center where the seats are even closer to the action than in any other OBT performance venue.

Simoneau's ***Departures***, presented in 2017 as part of the Choreography XX performances in Washington Park that celebrated emerging women choreographers, was a compelling introduction to a fresh choreographic voice that will surely reward repeated viewing. Set to an emotional score by David Schulman, ***Departures*** was praised in bachtrack.com's review: "In this piece, [Simoneau] seemed less interested in ballet as an art of expression, rather more concerned with the fusion of sound, colour and a stripped-down technical virtuosity into a living sculpture."

In a season-ending surprise—and one which will capitalize on the space's intimacy and elevate OBT's mission to share, inspire, and connect to a new level—Artistic Director Kevin Irving will take the microphone as emcee and work with dancers as they learn and work through a piece. This rare opportunity for audiences to see behind the scenes and to appreciate the intense preparatory work that goes into performances is sure to magnify audiences' appreciation for this incredible art form and artists who bring it to life.

CLOSER

BodyVox Dance Center
1201 NW 17th Ave.
Portland OR

Thursday, May 24 – 7:30 PM
Friday, May 25 – 7:30 PM
Saturday, May 26 – 7:30 PM
Thursday, May 31 – 7:30 PM
Friday, June 1 – 7:30 PM
Saturday, June 2 – 2:00 PM

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets, at \$55, are available online at www.obt.org, by phone at 503.222.5538, and in person at the Oregon Ballet Ticket Office, 0720 SW Bancroft St., Portland.

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ABOUT OREGON BALLET THEATRE

Oregon Ballet Theatre is committed to sharing our passion for the expressive power of ballet, inspiring an enduring appreciation of dance, and connecting in meaningful ways to our community through excellence in performance, training and educational programs. OBT is the largest professional ballet company in Oregon, employing nearly 200 people and attracting artists from around the globe with a reputation for excellence. The company is rooted in the traditions of classical ballet, with a repertoire that ranges from the great classics to premieres from some of the most exciting choreographic voices in the field today. Our mission is dedicated to the vitality of, and access to, world-class ballet performance and training in our region. Founded in 1989 by James Canfield, a former principal dancer with the Joffrey Ballet, OBT quickly developed a distinctive style and unique repertoire that grew to comprise over 80 ballets. From 2003-2012, under the direction of Christopher Stowell, OBT presented nearly 350 performances and added 51 ballets, including 20 world premieres, to its diverse body of work. In June 2013, we were delighted to name Kevin Irving as the company's third Artistic Director. Irving brings over 25 years of experience performing with and managing world-renowned cultural organizations and dance companies, including The Göteborg Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, and Compañía Nacional de Danza (Spain). His tenure has been marked by a commitment to collaborative partnerships with other Portland artists and organizations, including the Portland Art Museum, Multnomah County Library, Kenji Bunch, and Pink Martini. He has expanded the company's classical repertoire – with the premieres of Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella*, August Bournonville's *Napoli*, and Irving's own update of *Swan Lake* while preserving OBT's legacy and restoring major works such as James Canfield's *Romeo & Juliet*. At the same time, he continues to build a diverse body of work with world premieres from internationally acclaimed contemporary choreographers such as Nacho Duato, William Forsythe, Nicolo Fonte, Darrell Grand Moultrie, and Helen Pickett.

OBT's investment in the community extends far beyond our stages and studios, as we seek to enrich the community and invest in our art form. We provide ballet training to over 800 students through the OBT School, which attracts dancers from as far away as Spain and Japan, and through OBT2, our junior company, which brings professional level performance to underserved audiences throughout Portland.

Our robust Education Outreach programming impacts nearly 40,000 people annually, including thousands of K-12 youth across 21 school districts. Ongoing efforts to ensure equitable access include: scholarships to OBT School, field trip transportation for low income and Title 1 schools, and our Share the Wonder campaign, which provides thousands of tickets to our mainstage performances for those in need.