



FONT

- A +

SHARE THIS

f t G+ e+ in

MORE STORIES

Prev Next

## Wondrous 'Alice' leaps onto stage

Jason Vondersmith Wednesday, February 21, 2018

0 Comments

**Oregon Ballet Theatre pulls out all stops in adaptation of Lewis Carroll story, set to show Feb. 24-March 4 at Keller Auditorium**



COURTESY: WASHINGTON BALLET - Septime Webre created the ballet 'Alice (the wonderland)' in 2012, and it has been staged to rave reviews. Oregon Ballet Theatre performs the ballet Feb. 24-March 4 at Keller Auditorium.

**It's all feet, legs, arms and hands on stage for Oregon Ballet Theatre, which has prepared to perform may**

be its most ambitious ballet ever.

It's the West Coast premiere of "Alice (the wonderland)," adapted by Septime Webre from the Lewis Carroll story about the young woman who goes down a rabbit hole and discovers an imaginative and zany world of characters and magic. The highly athletic and vibrant production takes place Feb. 24-March 4 at Keller Auditorium, and involves choreography (ballet and acrobatics), puppets, props and costumes and sets on a Cirque du Soleil scale, the OBT Orchestra playing an original score by Matthew Pierce and a cast of 100.

"It's a huge undertaking and requires our whole team to pull out all the stops," says Kevin Irving, OBT artistic director.

" 'Alice' is the perfect vehicle to show off the considerable skills and artistry of the Oregon Ballet Theatre dancers."

Of the 100 dancers, about half come from the OBT School.

Veteran principal Xuan Cheng plays Alice.

And, principal Brian Simcoe plays Lewis Carroll and The Mad Hatter.

The way they describe it, "Alice" will be unlike anything they have done. Because it's non-stop action.

"You can't relax," Cheng says. "You have to be in the character. It's fun. For me, personally, it's challenging."

Webre created the show in 2012, basing it off Carroll's classics "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking-Glass."



COURTESY: YI YIN/OBT - Dozens of kids, led here by dancer Martina Chavez, from the Oregon Ballet Theatre School have parts in 'Alice (the wonderland).' Says principal dancer Brian Simcoe, of OBT taking on the fairy tale: 'I think fans will love it. ... It's very refreshing.'

**Cheng wasn't a big "Alice" reader or watcher growing up, but she has watched the Johnny Depp and Mia Wasikowska movies — Tim Burton's "Alice in Wonderland" and James Bobin's "Alice Through the Looking Glass."**

She's ready to do the role.

"Technically, there's a lot of turning and jumping," Cheng says. "Alice is almost on stage the whole time. It's not like doing 'Swan Lake,' where it's very difficult but you can go off stage and rest. For this production, all the resting time is on stage. You're running around and throwing around and doing fun lifts. That actually takes a lot of energy.

"I'm still trying to learn (the role), how to make it better. It's a lot ... I have to do all this research to get more in tune, and find a way to do it."

Simcoe wasn't a big "Alice" fan growing up, either, but he learned to like the story.

His version of The Mad Hatter hasn't come to full development, yet.

### DAILY NEWS WHERE YOU LIVE

- Beaverton Hillsboro Prineville
- Clackamas Lake Oswego Sandy
- Canby Madras Sellwood
- Columbia Co. Milwaukie Sherwood
- Estacada Molalla Tigard
- Forest Grove Newberg Tualatin
- Gladstone Oregon City West Linn
- Gresham Portland Wilsonville
- King City Portland SE Woodburn
- Happy Valley Portland SW

### SPECIAL INTEREST

- Biz Trib
- Wheels
- Public Notices
- Sustainable
- KXL

Latest Comments Social Media

Search Articles Search

FRIENDS 2 FOLLOW

t f i

Social media posts from your local merchants.

PortlandTribune

Portland RV

Portland RV now has a very nice 2003 Kountry Star double slide diesel coach for \$59,900. It has 50,236 miles on a Freightliner...

06:55PM SHARE: f t G+

Powered by Friends2Follow

### AIR QUALITY REPORT

### INSIDERS

#### Time for Oregon football and tasty treats

Brought to you by Linda Strand - Your NW - GIFT BASKETS INSIDER - Columbia Empire Farms

#### Trick-or-treat some POOP

Brought to you by Linda Strand - Your NW - GIFT BASKETS INSIDER - Columbia Empire Farms

#### Custom Flags: Something for Everyone's Message

Brought to you by David Anchel - Elmer's Flag and Banner, Kites Tool - FLAG, BANNER and KITE INSIDER

#### Why are Opals thought to be unlucky??

This article brought to you courtesy of Sara Winter of Nielsen's Jewelers, Portland Tribune Jewelry Insider.

#### Fall Lighting

This article brought to you courtesy of Kay Newell, fo Sunlan Lighting, Inc., Portland Tribune Lighting Insider.

"I'm still trying to find his motivation," he says. "I think his wackiness should come from a darker and more cynical outlook on life. I'm trying to still find the humor."

The dancing is very physical, he adds. "It's very technical and requires stamina and body strength," Simcoe says.

It'll be extensive involvement of OBT School students.

"It's very inspiring from the young kids," Cheng says. "I feel their energy. It's good to have the school with us. It's great to remind ourselves why we're doing this."

Simcoe has been around long enough with OBT to know that they company has really expanded its horizons with "Alice."

"It's really exciting, actually," he says. "It's quite a bit of challenge, especially for the men because the whole production is so over the top. There are so many technical elements that have to be achieved. We're trying to reach new heights."

"I'm excited to get it to the stage. I think fans will love it. I love the whimsical element to this. It's very refreshing."

Oregon Ballet Theatre's "Alice (in wonderland)" takes place Feb. 24-March 4 at Keller Auditorium, 222 S.W. Clay St. Show times are: 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 24; 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 25; 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Friday, March 1-2; 2 and 7:30 Saturday, March 3; noon Sunday, March 4. Tickets start at \$29. For more: [www.obt.org](http://www.obt.org).

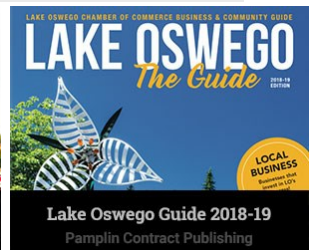
#### Get Your Roof Checked Before Cold, Wet Weather Arrives!



This article brought to you courtesy of Stan Robinson of Pacific West Roofing, Portland Tribune Roofing Insider.

[back to top](#)

## CONTRACT PUBLISHING



### Our Publications

#### Portland Metro Area

Portland Tribune  
Beaverton Valley Times  
Tigard Tualatin Times  
Lake Oswego Review  
West Linn Tidings  
Wilsonville Spokesman  
Hillsboro Tribune  
Forest Grove News Times  
Newberg Graphic  
Clackamas Review  
Oregon City News

### Obituaries

Submit an Obituary

### Business Tribune

Columns  
Public Notices  
Oregon Property Foreclosures  
Business Calendar  
Business Leads  
News Links  
Plan Center  
Marketing

### Shop Local

Weekly Ads  
This Week's Circulars  
Find your Next Vehicle  
Special Sections  
Insiders

### Classifieds

About Us  
Contact Us  
Subscribe  
Eblast



### Connect with Us!



Subscribe Today!

The Outlook  
Sandy Post  
Estacada News  
Canby Herald  
Woodburn Independent  
Molalla Pioneer  
Columbia County Spotlight  
Regal Courier  
Sherwood Gazette  
The Bee  
Southwest Community Connection

### Contract Publishing

Printing and Distribution Services

### Special Publications

Public Notices

### Submit

News Tips  
Letters to the Editor  
Births | Anniversaries | Weddings |  
Engagements | Business | Birthday |  
Obituaries

[Click Here](#)

### Central Oregon

Madras Pioneer  
Central Oregonian