



FEATURE ARTICLES

Oregon Ballet Theatre to present 'Rhapsody in Blue'



XUAN CHENG WITH (LEFT TO RIGHT) MICHAEL LINSMEIER, BRIAN SIMCOE AND AVERY REINERS ON STAGE WITH PINK MARTINI, FEATURING BANDLEADER THOMAS LAUDERDALE AND VOCALIST CHINA FORBES (PICTURED RIGHT). IN THE WORLD PREMIERE OF NICOLO FONTE'S 'NEVER STOP FALLING (IN LOVE)' IN 2014. PHOTO BY BLAINE TRUITT COVERT.

f SHARE t TWEET p SHARE e EMAIL c COMMENTS

Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT) will open its 2017-18 Season with *Rhapsody in Blue* on October 7-14. The double bill will reunite two of Portland's most creative artists – OBT Resident Choreographer Nicolo Fonte and Pink Martini Founder Thomas Lauderdale. The evening will pair a world premiere set to Lauderdale's masterful take on George Gershwin's famous *Rhapsody in Blue* with the return of Fonte's *Never Stop Falling (in Love)*, an audience favorite.

One of the most anticipated events of the fall, OBT's season opener will showcase the company's commitment to broadening the appeal of classical ballet and will feature not only Lauderdale, but also China Forbes and Pink Martini at every performance.

While the dynamic rhythms and melodies of *Rhapsody in Blue* are extremely familiar due to the iconic status of Gershwin's score, Lauderdale, together with concert pianist Hunter Noack, has created an innovative arrangement that will bring out nuances in the work of which audiences may have never been aware. Lauderdale, who has been playing this music since the age of 10, will imbue the score with emotion and resonance forged over a lifetime.



Chauncey Parsons (above) and Colby Parsons (below) in the premiere of 'Never Stop Falling (In Love)'. Photo by Blaine Truitt Covert.

"Thomas's arrangement brings a dreamy and mysterious quality to the work that completely inspires me," explains Fonte.

Through expanded lyrical phrases, Lauderdale and Fonte will seek to capture a magical time of day ripe with the potential of discovery – the blue hour. "L'heure bleue" – when day becomes night, life becomes less linear, boundaries become more fluid – and there is an electric charge in the air. Themes of betrayal, discovery and triumphant realization are woven together into a narrative heightened by the mysterious strains of familiar melodies reimagined expressly for this production. Lauderdale and Noack will each be seated at a grand piano to perform the score.



From left, Katherine Monogue, Eva Burton, Chauncey Parsons (in air) and Michael Linsmeier on stage in 'Never Stop Falling (In Love)'. Photo by Blaine Truitt Covert.

From this ethereal setting, the program will dramatically shift gears with the much-longed for return of *Never Stop Falling (in Love)*. The 40-minute ballet, performed to a medley of Pink Martini's most popular songs, was originally created in honor of OBT's 25th anniversary. Fonte's exhilarating and athletic choreography captures the unapologetic euphoria in Lauderdale's arrangements, which are performed on stage by Pink Martini with Portland's beloved vocalist, China Forbes.

Transported to what Fonte calls a "Hotel of Love", the dancers and musicians embark on a journey of intense emotion, where delirium, hope, disillusionment and of course, romance, are all intertwined. Pink Martini's trademark combination of joyful celebration and great beats permeates the entire auditorium in an explosive finale.

For further information, visit www.obt.org. Performances will take place at Keller Auditorium.

SHARE THIS:

f Share 0 t Tweet + Save Print

RELATED ITEMS: CHINA FORBES, GEORGE GERSHWIN, HUNTER NOACK, KELLER AUDITORIUM, NEVER STOP FALLING (IN LOVE), NICOLO FONTE, OREGON BALLET THEATRE, PINK MARTINI, PORTLAND, RHAPSODY IN BLUE, THOMAS LAUDERDALE

SUBSCRIBE TO DANCE INFORMA

SIGN-UP

POPULAR

FEATURE ARTICLES
Mike Minery jumps feet first into new role as JUMP Director

DANCE HEALTH
Dance like no one's watching (Even though everyone is)

FEATURE ARTICLES
Fall in love with dance this fall

FIND

- Competitions & Conventions ▾
- Dance Studios & Classes ▾
- Back to School ▾
- Suppliers ▾
- Dance Costumes ▾
- Teachers ▾
- Choreographers ▾
- Dance Companies ▾
- Dance Jobs ▾

RECOMMENDED FOR YOU



Let there be light: Ballet teacher Noriko Hara brightens the NYC dance scene



Special Ticket Offer for Broadway's 'An American in Paris'



Catching Up with Beckanne Sisk of Ballet West

[CLICK TO COMMENT](#)



Dance Informa is the industry's online dance magazine and news service. Subscribe for free to keep informed!

