

OREGON BALLET THEATRE

Make Sure to See Oregon Ballet's Latest Production

Man/Woman examines gender roles in dance in five beautiful ballets.

by Sebastian Fortino

SHARE THIS ARTICLE



Like 0

Man/Woman is a ballet celebrating and challenging gender stereotypes we find in ballet. The last performance is on Saturday, April 21st. So, if you have not yet had the chance, plié to the ticket office at [Oregon Ballet Theatre \(OBT\)](#), or check for available tickets online. Kevin Irving, Artistic Director of shared some thoughts on the message of Man/Woman.

"Dance, particularly classical ballet, is often extremely rigid in regards to gender roles: the ballerina is in front, ethereal, delicate--a princess or a swan or some other other-worldly creature, the danseur stands behind the ballerina, strong, restrained, & above all masculine. Of course it has to be recalled that classical ballet was 'born' first in the royal French court and then Tzarist Russia, in times of strict hierarchy of class and gender roles. So the question now is whether we can retain a beautiful tradition and also question the rigidity embedded in it. Our performance "Man/Woman" tries to use the language of contemporary ballet to probe those rigid gender roles and our assumptions about the masculine/feminine divide. In three acts we present two works with only men, two works with only women and just one ballet with both sexes. There is the iconic "Dying Swan"--an emblem of romantic femininity that, ironically, demands incredible fortitude, restraint, and strength--which can be contrasted with "Falling Angels," a rollicking, kick-ass all female explosion of a finale that pokes fun at a multitude of stereotypes. "Fluidity of Steel", created for this program and featuring the entire company of OBT men, explores all the boxes that men are supposed to fit themselves in and contrasts gigantic expressions of testosterone-fueled interactions with vulnerability. "Steel" can be contrasted with James Canfield's solemn ode to male restraint and brotherhood "Drifted in a Deeper Land", created in 1990 in response to the AIDS pandemic. Smack in the middle of the program is "Left Unsaid" by OBT Resident Choreographer Nicolo Fonte, a work not about gender per se, but rather about the yin/yang of the masculine and feminine energies in each individual, and the ultimate need to embrace that duality in order to create balance & harmony. Oh, and the dancing is pretty spectacular!"

Make sure to check out the pictures, kindly provided by [OBT](#).

f oregonballet

t oregonballettheatre

@ oregon.ballet.theatre

[Tweets by oregonballettheatre](#)



