

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SHOW IMAGE: obt.org/nutcrackerpresskit

VIDEO: obt.org/nutcrackerpresskit

PRODUCTION PHOTOS: obt.org/nutcrackerpresskit

GEORGE BALANCHINE'S THE NUTCRACKER®

19 performances with 12 featuring the OBT Orchestra

WHO [Oregon Ballet Theatre](http://obt.org)
WHAT [GEORGE BALANCHINE'S THE NUTCRACKER®](http://obt.org/nutcracker)
WHEN December 8-26, 2018
WHERE Keller Auditorium, 222 SW Clay Street, Portland, OR 97201

PERFORMANCES: Saturday, December 8, 2018 at 2:00 PM – live orchestra

PRESS NIGHT: **Saturday, December 8, at 7:30 PM – live orchestra**
Sunday, December 9, at 2:00 PM – live orchestra
Thursday, December 13, at 7:30 PM – recorded music
Friday, December 14, at 7:30 PM – live orchestra
Saturday, December 15, at 2:00 PM – live orchestra
Saturday, December 15, at 7:30 PM – live orchestra
Sunday, December 16, at 2:00 PM – live orchestra
Sunday, December 16, at 7:30 PM – recorded music
Thursday, December 20, at 2:00 PM – recorded music
Thursday, December 20, at 7:30 PM – recorded music
Friday, December 21, at 2:00 PM – recorded music
Friday, December 21, at 7:30 PM – live orchestra
Saturday, December 22, at 2:00 PM – live orchestra
Saturday, December 22, at 7:30 PM – live orchestra
Sunday, December 23, at 2:00 PM – live orchestra
Sunday, December 23, at 7:30 PM – recorded music
Monday, December 24, at 12:00 PM – recorded music
Wednesday, December 26, at 2:00 PM – live orchestra

TICKETS To purchase tickets: call, click, or come in:
503.222.5538; or obt.org/nutcracker; or 0720 SW Bancroft Street, Portland, OR 97239

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Portland, OR | November 8, 2018. This winter, Oregon Ballet Theatre proudly returns *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker®* to the Keller Auditorium. The company welcomes over 45,000 people to experience Portland's Favorite Holiday Tradition, now in its 15th year!

OBT's production of *The Nutcracker* features 12 live orchestra performances, magnificent scenery, and elaborate costumes. The company remains one of only a handful in the nation with the rights to produce George Balanchine's version of this magical holiday classic. Each season, talented young dancers stand in the wings, ready to take the stage in challenging new roles: Casting will be made available approximately one week before each performance, at obt.org/nutcracker.

Over 1,000 people will attend *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*® through OBT's "Share the Wonder" program: a highly impactful initiative driven by the generosity of our audiences and donors. "Share the Wonder" works in partnership with over 50 social service organizations to bring underserved segments of the community to performances free of charge.

OBT is also pleased to announce the promotions of Skye Stouber and Zoie Saludaes:

Stouber is a Portland, Oregon native. He began training at The Portland Ballet under Alex Ballard, as well as Jason Davis and Nancy Davis Lane. He continued training at Houston Ballet Academy and San Francisco Ballet School. In SF Ballet School's 2013 Showcase, he performed a principal role in Christopher Wheeldon's *Dances Bohemiennes*. After a knee injury paused his career, he joined skinner/kirk DANCE ENSEMBLE in 2018. Additionally, he danced with OBT as a guest artist for Septime Weber's *ALICE (in wonderland)* in 2018. In August, Stouber was asked to join the company as an apprentice; in October, following his role as Carlino in OBT's production of August Bournonville's *Napoli*, Stouber was promoted to company artist.

Zoie Saludaes is from Las Vegas, Nevada. She trained at Nevada Ballet Theatre, and moved to Miami to attend the preprofessional program at Miami City Ballet (2015). In 2016, she moved to Utah as a member of the Ballet West Professional Training Division. She joined OBT2 in 2017, and was promoted to apprentice following *Napoli* in 2018. She was also featured in Bournonville's *Flower Festival in Genzano* and George Balanchine's *Walpurgisnacht Ballet*. Among Saludaes' favorite OBT roles are Flamingo in Septime Webre's *ALICE (in wonderland)*, and Cupid in the Annual School Performance of *Don Quixote*.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

A rare dancer whose career spanned multiple disciplines, Kevin Irving began dancing with jazz classes in his hometown dance school (Long Island, New York), before joining the school and training ensemble of Alvin Ailey – an experience that impacted him deeply. From 1982-1985, he danced with The Elisa Monte Dance Company of New York, a company often referred to as "post-modern." At 24, however, he took a sharp turn toward classical dance, joining Les Grands Ballets Canadiens in Montréal.

Promoted to soloist and principal, Irving became a well-known figure wherever LGBC performed, excelling in classical, neoclassical, and contemporary roles – including roles and ballets created by LGBC's resident choreographer, James Kudelka. In 1993, Irving joined Twyla Tharp Dance, touring the U.S. and Europe with the acclaimed choreographer, including performances at L'Opéra de Paris, and the PBS filming of Tharp's much-lauded ballet *In the Upper Room*.

From 1994-2002, Irving was ballet master and associate director with Nacho Duato's Compañía Nacional de Danza in Madrid. From 2002-2007, he served as artistic director of The Göteborg Ballet in Sweden. The company, during Irving's tenure, was named the most important dance company in Sweden in Ballet International's critic poll. From 2007-2013, Irving was a frequent guest ballet master with The Royal Danish Ballet, where he staged and rehearsed works by Jiří Kylián, George Balanchine, and Jerome Robbins. He has also been a guest teacher with numerous companies and schools in the U.S. and abroad for over 20 years. Additionally, he staged ballets by Nacho Duato and Nicolo Fonte for companies such as The Royal Ballet Covent Garden, Nederlands Dans Theater, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Lyon Opera Ballet, and The Australian Ballet, to name just a few.

In the U.S., Irving became associate director at Morphoses (formerly The Wheeldon Company) from 2011-2012, coordinating special initiatives aimed at defining the company's unique profile in the dance world. In 2010, he founded I-DANCE (Inspiring Dance: American Nations' Choreographic Exchange), a nonprofit that sends teachers and choreographers to dance communities in Central and South America. Irving was named artistic director of Oregon Ballet Theatre in July 2013.

ABOUT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Michael Greer brings leadership experience from both for-profit and nonprofit worlds. Most recently, he led an arts nonprofit through a successful transition; previously, he led China side operations, projects, and sales teams for multinational companies. A native of Missouri, Greer spent the early part of his life as a dancer at the world's most prestigious institutions: Interlochen Arts Academy, School of American Ballet, San Francisco Ballet School, and The Royal Ballet School. Upon completing his training, he danced professionally with Ballet West in Salt Lake City, Utah, under the direction of Jonas Kage.

After retiring from performing, Greer completed an economics degree with emphasis in industrial organization – as an Arturo Schomburg Scholar at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts. He was offered a merit scholarship to continue economics at Stanford University, but declined – to gain international business experience as a Gilman Scholar through the U.S. State Department. Greer then worked with companies in India and China for nine years; he managed teams and operations for several multinational corporations. A Mandarin speaker, he fully enjoyed life in China with his wife and two children.

In 2015, Greer returned to the U.S. and the dance world, to direct Portland Ballet in Portland, Maine. Combining considerable business experience with his passion for the arts, he worked to increase earned and contributed revenue, which resulted in Portland Ballet's major turnaround. Now, Greer and his family are thrilled to be a part of the Portland, Oregon community.

ABOUT OREGON BALLET THEATRE

OBT is committed to *sharing its 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 education*. OBT is the largest professional ballet company in Oregon; we employ nearly 200 people and attract artists from around the globe through our reputation for excellence. The company is rooted in classical ballet traditions, with a repertoire ranging from the classics to premieres from today's most exciting choreographic voices. Our mission is dedicated to the vitality of – and access to – world-class ballet performance and training in the Pacific Northwest.

Founded in 1989 by James Canfield, a former principal dancer with the Joffrey Ballet, OBT developed a distinct style and unique repertoire that comprised 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, the OBT Board named 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, The Royal Danish Ballet, and Compañía Nacional de Danza. Irving's tenure is marked by a commitment to collaborative partnerships with Portland artists and organizations, including the Portland Art Museum, Multnomah County Library, Kenji Bunch, and Pink Martini. He is expanding the company's classical repertoire with premieres of Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella* and his own updated *Swan Lake*, while preserving OBT's legacy by restoring major works such as James Canfield's *Romeo & Juliet*. Irving is diversifying our repertoire with world premieres from internationally-acclaimed and contemporary choreographers: Nacho Duato, William Forsythe, Nicolo Fonte, Darrell Grand Moultrie, and Helen Pickett.

ABOUT OBT SCHOOL

We are proud to train the next generation of dance artists through the OBT School. Under the direction of Marion Tonner, our school provides over 800 youth and adult students with a high-quality dance education from professional instructors. Alumni have gone on to train at some of the most prestigious institutions in the country, and have gone on to dance professionally with a number of international companies and almost every major company in the U.S. We offer enhanced professional development opportunities at the upper levels of the school through our junior company, OBT2.

OBT2 provides rigorous training and performance experience to facilitate the transition from student to professional dancer in a small, nurturing environment. This smaller, more mobile performing ensemble develops and performs its own repertoire, expanding dancer training while improving access to ballet for an estimated 5,000 people each year, throughout the Portland Metro area and beyond. Directed by Lisa Sundstrom (former principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre and Pennsylvania Ballet), OBT2 is equipped to bring performances into a variety of settings, including schools, studios, retirement centers, corporate events, and community venues.

ABOUT OBT EDUCATION OUTREACH

OBT’s investment in the community extends far beyond our stages and studios, through a wealth of free and low-cost programs that unlock the world of ballet for learners of all ages and backgrounds. Our comprehensive OBT Outreach reaches approximately 35,000 people annually, including over 11,000 K-12 students across 22 school districts, and includes: “Performance Perspectives” pre-show presentations; our popular “Student Performance Series”; special access to our dancers through “Photo/Art Encounter”; and front-row seating and audio narration at *Nutcracker* dress rehearsals for hundreds of low vision and hearing-impaired children and their families. Our in-school residencies are designed to integrate seamlessly with academic curriculum, and the majority of our youth programs serve schools with over 50% Free and Reduced Rate Lunch (FRRL) participation.

OREGON BALLET THEATRE COMPANY 2018-2019

Principals	Ansa Capizzi Xuan Cheng Peter Franc Chauncey Parsons Brian Simcoe
Soloists	Eva Burton Michael Linsmeier Katherine Monogue Kelsie Nobriga Matthew Pawlicki-Sinclair
Company Artists	Thomas Baker Hannah Davis Abigail Diedrich Kimberly Fromm Adam Hartley Makino Hayashi Christopher Kaiser Jessica Lind Emily Parker Colby Parsons Skye Stouber Theodore Watler
Apprentices	Alexa Domenden Marc LaPierre Zuzu Metzler

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