

OREGON **BALLET** THEATRE

KEVIN IRVING / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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OREGON BALLET THEATRE ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP CHANGE
Executive Director Michael R. Greer will leave for new position at the end of May

PORTLAND, OR—Oregon Ballet Theatre Executive Director Michael Greer will leave the organization on May 29, 2020 to become the president and chief executive officer of ArtsFund, a grant making and advocacy organization serving all of King County in Washington State and based in Seattle.

Michael is excited to have the opportunity to lead an organization that reaches so many different parts of the arts and culture community. While he is looking forward to this new challenge, he is grateful to Oregon Ballet Theatre and the Oregon arts community for all of their support over the past three seasons. "My time spent in Oregon has been transformative for me. My family and I will forever be grateful for the relationships we have developed, and this community will always hold a special place in our hearts. We have accomplished so much over the past few years, and I have no doubt that Oregon Ballet Theatre will continue to grow and thrive for years to come."

"Michael has accomplished a great deal for our organization in his time with us and we thank him for his commitment, service, and leadership," said Allison Lyneham, chair of the OBT Board of Trustees. "While Michael will certainly be missed, our Artistic Director, Kevin Irving, and outstanding team will have the full support of the Board of Trustees as we focus on the mission-driven work of the organization through this transitional period."

Kevin Irving added, "OBT is solidly positioned for the future and fully committed to its mission to share, inspire, and connect with our community, even during the current health crisis. We are grateful for Michael's contributions to the entire arts landscape in Oregon, and especially to our organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion work-helping to ensure that OBT is the best it has ever been. We are grateful for these contributions which lay the foundation for OBT's next exciting chapter."

Under Greer and Irving's leadership, Oregon Ballet Theatre has seen the highest ticket revenues in the history of the organization, a significant increase in the community reach of our second company OBT2 and an increase in staffing capacity that has helped OBT accomplish its mission. During the past three years, the organization has continued to solidify its financial position, grow its budget, and strengthen its reputation in the community.

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ABOUT OREGON BALLET THEATRE

OBT is the largest professional ballet company in Oregon, employing nearly 200 people and attracting artists from around the globe with our 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.

Oregon Ballet Theatre was founded in 1989 through the consolidation of Pacific Ballet Theatre and Ballet Oregon; James Canfield, a former principal dancer with the Joffrey Ballet, was the company's first artistic director. Under his leadership, 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, Kevin Irving became 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 Gothenburg 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 his own *Swan Lake* – while preserving OBT's legacy and restoring major works such as James Canfield's *Romeo & Juliet* and Christopher Stowell's *The Sleeping Beauty*. At the same time, he continues to build a diverse body of work with premieres from internationally acclaimed contemporary choreographers such as Nacho Duato, Jiří Kylián, and James Kudelka, while investing in American choreographers such as Alvin Ailey, Twyla Tharp, and Agnes de Mille as well as new dance makers Helen Pickett, Darrell Grand Moultrie and OBT's Resident Choreographer, Nicolo Fonte.

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 families in need.