



**PORTLAND OPERA**



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Oregon Ballet Theatre, Portland Opera, and OMSI Bring Live Performances  
Back to Portland with Jordan Schnitzer CARE Summerstage Series***

(PORTLAND, OR, May 11) – Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT) and Portland Opera (Opera) enthusiastically announce today their return to live performance this June on the Jordan Schnitzer CARE Summerstage generously hosted by OMSI on its museum campus.

As caution turned to optimism this spring, Opera General Director Sue Dixon, and OBT Artistic Director, Kevin Irving, started brainstorming ways to share resources and their commitment to bringing live art performances back to Portland. For more than a year, Opera and OBT artists have been diligently training under the most challenging circumstances and entertaining their patrons virtually; the time had finally come to explore ways to balance the safety of artists and audience with the irreplaceable joy of performing live.

In the spirit of community and collaboration, Portland Opera and OMSI connected to share resources, with the Hampton Opera Center scheduled to host an assortment of OMSI camps over the summer and an outdoor section of the OMSI campus offered as the venue for a summer performance series with OBT and the Opera. The OMSI property's considerable size ensures easy social distancing and its Willamette River location provides a unique setting for a pop-up stage.

With the OMSI location confirmed, OBT and the Opera collaborated with vendors to design a stage to accommodate the unique production demands for each art form. These local vendors, who have expressed gratitude to be back at work on a live event, have created an outdoor stage that rivals any indoor theater for presence and function with accommodations planned for our fickle Oregon weather. Watching a performance on what is newly named, thanks to a very generous contribution, the Jordan Schnitzer CARE Summerstage, can create a wonderful shared memory of reunion and inspiration after the pandemic.

"All of us at Portland Opera are so glad to be able to bring live opera to the stage this summer," says Sue Dixon, general director of Portland Opera. "We are delighted for the incredible opportunity to partner with our neighbors at OMSI and collaborate with our friends at Oregon Ballet Theatre to welcome audiences again!"

"We have such deep appreciation for our partners in this groundbreaking endeavor, including the Opera, OMSI, the very generous Jordan Schnitzer and the Harold & Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation, Travel Oregon, and TriMet, and for the incredible artists whose talent and commitment makes this return to the stage possible. We are excited to be taking these first steps in bringing live performance back into our lives and for our patrons who have supported us every step along the way," added OBT artistic director Kevin Irving.

#### **Jordan Schnitzer CARE Summerstage Highlights:**

- The Jordan Schnitzer CARE Summerstage will host live performances from June 5 through June 27, 2021
- First up is OBT with OBT LIVE June 5 - June 12
- OBT LIVE presents two world premieres, including a first-time commission from the powerful and dynamic Ailey-trained choreographer Jennifer Archibald paired with new work from audience favorite and OBT Resident Choreographer Nicolo Fonte.
- Portland Opera takes the stage from June 22-27
- Portland Opera presents a 90-minute version of Robert Xavier Rodríguez's vibrant opera *Frida*. Each evening at the Opera will begin with a performance by Ballet Folklórico.
- *Frida* is made possible by generous support from ~~the~~ Carol Franc Buck Foundation.

#### **About Portland Opera**

Portland Opera gathers and inspires audiences, artists, and collaborators to share opera experiences that enliven and connect us all, enhancing the cultural landscape of the beautiful Pacific Northwest.

Since 1964, Portland Opera has contributed to the cultural, artistic, and economic landscape of the city and region that we love. We celebrate the power of performance, storytelling, and song with performances that take place around the region, as well as at the Keller Auditorium, Newmark Theatre, and the Gregory K. and Mary Chomenko Hinckley Studio Theatre at the Hampton Opera Center. Portland Opera also shares programming on the company's digital channel, Portland Opera Onscreen. Learn more about who we are and how we celebrate the amazing world of opera by visiting [portlandopera.org](http://portlandopera.org).

#### **About OBT**

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 Jaffrey 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, OBT named Kevin Irving as the company's third Artistic Director. Irving brings over 30 years of experience performing with and managing world-renowned cultural organizations and dance companies, including The Göteborg 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, and Pink Martini. He has expanded the company's classical repertoire – with the premieres of Ben Stevenson's Cinderella and August Bournonville's Napoli – while preserving OBT's legacy and restoring major works such as James Canfield's Romeo & Juliet and Dennis Spaight's Scheherazade. At the same time, he has introduced the work of contemporary masters Nacho Duato and Jiří Kylián and continues to build a diverse repertory with world premieres from internationally acclaimed contemporary choreographers such as Nicolo Fonte, Darrell Grand Moultrie, and Helen Pickett 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 and Community Engagement 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 I schools, and our Shore the Wonder campaign, which provides thousands of tickets to our mainstage performances for families in need.

### **About OMSI**

Founded in 1944, the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) is one of the nation's leading science museums, a world-class tourist attraction, and an award-winning educational resource for the kid in each of us. OMSI operates the largest museum-based outdoor science education program in the country and provides traveling and community outreach programs that bring science learning opportunities to schools and community organizations in every county in Oregon and throughout the region. For more information, visit [omsi.edu](http://omsi.edu). or call 503.797.4000.