



PRESS CONTACT: Natasha Kautsky
Director of Marketing & Communications
PHONE: 503.227.0977
EMAIL: natasha.kautsky@obt.org

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Oregon Ballet Theatre closes its 2022/23 season with *Made in Portland* featuring four commissions by four dynamic dance makers.

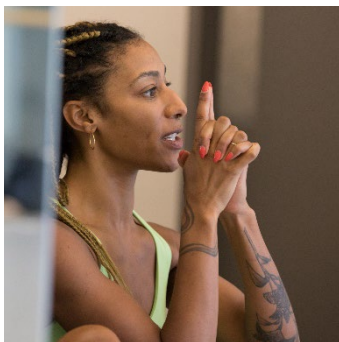
This June Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT) returns to the Newmark Theatre for its season finale *Made in Portland*, a program featuring four commissions by a dynamic group of choreographers: Princess Grace Award winner **Rena Butler**, Guggenheim Fellow **Hélène Simoneau**, Portland push/FOLD Founder and Director **Samuel Hobbs**, and OBT's own rising dance maker, **Makino Hayashi**. Thematically the program explores what these artists have heard about Portland and how it makes them feel.



“Dance is an ever-evolving art form,” notes OBT’s Artistic Director Dani Rowe. “We are proud to be that company which in a single season presents one of the world’s oldest ballets *La Sylphide* and then pivots to share four entirely new works with our audience.

We are shining a light on the future of dance right here in Portland, a city with a reputation for fearlessly breaking barriers.”

About the works and artists of *Made in Portland*



With this program OBT is thrilled to add work by **Rena Butler** to its repertory. Fresh from creating her first commission for The National Ballet of Canada, Butler has been called the “epitome of contemporary cool” in a recent *Dance Magazine* cover story. Butler’s work for OBT, ***The Present Tense***, is a multimedia moving portrait of characters in momentous, fervent dialogue amidst a film by **Daniela Repas, a Bosnian visual artist based in Portland**. This ballet captures a moment in the city of Portland and examines how cultural climate encounters its natural environment.



Veteran OBT dancer Makino Hayashi first choreographed for the company in 2013's *Create* program. Since then, she has regularly received commissions and awards for her work. For *Made in Portland* she has created ***The Rose***, with **original music by composer and longtime collaborator Bob Bush**. The ballet broadly reflects the community of Portland and more specifically the community and life of a dancer — intense and ephemeral. In that spirit, *The Rose* gives each dancer a chance to shine and to show off who they are. “I have choreographed ON them, on their bodies” she says. “Then they are willing to express themselves and feel and enjoy each moment.”



Hélène Simoneau received her first OBT commission during 2017's **Choreography XX** competition. Her piece *Departures* was lauded by dance critic Carla Escoda for its striking architecture. “The movement was weighty yet light, skimming the ground, apart from sudden breathtaking moments of flight.” **Simoneau returns to OBT with *Clair-Obscure***, a reference to the use of strong contrasts between light and dark in visual art to highlight certain people or objects within a scene. For this ballet Simoneau explores the choices people make in how they present ideas — what they prioritize, what they conceal. The same tableau with different lighting, or seen from another angle, may reveal something entirely different.



push/Fold founder Samuel Hobbs is a Portland born artist. They see promise and an opportunity for growth following the recent upheaval in their hometown. “**I believe that the identity of Portland was revealed and the resilience and urge to protect came out...**that reconciliation of identity is a major component of maturity as we recognize ways forward in community.” For Hobbs personally this reconciliation is the opportunity to return audiences to something beautiful—the power of the human body, life, transition, growth... within community. **Their work *Part II* is an homage to transforming oneself for survival in community.**

Made in Portland

Five performances running June 8 – 11, 2023 | Newmark Theatre

Tickets start at \$29

Arts for All, Student and Senior Rush available

Call the OBT Box Office 503-222-5538 M – F 9:00AM – 4:30 PM

or visit obt.org for schedule and ticketing.

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ABOUT OBT

Founded in 1989, OBT is among the nation's leading professional ballet companies, employing 250 people and attracting artists from around the globe with its reputation for excellence. OBT's mission is to share our passion for the expressive power of ballet, inspire an enduring appreciation for dance, and connect to our community through excellence in performance, training and education.

In addition to the quality of its artistic product, OBT continues to thrive organizationally and has emerged from COVID exceptionally well-positioned for the future. The nationally-acclaimed OBT School is robust, with 300 students from across the country. Education and Community Engagement reaches thousands of students in classrooms across the state, 50% of whom are youth of color. OBT has a multi-year action plan to advance diversity, equity and inclusion. The Board is actively engaged in oversight, strategy and fundraising. OBT remains debt-free; 2022 was its eighth consecutive year operating in the black financially, and the organization maintains a Board-designated building fund approaching \$5 million. Learn more at obt.org.