

THE PORTLAND BALLET

NANCY DAVIS & ANNE MUELLER ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

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The Portland Ballet presents 'Up Close'

Professional dancers of today perform alongside those of tomorrow

DETAILS

UP CLOSE

Dates: June 8-10, 2018

Times: 7:30 p.m. Friday, 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, 2:30 p.m. Sunday

Where: The Portland Ballet Studio Theatre, 6250 SW Capitol Hwy, Portland, OR 97239

Tickets: Start at \$10

Information: theportlandballet.org or 503-750-3157

Discounts: Limited Arts Card and Arts for All tickets

PORTLAND, Ore. – Showcasing The Portland Ballet's **Career Track** dancers and TPB alumni, **Up Close** is a chance to see the professional dancers of today perform alongside those of tomorrow in TPB's intimate studio theatre. The program features two new works by choreographers with ties to TPB – faculty member **Michelle Davis** and alumna **Caroline MacDonald** – and two with ties to New York City Ballet – **Philip Neal's** *Grand Avenue Blues* and **Christopher D'Amboise's** *Pandora's Box*.

In addition to these ballets, nine TPB alumni will return from professional and conservatory programs all over the United States to perform excerpts from the classical and contemporary repertoire.

The 10 TPB pre-professional dancers who will perform range in age from 13 to 18 and come from all over the Portland metro area to study about 25-30 hours a week in TPB's rigorous Career Track program, which trains students with professional intent.

This is a rare chance to see TPB's superbly trained dancers in an intimate setting, with only 80 seats available per show. We highly recommend reserving spots early since these shows sell out every year.

PERFORMANCES

Four concerts will take place June 8-10, 7:30 p.m. Friday, 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, 2:30 p.m. Sunday, at The Portland Ballet Studio Theatre, 6250 SW Capitol Hwy, Portland, Ore. Tickets start at only \$10. Information: theportlandballet.org or 503-750-3157.

Providing professionally produced performance experience has been at the core of TPB training since the company was founded in 2001. TPB continues to nurture stand-out dance talent for students ages 3-22, and many go on to professional companies and conservatory programs around the world. These performances are rare opportunities to see the next generation of dance stars.

PROGRAM

New Work

Michelle Davis (TPB faculty member)

Inspired by the beach, this new ballet is about focus in four parts: ocean waves, femininity, strength, and fun. It's about the need to pause and look at art, to savor the moment and be present, to reflect and enjoy what matters. It encourages the audience to admire the dancers' technical abilities, their individuality, and their confidence and dedication. It celebrates and honors the many hours of hard work and focus that the dancers put into their craft.

Precipitation

Caroline MacDonald (TPB alumna)/music by Vanessa Mae

Precipitation is a new work that draws inspiration both from nature and the music that it is set to. The dancing begins with small groups and pairings of dancers, slowly accumulating and gathering mass until everything expands and takes over the space in an explosion of dynamic, high energy movement reminiscent of a storm cloud. The music, three songs by Vanessa Mae, ranges from classical to a Moroccan-inspired piece, which is reflected in the movement style. Caroline challenged the dancers to step out of their comfort zones and find the contrast between classical and contemporary movement, discovering how to merge both together in a single work. The end result is a fun, dynamic piece that showcases the beautiful dancers of TPB in an up close and personal environment.

Grand Avenue Blues

Philip Neal/music by Michael Roberts

Fun and jazzy, Grand Avenue Blues was created for a competition that made it to the finals of Youth American Grand Prix. Neoclassical in style with no story, it's set to an original score by Michael Roberts.

Pandora's Box

Christopher D'Amboise/music by Franz Schubert

Theatrical, romantic, and sensual, Pandora's Box is a contemporary duet that was originally choreographed on Saint Louis Ballet in 2014.

CAREER TRACK PROGRAM

Launched in 2015, The Portland Ballet's Career Track program offers well-trained, advanced dancers with professional intent a setting that simulates a professional company experience. Students participate in an intense and personal learning environment with a rigorous schedule that requires about 25 to 30 hours of work a week. In addition to classes, rehearsals and performances, dancers receive supportive one-on-one evaluation and coaching in technique, performance skills and goal setting, as well as tools for auditioning, injury prevention, cross training and nutrition.

TPB CAREER TRACK DANCERS

Harumi Buchholz, 14, of **Cornelius**, is in 9th grade at Indiana University Online High School. This is her first year at TPB. She has attended summer programs at School of Oregon Ballet Theatre, American Ballet Theatre, and TPB. She has also trained at Forest Grove Dance Arts and performed as Clara in “The Nutcracker.”

Lydia Butler, 13, of **Beaverton**, is in 8th grade at Sheridan All Prep Academy. This is her second year at TPB. She has attended summer programs at Pacific Northwest Ballet, School of Oregon Ballet Theatre, Portland Youth Ballet, and TPB.

Elysée Donaghy, 14, of **Beaverton**, is in 8th grade at EdGenius. This is her first year at TPB. She has attended summer programs at Ballet Arts Academy, The Dallas Conservatory, and TPB.

Lauren Grover, 15, of **Portland**, is in 9th grade at Indiana University Online High School. This is her fourth year at TPB. She has attended summer programs at City Ballet of San Diego, Walnut Hill, and TPB.

Melanie Labs, 14, of **Sherwood**, is in 10th grade at University of Nebraska Online High School. This is her second year at TPB. She has attended summer programs at School of Oregon Ballet Theatre, Portland Youth Ballet, and TPB.

Olivia "Rosie" Pedersen, 18, of **Lake Oswego**, is a freshman at Spokane Community College. This is her first year at TPB. She has attended summer programs at Ballet West, International School of Ballet-Georgia, and Sultanov Russian Ballet Academy.

Sarah Rinderknecht, 17, of **Tualatin**, is in 11th grade at PCC Early College Program. This is her second year at TPB. She has attended summer programs at Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet and Classical Ballet Academy.

Kate Southerland, 14, of **Vancouver**, is in 9th grade at Indiana University Online High School. This is her third year at TPB. She has participated in summer programs at San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, School of Oregon Ballet Theatre, and TPB. She has also trained at Columbia Dance.

Giselle Tired, 14, of **Portland**, is in 8th grade at Summit Learning Charter. This is her sixth year at TPB. She has attended summer programs at Ballet West, The School of American Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, School of Oregon Ballet Theatre, and TPB.

Kyra Yannotta, 13, of **Wilsonville**, is in 8th grade at Summit Learning Charter. This is her third year at TPB. She has participated in summer programs at The School of American Ballet and Pacific Northwest Ballet.

TPB ALUMNI PERFORMING

Lauren Kness, Ballet Arizona

Lauren Lane, Saint Louis Ballet

Caroline MacDonald, Nevada Ballet Theatre

Christine Mathews, Tucson Ballet

Michael McGonegal, Saint Louis Ballet

Naomi Rux, Ballet Idaho

Kerridwyn Schanck, Ballet Idaho

Delci Syvertson, Boston Conservatory

Henry Winslow, Boston Conservatory

CHOREOGRAPHERS and COMPOSERS

Michelle Davis was born in Dallas, Texas. She trained with the Dallas Ballet Academy under the direction of Flemming and Vivi Flindt. She worked as a student dancer with the Dallas Ballet and Ballet Dallas, and attended Booker T. Washington Arts Magnet High School. In 1989 Michelle joined the San Francisco Ballet School and was named an apprentice in 1991. She danced for eight seasons with the San Francisco Ballet under the direction of Helgi Tomasson, and also danced in 1996/97 with the Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen, Denmark. She made guest appearances dancing with Maximum Dance, Nevada Festival Ballet, Smuin Ballet/SF, Ballet Arts Ensemble in Michigan, Ballet Theatre of New Mexico, and Pacific Festival Ballet in Oregon. In 2004 Michelle moved to Portland and has enjoyed teaching and choreographing for Stites, Columbia Dance Ensemble, BodyVox, Vancouver Dance Theatre, Polaris, and Vancouver School of Arts and Academics. She currently teaches at Northwest Dance Project, PDX Contemporary Ballet, Arts and Communication Magnet Academy, and The Portland Ballet. Along with her husband and three children, Michelle is an integral part of the TPB family, where she has taught for ten years.

Caroline MacDonald grew up in Portland, Oregon, where she trained at The Portland Ballet and Arts and Communication Magnet Academy. She attended summer programs at The Portland Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, where she danced for two years as a member of the Graduate Program after high school. While there, she performed in numerous company productions. As a choreographer, Caroline set original works on the Pre-Professional High School and Graduate divisions. Caroline joined Nevada Ballet Theatre in 2014 as a Company Artist. She has choreographed seven original works for NBT, including four collaborations with Cirque Du Soleil.

Philip Neal danced for 23 years with the New York City Ballet, 17 years as a Principal Dancer. He is a Repetiteur for The George Balanchine Trust and The Jerome Robbins Rights Trust, and a choreographer staging the ballets of both legendary choreographers throughout the world. He has also successfully embarked on choreographic ventures, having crafted five original commissions for Richmond Ballet and participated in both the New York Choreographic Institute and the National Choreographers Initiative. Neal is a guest instructor for numerous international dance companies and schools, including Joffrey Ballet, Miami City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet and the School of American Ballet. He is a dance panelist/mentor for National YoungArts Organization, and an adjudicator/master teacher for Youth America Grand Prix. In addition, from 2010-2013, he directed developmental efforts, fundraising of major gifts, Board Trustee recruitment and special events in Palm Beach County on behalf of Miami City Ballet. In 2015, Neal was appointed the Artistic Director of Next Generation Ballet (NGB) & Dance Dean of the

Patel Conservatory at the Straz Center in Tampa, Fla., one of the largest performing arts centers in the United States. Neal directs the award-winning pre-professional training division (the official dance company of the Straz Center), producing full-scale productions such as *The Nutcracker*, *Giselle* and *Don Quixote*, while simultaneously overseeing the open enrollment academy of nearly 250 students.

Christopher d'Amboise has had many careers: dancer, director, choreographer, playwright and teacher. He became a principal dancer in the New York City Ballet, where he worked closely with George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins, dancing all the major roles, as well as originating several works. He left the company in 1983 to pursue other interests, including performing in the Broadway production of *Song and Dance*, which earned him a Tony nomination for Best Featured Actor in a Musical for a role in which he only danced. From 1990-94, he was artistic director, president, and CEO of the Pennsylvania Ballet. His choreography explores the integration of text, dance, music and drama and seeks to reinforce a positive perspective of humanity. He's created more than 80 ballets for numerous international companies. His *Tribute* premiered with the New York City Ballet in 2007. For musical theatre, he choreographed productions of *High Society* and the rock musical William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, a project conceived by his brother-in-law, Terrence Mann. Television credits include appearances on the *Kennedy Center Honors*, *Live from Studio 8H*, and the Emmy-winning documentary *He Makes Me Feel Like Dancing*. He has initiated outreach programs and taught master classes and workshops at schools and universities worldwide.

Michael Roberts was born in Sussex, England. He began playing the piano at age 4. From 1967 to 1975 Michael was production stage manager for Harold Prince in London's West End. He has been accompanying and composing for dance for over four decades, playing for such notables as Finis Jhung, Stanley Holden, David Howard, Juliet Prowse, Mark Morris, Alvin Alley, American Ballet Theater, The Joffrey Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Mikhail Baryshnikov, William Forsythe, Benjamin Millepied and Angel Corella. He has released five Ballet Class CDs and one Modern Dance CD as well as four new age/classical CDs. He is music and technical coordinator for the Colburn Dance Institute and the Colburn Dance Academy at Colburn School for the Performing Arts in Los Angeles, California, as well as resident dance accompanist at the Los Angeles Music Center. In 2004 he was awarded a special Lester Horton award for service to the field of dance.

THE PORTLAND BALLET

Founded in 2001, The Portland Ballet is shaped by the vision, artistic experience, and family-centered sensibility of the founding directors. **Artistic Director Nancy Davis** and **Executive Director Jim Lane** trained at the School of American Ballet and enjoyed distinguished professional careers in companies throughout the U.S. After retiring as principal dancers of the Los Angeles Ballet – where their partnership onstage led to a marriage and family off the stage – they moved to Portland, Oregon, and founded The Portland Ballet.

Graduates have carried TPB's reputation for excellence into advanced dance programs and professional companies throughout the U.S. and abroad. TPB alumni have gone on to dance with Pacific Northwest Ballet, Houston Ballet, Saint Louis Ballet, Sacramento Ballet, Ballet West, Nevada Ballet Theatre, Royal Swedish Ballet, Eugene Ballet, Batsheva Dance Company, Maryinsky Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, and other professional companies.

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