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THE PORTLAND
BALLET
NANCY DAVIS & ANNE MUELLER
ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

The Portland Ballet Launches Career Track & Studio Company; Acquires Portland-Debut Rights to Trey McIntyre's *Mercury Half-Life*

New Program Prompts 50% Expansion of Performance Schedule

When Anne Mueller's appointment as The Portland Ballet's co-artistic director (with founding artistic director Nancy Davis) was announced in April, anticipation was high for the forward momentum of Portland's foremost youth ballet academy and company, founded in 2001. The former principal dancer, director of artistic operations and interim artistic director at Oregon Ballet Theatre (1996-2013) was already well-known in the community and well-regarded for her rare, switch-hitter ability as artist and manager.

Although Mueller has been teaching and choreographing at TPB for two years, her new role didn't officially begin until August 1. But clearly, she, Davis and Executive Director Jim Lane have quickly cohered as a productive leadership team.

They have already achieved one of their stated goals – the establishment of a pre-professional Career Track program. Career Track dancers will perform in every TPB performance and will debut as the Studio Company in June 2016. Those performances expand TPB's previous performance schedule by 50%. As the Career Track and Studio Company expand, TPB will add more school and community outreach, performances and, eventually, regional touring to its program.

Mueller's experience and influence led to TPB securing the rights to perform excerpts from McIntyre's critically acclaimed *Mercury Half-Life* set to music by Queen. TPB's May 2016 performances mark the Portland debut of the critically acclaimed work. *Mercury Half-Life* was danced at all Trey McIntyre Project's June 2014 farewell concerts to critical acclaim like:

Ignores goofy lyrics, avoids camp and takes the music as exalted...deployment of classical vocabulary fully matches the wattage of the electric guitars. – New York Times

High energy and kinetic wit [with] the fluidity of mercury. – San Francisco Chronicle

Mueller, a founding member of Trey McIntyre Project and managing director of the company from 2004 to 2006 (simultaneously with dancing with OBT), will set *Mercury Half-Life* on Washington Ballet in October.

From August 17-29, Mueller will audition Career Track candidates (by appointment only) and choreograph *Day by Day*, set to Mozart's String Quartet No. 22 in B-Flat Major. That work will receive its world premiere at TPB's highly popular Thanksgiving Weekend production, November 27-29, 2015 at Lincoln Hall.

All six performances, which include John Clifford's *Firebird* set to Stravinsky, is performed to live music played by the PSU Orchestra, directed by Ken Selden. To amplify the sound of the Mozart quartet, the parts will be doubled and, in some instances, tripled.

The Spring Concert and Studio Company debut, respectively, feature work by TPB contemporary-dance faculty members Gregg Bielemeier, locally loved and nationally acclaimed for the fluidity of his movement and its sly humor, and Éowyn Emerald Barrett, whose works attracts the city's best dancers as she blazes a fresh trail in the Portland dance scene.

The Portland Ballet's 2015 / 2016 Performance Schedule

THANKSGIVING WEEKEND

with PSU Orchestra, Ken Selden, conductor

November 27, 28 & 29, 2015 • 1 & 4 PM

Day by Day Mozart/Mueller (World Premiere)

Firebird Stravinsky/Clifford

Lincoln Performance Hall, PSU campus

1620 SW Park @ Market

Tickets: \$5-\$35; affordable family pricing available
theportlandballet.org • 503.452.8448

SPRING CONCERT

May 6 & 7, 2016 • 7:30 PM

Mercury Half-Life (excerpts) Queen/McIntyre

Valse-Fantaisie Glinka/Balanchine

TBA Gregg Bielemeier

Raymonda Pas De Dix Glazunov/Petipa

Lincoln Performance Hall, PSU campus

1620 SW Park @ Market

Tickets: \$5-\$35; affordable family pricing available
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STUDIO COMPANY DEBUT

June 10–12, 2016 • 7:30 PM

New Work Éowyn Emerald Barrett

New Work Anne Mueller

More TBA

The Portland Ballet Studio Theater

6250 SW Capitol Highway

Tickets: \$10-\$20

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\$5 Arts for All and Two-for-One ArtsCard tickets offered based on ticket availability.