

# THE PORTLAND

NANCY DAVIS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

# BALLET

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Portland Ballet presents the world premiere  
of John Clifford's *A Christmas Carol: The Ballet***

**DETAILS**

**The world premiere of John Clifford's *A Christmas Carol: The Ballet***

**Dates:** Thanksgiving weekend, Nov. 27-28, 2021

**Time:** 1 and 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday (4 performances)

**Where:** Lincoln Performance Hall at Portland State University, 1620 SW Park at Market, Portland, OR

**Tickets:** Start at \$15 and will be limited to allow for social distancing

**Runtime:** 50 minutes with no intermission

**Information:** [theportlandballet.org](http://theportlandballet.org) or 503-452-8448

**Health and safety protocols:** Audience members will be required to wear masks and show proof of vaccination or a negative Covid test within 72 hours.

PORTLAND, Ore. – [The Portland Ballet](http://ThePortlandBallet) is thrilled to announce that in a bold move it will be performing the world premiere of John Clifford's *A Christmas Carol: The Ballet* this Thanksgiving weekend. Founders Nancy Davis and Jim Lane decided to return to live performances by going big and commissioning a whole new ballet.

"We are so happy and excited to be collaborating with our good friend John Clifford again and to be able to bring this timely new production of 'A Christmas Carol' to our Portland audiences," said Davis, the company's artistic director. "All new choreography, an original score and scenic designs combined with the talents of our own dancers and stellar guest artists will make for a sensational performance experience!"

Clifford, a company artistic advisor, is best known as founder and artistic director of the original Los Angeles Ballet, and a principal dancer and choreographer with New York City Ballet. He is widely considered to be George Balanchine's choreographic protégé and has just published the highly anticipated memoir "Balanchine's Apprentice: From Hollywood to New York and Back."

"For my new ballet, for the holidays, and as an alternative to the endless Nutcrackers, I wanted to do something fresh, but at the same time familiar and easy to understand," said Clifford. "Most families know the tale of the miserly Scrooge, and how he was transformed from the meanest man in London, to the kindest. It's a morality tale that children, as well as adults, love the world over."

“In my version I emphasize the love that permeates this story by Charles Dickens, and it is not as dark and scary as the original book or the various filmed and TV versions. We show why Scrooge has turned so sour, so that we actually understand him better and forgive him his flaws.

“The new music is a big plus for this new work. A totally new score was composed by Karl Moraski, a pianist composer I worked with before for my Los Angeles Ballet and my Warner Bros. financed, *Casablanca, The Dance*. Mr. Moraski has also rearranged some popular Christmas carols for some of the set dance sections, and I know the public will be all smiles when they hear it.”

The Portland Ballet has been mounting its biggest production of the year on Thanksgiving weekend since 2003. The cast of about 30 dancers will include four guest artists, three who are former students: Michael Jurica will play the lead role of Scrooge; Lauren Lane, recently retired from a long professional career at Saint Louis Ballet and who is now Assistant Artistic Director of The Portland Ballet, will play Mrs. Cratchit; featured dancer Nicholas Le-Jurica returns to the academy as Director of Community Engagement after receiving a BFA from The Juilliard School in New York City and dancing professionally with Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company in Salt Lake City.

The other talented artists who fill out the creative team include Kim Morris, who captures the charming Victorian flavor in her new scene projections, Michelle Shipton-Cook as costume designer, and James Mapes as lighting designer.

### **CREATIVE TEAM**

Choreography by John Clifford  
Music by Karl Moraski  
Scenic designs by Kim Morris  
Costumes by Michelle Shipton-Cook  
Lighting by James Mapes

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**The Portland Ballet**, a world-class dance academy in Portland, Oregon, is committed to fostering the future of ballet by building the next generation of dancers and audiences. Founded in 2001, TPB 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 major professional companies and conservatory programs throughout the U.S. and abroad.

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