



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Erika Overturff (Artistic Director and CEO), 402-541-6946

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FROM FOSSE TO SHAKESPEARE, BALLET NEBRASKA'S SEASON EIGHT BRINGS VARIETY

OMAHA -- What does a nine-time Tony Award™-winning choreographer and director have in common with William Shakespeare's best-loved romantic comedy? They'll both be represented on Ballet Nebraska's Season Eight, artistic director Erika Overturff said.

"We're combining audience favorites along with standout works that are new to the company," Overturff said. "This season will show off our professional dancers' versatility like never before."

Work on the new season will begin this fall, when Broadway superstar Ann Reinking arrives in Omaha to stage a medley of Bob Fosse choreography, Overturff said. Fosse, who won not only multiple Tonys but an Academy Award as a film director, created an iconic style of theater dance; Reinking (herself a multiple Tony winner) is a leading authority on his work and style, she said.

The Reinking/Fosse work will highlight Ballet Nebraska's season opener, *Momentum: Fosse Style!*, Overturff said. As always, the award-winning mixed-repertory program also will include a variety of other works by resident artists and guests, she said. Performances will be Friday, October 20, at Joslyn Art Museum, and Sunday, October 22, at the Iowa Western Arts Center.

Next in the season lineup will be the family favorite holiday ballet *The Nutcracker* – complete with a cast of 130 professional and student dancers, lavish sets, and more than 250 costumes, Overturff said.

"It's a wonderfully entertaining spectacle, and even the youngest viewers are captivated by the heroine and her exciting adventures," Overturff said. "For seasoned dance-goers, it's a chance to see a ballet in the grand classical style, with glorious Tchaikovsky music."

The Nutcracker will open with a special pre-Thanksgiving performance on Sunday, November 19, at the Iowa Western Arts Center, followed by performances Saturday and Sunday, December 2 and 3, at Omaha's Orpheum Theater. Season Eight also marks the debut of the company's Nutcracker Gala on December 1 at the Orpheum, a new event to be held every other year.

A favorite from Ballet Nebraska's first season will return to round out Season Eight: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, choreographed by former Royal Danish Ballet dancer Oskar Antunez.

"Oskar skillfully captures the humor and charm of Shakespeare's popular comedy, set to the beautiful music of Felix Mendelssohn," Overturff said. "The ballet will showcase both the expressive acting and fleet footwork of our dancers."

Performances of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will be Saturday and Sunday, May 5 & 6, at the Orpheum.

Subscriptions for Ballet Nebraska's Season Eight are on sale now at balletnebraska.org/subscribe/. Information about all three productions is available at balletnebraska.org/performances.

Ballet Nebraska is the region's professional dance company. Season Eight is presented with major support from the Fred and Eve Simon Charitable Foundation and the Richard Brooke Foundation, and additional support from Cindy and Scott Heider.

Ballet

NEBRASKA

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SUMMARY: BALLET NEBRASKA SEASON EIGHT

I. Season opener: *Momentum: Fosse Style!*

- What:** Ballet Nebraska's annual mixed-repertory program of ballets in a wide range of styles.
- When/Where:** Friday, October 20, 7:30 pm, at Joslyn Art Museum;
Sunday, October 22, 2 pm, at Iowa Western Arts Center
- Details:** *Momentum*, Ballet Nebraska's award-winning mixed-repertory program, showcases the artistic range and choreographic variety of dance as a captivating art form. Headlining this season's program will be a medley of choreography by dance innovator Bob Fosse, staged especially for Ballet Nebraska by Broadway legend Ann Reinking.
- Erika's take:** "Bob Fosse was a tremendously important innovator in the field of dance. Not only did he win a record eight Tony Awards™ for choreography, he also won both a Tony and an Academy Award as a director. He created an iconic style that set new standards. We'll be learning from a Broadway legend, Ann Reinking, who was his longtime collaborator and now is recognized as a leading expert on his style and work."

II. Holiday classic: *The Nutcracker*

- What:** Ballet Nebraska's lively, entertaining version of the classic holiday ballet
- When/Where:** Saturday, November 19, 2 pm, at Iowa Western Arts Center;
Saturday, December 2, 2 and 7:30 pm, and Sunday, December 3, 2 pm,
at Omaha's Orpheum Theater
- Details:** Its visual splendor, charming story line, and lively variety make *The Nutcracker* an enduring family favorite.
- Erika's take:** "*The Nutcracker* is a ballet that both newcomers and experts can enjoy, with a charming story told through beautiful classical dancing. It is a highlight of the holiday season."

III. Season finale: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

- What:** A lively full-length ballet that closely follows the story of Shakespeare's best-loved romantic comedy, drawing movement inspiration from Felix Mendelssohn's captivating musical score.
- When/Where:** Saturday and Sunday, May 5 and 6, at Omaha's Orpheum Theater
- Details:** Former Royal Danish Ballet dancer Oskar Antunez created this charming version of Shakespeare's tale: a contest of wills between the King and Queen of the Fairies, complicated by two mismatched pairs of human lovers and a band of amateur actors.
- Erika's take:** "We debuted *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2011, but this will be our first chance to bring it to the Orpheum Theater stage. Oskar Antunez is a masterful choreographic storyteller, and Mendelssohn's beautiful score is inspiring for our dancers."

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