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Borne Back Ceaselessly into the Past: The Great Gatsby

BalletMet closes its season with a new ballet inspired by an American literary classic

COLUMBUS, OH—F. Scott Fitzgerald’s Great American Novel comes to life in BalletMet Columbus’ world premiere of *The Great Gatsby* **April 24-May 2 at the Capitol Theatre**, 77 South High Street. **Choreographed by Princess Grace Award winning choreographer and BalletMet Company dancer Jimmy Orrante**, the production takes audiences back to the Jazz Age, a time of lavish lifestyles and bootlegging wealth. Experience the glitz and glamour of the Roaring ‘20s through the swanky parties of Jay Gatsby, an enigmatic man who mysteriously rose from humble beginnings to a life of wealth and prosperity, all for the love of Daisy Buchanan. The ballet brings Fitzgerald’s narrative of a shattered American Dream from the page to the stage.

This full-length ballet features:

- Classical technique combined with dances of the era including the Charleston, Tango and Fox Trot;
- Jazz and classical music of the early 20th century, from Duke Ellington, Shep Fields & His Orchestra, Hugo Alfvén, Benny Goodman, Aaron Copland and more;
- Elaborate sets, from Gatsby’s mansion to George Wilson’s humble gas station; and
- Period inspired costumes designed by Rebecca Baygents Turk, BalletMet Costume Shop Manager, and constructed by the BalletMet Costume Shop.

Costume designer Rebecca Baygents Turk said she helps to create characters “as a costume designer, not a fashion designer. The costumes are inspired by the period of the 1920s, but are designed to compliment the movement and accurately embody each character, she said.”

Orrante said he hopes to honor Fitzgerald’s literary masterwork with his stage adaptation, breathing new life into the intense characters and complex storylines. “My main focus is to be true to Fitzgerald’s novel,” Orrante said. “It’s a love story that never got to blossom. Also, so much was happening in that era. There was a raw energy and wild abandon. People partied hard and drove big cars and danced carelessly. I hope to show this extravagance and richness in the work, while connecting the key relationships among the few central characters.”

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dare to be moved.

CHOREOGRAPHY: JIMMY ORRANTE

BalletMet Company dancer Jimmy Orrante is a recipient of a Choreography Award from the Princess Grace Foundation, dedicated to identifying and assisting emerging talent in the performing arts, as well as the Violetta Bofit Memorial Award from BalletMet Columbus. Now in his fourteenth season as a BalletMet Company dancer, the Los Angeles native has attended the International Summer Workshop in Budapest, Hungary; studied modern dance in London; danced with England's Northern Ballet Theatre, Memphis Ballet, Nevada Dance Theatre among others, and is on faculty at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. *The New York Times* wrote of his New York debut at the Joyce Theatre, *Ad Infinitum*, "[Orrante] presented fluid frolicking to Simon and Garfunkel songs with a particularly vivid female duo." Orrante lives in Columbus with his wife, former BalletMet dancer Sonia Welker, and two children.

Orrante's choreography has taken him from Simon and Garfunkel to Vivaldi, from dynamic group work to intimate pas de deux. His repertoire includes a masterful mix of humor, sentiment and innovative storytelling. He brings together classical technique and modern originality.

ORIGINAL TEXT: F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

The Great Gatsby was written by F. Scott Fitzgerald in the spring of 1924, while he and his wife, Zelda, were staying in Paris. The characters and plot of *Gatsby* were fashioned after the author's own life experiences in the era he coined the Jazz Age. Fitzgerald grew up in Minnesota and joined the army after an unsuccessful stint at Princeton. While he was stationed at an army camp in Alabama he met Zelda Sayre, a wild young woman who desired wealth and the fun that came with it. Sayre—an artist in her own right—refused to marry Fitzgerald until the success of his first book, *This Side of Paradise*, made him a celebrity. Today *The Great Gatsby* is considered one of the most honest and powerful portrayals of American society, and Fitzgerald one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century.

EXTRAS AT THE THEATRE

Artist Discussions April 26, 1:30pm; April 30, 7pm; and April 25, post performance
Learn about the making of this new work from Jimmy Orrante and cast members. *Free*

Demonstrations and Dance Lessons April 24 and April 25, 30 minutes prior to show
Experience the fun and frivolity of the Roaring '20s by learning the Charleston dance as Mark and Shannon of The Lindyroos show some of its easy and exciting moves. lindyroos.com. *Free*

Opening Night Dinner April 24, 6pm; Capital Club, Huntington Center
Le Bistro will be transformed into an elegant affair that harks back to *Gatsby's* grand parties.
Tickets: \$100, dinner and a performance ticket; \$60, dinner only. RSVP: 614.586.8671

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Ghost of Gatsby balletmet.org/ghostofgatsby

Something eerie is going on at BalletMet’s studios. In exchange for his or her help, one lucky participant will win a downtown night out: two tickets to the show, a night’s stay at the Doubletree Guest Suites Columbus, and \$100 to Cameron Mitchell Restaurants.

From the Page to the Stage April 17, 5pm, BalletMet Performance Space

Experience a sneak peek of this new ballet in progress and learn from choreographer Jimmy Orrante about his creative process for bringing *The Great Gatsby* to life. *Free with Food Donation to the Mid-Ohio Food Bank*

The Roaring 20s April 9, 6pm, Ohio Historical Society

Join BalletMet, The Lindyroos, and OHS interpreters in a unique historical backdrop as we learn about the 1920s, see a Charleston dance demonstration, and discuss the making of *The Great Gatsby*. ohiohistory.org

SHOWTIMES AND TICKETS

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	April 24, 8pm	April 25, 8pm	April 26, 2pm*
April 30, 7:30pm	May 1, 8pm	May 2, 8pm	

*Audio description available. Reservations required: 614.229.4848.

Senior Dress Rehearsal April 24, 11am. For ages 55+. Tickets are \$13 through balletmet.org, CAPA (614.469.0939) or Ticketmaster (800.982.2787, ticketmaster.com). Sponsored by WMNI.

Tickets are \$25-\$45 through balletmet.org, CAPA (614.469.0939), and Ticketmaster (800.982.2787, ticketmaster.com). BalletMet Member-Subscribers, MetPass members and groups of 10 or more may contact the BalletMet Box Office (614.229.4848) for tickets and discounts. College students with ID can purchase \$10 Student Rush tickets at the theater beginning two hours prior to showtime. Students age 13 to 18 can purchase \$5 High Five vouchers at any Kroger Ticketmaster location.

SPONSOR SUPPORT

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BalletMet Columbus, renowned for its versatility and innovative repertory, ranks among the nation’s 15 largest dance companies, and its Dance Academy ranks among the five largest professional dance-training centers. Since its inception in 1978, BalletMet has added 146 company premieres to its repertoire and produced 121 world premieres. It has also developed DanceReach, a series of educational and outreach programs that serve 30,000 people annually, as well as a scholarship program that provides tuition for youth based on financial need or talent.