

**BalletMet Columbus presents a double bill of passion and romance:
the enchanting *A Midsummer Night's Dream* plus a world premiere**

COLUMBUS, OH—Just in time for Valentine's Day, BalletMet Columbus presents the romantic comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Feb. 5-14 at the Capitol Theatre. Based on William Shakespeare's play, David Nixon's ballet offers laughter, entertainment and engaging storytelling for all ages. Completing the program is a passionate world premiere by innovative choreographer Ma Cong.

Adventures and misadventures abound in *Midsummer*. The story features such recognizable characters as Puck, the knavish sprite; Oberon, Titania, queen of the fairies and Oberon their king; Helena and her unrequited love, Demetrius; and Hermia and Lysander, a couple in love. The kingdoms of these humans and fairies intertwine thanks to the mischievous Puck and a spell he casts with the juice of a magical flower pierced by Cupid's arrow.

The beloved music of Felix Mendelssohn accompanies the ballet. Mendelssohn created his captivating overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1826 at the tender age of 17. The overture and more of Mendelssohn's timeless music is featured in the production.

"I have seen a number of well known ballets of *Midsummer* and David Nixon's is by far the most satisfying and amusing to watch," said BalletMet Artistic Director Gerard Charles.

To accompany the one-act *Midsummer*, Ma Cong presents a new dance work that speaks sensually about Mediterranean culture and spirituality through organic, grounded movement. The work presents the contrasts between softness and strength, femininity and masculinity. Complimenting the movement is eclectic jazz music by artists including Anouar Brahem and Dhafer Youssef. The costumes, designed by BalletMet Costume Shop Manager Rebecca Turk, are inspired by East Indian body art and textiles. Cong, in Columbus in January to set his new work, looks forward to once again working with BalletMet.

"It has always been such a wonderful experience working with BalletMet dancers," Cong said. "They are all very good movers with strong technique. They react very fast and process movement fast."

THE CHOREOGRAPHERS

David Nixon's career began at the National Ballet of Canada. In 1985 he joined the Deutsche Oper Ballet in Berlin and won the 1987 Critics Award for Best Male Performance. Nixon held positions with National Ballet of Canada, Bayerisches Staatsballett Munich and Royal Winnipeg Ballet before returning to Deutsche Oper Ballet in 1994 as first ballet master.

--More--

dare to be moved.

Nixon became BalletMet's Artistic Director in 1994. During his six-year tenure he added several premieres to the repertoire, including his own productions of *The Nutcracker*, *Dracula*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and more. He left BalletMet in 2001 to become Artistic Director of Northern Ballet Theatre. He was voted Director of the Year by *Dance Europe Magazine* in 2003 and 2006. In 2010, he was awarded an Order of the British Empire honor for contributions to dance.

Ma Cong joined Tulsa Ballet in 1999 after dancing with the National Ballet of China. Trained at the Beijing Dance Academy, he received many accolades during his career including one of *Dance Magazine's* "25 to Watch" and was a finalist at the Paris International Dance Competition and the New York International Ballet Competition. In 2008 he earned first prize in the 21st Century Choreographic Competition and was named a choreographer for the National Choreographers' Initiative that same year. Cong has created many works for Tulsa Ballet including *Carmina Burana* for Tulsa's 50th anniversary and works for companies including Ballet Des Moines and Ballet Nouveau Colorado. He created *Two of Us* for BalletMet's 30th anniversary program in 2007.

PERFORMANCES AND TICKETS

A Midsummer Night's Dream performance schedule is as follows:

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	Feb. 5, 8pm	Feb. 6, 8pm	
Feb. 11, 7:30pm	Feb. 12, 8pm	Feb. 13, 2pm & 8pm	Feb. 14, 2pm*

*Free audio description available for the 2pm Feb. 14 performance. Reservations required: 614.229.4848.

SENIOR DRESS REHEARSAL: Feb. 5, 11am, Capitol Theatre
Sneak preview open to patrons ages 55 and up. \$15.

Tickets start at \$25 and can be purchased through CAPA (614.469.0939), Ticketmaster (800.982.2787, ticketmaster.com) or balletmet.org. Group discounts available through BalletMet (614.586.8665). College students with ID can purchase \$15 Student Rush tickets at the theater beginning two hours prior to show time. Students age 13 to 18 can purchase \$5 High Five vouchers at any Central Ohio Kroger Ticketmaster location.

PROGRAMS AT THE THEATER

Poetry Readings in collaboration with Thurber House, 30 minutes prior to show

Feb. 5: Poetry Out Loud Students

Feb. 11: Chiquita Mullins Lee (Project Coordinator, Poetry Out Loud), recipient of awards from the Greater Columbus Arts Council and the Ohio Arts Council.

Feb. 12: Ann Townsend (Associate Professor, Denison University), recipient of awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ohio Arts Council, and more.

Feb. 13 evening: David Baker (Professor, Denison University), recipient of awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ohio Arts Council and more.

Feb. 14: Andrew Hudgins (Professor, Ohio State University), Pulitzer Prize finalist, Ingram Merrill Foundation Fellowship recipient.

Pre-Show Artist Discussions

Feb. 6, 7:30pm: Brad Bradford, Geoff Nelson and Ambre Emory-Maier discuss the literary, theatrical and dance perspectives of *Midsummer*, respectively.

Feb. 13, 1:30pm: Rebecca Turk, BalletMet Costume Shop Manager, discusses the folklore of fairies and costume design for the stage.

Post-Show Artist Discussion

Feb. 5, following the performance: Choreographer Ma Cong and dancers discuss his new work.

SPECIAL EVENT

Opening Night Dinner: Feb. 5, 6pm, Hyatt

\$110 show ticket and dinner; \$60 dinner only | RSVP: 614.586.8671, www.balletmet.org

Proceeds benefit BalletMet's artistic and educational programs.

SPONSOR SUPPORT: Media partners are The Columbus Dispatch, This Week, Columbus Parent and Sunny95. Senior Dress Rehearsal sponsor is WMNI. BalletMet Columbus receives support for its annual performance season from The Columbus Foundation, the Greater Columbus Arts Council, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Ohio Arts Council, Classical 89.7 WOSU-FM, Time Warner Cable. Season partner is The Ohio State University Sports Medicine Center.

ABOUT BALLETMET COLUMBUS: BalletMet Columbus, renowned for its versatility and innovative repertory, ranks among the nation's largest dance companies, and its Dance Academy ranks among the largest professional dance-training centers. Since its inception in 1978, BalletMet has added 152 Company premieres to its repertoire and produced 124 world premieres. It has also developed DanceReach, a series of educational and outreach programs that serve nearly 30,000 people annually; through DanceReach, up to 70 scholarships each year give access to talented youth, many from minority and underserved groups, who cannot otherwise participate.

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