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BalletMet Offers Free Summer Festival Performances

COLUMBUS, OH—Dance fans can look forward to two free performances by BalletMet Columbus as summer comes to an end: the **Heinz Poll Summer Dance Festival August 17 and 18** at Akron's Firestone Park and **Rhythm on the River August 31** at the Riverfront Amphitheater in Columbus.

BalletMet to Perform at Akron Dance Festival

Dance aficionados can enjoy a performance under the stars when BalletMet Columbus takes the stage in the Heinz Poll Summer Dance Festival, August 17 and 18 at Akron's Firestone Park. The performances begin at 8:45pm and are free and open to the public.

Sponsored by the City of Akron, the festival features four weekends of performances by Ohio dance companies. The festival honors the legacy of Heinz Poll, the founding Artistic Director of Ohio Ballet, Akron's first professional dance company.

BalletMet's program will include selections from the 2007-2008 season and past favorites:

- Heinz Poll's *Bolero*, a passionate work set to the music of Ravel;
- Jimmy Orrante's crowd pleasing *Ad Infinitum*, set to the poignant songs of Simon and Garfunkel;
- Harrison McEldowney's *Dance Sport*, a witty satire on competitive sports and professional dance and *Call It Off*, a light-hearted glimpse at a lovers' quarrel,
- And a romantic pas de deux from the classic love story *Romeo and Juliet*.

BalletMet Artistic Director Gerard Charles will also teach a master class during the Festival at 3pm August 18. The class is for advanced level students and dancers and costs \$10. To register, call 330.990.5263.

Other participating Ohio companies include GroundWorks Dancetheater and Verb Ballets. The Artistic Directors of these companies—David Shimotakahara and Hernando Cortez, respectively—are both participating in BalletMet's *30x30*, August 6 – 26. In celebration of BalletMet's 30th anniversary, 30 choreographers from across the country will create 30 new works in 30 hours.

—More—

dare to be moved.

BalletMet Columbus to Perform at *Rhythm on the River*

BalletMet Columbus offers a glimpse of their 30th anniversary season lineup when they perform at the Riverfront Amphitheater, Genoa Park, on Friday, August 31 at 8pm as part of Music in the Air's Rhythm on the River series. Admission is free.

The program will feature excerpts from the company's upcoming season as well as a few favorites from previous seasons. The public is invited to arrive early and watch the dancers warm up prior to the performance.

BalletMet's 2007-2008 season kicks off with *30x30*, August 6-26, an ambitious project with 30 choreographers creating 30 new works in 30 hours. Also on the season lineup is the seductive favorite *Dracula*, the family classic *The Nutcracker* and the world premiere of *Aladdin*.

"BalletMet's summer would not seem complete without our annual Riverfront performance," said Artistic Director Gerard Charles. "It offers wonderful entertainment set against a beautiful backdrop of the river and downtown skyline."

Rhythm on the River is produced by Music in the Air, a program of the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department. A summer tradition since 1973, Music in the Air offers free outdoor performances in city parks all summer long. For more information about this performance: 24-hour information line: 614.645.3800, www.musicintheair.org.

BalletMet's 30th anniversary season begins Aug. 6 - 26 with *30x30* at the BalletMet Performance Space, 322 Mount Vernon Avenue. For showtimes and ticket information visit www.balletmet.org. Tickets are available through the BalletMet Box Office (614.229.4848), CAPA (614.469.0939), Ticketmaster (614.431.3600), or www.balletmet.org. \$10 Student Rush tickets are available for students with ID at the theater beginning two hours prior to showtime and \$5 High 5 vouchers are available at Kroger Ticketmaster locations for students age 13-18.

BalletMet Columbus receives support for its performance season from The Columbus Foundation, the Greater Columbus Arts Council, the Ohio Arts Council, Classical 89.7 WOSU-FM, Time Warner Cable, Pepsi and NBC4. *30x30* is presented in association with the Wexner Center for the Arts and supported in part by the Greater Columbus Arts Council.

With an annual budget of \$5 million, BalletMet Columbus 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 102 company premieres to its repertoire and produced 79 world premieres. It has also developed DanceReach, a series of educational and outreach programs that serve 40,000 people annually, as well as a Community Outreach Scholarship program that provides full tuition for talented minority and underserved youth.

For more information, call 614.229.4860 or visit www.balletmet.org.

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