

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR** TERRENCE S. ORR  
**PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**'Dracula' Opens 2017-2018 Ballet Season Over Halloween Weekend**  
*Levitation, Special Effects Give Classic Story Teeth*



**PITTSBURGH, PA (August 2017)** – Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre revives the grandfather of all vampire dramas over Halloween weekend with its 2017-2018 Season opener: “**Dracula**,” onstage **Oct. 27-29**, at the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts, 237 7th St, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

The full-length ballet follows Bram Stoker’s 1897 gothic novel. Discontent with his corps of vampire brides, Dracula fixates on Svetlana, a young girl on the cusp of engagement, to satiate his thirst for fresh blood. His obsession forms a suspenseful love triangle between himself, Svetlana and her soon-to-be fiancé, Franz.

A co-production of PBT and Houston Ballet, “Dracula” features concept and choreography by Ben Stevenson, former Houston Ballet artistic director and current artistic director of Texas Ballet Theater, and a score created by Hungarian composer Franz Liszt and arranged by John

Lanchbery. Multiple Liszt compositions comprise the score, including haunting variations on the “Dies Irae,” a 13th-century Latin hymn, and the ominous “The Dance of Death.”

Houston Ballet premiered “Dracula” in March 1997, during the centennial of the Stoker novel’s publication, and the production marked its October 1997 Pittsburgh premiere with a packed seven-performance run. PBT last performed “Dracula” in February 2011.

At the time of its premiere, the New York Times described the production as a “spectacle of an order ballet audiences seldom see today” for “exquisitely beautiful and atmospheric” sets, costumes and lighting as well as effects ranging from the eerie flying sequences to the pyrotechnics of the fateful Act III sunrise.

Costume designer Judanna Lynn conceived the costumes for “Dracula.” In addition to drawing inspiration from Stoker’s novel and Liszt’s score, Lynn researched works by 19th-century German romantic artists, watched multiple movie versions of “Dracula,” and visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art Costume Institute to examine Romanian material and costume designs.

For his interpretations, scenic designer Thomas Boyd studied Balkan and Romanian architecture and natural features to create the 19th-century Transylvania setting. Boyd created a distinct set design for each of the three acts: the crypt, the village and Dracula’s bedroom. Timothy Hunter created the production’s atmospheric lighting designs.

Among the five performances, the company will present a Student Matinee performance, at 11 a.m. Friday, Oct. 27.

Tickets start at \$28, and are available at [www.pbt.org](http://www.pbt.org), 412-456-6666 or by visiting the Box Office at Theater Square. Groups of 10 or more can save up to 50% by calling 412-454-9101 or emailing [groupsales@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:groupsales@pittsburghballet.org).

#### **“Dracula” Public Performances:**

- Friday, Oct. 27, at 8 p.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 28, at 2 p.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 28, at 8 p.m.
- Sunday, Oct. 29, at 2 p.m.

#### **“Dracula” Theater Programs**

*Free and open to all ticket buyers*

- **Afterthoughts:** Oct. 27, at 10:30 p.m.; post-show discussion with the artists
- **\*Family Pointe:** Oct. 28, at 1 p.m.; entertaining pre-show program for all ages
- **\*Insights:** Oct. 28, at 7 p.m.; pre-show discussion with the artists
- **Talks with Terry:** Oct. 29, at 1 p.m.; pre-show discussion with Artistic Director Terrence S. Orr
- **\*Audio-described Performance:** Oct. 29, at 2 p.m.; live narration of the production  
*For more information visit [www.pbt.org/PBT-Connects](http://www.pbt.org/PBT-Connects).*

*\*RSVPs requested at [education@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:education@pittsburghballet.org) or 412-454-9109.*

### **2017-2018 Season Lineup**

- “Dracula”: Oct. 27-29, 2017 at the Benedum Center
- “The Nutcracker”: Dec. 1-27, 2017 at the Benedum Center
- “Swan Lake” with the PBT Orchestra: Feb. 16-25, 2018 at the Benedum Center
- “PBT: New Works”: March 16-25, 2018 at the August Wilson Center (*World premieres by company dancers*)
- UPMC Presents “West Side Story Suite” + “In the Night” with the PBT Orchestra: May 4-6, 2018 at the Benedum Center (*Company premiere, and Jerome Robbins and Leonard Bernstein centennial celebration*)

### **About Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre**

Since 1969, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre has made extraordinary ballet experiences accessible to people throughout the Pittsburgh region and in the places PBT tours. Led by Artistic Director Terrence S. Orr, an American Ballet Theatre alumnus, the company performs a wide-ranging repertoire of classical ballets, contemporary masterworks and new commissions by both seasoned and emerging choreographers. Through its official training institution, PBT School, the company cultivates the next generation of professional dancers and shares the joy, expression and discipline of ballet with students of all ages. PBT extends these experiences to people throughout the region by bringing demos, discussions, storytelling and creative movement sessions to a multitude of classrooms, libraries and neighborhoods all year round. PBT’s 2017-2018 Season runs from October through May and features “Dracula,” “The Nutcracker,” “Swan Lake,” “PBT: New Works” and “West Side Story Suite + In the Night.”