

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR **SUSAN JAFFE**  
**PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE**

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**Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Announces Changes to 2020-2021 Fall Season;  
Alternative Programming**

*PBT will pioneer alternative programming as well as outdoor performances on its newly-acquired mobile performing arts venue.*

**PITTSBURGH, PA (Aug. 20, 2020)** - In response to public health guidance and restrictions on public assembly due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre (PBT) will present an updated 2020-2021 Season, beginning Sept. 10 with a series of outdoor performances at PBT Studios in the Strip District.

PBT's performances of "Balanchine + Tchaikovsky" and "The Nutcracker" will not take place at the Benedum Center as scheduled. In lieu of traditional theater performances, PBT will offer ticket holders to "Balanchine + Tchaikovsky" a socially distanced, outdoor ballet experience presented PBT's new mobile performing arts venue at PBT's Strip District campus. PBT is exploring options to reimagine "The Nutcracker" for audiences in December. Programs scheduled for 2021 remain unchanged.

"While this isn't the season we had planned, we're thrilled to be able to connect with our audience outdoors and online," Artistic Director Susan Jaffe, who took the helm of the company at the height of the pandemic in July, said. "It's our mission to provide Pittsburgh with extraordinary ballet experiences, and the adaptability and creativity of our company and staff makes that possible, even within the limitations of a COVID-19 world."

PBT is also exploring options for an additional performance in the fall and more opportunities to make use of the mobile performing arts venue throughout the year.

**Open Air Series & Mobile Performing Arts Venue**

On Sept. 10-14, PBT will launch its Open Air Series at PBT, an outdoor performing arts series at PBT Studios. The parking lot of PBT's Strip District campus will be converted into a performance space with socially distanced audience seating and performances on PBT's new Stageline SAM450 mobile performing arts venue.

“Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre is thrilled to move forward with the purchase of the Stageline SAM450 mobile stage with 85 percent of the funds raised,” Executive Director Harris Ferris said, “and we are encouraged by strong interest from additional partners to complete the funding. Major gifts received so far are from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, the Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust and the Jack Buncher Foundation. With the SAM450 capable of mounting full-scale ballet, opera, symphony, and all manner of performing arts productions, it provides a solution in the current pandemic and a window to the future. We are looking toward a future of performing arts that engages people in their own communities, expanding our reach and increasing access to the arts for audiences throughout the region.”

Patrons with tickets to “Balanchine + Tchaikovsky” will be offered the option to use their tickets to attend a mixed-repertory production held for a small, socially distanced audience. These PBT performances will not be open to the broader public, but the ballet intends to use the mobile performing arts venue and the Open Air Series to continue to connect audiences to the performing arts through outdoor events throughout the region.

For the Open Air Series inaugural performances, safety protocols such as mandatory masks, socially distanced seating, digital playbills and limited access to the PBT building will be enforced during performances.

In addition to PBT, several other arts organizations in Pittsburgh will host performances during the Open Air Series from Sept. 10-14. [Pittsburgh CLO](#) will present solo performances featuring students from the CLO Academy Professional Development Program on Sept. 12. [The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra](#) will perform a concert of popular classical works performed by ensembles of its musicians on Sept. 13. Also on Sept. 13, [Pittsburgh Opera](#) will present a short program that Sunday evening, with details to follow. The [August Wilson African American Cultural Center](#) will present live jazz with the Jevon Rushton Group and special guests on Sept. 14. Details about these performances and ticket information will be available soon on each organization’s website.

PBT’s performance will include performances of excerpts from “Coppelia,” “Swan Lake,” “Who Cares?,” “The Sleeping Beauty” and more.

### “The Nutcracker” Experience

The magic of “The Nutcracker” will be transformed in December 2020 when PBT presents a reimagined “Nutcracker” experience. The reimagining, which will include educational programs and special at-home offerings, will be available to existing “Nutcracker” ticket holders and the public. Details about PBT’s “Nutcracker” experience will be announced this fall.

### PBT School Reopening

Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School will welcome students back to the studios this fall with in-person, online and hybrid programs. PBT School programming has been entirely virtual since

the building closed in March. Beginning in September, after three weeks of remote learning, PBT School students of all levels will have options for in-person, virtual or hybrid programs. Safety protocols, including limited class sizes, enforced social distancing and limited time spent in the building will be part of PBT School's reopening.

For more information on PBT School's fall programs, visit the PBT School webpage [here](#).

### Ticket Information & FAQ

Subscribers and ticket holders to performances of "Balanchine + Tchaikovsky" and "The Nutcracker" will receive an email from PBT patron services outlining several options for tickets. Patrons with tickets to "Balanchine + Tchaikovsky" will have the opportunity to use their ticket to attend the Open Air Series, request a refund, save their ticket for a future PBT performance or donate the cost of the ticket to PBT.

Subscribers and ticket holders with tickets to "The Nutcracker" will be contacted in the coming weeks with options for their ticket and details about PBT's reimagined "Nutcracker" experience.

For frequently asked questions regarding ticket options and subscriptions, please visit [PBT's website](#).

### **About Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre**

Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre has been Pittsburgh's premier professional ballet company since 1969. Today, PBT is a nationally recognized ballet company of 30 professional dancers, a training institution for over 1,200 students of all ages, and an incubator for education and accessibility programs in classrooms, libraries and community centers throughout the region. Led by Artistic Director Susan Jaffe, the company performs a wide-ranging repertoire of classical ballets, contemporary masterworks and new commissions in more than 50 performances annually at home and on tour.