

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

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Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and The Mosites Company Partner to Bring Open Air Series Back June 9-12

Collaboration and generous funding from the Gaming & Economic Development Tourism Fund (GEDTF) allows the Open Air Series to relaunch on the shores of the Allegheny River in Sharpsburg

PITTSBURGH, PA (April 1, 2022) – Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre (PBT) is pleased to announce that its popular collaborative performance series Open Air will return this June. Thanks to an exciting new partnership with The Mosites Company and generous funding from the Gaming & Economic Development Tourism Fund (GEDTF), artists from several arts and cultural organizations and dance schools throughout Pittsburgh will take the stage on the beautiful riverfront of the Allegheny River in Sharpsburg (1 19th Street, Sharpsburg, Pennsylvania) June 9 – 12. Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre has also received a grant from the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) to help bring the Open Air Series back to the community this summer.

During the height of the pandemic in the fall of 2020, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre launched the mobile stage and a brand new Open Air Series to bring live performances to the Pittsburgh community in outdoor settings when indoor performances were not an option. Through the power of partnership this wonderful series will be reignited this summer.

"We are excited that Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's Open Air festival will find a new home in Sharpsburg this summer," says State Representative Sara Innamorato. "Partnership and collaboration are vital to the success of this event and the proliferation of the arts in our region. Thank you to everyone involved in production. I'm looking forward to watching the show with my friends and neighbors."

"We are grateful to The Mosites Company, Steven Mosites, Susan Mosites Bicket and Rep. Sara Innamorato for their advocacy, which helped us to secure this grant," says Executive Director Harris Ferris. "Not only do we look forward to performing Susan Jaffe's *Swan Lake* with the PBT Orchestra at the Benedum Center from May 6-15, we are also very excited to continue this outdoor performance series on our mobile stage, allowing audiences to experience

Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and other local arts organizations in the gorgeous setting of the Allegheny River shoreline in Sharpsburg.”

“The Open Air Series sets the stage for the Mosites Company’s large-scale, mixed-use wellness community development along the Allegheny River to play host to community gatherings, cultural events and recreational opportunities, activating the riverfront for the benefit of Sharpsburg, Allegheny County and the Greater Pittsburgh region,” says Susan Mosites Bicket. “We hope that this weekend of performances at the Open Air Series is the first of many opportunities to bring art and unique performances to the community.”

Originally debuted in 2020 amidst restrictions that severely limited indoor performances, PBT launched Open Air to safely bring over 7,000 people and 26 local arts organizations together to enjoy live theater. PBT was able to invest in the Stageline(R) SAM450 mobile stage thanks to generous support from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust, Jack Buncher Foundation and Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. The mobile stage is a shared asset among the seven anchor organizations of the Pittsburgh Cultural District, including the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Pittsburgh CLO, August Wilson African American Cultural Center, Pittsburgh Opera, Pittsburgh Public Theater and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in addition to Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. This collaborative approach to bring live outdoor performances to diverse audiences throughout the Greater Pittsburgh region is what inspired the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) to help fund the Open Air series. “RAD is enthusiastic about this opportunity, as a part of its connections grant program, to support these partnerships for the Open Air Series and share their inspiring programs with audiences throughout all of Allegheny County,” says RAD Executive Director Richard Hudic.

This June, the mobile stage will once again be shared with a number of local organizations during the second Open Air Series, including Confluence Ballet, Jamie Erin Murphy, Naina Roy Kathak and Shana Simmons Dance. For the first time ever in Pittsburgh, a number of prominent regional studios will come together for Open Air: Shared Spaces, a program curated by dancemaker Joe Nickel and which will include Allegro Dance Company, Dance Unleashed, Donna’s School of Dance, LDI Dance Works, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School, Seton Hill University and A Step Above Dance Academy. Additional participating organizations will be announced at a later date. This year, the stage will be located in Sharpsburg overlooking the scenic Allegheny River on a 52-acre, 1.5 mile shoreline site that The Mosites Company will transform into a mixed-use wellness community and regional destination. The project will ultimately integrate a variety of residences, a riverfront village with retail and restaurants, innovative office space, and outdoor parks and recreation space for locals and tourists. They are working in close collaboration with Live Work Learn Play to transform the location over the next several years. Live Work Learn Play is an international real estate development and advisory firm on the cutting edge of conceiving, planning, developing and activating dynamic, large-scale mixed-use communities and places.

“We are excited to welcome the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and other local performers to our riverfront for a spirited Open Air event. Our community members will get to enjoy the riverfront in

a way they haven't before, and visitors will get to explore and enjoy all that Sharpsburg has to offer," says Sharpsburg Mayor Brittany Reno.

Seating at Open Air will be limited and tickets are \$20 for PBT Company performances. Learn more at pbt.org/openair. More information will be posted soon. For more information on tickets to Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's *Swan Lake*, visit pbt.org.

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. 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.