

PORTLAND BALLET

NELL SHIPMAN ♦ ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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Portland Ballet Announces 2021-2022 Season

The 41st season features a new contemporary ballet, *Persephone & Hades*, the beloved holiday classic, *a Victorian Nutcracker*, a restaging of *Boy Meets Girl* and the return of Shipman's *Firebird*.

July 21, 2021 (PORTLAND, ME) - Artistic Director Nell Shipman announces the programming for Portland Ballet's 2021-2022 season. The season will open with *Persephone & Hades*, a new contemporary ballet choreographed by Shipman. Maine favorite, *a Victorian Nutcracker*, will return to the stage this holiday season with newly designed backdrops and set pieces. Late winter will bring a restaging of the audience favorite, *Boy Meets Girl*. The season will close with a revival of Shipman's *Firebird*.

"Portland Ballet is thrilled to welcome our audience back to the theater for the upcoming 2021/2022 season, which is filled with rich storytelling through dynamic choreography. The season opens and closes in two mythical and magical worlds which bookend two familiar and delightful tales of enchantment. From the mysterious to the classical, we are profoundly excited to share this all live with our audiences and look forward to seeing you when the curtain rises once again!" said Artistic Director Nell Shipman.

The 2021/2022 season opens **October 29-30** with *Persephone & Hades*, a tale of renewed hope told through the power of ballet. Based on the Greek myth, this is a new contemporary work choreographed by Artistic Director Nell Shipman and set to music by Verdi. After Persephone is taken by Hades from the land of the living to his kingdom in the Underworld, she comes to find her own place and strength in this new world she rules.

Holiday favorite, *a Victorian Nutcracker*, returns to Westbrook Performing Arts Center **December 18-19** and to Merrill Auditorium **December 22-23**. *A Victorian Nutcracker* is a retelling of the

classic story of a young girl's Christmas Eve dream, brought on by the curious gift of a nutcracker, in which she travels to the Sugar Plum Fairy's Land of the Sweets. This version is unique to Portland, and its history, with characters pulled directly from the city's past. This year's production will feature new set pieces designed by Austin Phillips and inspired by Portland's Victoria Mansion.

In late winter Portland Ballet will revive **Boy Meets Girl**, which became an audience favorite when it debuted in 2014. The classic love story comes to life in a 1950's Italian restaurant on date night. Throughout the night, the stories of these individuals intertwine into a fun-filled, romantic, evening where drinks are in hand, love is in the air, and, hopefully, everyone leaves with a song in their hearts.

The 2021-2022 season concludes **April 29-30** with Shipman's **Firebird**. Based on the classic Russian folktale, the *Firebird* is a powerful ballet set to the music of Stravinsky. Full of dynamic performance, beauty and magic, Portland Ballet's recreation of this neo-classical ballet will delight audiences of all ages.

Tickets are on sale now through PortTIX, Portland Ballet's trusted box office partner. For tickets please visit www.porttix.com. For more information please visit www.portlandballet.org or call 207.772.9671.

Persephone & Hades

October 29 at 7:30pm - Westbrook Performing Arts Center
October 30 at 10:00am - Westbrook Performing Arts Center
Choreography by Nell Shipman

a Victorian Nutcracker

December 18 at 2:00pm - Westbrook Performing Arts Center
December 19 at 2:00pm - Westbrook Performing Arts Center
December 22 at 7:30pm - Merrill Auditorium
December 23 at 7:30pm - Merrill Auditorium
Choreography by Nell Shipman, Jennifer Jones, and the artistic staff of Portland Ballet

Boy Meets Girl

Late Winter 2022 - Date and Venue TBA
Choreography by Nell Shipman and Jennifer Jones

Firebird

April 29 at 7:30pm - Westbrook Performing Arts Center

April 30 at 2:00pm - Westbrook Performing Arts Center

Choreography by Nell Shipman

Founded in 1980, Portland Ballet is Maine's professional ballet company and leading training in the state. Blending classical traditions with innovative new works, the company has a mission to to enrich the community through ballet education and performance.

The affiliated Portland School of Ballet (PSB) has been the premier dance education center of southern Maine for four decades. Professional and inclusive, the School is dedicated to bringing dance to people of all ages and skill levels, while at the same time maintaining its focus on training young men and women for professional careers.

For more information, please visit www.portlandballet.org.