

# NEVADA *Ballet* THEATRE

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## NEVADA BALLET THEATRE APPOINTS JAMES CANFIELD AS ITS NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**LAS VEGAS, NV – (Friday, January 9, 2009)** - Following an international search, the executive board of Nevada Ballet Theatre announced today that James Canfield has been chosen as the Company's next artistic director. Canfield had served as the Company's interim artistic director since March 2008, and was the founding artistic director of Oregon Ballet Theatre, one of Oregon's leading arts organizations, from 1989 to 2003. For the last several years, he has been teaching, choreographing and staging his ballets for companies across the country.

Canfield will work closely with Executive Director Beth Barbre and the board of trustees to lead the Las Vegas-based ballet company as it prepares for its much anticipated move into the \$475 million Smith Center for the Performing Arts, which is slated for completion in 2011.

"We are thrilled to have James Canfield's experience and passion for artistic achievement here at Nevada Ballet Theatre," said Nancy Houssels, co-founder of the Company and co-chair of the board of trustees. "Building on our first-ever performance at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. this year, we believe James can help propel our continued rise to national prominence."

"James' extensive knowledge of the art form, coupled with his proven leadership and teaching skills brings a newfound creativity to our company and further enhances our commitment to artistic excellence," added Board of Trustees Co-Chair Wendy Plaster.

As only the third artistic director in the company's 37-year history, Canfield's duties will include leading Nevada Ballet Theatre's professional company, planning future seasons and performances, overseeing the company's affiliated school, the Academy of Nevada Ballet Theatre, and expanding the company's education and outreach activities.

"I am honored to join Nevada Ballet Theatre and I am extremely excited about the enormous potential of this company," Canfield said. "My commitment is to build a vibrant contemporary company that respects and maintains its basis in classical ballet. We will offer creative artistic programming based on calculated risks and artistic collaborations. We will elevate our repertoire and the quality of our performances. And we will always seek to educate, entertain and reach out to all members of our community."

Among Canfield's immediate priorities as artistic director is the company's performance at the 2009 Black & White Ball on Saturday, January 17 at Caesars Palace. Honoring "Woman of the Year" Bette Midler, the event is the company's largest annual fundraiser and features musical entertainment by Las Vegas headliners, "Zowie Bowie." In addition, this highly anticipated social event includes cocktails, dinner and dancing a live auction offering one-of-a-kind experiences. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Jessica Erali at (702) 242-2623 ext. 222 or email [jerali@nevadaballet.com](mailto:jerali@nevadaballet.com).

On February 6 & 7, Nevada Ballet Theatre presents an *All-Balanchine Program*, including two company premieres, *Serenade* and *Concerto Barocco*, which will be accompanied by the Las Vegas Philharmonic, as well as the witty and romantic, *Who Cares?* set to the music of George Gershwin.

### **ABOUT JAMES CANFIELD**

James Canfield, founding artistic director of Oregon Ballet Theatre from 1989-2003, was born in Corning, New York, and received his early dance training at the acclaimed Academy of the Washington School of Ballet under the direction of Mary Day. Mr. Canfield was a member of the Washington Ballet in Washington D.C., the Joffrey II Dancers in New York City and the Joffrey Ballet under the direction of Robert Joffrey and Gerald Arpino, where he danced an extensive repertoire of works by Jiri Kylian, Agnes de Mille, John Cranko and William Forsythe among others. In 1986, he left the Joffrey Ballet to become the artistic director of Pacific Ballet Theatre, and once the company combined with Ballet Oregon, Mr. Canfield was appointed artistic director of the new Oregon Ballet Theatre (OBT) in 1989. There, he choreographed numerous ballets for the year-round company and established the School of Oregon Ballet Theatre in order to provide the best classical training to dancers throughout the Northwest. For the last three years, he has participated in the Northwest Professional Dance Project in Portland, Oregon.

### **ABOUT NEVADA BALLET THEATRE**

A 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, Nevada Ballet Theatre is the largest professional ballet company and dance Academy in the state. Committed to the highest artistic standards, dancers for the 31 member company have been recruited from around the world and include artists with international performing experience. This classically-based company is at home in an eclectic repertory, moving easily from the classics to the high-energy contemporary ballets. The mission of Nevada Ballet Theatre is to educate and inspire regional, statewide and national audiences and vitally impact community life through professional company productions, dance training and education and outreach. Beginning in 2011, Nevada Ballet Theatre will be a resident company in the new world-class Smith Center for the Performing Arts.

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