

PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE

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Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Names New Artistic Director Adam W. McKinney Will Serve as Organization's Seventh Artistic Director Beginning March 2023



PITTSBURGH, PA (January 18, 2023) -

After a comprehensive international search aided by Management Consultants for the Arts (MCA), the Board of Directors of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre (PBT) announced today the appointment of Adam W. McKinney as artistic director. He will be the company's seventh artistic director in its rich 54-year-history. McKinney, PBT's first artistic director of color, will begin his role in March 2023.

"We are thrilled to welcome Adam W. McKinney as Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's next artistic director," said President and Board Chair Mary McKinney Flaherty. "After an extensive search, expertly led by search committee chairs Dr. Melonie Nance and Rich Beaty and guided by PBT's historical strengths and established strategic goals, Adam became the clear choice to lead PBT's next era. We believe Adam will be a transformative artistic director for our organization and leader in our community and throughout the world of ballet."

Adam W. McKinney; Photo: Timothy Brestowski

McKinney has a diverse and accomplished background in arts leadership across the globe, having served as an arts organization director, tenured professor, choreographer, dancer, educator, and activist. He is a gifted teacher of classical ballet whose expertise lies in creating

environments that support the training and development of artists. He will continue in the legacy of his predecessors by centering classical ballet repertoire as well as introducing new contemporary works and choreographers to Pittsburgh audiences. He strongly believes in building community connections and in making dance accessible to everyone.

“I am honored and excited to lead PBT into a new era as its seventh Artistic Director,” said McKinney. “Internally, I most look forward to building upon PBT’s significant ballet legacy by curating meaningful and innovative season programming, working with and mentoring company artists and PBT School students and developing relationships with the PBT staff. Many have prepared PBT and me for this moment, which I do not take lightly. Together we have an extraordinary opportunity to build PBT and Pittsburgh’s arts and culture ecology. Externally, I am moved to meet the people of Pittsburgh. Under my leadership, I will work to develop relationships in and with the broader communities to ensure that all people know that they are welcome and belong at PBT.”

“We are so excited to welcome Adam to PBT,” stated Acting Executive Director Kathryn Gigler. “He brings with him incredible creativity, energy and kindness and his leadership is going to have such a positive impact at PBT and in Pittsburgh.”

McKinney joins the ranks of PBT’s distinguished artistic directors, including founding artistic director Nikolas Petrov; Patricia Wilde who from 1982 to 1996 invigorated the company with the works of contemporary choreographers; Terrence S. Orr, who led the company from 1997 to 2020, elevated its repertoire through artistic vision and creative collaboration; and Susan Jaffe, whose tenure from 2020 to 2022 included launching the *Open Air* outdoor ballet series and spearheading digital programming, including the award-winning *Fireside Nutcracker*. McKinney succeeds Jaffe, now artistic director at American Ballet Theatre.

About Adam W. McKinney

Adam W. McKinney has a diverse and accomplished background in arts leadership across the globe, having served as an arts organization director, tenured professor, choreographer, dancer, educator, and activist. McKinney was most recently an Associate Professor of Dance in Ballet with tenure in the School for Classical & Contemporary Dance at Texas Christian University. There he taught courses in classical ballet, modern dance and choreography. He was the Co-Director/Co-Founder of DNAWORKS, an arts and service organization committed to healing through the arts and dialogue. Previously, he was the inaugural Dance Department Chair at New Mexico School for the Arts in Santa Fe.

He has danced with some of the world’s preeminent dance companies, including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, Béjart Ballet Lausanne (Switzerland), Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet and Milwaukee Ballet Company.

McKinney has led dance work with diverse populations across the U.S. and North America, and in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. A leader who is committed to making ballet and dance accessible to all, he served as a U.S. Embassy Culture Connect Envoy to South Africa through the U.S. State Department. McKinney has created community social justice and awareness projects including the interactive *Fort Worth Lynching Tour: Honoring the Memory of Mr. Fred Rouse* and “The Borders Project” at the Mexico/U.S. and Palestine/Israel borders. He was also honored with the NYU President’s Service Award for his dance work with populations who struggle with heroin addiction.

McKinney was named one of the most influential African Americans in Milwaukee by St. Vincent DePaul. He holds a BFA in Dance Performance with high honors with a focus on classical ballet from Butler University and an MA in Dance Studies with concentrations in Race and Trauma theories from the Gallatin School at New York University.

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.

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