

should not expect Stowell's version to have the markers they might associate with the tale of a fiery gypsy woman and her lover: no bullfighter costumes or lace mantillas.

Stowell treats the characters as everymen and everywomen, so to speak, as opposed to more traditional story ballet characters, who tend to be princes and princesses. He describes his version of *Carmen* as "very immediate and now ... so people relate [with the characters] as if these situations could happen to them."

Both works will be performed with the full OBT orchestra, in keeping with Stowell's commitment to continuing the time-tested partnership between live music and ballet. Whereas recorded music is predictable, live musicians never perform a work exactly the same way twice, which Stowell says "makes for a more exciting and visceral response from everyone," including the dancers.

Creating two new narrative works from scratch is no small feat, a fact that has become impossible to ignore as the premiere draws near. "It's a lot of work for everyone, at full tilt at all times," says Stowell.

As hectic as it may be inside OBT's building these days, the company is working toward exactly what Stowell wants for it, artistically: to be creating and performing dance works that are outside the box while still building on the long history of the art form. With the *Petrouchka/Carmen* program, Stowell says, "The music and narratives are reimagined for the 21st century audience in unexpected ways. ... That needs to be what we're about almost all the time."

OBT's *Petrouchka/Carmen* performances join dozens of others on this month's dance calendar.

BodyVox has been performing its *Horizontal Leanings* program since September 29 and White Bird's season launched in early October with a performance by Pilobolus, the 40-year-old American company known for its whimsical, athletic style. Also this month, White Bird presents the West Coast debut of Israel's Vertigo Dance Company (October 13-15) and brings back Australia's Chunky Move (October 20-22).

In fact, there is so much dance in Portland this October that the enterprising dance



Michael Linsmeier rehearses for *Carmen*.

BLAINE TRUETT COVER

community has put together the equivalent of a "frequent flyer" awards program for dance-goers (details at pdxdancecard.org).

The program works like this: When attending any of the participating productions, pick up a dance card and get it punched at the PDX Dance Card table. Cardholders with punches for two or more shows can redeem the card for restaurant gift certificates; those with four punches can enter a grand prize drawing.

In addition to OBT's *Petrouchka/Carmen*, upcoming PDX Dance Card performances include:

Polaris Dance Theatre: *iCHANGE* (closes Oct. 7; polarisdance.org)

Bobbevy: *Palace of Crystal* (Oct. 7-9 and 14-16; bobbevy.com)

BodyVox: *Horizontal Leanings* (closes Oct. 15; bodyvox.com)

Northwest Dance Project: *New Now Wow!* (Oct. 14-15; nwdanceproject.org)

White Bird: Vertigo Dance Company and Chunky Move (whitebird.org)

Tracy Broyles: *Mirror* (Oct. 21-23 and 28-29; tracybroyles.com)

Portland Center Stage: *Oklahoma!* (closes Oct. 30; pcs.org)

Oregon Ballet Theatre's *Petrouchka/Carmen* premieres at Keller Auditorium (222 SW Clay St.) Sat., Oct. 8 and runs for five performances through Oct. 15 (7:30 p.m. except for 2 p.m. Sun., Oct. 9). Tickets start at \$23; call 503-222-5538 or visit obt.org.



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