

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

The Portland Observer

Sidney Poitier Elected To Disney Board Of Directors

Acclaimed actor-director-writer Sidney Poitier has been elected to the board of directors of The Walt Disney Company, it was announced by Michael D. Eisner, chairman and chief executive officer.

The Academy Award-winning entertainer will fill the unexpired term held by the late Frank G. Wells, who served as Disney's president and chief operating officer until his death in a helicopter crash last April. The term runs until the annual stockholders' meeting in February.

The first African-American to be a leading man in mainstream motion pictures, Poitier, 67, has been one of the entertainment industry's most respected figures for nearly four decades. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 1968.

Nominated for an Oscar in 1958 for his role in *The Defiant Ones*, Poitier won the Academy Award for Best Actor five years later for his leading role in *Lilies of the Field*.

Nutcracker Performances Added To Meet Demand

Patrons Are Encouraged To Purchase Tickets Early For The 1994 Run

Last December's premiere of Oregon Ballet Theatre's All-New Nutcracker set a precedent for the growing ballet company. The \$1.2 million production, inspired by Artistic Director James Canfield, enchanted a sold-out audience of over 70,000 spectators. In an effort to accommodate the overwhelming demand, Oregon Ballet Theatre has added one performance of 3,000 seats for the 1994 holiday season, December 13 through 30, 1994. Interested parties are encouraged to buy tickets early.

Once again, the stage of the Portland Civic Auditorium will transform into an elaborate winter fantasy land. Canfield sets *The Nutcracker* in the opulence of Imperial Russia, drawing upon the 19th century influences of

designer Carl Faberge and Nutcracker composer, Peter Ilych Tchaikovsky. Canfield also choreographed the entire production.

For Canfield, the success of the new Nutcracker was the realization of a long-awaited dream. The former Joffrey Ballet principal dancer worked for several years to implement his vision for a world class holiday production. "In order to keep our patrons coming back to see *The Nutcracker* year after year, it is important that we give the community a production that is comparable in scale to those of the major players in the dance and theatre world," Canfield states.

Canfield collaborated with internationally renowned designer Campbell Baird to create sets and costumes. The Joffrey Ballet resident designer drew inspiration from sources as diverse as photographs of

Tchaikovsky's home to the jeweled designs of the famous Faberge eggs. Baird sets Act One of the ballet at Russian country estate in winter, while Act Two takes place in a palatial hall evoking the lavishness of Imperial St. Petersburg.

Live music accompanies all performances of *The Nutcracker*, and Music Director Niel DePonte conducts the Orchestra. The Nutcracker creates a sense of holiday magic in the Portland-Metropolitan area, call 2-BALLET (222-5538) for ticket information.

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