
News Release

CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE

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Brigham Young University

Artistic Director

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Brigham Young University welcomes home Broadway performer and contemporary dance artist Nathan Balsler as director and choreographer of his first BYU production, *Encounters*. As the director of the BYU Contemporary Dance Theatre, he seeks to introduce his flavor and vision for this unique collegiate dance company.

Balsler works with the students at Brigham Young University as both a teacher and a mentor in the dance department. His experience on national and international stages provides an extensive background upon which he can draw both creative measures and practical technique to educate BYU's dancers.

Balsler performed as a member of internationally-known Repertory Dance Theatre, a company dedicated to representing and preserving dance history, including the world's largest collection of American dance. His work has also put him on stage with world-renowned dancer and choreographer Molissa Fenley, as well as John Malashock and company; both of whom have choreographed over 70 works.

In addition to his demanding schedule as a performer, Balsler continued to develop his own skills as a choreographer. He has developed a significant number of dances which have been performed internationally. He also helped in the organization and development of the Utah Conservatory of the Performing Arts, a studio dedicated to training and encouraging up-coming performing artists. Balsler impresses upon his students the desire and motivation to be dance artists of the future and to continue the high performance standards of the group. He brings that same drive to expand the vision of Contemporary Dance Theatre by providing a blended showcase of art and entertainment that lifts and shares a touching message to audiences worldwide.

Balsler graduated from Brigham Young University in 1998 with a degree in Therapeutic Recreation, after which he went on to receive a master's degree in Fine Arts from the University of Utah. In addition to his

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contemporary dance experience, he has performed in many Broadway productions, and performed in four consecutive Tony Award shows. His casting credits place him alongside famous musical theatre actresses Kristen Chenoweth, Allyson Janney, and Cheyenne Jackson. Experience from *9 to 5: The Musical*, *Damn Yankees*, and *Legally Blonde* add to his musical theatre repertoire. He strives now to teach his students what he believes to be the most important lesson he learned under the national spotlights: professionalism. This work ethic is reflected not only in his teaching methods but in the technique and discipline of his students.

Since its creation in 1974, the company has performed in Argentina, Chile, Japan, the Philippines, Korea, Turkey, Israel, South Africa, and Australia. In November of 2013, Contemporary Dance Theatre participated in the Chun Hua Qiu Shi Festival at the National Center for the Performing Arts, in Beijing, China, as the first non-Asian international university dance group invited to perform in this festival. The group closed the festival with their full-length performance, "Encounters". In addition, Contemporary Dance Theatre has toured in the Eastern United States and was twice selected by the American College Dance Festival to perform at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Contemporary Dance Theatre originates in the Department of Dance of the College of Fine Arts and Communications at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. BYU is one of the nation's largest private universities with an enrollment of 30,000 students from across the United States and 110 foreign countries.

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