



Advertisement

GET 99.9% RELIABILITY WITH HIGH SPEED INTERNET FROM AT&T
Claim for Unverse HSPA

KEEP CALM YOUR INTERNET'S ON

STARTING AT \$30/mo.
Price for 24 mos. Req's 12 mo agmt, other qualifying svc & combined billing. Incl. 20GB. Add'l 20GB gains \$10 chrg for ea. Geo. & svc restr. apply.

Offer details

axs entertainment ARTS

Donna Cherry as Zimmerman's mother shines in 'The Ballad of Trayvon Martin'



Adrienne Warber
Grand Rapids Ballet Examiner

Read Bio

FEATURED VIDEO



Ryan Gosling
Learns Ballet

RELATED STORIES

Cathy Rigby McCoy and Tom McCoy win 2016 Broadway Global Producer of the Year

'Tab Hunter Confidential' opens his closet (once again) to tell all

Amanda Pekoe, founder of NYC's The Pekoe Group, predicts the Tonys big winners

'Hillary & Monica' a very funny play about writing and writers

Jungle Book, Call of the Wild, Pittsburgh Zoo Gala

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT HIGHLIGHTS



Exclusive premiere: Matt Brown's 'Feel Like That'

I just try to bring two worlds together, something old and something new, because those are the two worlds I grew up with," Matt Brown told AXS. He is an authentic, blue-eyed soul singer with a...



Anton Yelchin has private funeral as investigation into his death continues

Anton Yelchin was laid to rest in a private funeral attended by his loved ones five days after he was found dead outside of his home, according to People on June 28. The 27-year-old "Star Trek"...

NEXT ARTICLE

S.F. Ethnic Dance Festival: more than entertainment

AXS ENTERTAINMENT / ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT / PERFORMING ARTS

See also: [dance](#), [grand rapids ballet](#), [cinderella](#), [ballet](#)

Grand Rapids Ballet gives a magical performance with heart in 'Cinderella' [Like 485](#)

Next: [S.F. Ethnic Dance Festival: more than entertainment](#) Use your key for the next article

May 13, 2016 3:23 AM MST [f](#) [t](#) [p](#) [in](#) [g+](#) [m](#) [e](#) [s](#)



Caroline Wiley as Cinderella and Nicholas Schultz as the Prince

Photo Courtesy of Grand Rapids Ballet

Grand Rapids Ballet ends their 2015-16 Season on a high note with a stellar performance of "Cinderella," with choreography by world renowned choreographer Bruce Wells. This production captures the special magic of the classic fairy tale through enchanting dance sequences, emotional choreography and a fluid storyline. Grand Rapids Ballet's world premiere of "Cinderella" opened last weekend, and will hold four more shows this weekend, starting tonight, May 13-15, at the Peter Martin Wege Theatre. Most shows are sold out, but limited tickets are still available.

"Cinderella" as a ballet is relatively new. The ballet first premiered in 1945, performed by the Bolshoi Ballet, with music by Sergei Prokofiev and choreographed by Rostislav Zakharov. Since that premiere, there have been many productions of "Cinderella," most using the music by Prokofiev. **Grand Rapids Ballet** created a unique version of "Cinderella," setting it to music by Johann Strauss II, using four fates played by male dancers in place of the usually female four seasons, and having Bruce Wells choreograph on their dancers. Wells' choreography brought out the tenderness of the romance, Cinderella's emotions and the magic of her story. The Strauss music arranged by Michael Auer and Brendan Hollins worked beautifully with the dance numbers and story.



Photo Courtesy of Grand Rapids Ballet

Sold out shows can be a lot to live up to, but Grand Rapids Ballet more than delivered. All the elements of the production, from dancing and choreography to the set, music and costumes, worked seamlessly together to help the audience emotionally connect with the characters and the story. The audience for "Cinderella" at last Saturday's show had a mix of all ages – children, whole families and couples. So the challenge was to please all these age groups. Judging by the audience reaction of smiles at tender moments, laughter at comic displays and the standing ovation at the end of the show, it is clear that people had a good time.

The creative team of Grand Rapids Ballet Artistic Director Patricia Barker, Grand Rapids Ballet Creative Director Michael Auer and choreographer Bruce Wells created a strong and fluid storyline for "Cinderella." The story is retold in a way that shows Cinderella's loving relationship with her mother as a source of strength for Cinderella, and how Cinderella's strong character and goodness overcome the mean-spirited behavior of her stepmother. It is still love at first sight for Cinderella and her prince, but they first lock eyes in the garden by her mother's grave, not at the ball. Cinderella's mother's spirit transforming into the fairy godmother is a clever plot angle. The show provides the excitement of the ball, Cinderella's grand entrance, and the love-struck dancing between her and the prince. However, it is the tenderness between the main characters after the prince finds Cinderella and returns her shoe, as well as their private wedding dance with the spirit of Cinderella's mother that is most memorable in the love story.

The set worked well with the lighting and costumes. One of the unique things about this production was the way Grand Rapids Ballet Creative Director Michael Auer designed the set to come to the dancers for scene changes, rather than have the dancers enter each scene. For example, the garden changes into the house through a series of panels while Cinderella remains on the same place on stage. The costumes designed by Grand Rapids Ballet Artistic Director Patricia Barker were all in jewel tones and created a lovely 18th century atmosphere. The magical transformations of the horses and coachmen were entertaining and performed smoothly. It was a nice touch when Cinderella's dress transformed into her ball gown with one quick movement, as if by magic. The lighting by Matthew Taylor helped set the mood for scenes. One memorable use of lighting was the pas de deux between Cinderella and the prince after he finds her and returns her shoe, because all fades out to black except the two of them dancing, showing the intimacy of the moment.

Choreographer Bruce Wells did an excellent job creating lovely, romantic choreography that conveyed the characters' moods and brought out an emotional response in the audience. In the original production of "Cinderella," four seasons portrayed by female dancers, were prominent in the story as both a plot and choreography element. Choreographer Bruce Wells decided to have four male dancers portray the four fates of Cinderella as a way of showing emotional mood and to allow freer movement across the stage through many lifts. For example, it is through the four fates that the audience sees the fairy godmother fly around the stage in a series of lifts. Wells employed lifts in his choreography in key sequences that truly brought out Cinderella's mood with how she uses the movements in the transitions. Wells created strong classical ballet sequences that were both beautiful and entertaining for partnering and corps de ballet numbers. The inclusion of 18th century ball dancing movement added to the beauty of the production. The movements throughout the show created the right amount of romance, drama and comedy for various scenes. The interactions between Cinderella and the prince were romantic. The scenes between Cinderella and her mother's spirit were tender. The awkward antics and bickering between the two stepsisters was good comedy.

Grand Rapids Ballet dancers gave a strong performance in both classical ballet technique and acting skills. Solos, partnering and corps numbers all showed top-notch classical ballet technique. There are three "Cinderella" casts for the eight shows. In last Saturday's evening performance of the show, Caroline Wiley played Cinderella and Nicholas Schultz played the prince. Wiley danced with elegance and expression. Wiley and Schultz danced beautifully together and showed the range of emotions of falling in love, losing the love and the joy in finding it again through their dancing. Dawnell Dryja danced with grace and emotion as both Cinderella's mother and the fairy godmother. Cassidy Isaacson and Therese Davis were entertaining stepsisters through the physical comedy of their characters' awkward advances to the prince. Laura McQueen Schultz did a good job as the cruel stepmother, working well with Isaacson and Davis' stepsisters. The student dancers from Grand Rapids Ballet School's Junior Company, who played woodland creatures and debutantes, also did a great job in their dances.

Grand Rapids Ballet's "Cinderella" is possibly one of their best shows this season. It is easy to see why most of the eight shows are sold out. The remaining four shows will run on May 13-15 at the Peter Martin Wege Theatre at 341 Ellsworth SW. A few limited tickets are still available for the Saturday, May 14, matinee show at 2:00 p.m., as well as Royal Workshop backstage package tickets for select shows. Call the Grand Rapids Ballet Box Office at (616) 454-4771, ext. 10 for the most current ticket information or connect with them on [Facebook](#).

SUGGESTED LINKS

- [Grand Rapids Ballet: Choreographer Bruce Wells' artistic vision for 'Cinderella'](#)
- [Grand Rapids Ballet: How choreographer Val Caniparoli creates 'Nutcracker' magic](#)
- [Grand Rapids Ballet: Get to know 'Movemedia II' choreographer Penny Saunders](#)
- [Grand Rapids Ballet's 'Swan Lake' is radiant and emotional](#)
- [Grand Rapids Ballet's 'Spring Break for Kids' was delightful family fun](#)

Report this content

SHARE THIS ARTICLE

[f](#) [t](#) [p](#) [in](#) [g+](#) [m](#) [e](#) [s](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO AUTHOR

YOU MAY LIKE

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Her Dress Dropped Jaws At The 2015 Cannes Festival
Livingly

New Military-Grade Sunglasses Are Selling Out...The Coolest Shades For Summer
Dollar Conscious

Ron Paul Issues Surprising Gold Warning
Stansberry Research

Scientists Uncovered How We Age - Now They May Have A Solution
MIT Technology Review | Elysium Health

Meryl Streep Finally Reveals Her Outrageous Sleep (Photos)
Lonny

Best Credit Cards Of 2016
CompareCards.com

MORE FROM EXAMINER

by Taboola

Andrea Tantaros surfaces in interview: Fox host mysterious ousting baffles fans

Biggest dog in shelter: Leonberger so sad doesn't even pick up his head

Prince death details ironic: Autopsy complete, so what killed iconic star?

Comments

We're unable to load Disqus. If you are a moderator please see our [troubleshooting guide](#).

Advertisement

Report this ad

Advertisement

Report this ad

POPULAR in ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

- Andrea Tantaros update on return as Fox News 'Outnumbered' host**
- George Harrison featured on lost 1972 Gary Wright album finally being released**
- Top 8 Credit Cards For Those With Excellent Credit**
Sponsored CompareCards.com
- Foul play targeting Bobbi Kristina Brown's boyfriend in criminal investigation**
- Sony hack helped push Amy Pascal for her exit interview**
- Paparazzi not to blame in Bruce Jenner crash that killed woman**
- Will Donald Trump Cause the Market to Crash?**
Sponsored Fisher Investments
- 'Poltergeist' trailer and poster are here**
- Daniel Craig 'Spectre' injury delays latest James Bond film**
- Matt Jardine discusses performing Pet Sounds at 50**
- The End of Social Security**
Sponsored The Sovereign Investor
- 'Fifty Shades of Grey' ending wasn't director's choice**
- See pictures of the new Beatles Yellow Submarine Hot Wheels**

Advertisement

Report this ad

TRENDING on EXAMINER.COM

- Dogs tortured then killed after 'free to good home' ads**
- Dog found dragging 6 pound chain around her neck exposing main artery**
- Hillary Clinton almost certainly will face indictment rec'd from FBI**
- Myrtle Beach is under a long-term no-swim advisory**
- Terrified dog tried to cling to owner just as he was surrendered to busy shelter**
- Dying girl's last wish: Please, remember to throw the ball for my service dog**
- Dog dragged by neck behind truck - reward offered**
- ABBA reunion video: What really happened when ABBA reunited to sing**
- Shih Tzu's owner gravely ill with cancer pleads for someone to save his dog**
- Simon Cowell walks off stage with scared puppy on 'Britain's Got More Talent'**

Advertisement

Report this ad