

Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Decision to Cut Orchestra

Dear Mr. Orr,

As a musician of the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra it has come to my attention that the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre has decided that it would be in the companies best interest to suspend live performance by the PBT Orchestra in favor of pre-recorded orchestral music to accompany the dancers. I wish to express my outrage at the notion that live musical accompaniment is not integral to the business of a dance presentation. Especially in light of the fact that your own Mission Statement places top priority on the presentation of "world-class" ballet.

Our own orchestra is fortunate to have a member who is a resident of Pittsburgh, but has chosen to perform in Detroit. This outstanding musician has left the Pittsburgh market in search of an opportunity to perform live opera and ballet. Our gain has resulted in a loss to the city of Pittsburgh. Once the company loses it's orchestra, which is sure to follow this unfortunate decision, what comes next? Perhaps you could suspend the professional dancers in favor of students or volunteers from the community. After all its *dance* that defines the company, not dancers, or musicians, or the other countless professionals who contribute to the presentation of "world-class" ballet.

I believe the citizens of Pittsburgh deserve better than the bad decisions being made by the administrative staff of the PBT and I hope you reconsider the present direction the company has chosen to follow.

Sincerely,

Greg Near
ROPA Delegate for Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra