

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 7, 2026

**Ballet Kelowna Opens 2026/27 Season with Visionary Mixed Program,
Paying Homage to Beauty, Sacrifice, Resilience, and Legacy in
– *Four Voices* –**

Season opens with two audience favourites and two world premieres

Kelowna, BC – Ballet Kelowna opens its 2026/27 season with four distinct works of tribute and commemoration in its compelling mixed program, ***Four Voices***, on stage **November 6, 2026 at 7:30pm** and **November 7, 2026 at 1:30pm and 7:30pm**, at the **Kelowna Community Theatre**. The program features two audience favourites from Ballet Kelowna's repertoire: ***Acts of Remembrance***, a poignant ode to the Canadians who served and lost their lives in times of war from Ballet Kelowna's own Artistic Director and CEO **Simone Orlando**, and **Trey McIntyre's *The Reassuring Effects (of Form and Poetry)***, a vibrant piece that embodies the lyrical beauty of Antonín Dvořák's radiant *Serenade for Strings in E Major*. The program balances these works with two world premieres from Ballet Kelowna's own Rehearsal Director **Joanna Lige** and Company Dancer **Donaldo Nava**, who both make their solo choreographic debuts. Lige's ***Unrooted*** is inspired by nature's resilience in the face of environmental loss, and Nava's ***Reverencia al Umbral*** pays homage to fellow dancer **Kurt Werner**, who will retire at the end of the 2026/27 season, following a distinguished 15 years with Ballet Kelowna.

"*Four Voices* brings together four deeply personal perspectives, each honouring the people and life experiences that have shaped who we are," says Simone Orlando, Ballet Kelowna's Artistic Director and CEO. "Ballet Kelowna has always been a home for creation, and it's immensely rewarding to see our company artists expand into choreography. I've had the privilege of serving as advisor and dramaturge on Joanna and Donaldo's latest creations—a natural evolution from the shared work they created last season. And to have this program highlight Ballet Kelowna's longest-serving dancer, Kurt Werner, is a wonderful celebration of his tremendous contributions to the company."

Performed in recognition of Remembrance Day, ***Acts of Remembrance*** reflects on the profound human cost of conflict, drawing inspiration from pivotal First World War battles including Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele. Set to the sweeping, emotive score of Canadian composer Owen Belton, which weaves in names read aloud from the Kelowna cenotaph, and incorporating archival images of young Okanagan soldiers, Orlando's ***Acts of Remembrance*** is a contemplative reflection of the local community's service. Having first premiered in 2017, in honour of the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, the work has since become one of the company's most requested works and will feature newly revised scenes for its 2026 presentation.

Following her group choreographic debut in *Threefold Beat*, Lige returns to the Ballet Kelowna stage with *Unrooted*, a striking new work that ruminates on the resilience of the natural world. Born and raised in Kelowna, Lige has lived through numerous catastrophic wildfire events in the region. Her heartfelt piece explores the grief of ecological loss alongside nature's quiet capacity to survive. Through richly expressive movement—and a costume concept taken from the bitterroot flower, a plant native to the Okanagan—Lige affirms that beauty, though fragile in the face of destruction, endures beneath the surface.

Also returning to the stage since his choreographic debut alongside Lige is Nava, who presents his new solo work, *Reverencia al Umbral*, inspired by longtime company artist Kurt Werner, who performs his final season with Ballet Kelowna. This intimate piece for two dancers, Werner and Emily Webb, is a meditation on both the ending and new beginnings that major life changes bring. Exploring the physical and emotional act of stepping away, *Reverencia al Umbral* captures a moment suspended between the weight of a remarkable legacy and the quiet space of what's to come.

Back by popular demand, the program concludes with McIntyre's *The Reassuring Effects (of Form and Poetry)*, beloved for its infectious energy, musicality, and spirit. Set to a classical score, the exhilarating work showcases eight dancers in a dazzling display of virtuosity, precision, and uplifting movement performed "with the speed and clarity of light" (*Miami Herald*).

Four Voices is dedicated to the memory of Lori Larson, whose decades of mentorship and devotion to dance education helped lay the foundation for Ballet Kelowna and shaped generations of young dancers across the Okanagan.

Pay-What-You-Wish tickets for *Four Voices* are proudly sponsored by **Odium Brown**. Ballet Kelowna also offers an 'All My Relations' \$18 ticket option for Indigenous patrons. Tickets and information at balletkelowna.ca

Ballet Kelowna's 2026/2027 season is presented by the Thomas Alan Budd Foundation.

About Ballet Kelowna (balletkelowna.ca)

Founded in 2002, Ballet Kelowna is the sole professional dance company in B.C.'s Interior. The organization is committed to its role as a leader in the region through encouraging, promoting, and developing Canadian dancers and choreographers. The company performs annually for more than 12,000 audience members in Kelowna and on tour, and provides unique dance training opportunities and outreach programs. Its Artistic Director and CEO, Simone Orlando, is an award-winning choreographer and former dancer with Ballet BC and The National Ballet of Canada. Under Orlando's direction, Ballet Kelowna was named the 2024 Artistic Company of the Year by the BC Live Performance Network (formerly the British Columbia Touring Council) and was an organizational recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Arts and Music Award in 2022.

LISTING INFORMATION

Ballet Kelowna presents *Four Voices*

Dates & Times:

November 6 at 7:30pm + November 7 at 1:30pm & 7:30pm

Tickets: Kelowna Community Theatre
Phone: 250-469-8940
Online: theboxoffice.ca
In Person: 1375 Water Street, Kelowna, BC

Ticket Prices: From \$63.98 (Adult), \$55.49 (Senior), \$33.44 (Student/Child)
\$18 (Indigenous Patrons)

Performance Venue: Kelowna Community Theatre
1375 Water Street, Kelowna, BC

Website: balletkelowna.ca

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