

Ballet

NEBRASKA

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IOWA WEST GRANT STARTS COUNTDOWN TOWARD BALLET NEBRASKA DEBUT

OMAHA, Neb. -- A \$10,000 grant to Ballet Nebraska from the Iowa West Foundation is helping build the momentum toward the new company's October debut, its artistic director said.

"The grant just adds excitement at what is already an exciting time for us," said Erika Overturff. "The Iowa West Foundation is a very respected supporter of arts projects, and receiving this level of commitment from them is a real stamp of approval for us.

"I think it will help people realize that this really is happening -- that professional ballet is coming back to Nebraska."

Iowa West's grant supports Ballet Nebraska's production of *Swing, Swing, Swing*, which will open the company's premiere season October 2 at Omaha's Orpheum Theater.

Swing, Swing, Swing will feature live music performed onstage by Omaha's DoyleMusic jazz combo. Created by Chicago choreographer Harrison McEldowney, the ballet uses Swing Era dance styles to tell a story of love and camaraderie among young men and women against the backdrop of World War II.

Originally commissioned by the Omaha Theater Ballet for its 2008-09 season, the ballet drew enthusiastic audiences who otherwise might never have attended a ballet performance, said Overturff, who danced one of the lead roles in the 2008 production.

"I'd look out into the theater while we were dancing, and see a huge mix of people," she recalled. "People who had lived through that era, swing dancing fans, jazz fans, ballet buffs -- all enjoying the great music and choreography and having a terrific time.

"That's exactly our goal for Ballet Nebraska -- to present ballet as great theater that everyone can appreciate. So *Swing, Swing, Swing* is the perfect way to start our debut season. And we really appreciate the Iowa West Foundation, and all our other supporters, for being our partners in making it happen."

Ballet Nebraska is the region's only professional dance company. The company's mission is to enrich the communities of Nebraska and Iowa through professional dance performance, educational programs, and community outreach. More information about Ballet Nebraska is available on the company's website at balletnebraska.org. Tickets for the October 2 production of *Swing, Swing, Swing* are available from Ticket Omaha at ticketomaha.com.

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Note to editors:

- Downloadable full-resolution photos for use with this release are available from:
http://www.smugmug.com/gallery/13104790_6WBfS