

**A performance of biblical proportions:
Pacific Festival Ballet announces world premiere of *Noah's Ark***

For immediate release: On Saturday, May 22, Pacific Festival Ballet will present the world premiere of *Noah's Ark*, a multimedia début featuring ballet, modern dance, aerial work, video and special effects performed by guest artists from professional dance companies and select students at California Dance Theatre, the company's training school.

The second collaboration between Pacific Festival Ballet's Artistic Director Kim Maselli and music composer Eric Allaman, *Noah's Ark* is a retelling of the biblical story and will feature a hand-constructed ark [dimensions].

"This is a story of epic proportions," observed Maselli, "rich in tradition, colorful characters, and a storyline that allowed me to frame Noah's personal journey against the most compelling of backdrops. Such an undertaking went beyond the bounds of mere ballet," she added, "which is why I felt inspired to take a multimedia approach to telling Noah's tale."

With a blank canvas but limited budgets, the company was challenged to find creative ways to remain faithful to the story's essential message while conveying the scale of its undertaking. The innovative use of hand puppets allowed Maselli to cast one dancer for each animal represented while suggestion the notion of two by two.

"We have quite a menagerie performing in Noah's Ark," laughed Lori Sorensen, California Dance Theatre's Artistic Director, "so it was obvious from the beginning that we'd have to find a way to double up on our animals without overwhelming the story or the stage."

It's out-of-the-box thinking such as this that is a signature of the company's ballets, but the dazzle element for which they've become known is also there. "One of our dancers who is also a contortionist will be performing the role of the Dove on silks suspended [x] feet in the air," reminiscent of something one might see in Cirque du Soleil, Sorensen noted. "It's breathtaking the way this conveys a sense of flight and freedom."

Pacific Festival Ballet's *Noah's Ark* premieres Saturday, May 22 at 2:00 p.m. and again at 7:00 p.m. at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza Bank of America Performing Arts Center. Tickets are available through ticketmaster.com, in person at the box office, or by calling 805.449.ARTS (2787). More information can be obtained at the company's website: <http://californiadancetheatre.com> or by calling 818.707.3267.