

## PRESS RELEASE

Date: June 24, 2013

Presented by: McLaughlin Research Institute  
1520 23<sup>rd</sup> Street South  
Great Falls, MT  
(406) 452-6208  
(406) 454-6019 (fax)

---

### **Smuin Ballet returns to Great Falls: Funding Science through the Arts**

***Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at 7:30PM***

Michael Smuin, *Founder*  
Celia Fushille, *Artistic & Executive Director*

McLaughlin Research Institute for Biomedical Sciences (MRI), located in Great Falls, MT is excited to once again host the fantastic ballet troupe, Smuin Ballet, for its performance at the Mansfield Theater in Great Falls on September 13, 2013. Smuin Ballet, based in San Francisco, last came to Montana in 2008 and drew rave reviews for its performances.

This performance benefits McLaughlin Research Institute through the generosity of Montana natives, Dr. Irving Weissman and Allie Knight Weissman. The Weissmans graciously underwrite a significant portion of the tour so the proceeds can benefit biomedical research at McLaughlin.

The connection between McLaughlin and Smuin Ballet runs deep. Dr. Irving Weissman was the first student intern at MRI, nearly 50 years ago. Today, Dr. Weissman is Director, Institute of Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine, Stanford *University* School of Medicine and is one the most highly recognized immunologists in the country. Dr. Weissman was the first to isolate blood-forming stem cells and how they can be used to treat cancer and other diseases. Allie Weissman is a long-time trustee of Smuin Ballet

Michael Smuin was also a native Montanan, from Missoula. Upon leaving home at the age of 15 to pursue a ballet scholarship at the University of Utah, and then on to San Francisco Ballet at the age of 17, Michael became a nationally acclaimed dancer, choreographer and director. After winning numerous awards, including a Tony Award for his choreography of the Broadway show "Anything Goes," Michael founded Smuin Ballet in 1993 and has shaken up the ballet scene with his innovative style, which combines the grace and technique of

classical ballet with the energy and pizzazz of Broadway. Because of the spicy, colorful flavor of his ballets, he has been described as both “the Bad Boy of Ballet” and the person “leading ballet into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”. Sadly, Michael passed away in 2007, but his work and legacy live on through the company that bears his name as well as his fun-loving, spirited style. We are proud to once again treat Montanans to the beauty and joy of Michael Smuin’s choreography.

Smuin Ballet has quickly established itself as “one of this country’s most entertaining, original ballet troupes,” (*Dance Magazine*). Recognized for its accessible and innovative repertory, the company adheres to the philosophy that ballet should be a living dance form that continues to engage and delight modern audiences.

Smuin Ballet will perform three original pieces, Dear Miss Cline, Jazzin’, and Fly Me to the Moon. The performance will take place at the Mansfield Theatre in Great Falls at 7:30PM on Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup>.

Dear Miss Cline, choreographer Amy Seiwert’s tribute to Nashville songstress, Patsy Cline, departs from Seiwert’s edgy, contemporary style into the realm of pop, and is a nod to Smuin, who was her mentor. The ensemble performs sharp, witty miniature narratives to Cline’s unwavering vocals. The piece is chic and smart, and the dancers buck audience expectations with turns, twists, lifts and flexed feet when least expected.

Darrell Grand Moultrie’s Jazzin’ is a sultry ballet driven by the tunes of jazz greats Wynton Marsalis, Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, and Andy Razaf.

Fly Me to the Moon is Michael Smuin’s tribute to Frank Sinatra. This blend of ballet and popular dance is the embodiment of the smooth and stylish melodies that have inspired generations, including his renditions of “I’ve Got You Under My Skin,” “That’s Life,” and “The Lady is a Tramp.” Performed against a twinkling backdrop of a glowing night sky, the ballet also highlights warm and witty favorites such as “You and the Night and the Music,” the funny and charming “I Won’t Dance,” and culminates in a full chorus, high-kicking “New York, New York.” Infused with Michael Smuin’s signature Broadway pizzazz, this “A-Number One, top of the heap” ballet inspires audiences to shake their little town blues, stand up, and cheer.

Tickets will be available in Great Falls at the Mansfield Box Office by calling 406-455-8514 or visiting <http://ticketing.greatfallsmt.net> or purchasing directly from the location at Great Falls Civic Center, 2 Park Dr. S, using the "C" door on the south side of the building. Tickets are \$30.00 and \$50.00 based on zone seating or \$100.00 for the performance and reception immediately following with the cast. Tickets are limited for each zone so please be sure to book early!