



Ballet Goes Green at the Gardens

Environmental activism theme to be explored at this annual gala evening

Youngstown—When John Lennon wrote the words “nothing's gonna change my world” as the refrain of his song *Across the Universe* he was he was trying to inspire environmental action. The same can be said for Ballet Western Reserve and Fellows Riverside Gardens-Mill Creek MetroParks at this year’s annual collaboration the *Enchanted Evening at the Gardens* on **Friday, April 30th**. This year’s theme is “**The Recycle Revue**” featuring music written by The Beatles.

The wine and cheese reception will begin at **7 P.M.** on the Davis Education and Visitor Center terrace and the performance will follow at **8 P.M.** in the auditorium. Following the performance, guest will enjoy a dessert and champagne; an elegant silent auction and dancing under the stars to the music of a local band.

This performance will be a sort of call to environmental action through dance, says Richard Dickinson, Artistic Director of Ballet Western Reserve. Dickinson will serve as director and lead choreographer for the event, but will share the night with five other BWR choreographers.

“We have chosen this year’s theme as a way of promoting awareness that each of us can do our part to protect and save the planet,” says Dickinson, noting that there is no better place in the Mahoning Valley than the Gardens to remind us why we should be working so hard to save the earth.

However, Dickinson reassures that the show will not be preachy or a lecture. Far from it! The Beatles music was selected as a universal choice for the show because it is considered recyclable in the sense that you can hear it over and over again and never tire of it. All costumes for the event are being reused from BWR’s costume vault. Even the Green Team will be on hand promoting its “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” mantra.” I am sure everyone will enjoy the very creative ways the choreographers have tackled the theme,” he adds.

Keith Kaiser, horticulture director of the MetroParks concurs: “Spring in the Gardens is truly magical. The joys we receive from seeing color emerge on the daffodil and tulip plants remind us how lucky we are to have such great cultural assets in our community such as a professional dance troupe and botanical display garden. This years’ theme of expressing environmental issues through dance should connect with everyone who sees the performance.”

The annual Elegant Auction will feature clothing from Nanette Lepore’s collection, a “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” fall ticket package, a Jim Tressel autographed football and other fantastic items.

“**Sneak Peek**,” the child-size version of the show, will take place on **Thursday April 29th at 6PM**. The event starts with a tour of Fellows Riverside Garden where BWR choreographers will be scattered throughout to teach children dance steps from the show. After light refreshments, the group will then proceed to the auditorium for the performance.

This entire event is generously underwritten by Jeff and Kimberly Simon. Food for the reception is provided by a variety of area restaurants. Seating is limited and tickets are on sale now for \$50.00 per person. For information or tickets, please call (330) 744-1934.