

January 6, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## DESTINATION MISSOULA BRINGS U.S. PREMIERE OF THE VIENNA INTERNATIONAL BALLET EXPERIENCE TO MISSOULA JANUARY 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>

(MISSOULA, MT) - Destination Missoula and the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) are proud to be hosts and founding sponsors of [VIBE, the Vienna International Ballet Experience](#) bringing this prestigious Viennese Competition to the U.S. for the first time January 12 – 16.

“When the opportunity was presented to host the first round of the famed Viennese 8- Annual International Ballet and Contemporary Dance Competition, we knew Missoula was the perfect place. We are a unique blend of sophisticated, eclectic culture and unparalleled natural resources and beauty,” said Barb Neilan, Executive Director of Destination Missoula and Missoula TBID.

The partnership between Destination Missoula, the Missoula TBID and the Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre (RMBT) began two years ago when Destination Missoula and the Missoula TBID became the sponsor of RMBT’s International Tour. As a direct result of RMBT’s European Tour, Missoula was asked to host the first round of the Viennese International Ballet and Contemporary Dance Competition. Destination Missoula worked hand in hand with RMBT and Gregor Hatala from the Vienna Ballet Competition to develop the VIBE concept including branding, website and event coordination. The two Missoula tourism organizations have combined to contribute over \$40,000 in cash and in-kind support to bring this historic event to our beautiful city. Event promotion highlights included information distributed to the Today Show during Al Roker’s visit to Missoula this November, VIBE branding displayed at ABC Studios in Time Square during Thanksgiving Week and placement on huge media boards around the financial district of Toronto for the month of December. Destination Missoula/Missoula TBID also pitched the event to 81 journalists on a recent press junket to San Francisco, Seattle and Portland.

VIBE is bringing in 200 of the most talented ballet and contemporary dancers from around the world, including Cuba, South Africa, Portugal, and Canada. The prestigious panel of judges and master workshop instructors have backgrounds with the Vienna State Opera Ballet, New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, National Ballet of Canada, Ekaterinberg State Ballet, the Bolshoi Academy and the Beijing Dance Academy, to name a few.

Events include the VIBE Dance Challenge held at the Dennison Theatre, VIBE Film Festival at the Silver, Roxy Theaters and UC Theatres and the Art of Diplomacy Conference hosted by the Mansfield Center. The culmination of this remarkable event is the Grand Finale Gala, featuring performances by the winners and renowned international guest artists, Saturday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, presented by the Wilma and the Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre.

“My hope is that throughout this week visitors and locals will enjoy performances by many of the most talented dancers from across the U.S. and around the world, watch documentaries that will demonstrate the power of dance, and listen to speakers talk about how art and diplomacy can change how we view ourselves and affect change around the globe,” Neilan concluded.

For VIBE event schedules and ticket information visit [vibe.destinationmissoula.org](http://vibe.destinationmissoula.org).

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