

For immediate release

Out There: Jonathan Porretta's Life in Dance

A Book by Marcie Sillman

Available September 10, 2016

Elliott Bay Book Co. Talk/Signing on September 10, 2016

Seattle, WA – August 29, 2016—Jonathan Porretta is one of the most beloved dancers at Pacific Northwest Ballet. But his journey to principal dancer wasn't easy. He grew up different: gay, lonely, and teased in a small New Jersey town, following a dream that those around him couldn't understand. Award-winning arts journalist Marcie Sillman chronicles the dancer's tale in a new, all-ages *catalogue raisonné* called *Out There: Jonathan Porretta's Life in Dance*.

The book's message—"Be yourself and people will love you for who you are"—comes through clearly in Sillman's crisp, engaging prose. Family snapshots and exquisite dance photography by Angela Sterling show key moments in Porretta's career thus far.

Out There is an expanded version of the 2,000-word article Sillman published on KUOW.org in January 2016. In addition to Sillman's 5,000-word essay, *Out There* includes a list of Porretta's lead roles (plus 10 favorites highlighted with personal commentary by Porretta), a selected bibliography of articles about Porretta, and a timeline.

Book Facts at a Glance

Out There: Jonathan Porretta's Life in Dance

By Marcie Sillman

List price: \$59 (available on Amazon.com and through other IngramSpark distribution channels)

Special price at Amusements (in-person and online): \$45

Special price at Elliott Bay Book Company: \$45

ISBN: 978-0-692-70822-4

136 pages, hard cover, 8.5" x 11"

5,000-word essay by Marcie Sillman

Commentary on 10 roles by Jonathan Porretta

List of leading roles, guest appearances, and choreography

Selected bibliography and chronology

95 color photographs by Angela Sterling

108 add'l images (childhood photographs, candid, additional dance photographs, etc.)

Designed and edited by Rosie Gaynor

Published independently by Seattle Scriptorium through IngramSpark

About the Dancer

Porretta is 35 years old. He is *not* planning on retiring anytime soon. He underwent a successful foot surgery in 2015 and returned to the stage for PNB's *Roméo et Juliette* in February 2016 as Mercutio. His performances on tour with PNB in New York a few weeks later earned him glowing reviews. Alastair Macaulay, chief dance critic of *The New York Times*, wrote about Porretta's portrayal of the lead in *Prodigal Son*: "Jonathan Porretta danced the role with

exceptional momentum and muscular force on Wednesday. Jumps sliced the air, pirouettes were mini-tornadoes, and — most striking — the ending of each movement was the preparation for the next.” Wendy Perron, *Dance Magazine*’s editor at large, tweeted: “Jonathan Porretta just slayed me in Prodigal Son @PNBallet @NYCityCenter. From bounding joy to pathetic despair.”

About the Author

Marcie Sillman has been covering the Seattle arts scene for 30-plus years. Her work is heard in Seattle on the NPR-affiliate KUOW FM, and has appeared in *The Seattle Times*, *Crosscut*, and on the *Seattle Channel*. Nationally, she reports for NPR and has written for *Pointe* and *Dance Teacher* magazines. She was the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship in dance journalism in 2009. More of Sillman’s writing can be found on her blog, *And Another Thing*, at marciesillman.com.

About the Photographer

After a successful career as a soloist with Pacific Northwest Ballet, Angela Sterling turned to her second passion, photography. She has created images commercially and for many marketing campaigns around the world, and she has shot for more than ten years for companies like Pacific Northwest Ballet, Les ballets de Monte Carlo, Dutch National Ballet, Boston Ballet, Alonzo King’s LINES, and Dresden Semper Opera Ballet. Sterling’s images are seen regularly in *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Dutch VOGUE*, *Paris ELLE*, and international dance publications. Images can be seen on her website, angelasterlingphoto.com. Recent work includes photographing for friend and Tony Award Winning choreographer Christopher Wheeldon for his Broadway show, *An American in Paris*.

Video Trailer

URL: <https://youtu.be/gMhxm4akJsI>

Embed code: `<iframe width="420" height="315" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/gMhxm4akJsI" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>`

Events: Meet Sillman and Porretta

Join Sillman and Porretta at Elliott Bay Book Co. on September 10, 2016, at 2pm for a conversation about the book—plus a book signing. (Books will be available for purchase.) More information is available on Elliott Bay’s website: <http://www.elliottbaybook.com/event/jonathan-porretta-marcie-sillman>. Stay tuned for a book signing at McCaw Hall/Amusements later this fall as well.

Advance Notices for *Out There*

from Peter Boal, Artistic Director of Pacific Northwest Ballet: “This book is worth the purchase price just for the retrospective of Jonathan Porretta’s various hairstyles. Like thousands of fans in Seattle, you will love this guy. Jonathan’s unmatched energy jumps from each page of this visually stunning book. As much as the story catalogues the career of one of the greats in the world of ballet, it is also the story of a talented boy finding his identity and his passion for dance through the unwavering support of his mother. This compelling tale takes the reader from the close-minded bullying of the schoolyard to the dazzling bravura of the stage. It’s a great read for ballet-goers, boys, moms, and the rest of the human race.”

from Marc Kenison (aka Waxie Moon):

In an art form that is primarily known for celebrating a specific type of feminine ideal, it is refreshing to read about a male ballet star. Yet Mr. Porretta doesn’t fit the conventional princely model typically emulated on stage. *Out There* will inspire dancers (or dance lovers) of any age,

but perhaps especially young men, who might relate to Mr. Porretta's adolescent feelings of not fitting in and having a singular passion to perform. A flamboyant gay outsider, he found acceptance akin to a second home in the world of dance. Young dancers may find a new kind of inspiration in Mr. Porretta. *[This is an excerpt. The full version is available at jonathanporretta.com/notices.html.]*

For More Information

For more information, please visit jonathanporretta.com or email rosie@seattlescriptorium.com.

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