



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ODC/DANCE RETURNS TO THE STAGE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON IN

The Velveteen Rabbit

*This annual holiday tradition delivers a timeless message of
love, loyalty and acceptance*

December 2 - December 10, 2023

Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA

December 16 – 17, 2023

Douglas Morrisson Theatre in Hayward, CA



Image by Greg Meyers with photography by Robbie Sweeny.

odc.dance.velveteenrabbit

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, September 18, 2023 – ODC/Dance has announced the dates of its annual holiday program, now in its 37th year. Voted *San Francisco* magazine's Best of the Bay, the company returns to the stage in ***The Velveteen Rabbit***, December 2 – 17. Based on the story by Margery Williams, *The Velveteen Rabbit* features choreography by **KT Nelson**, narration by actor **Geoff Hoyle**, costumes and sets by **Brian Wildsmith**, music by Benjamin Britten and larger-than-life storybook characters portrayed by the world-class dancers of ODC/Dance.

The Velveteen Rabbit runs December 2 - December 10 at the Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA, followed by two additional performances December 16 – 17 at the Douglas Morrisson Theatre in

Hayward, presented by the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District. Tickets for the dates in San Francisco, \$30 to \$125, are now on sale at odc.dance/velveteenrabbit. Tickets for the dates in Hayward, \$40, are now on sale at douglasmorrissontheatre.thundertix.com/events/218468.

The Velveteen Rabbit chronicles the story of a stuffed rabbit which comes to life through the love of its owner, a young boy. The book has endured because of its timeless message of love, loyalty and acceptance, and ODC/Dance's adaptation, which has toured to 20 states, continues to enthrall children and grown-ups alike.

"The wisdom of *The Velveteen Rabbit* is just as potent today as when it was written just over 100 years ago," said Nelson. "Margery Williams conveys insight about what's important in life with wit and tenderness. Through the Rabbit, she shows that enduring love depends on what's invisible to the eye."

ODC Founder and Artistic Director **Brenda Way** directs this year's *Velveteen Rabbit* with support from **Brandon "Private" Freeman**, and Nelson will direct the show on tour at the Douglass Morrison Theatre in Hayward. Finally, **Jeremy Bannon-Neches** will serve as the Kids Cast rehearsal director in charge of approximately 20 young dancers this year.

The cast includes **Rachel Furst** and **Allie Papazian** as the Rabbit; **Christian Squires** and **Colton Wall** as the Boy; **Ryan Rouland Smith** as the Skin Horse; Freeman as the Crocodile; Papazian as the Fairy and Nana; and **ArVejon Jones** as "Nana Bottom," the hard-working, unseen lower half of the ten-foot-tall character of the Nana. Rounding out the cast are Bannon-Neches, **Jaime Garcia Castilla**, **Jenna Marie** and **Miche Wong** as the adult chorus.

ADDITIONAL VELVETEEN RABBIT OFFERINGS

ODC is also delighted to offer ***The Velveteen Rabbit* Digital Experience**. This streaming program is available year-round on ODC Connect. It includes a feature film version of *The Velveteen Rabbit* alongside interactive content: six episodes of *The Family Follow Along Series*, three episodes of *Fun House* and the documentary *Backstage Pass: The Velveteen Rabbit*. Whether families wish to relive the magic and unpack the wisdom of the Rabbit or build up to the main event, this streaming package is the perfect companion – available at odc.dance/connect. Fourteen-day free trials are now available alongside rentals of specific programs.

Additionally, ODC is delighted to present for the first time two film screenings of *The Velveteen Rabbit* at the Vogue Theater on **November 11** at **11 a.m.** and **1 p.m.**

And as part of its annual **Buddies for Bunnies** program, ODC has donated 1400 tickets to third-grade students through 12 participating public schools, including Title 1 schools and for the first time The California School for the Deaf in Fremont. In addition to donating tickets, ODC provides the students transportation to and from the theater, and their teachers receive a curriculum guide with video designed for classroom use.

ABOUT ODC

Founded in 1971 by Artistic Director Brenda Way, ODC is a groundbreaking contemporary arts institution: a world-class dance company (ODC/Dance), a theater with year-round presenting and

mentorship programs (ODC Theater), a training school for dancers and movers of all levels (ODC School), and a fee-free, educational Healthy Dancers' Clinic. Known nationally for its entrepreneurial savvy and artistic innovation, ODC is unique for its holistic vision, now including a robust digital platform. With its home in San Francisco's Mission District, ODC makes a dynamic contribution to the Bay Area's vibrant dance and arts ecosystem, cultivating artists, inspiring audiences, engaging the community, and fostering diversity and inclusion through dance performance, training and mentorship.

FACT SHEET

WHAT:

ODC/Dance presents *The Velveteen Rabbit*, an annual holiday tradition since 1986. *The Velveteen Rabbit* is a two-act fantasy told through music, dance and narrative. It chronicles the story of a stuffed rabbit which comes to life through the love of its owner, a young boy. Suitable for ages 3 and up.

Run Time: 85 minutes including one intermission

WHEN & WHERE:

December 2 - 10, 2023

Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA

700 Howard Street

San Francisco, CA 94103

Saturday, Dec. 2 at **2 p.m.**

Sunday, Dec. 3 at **2 p.m.**

Friday, Dec. 8 at **11 a.m.**

Saturday, Dec. 9 at **2 p.m.**

Sunday, Dec. 10 at **2 p.m.**

December 16 - 17, 2023

Douglas Morrisson Theatre

22311 N 3rd St.

Hayward, CA 94546

Saturday, Dec. 16 at **6 p.m.**

Sunday, Dec. 17 at **2 p.m.**

TICKETS:

San Francisco: \$30 - \$125

To purchase tickets for the performances at YBCA visit odc.dance/velveteenrabbit or call the box office at **415-863-9834**. Discounts available. For more information, please contact the ODC Box Office at boxoffice@odc.dance.

Hayward: \$40

To purchase tickets for the performances at the Douglas Morrison Theatre visit douglasmorrissontheatre.thundertix.com/events/218468 or call the box office at **510-881-6700**.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.odc.dance

For all press inquiries please contact John Hill at john@johnhillpr.com.