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ODC/DANCE ANNOUNCES THE DATES FOR ITS HOLIDAY SHOW

The Velveteen Rabbit

*An annual holiday tradition delivering a timeless message of
love, loyalty and acceptance*

ODC/Dance welcomes two new dancers, Caitlin Hicks and Ja'Moon Jones

ODC/Dance tours to Taiwan December 31 to January 16

November 29 - December 7, 2025

Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA



Photo by Shawna Sarnowski.

"A trip down memory lane that children of all ages will find hard to resist."

– San Francisco Chronicle

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, September 15, 2025 – ODC/Dance has announced the dates of its annual holiday show, now in its 39th year. Voted *San Francisco* magazine's and the *Bay Area Reporter's* Best of the Bay, the company returns to the Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA in ***The Velveteen Rabbit***, November 29 – December 7. Based on the story by Margery Williams, *The Velveteen Rabbit* features choreography by **KT Nelson**, narration by actor **Geoff Hoyle**, design elements 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 for six performances with Saturday performances at 11 a.m. and Sunday performances at 2 p.m. The public is also welcome to attend on two additional dates which are designed primarily to serve student field trips: Wednesday, December 3 and Friday, December 5. Both performances start at 11 a.m. Tickets, \$30 to \$125, are now on sale at odc.dance/velveteenrabbit, and discounts are available for groups of six or more.

The Velveteen Rabbit chronicles the story of a stuffed rabbit which comes to life through the love of its companion, 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 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."

Former ODC/Dance company member **Mia J. Chong** returns as the show's staging director. Each production of *The Velveteen Rabbit* includes about ten young dancers from ODC's Youth & Teen program, and **Rosika Dater-Merton** will serve as this year's Children's Cast rehearsal director. Finally, guest artist **Michael Wells** will reprise the role of Nana's legs.

CAITLIN HICKS AND JA'MOON JONES JOIN COMPANY

This season, ODC/Dance welcomes two new members, Caitlin Hicks and Ja'Moon Jones. Hicks grew up in San Diego where she received her formative dance training at Performing Arts Workshop before completing her B.F.A. in Dance Performance at U.C. Irvine. She has been living and performing in the Bay Area since 2015, appearing with companies including Post:ballet, Sharp & Fine, REYES Dance, Garrett + Moulton Productions, Bellwether Dance Project, Capacitor and The MoveMessenger(s). Hicks has also worked with renowned media artist John Sanborn and collaborated with The Residents.

Jones is a conjurer of movement, channeling ancestral memory through ritual, dance theater and immersive experiences. A Juilliard graduate, he has performed in *Sleep No More* and danced works by Crystal Pite, Bill T. Jones and Kyle Abraham, among many others. In the Bay Area, his most recent performance took place this summer with SFDanceworks in pieces by Yue Yin and JA Collective. His honors include the Max Mara Young Visionary Award and the YoungArts Modern Dance Gold Medal. He has participated in workshops and training programs with LINES Ballet, ODC and the École Des Sables in Senegal. Jones is the inaugural resident choreographer at Ballare Carmel.

TOUR TO TAIWAN

Following the *The Velveteen Rabbit's* run in San Francisco, ODC/Dance will take the production to Taiwan under the aegis of the International Performing Arts Consortium. This is the company's second visit to Taiwan and its first international tour since 2018. While there, ODC/Dance will perform in two cities from December 31 to January 16.

The performances of *The Velveteen Rabbit* will take place at the National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts-Weiweyung, Friday, January 9 to Sunday, January 11. At each performance, ten Taiwanese youth dancers will take part as members of the Children's Cast. This collaboration reflects ODC's commitment to nurturing local talent while introducing audiences to diverse artistic perspectives.

In addition to the stop in Kaohsiung, ODC/Dance will perform at a gala at ZhongShan Hall in Taipei on December 31. The gala, featuring a split bill with the Royal Ballet of Taipei, will celebrate the renovation of Taiwan's newest center for dance. On January 3 and 4, ODC/Dance will take the stage at the Metropolitan Hall in Taipei with a triple bill including *A Brief History of Up & Down*, *Inkwell* and *Collision, Collapse and a Coda*.

ADDITIONAL THE VELVETEEN RABBIT OFFERINGS

In the run-up to the holiday season, the character of the Velveteen Rabbit will make an appearance at ODC's booth at Valencia LIVE!, a free, all-ages monthly street party, on October 9 from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

To commemorate the experience of attending *The Velveteen Rabbit*, ODC/Dance offers a **Very Important Bunny ("VIB") Package** which includes a gift bag filled with fun surprises and a selfie with the cast after the show. This is an add-on option available at ticket purchase for \$25.

On Sunday, November 30 and Sunday, December 7, The St. Regis San Francisco will host a holiday brunch experience at 9:15 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. as a prelude to ODC's production of *The Velveteen Rabbit*. The St. Regis' restaurant, Astra, is conveniently located across the street from The Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA. Their prix fixe menu will feature delectable options for children and adults. The experience includes Center Orchestra seats, a complimentary "VIB" (Very Important Bunny) gift bag and a photo with the cast.

Additionally, the brunch on Sunday, November 30th at 11:30 a.m. will celebrate LGBTQ youth and families, and Astra is planning a special menu. The brunch is priced at \$100 for children (12 and under) and \$175 for adults. For patrons who wish to extend their experience, the St. Regis also offers discounted room rates. For more information, visit odc.dance/velveteenrabbit.

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.

And as part of its annual **Buddies for Bunnies** program, ODC will donate approximately 1400 tickets to third-grade students through 12 participating public schools. The program 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 companion, a young boy. Suitable for ages 3 and up.

Run Time: 85 minutes including one intermission

WHEN:

November 29 – December 7, 2025

Saturday, Nov. 29 at **11 a.m.**

Sunday, Nov. 30 at **2 p.m.**

Wednesday, Dec. 3 at **11 a.m.**

Friday, Dec. 5 at **11 a.m.**

Saturday, Dec. 6 at **11 a.m.** (ASL interpretation provided)

Sunday, Dec. 7 at **2 p.m.**

WHERE:

Blue Shield of California Theater at YBCA

700 Howard Street

San Francisco, CA 94103

TICKETS:

\$30 - \$125

To purchase tickets, visit odc.dance/velveteenrabbit or call the Box Office at **415-863-9834**. Discounts available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.odc.dance

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