



Sancho Panza

Don Quixote

Joffrey Ballet
Don Quixote

up her alley so I thought it was great we got to utilize her talents,” he said. “She made the armor for Don Quixote and it looks incredible.”

This is Travis’s third season with the Joffrey Ballet but he has been involved in ballet costuming for many years. He worked at the Houston Ballet and the Omaha Theatre Ballet. He also teaches tutu classes for tutu.com and has a line of patterns for ballet bodices on that site.

“That’s my favorite thing, each month I get a royalty check,” he said. “Of course, I only have a few patterns for sale so it’s not a huge check but it buys me some ice cream every once in a while.”

Travis graduated from the University of Nebraska-Omaha with a degree in theatre arts – costume design and technology. He spent seven years running the costume shop at the Black Hills Playhouse and has won two regional awards from the Kennedy Center for outstanding design and two TAG awards for best design.

Travis got his start in theatre and costuming by chance.

“I was bringing a prop my parents were lending to the Lewis & Clark Theatre Company for their production of “Oklahoma” to the Dakota Theatre. I had no interest in theatre at all, I was just delivering a prop,” Travis said. “Just before I showed up with it one of the boys in the tap quartet had sprained his ankle. I walked in and Linda Haar grabbed me and asked, ‘Travis, can you tap?’ It was a

week and a half before opening night. They put a pair of cowboy boots on me and I learned to tap in the hallway at the theatre.

“During the rehearsals I had a lot of down time, so I would find my way into the sewing area where Pam Friedenbach (Kallis) was making the costumes with some other volunteers,” Travis said. “I always went there because they had snacks and I liked to listen to the gossip. Eventually Pam said if I was going to hang out and eat I had to sew. And really that’s how it all started.”

Now Travis has perfected his skills and is considered a master costumer. He thoroughly enjoys designing and building costumes for theatre and especially ballet.

“I never thought I would enjoy ballet but I think I do enjoy it more than theatre. In theatre you design a dress and it looks like a dress. In ballet you design a dress and you have to think about what it looks like spinning upside down as well as just standing. Ballet costumes are more challenging. Dancers make incredible shapes with their bodies and your costumes get to move the whole time.”

The costumes also play a bigger role in ballet, Travis said.

“There are no words in ballet to give clues as to who goes together and whatnot,” he said. “A lot of people today can’t really follow historical ballet pantomime so we need the clothing to tell us who goes together and help us follow what’s going on. The choreographer isn’t always so concerned with the theatrical aspects of the show, he’s more worried about what the dancers’ feet are doing so I like to make sure the costumes are clues for the audience and even if they get lost in the plot they will have some beautiful dancers and beautiful costumes to look at.”

Travis said no matter where his career takes him his beginnings in South Dakota will stick with him.

“When I lived in Houston I worked part-time at a kitchen supply store and the manager told me she hired me specifically because I was a South Dakotan,” he said. “She said she had had two workers from South Dakota before and they worked harder and complained less than anyone else. When people find out I’m from South Dakota they usually say it makes sense because I’m so nice. So South Dakota has a real good reputation and I plan to uphold that.”

■ by Tera Schmidt

Photos Courtesy of Travis Halsey

To see more of Travis’ work you can go online to www.travisbalsey.com

DIGITAL MAMMOGRAPHY AT AVERA SACRED HEART HOSPITAL

The Heart of Avera Sacred Heart Hospital

PRIVACY, COMFORT AND A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

Schedule your Digital Mammography Screening on any **Think Pink Thursday** and receive \$5 off your next treatment at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital Massage Therapy.

Think Pink Thursday is the 3rd Thursday of every month.

To schedule your screening, call (605) 668-8150.

Avera 
Sacred Heart Hospital