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For Immediate Release

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Emerald Ballet Theatre (EBT) to host a FREE story telling event Saturday April 17th from 3:30pm- 4:30pm at their Bellevue studio, 12368 Northup Way 98005

What do forest animals, Redmond High School choir and orchestra, an award- winning local author, a magical doll, a professional violinist, and a Bolshoi ballerina have in common? They are all part of an original EBT production of *The Jewel Heart* premiering May 29th at the North Shore Performing Arts Center (Bothell). The inspiration for this new ballet comes from a charming children's book by the Puget Sound's own Barbara Helen Berger.

"The story stems from my own experience and love of ballet as a child," confides celebrated author/illustrator BH Berger, "the illustrations are inspired by dancing and nature." From 3:30-4:30pm the community is invited to meet Ms. Berger and peruse a gallery of her original paintings from *The Jewel Heart*. She will also speak about storytelling and the creative process to aspiring dancers and musicians involved in the production.

Live music performed by regional professionals and talented local youth sets the tone for this event. "EBT reaches out and facilitates inter-disciplinary exploration at a professional level," explains music director Judy Huehn, "there are nearly 250 people participating from our community." Musicians auditioned last fall for a slot to play in *The Jewel Heart*. Dancers from EBT's school fill children's roles while adult professionals perform the leads. Lavish costumes from the show will also be on display.

"We're so happy to share the collaborative process of creating a new work with our students and with the community." EBT artistic director Viktoria Titova exudes enthusiasm for the "process" as well as the "product". EBT dancers, recently returned from competition at the prestigious Youth America Grand Prix finals in NYC, will also perform at the event.

Art, literature, music, and dance come together on April 17th to tell a common story. The public is invited to see the creative process in action. For directions to the April 17th free event or ticket information for the May 29th performance visit www.emeraldballet.org or call (425)883-3405.