

**Nominee:** Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre

**Award:** Event of the Year

**Statement of Nomination:**

January 12 – 16 2016 Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre (RMBT) hosted the first Vienna International Ballet Experience (VIBE) in the USA right in Missoula, MT. This 5 day event included a dance challenge/competition, a film festival and diplomacy conference.

VIBE attracted 200 exceptional dancers from throughout the world who competed before a world renowned jury, which solidified Montana as an arts destination. 300 people flew into Missoula, stayed at local hotels, ate and restaurants and shopped all in January, a slow time for tourism in MT. RMBT raised funds for VIBE from MT foundations, businesses and individuals. RMBT utilized print, media, posters, buttons, face book and social media to promote VIBE.

The gala finale was a sold out event with over 800 audience members at the Wilma Theater. The Dennison Theater, where the dance challenge was held, saw audiences of 300 – 400 each day. The film festival was held throughout Missoula at the Roxy, the Silver, and the UC Cinema. The diplomacy conference brought in artists and speakers to address how the arts create options for peaceful resolutions to conflict. Dancers from South Africa, Brazil, Georgia Republic, Korea, Portugal, Italy, Cuba, the UK, and throughout the US cheered each other on.

Jury members, diplomats, artists from the literary world, professional performers, and master teachers discussed art, dance and music to the appreciation of audience members from MT and the US. RMBT has plans to repeat the event in 2017 and double the participants.

**Website or relevant link:** <http://www.rmbt.org/about-vibe/>

**Website or relevant link:** <http://www.destinationmissoula.org/vibe>

