

PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

ROY KAISER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR 2009 - 2010 SEASON

HIGHLIGHTS:

**Company Premiere Works by Jerome Robbins and William Forsythe
World Premiere by Matthew Neenan**

**Invitation to perform *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*
at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC**

**Tribute to Fredric Chopin's 200th Birthday
All Chopin Program, March 2010**

Roy Kaiser's 30th year with the Company and 15th as Artistic Director

Artistic Director Roy Kaiser announces a bold and compelling 2009-2010 Season featuring fifteen visionary ballets on six dynamic programs, including Company Premieres by Jerome Robbins and William Forsythe, and a World Premiere by Choreographer in Residence Matthew Neenan.

The season includes four innovative repertory programs, one classic full-length work and the critically acclaimed production of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*. The Company was invited to perform *The Nutcracker* at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC in late November before returning to the Academy of Music in December.

Among the repertory programs presented, a World Premiere by Mr. Neenan will join ballets by George Balanchine and Agnes de Mille to open the season in October. The Company will perform ballets choreographed by Mr. Robbins and Mr. Neenan to the music of Frederic Chopin in celebration of the composer's 200th birthday in March. The long-awaited Company premieres of Mr. Robbins's lyrical masterwork *Afternoon of a Faun* and Mr. Forsythe's fiercely brilliant *In The Middle, Somewhat Elevated* will follow in May.

Mr. Kaiser celebrates his 30th year with the Company and 15th as Artistic Director in the 2009-2010 season by continuing to expand an increasingly diverse repertoire of classical and innovative works performed by Pennsylvania Ballet, widely regarded as one of the premier ballet companies in the country.

"I've always drawn inspiration from the extraordinary dancers who continually seek to improve their technical virtuosity and impassioned artistry," says Mr. Kaiser. "I remain committed to presenting challenging and provocative programming, and I think this season really represents the artistic strength of the Company."

PENNSYLVANIA BALLET'S 2009-2010 SEASON

**Denotes Company Premiere*

Program I

October 21 – 25, 2009

Academy of Music

- ***Theme and Variations***: Choreography by George Balanchine (Music: Tschaikovsky)
- **World Premiere**: Choreography by Matthew Neenan, Choreographer in Residence
- ***Rodeo***: Choreography by Agnes de Mille (Music: Copland)

In ***Theme and Variations***, Balanchine pays homage to the Imperial Russian Ballet of his youth in one of his most technically demanding works. This plotless ballet features glittering costumes and inventive choreography that is credited with bringing classical ballet into the 20th century.

Choreographer in Residence Matthew Neenan creates his 12th new work especially for the Company in his own unique contemporary style.

The allure of the cowboy is the focus of de Mille's ***Rodeo***, which captures the pioneering spirit of the American character and the exuberance of youth. A defining achievement in de Mille's early choreographic career, *Rodeo* is an optimistic tale of a tomboy's attempt to lasso in love, with Copland's exuberant score setting the scene.

George Balanchine's The Nutcracker: Choreography by George Balanchine (Music: Tschaikovsky)

November 24 – 29, 2009

The Kennedy Center

Pennsylvania Ballet has accepted an invitation to perform *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker* at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, one of the most prestigious cultural venues in the country. This engagement will mark the first time the Balanchine version of *The Nutcracker* has been performed in Washington, DC. Tickets go on sale to the public August 12, 2009.

December 12 – 31, 2009

Academy of Music

Presenting Sponsor: PNC

Our critically acclaimed production returns to the Academy of Music to delight audiences of all ages in this enduring holiday classic. The Nutcracker Prince, the Mouse King, the Sugarplum Fairy join the Philadelphia Boys Choir as the Company mesmerizes audiences with extraordinary sets and exquisite costumes. Tickets go on sale to the public June 15, 2009.

Program II

March 4 – 13, 2010

Academy of Music

- ***The Four Temperaments***: Choreography by George Balanchine (Music: Hindemith)
- ***Carmina Burana***: Choreography by Matthew Neenan, Choreographer in Residence (Music: Orff)

The stunning simplicity and angular architecture of ***The Four Temperaments*** became the standard for Balanchine works. The work is an abstraction of ancient doctrines that enumerated the four aspects of a person's disposition.

A thunderous score and innovative choreography punctuate Matthew Neenan's fiery ***Carmina Burana***, which premiered to sold out audiences in 2007 when *The Philadelphia Inquirer* declared it "simply scintillating... steamy and explosive...a triumph." Neenan fuses the power of Orff's classic work with his eruptive movement and existential sets.

Program III

March 10 – 14, 2010

Academy of Music

- ***The Crossed Line***: Choreography by Matthew Neenan, Choreographer in Residence (Music: Chopin)
- ***In the Night***: Choreography by Jerome Robbins (Music: Chopin)
- ***The Concert***: Choreography by Jerome Robbins (Music: Chopin)

A trio of works that embody the emotional range and inventiveness of Frederic Chopin celebrate the famed composer's 200th birthday.

The Crossed Line explores the boundaries and shifting nature of relationships to Chopin piano concertos transcribed for piano and violin/cello. The piece began as an idea Mr. Neenan developed while attending New York City Ballet's Choreographer Institute in September 2003. The concept grew into an exciting commission for Pennsylvania Ballet in April 2004, and was critically acclaimed for "Neenan's crisp choreography, creativity, and innovativeness are refreshingly unpredictable."

In the Night uses four Chopin nocturnes as inspiration for three intimate pas de deux that articulate graduated stages of love and romance. Each episode is a tableau of romance - tender young love, mature and balanced love, and explosive passion. Robbins's three heroines each has a distinct character, as do the principals who portray them. When last performed, *The Washington Post* observed "[The Company's performance]... was liquid smooth. At its heart was an extraordinary dancer, Riolama Lorenzo, who made you notice critical little things such as how she rose onto pointe as if a breath started in her feet and advanced right up into her rib cage."

The Concert, Robbins's comedic masterpiece set during a piano recital, envelopes audiences with its sidesplitting humor, witty timing, and satirical choreography in its spirited salute to Chopin. The onstage accompanist engages in the antics, which send everyone home laughing.

Program IV

May 5 – 9, 2010

Merriam Theater

- *Square Dance*: Choreography by George Balanchine (Music: Vivaldi/Corelli)
- *Afternoon of a Faun**: Choreography by Jerome Robbins (Music: Debussy)
- *Requiem for a Rose*: Choreography by Annabelle Lopez Ochoa (Music: Schubert)
- *In The Middle, Somewhat Elevated**: Choreography by William Forsythe (Music: Willems)

Master choreographer George Balanchine's *Square Dance* explores the juxtapositions of American folk dances and classical ballet. The hierarchal pairings and partner exchanges suggest the formal patterns of square dance, but the piece also offers virtuosic performances from the lead ballerina and male soloist. The Company has not performed this celebrated work since its 1992-1993 Season.

The Company's newest Robbins acquisition, *Afternoon of a Faun*, is considered a landmark piece of lyrical dance theater. A nymph-like figure interrupts a male dancer's work in the dance studio, and the pair engages in a delicate duet with the audience as their mirror. The stunning simplicity of the choreography underscores the compelling complexities that lie behind the glass.

The transient nature of love is explored in *Requiem for a Rose*, a dynamic work created for the Company during its 45th Anniversary Season. This encore engagement reunites choreographer Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's vision of 12 dancers as a bouquet of roses, in bold and fluid movements that hinge on a single heartbeat.

Nuance and depth saturate *In The Middle, Somewhat Elevated*, a frenetic experiment in angular movement that demands the raw commitment of its cast. The feigned disdain of the dancers contrasts the technical demands of the choreography. *The New York Times* declared this work "changed the way people perceived classical dance: how the fundamental principles of ballet technique could be used in new ways, how dancers could behave onstage, how we could see them." The Company Premiere of *In The Middle, Somewhat Elevated* has been funded by The Pew Center for Arts and Heritage, through Dance Advance.

Program V

June 4 – 12, 2010

Academy of Music

- ***Romeo & Juliet***: Choreography by John Cranko (Music:Prokofiev)

Luminous in its power and poignancy, John Cranko's ***Romeo and Juliet*** is set to Sergei Prokofiev's famous musical score. The ballet version of Shakespeare's famous tale established Cranko as a master story teller, using powerful music and pristine movements to explore the powerful relationship between the two title characters. When Pennsylvania Ballet last produced *Romeo and Juliet* in 2005, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* said it was a "sumptuous production" that keeps audiences "fully engaged and at times transfixed."

2009-2010 Season Subscriptions are available by calling 215.893.1955 or online at www.paballet.org.

Full season subscription prices have not increased at all this year, and range from \$77.50 to \$413.50. Subscribers receive many benefits over single ticket purchasers including a 10% discount, priority seating, convenient partial payment plan in three easy installments, flexible ticket exchanges, discounts to fine Philadelphia restaurants, shops, hotels and museums, advance ticket purchasing for *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker* and more!

New this year... subscribers will receive Artistic Director Roy Kaiser's monthly e-letter with exclusive inside news about his work and the Company. For more information or to subscribe to Pennsylvania Ballet's 2009 – 2010 Season, please call 215.893.1955 or order online at paballet.org.

Pennsylvania Ballet's 2009-2010 season sponsors include The Sporting Club at the Bellevue and 10 Arts by Eric Ripert and USAirways.

Pennsylvania Ballet receives support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Founded in 1963 by Balanchine student and protégée Barbara Weisberger, **Pennsylvania Ballet** is one of the nation's leading ballet companies. Headquartered in Philadelphia, the Company's annual local season features classic favorites and new works, including the Philadelphia holiday tradition, *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*. For more information, call 215.551.7000 or visit paballet.org.

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