

# PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

ROY KAISER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR 2010-2011 SEASON

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Pennsylvania Ballet Presents Building on Balanchine**

**A triple bill featuring a new work by Benjamin Millepied of “Black Swan”**

*Agon* by George Balanchine

**World Premiere by Benjamin Millepied**

*Who Cares?* by George Balanchine

**April 14-17 at the Merriam Theater**

Philadelphia, PA (March 25, 2011) – Pennsylvania Ballet honors its Balanchine heritage and looks to its future with Building on Balanchine, featuring a world premiere by “Black Swan” choreographer Benjamin Millepied, April 14-17 at the Merriam Theater.

“Building on Balanchine perfectly reflects what Pennsylvania Ballet is all about,” Artistic Director Roy Kaiser says, “a commitment to both the remarkable legacy of George Balanchine and to the creation of new work.”

Balanchine’s *Agon* is an organic collaboration between the choreographer and composer Igor Stravinsky, who together designed the structure of this ballet during the creation of the score: 12 pieces of music for 12 dancers. One of Balanchine’s classic “black and white” ballets, *Agon* takes its name from the Greek word for “contest” or “struggle” and was lauded by Balanchine himself for its striking precision.

Renowned French-born choreographer and New York City Ballet Principal Dancer Benjamin Millepied creates his first **world premiere** for Pennsylvania Ballet, but this is not the first time he’s worked with Pennsylvania Ballet dancers. Mr. Millepied starred in and choreographed the Academy Award-winning film “Black Swan,” in which Pennsylvania Ballet dancers performed. Set to the music of composer David Lang, Mr. Millepied’s world premiere will incorporate innovative video projection techniques with three live cameras on stage.

*Who Cares?* brings a bit of Broadway to ballet. The lively George Gershwin score features beloved classics like “The Man I Love” and “I Got Rhythm.” An enchanting, fun-filled ode to the 1930’s, *Who Cares?* sparkles with a touch of nostalgia and leaves audiences feeling energized.

At the closing performance of *Building on Balanchine*, **Sunday, April 17 at 2 p.m.**, Principal Dancer Martha Chamberlain will end her extraordinary 21-year performance career. Born and raised in Media, PA, Ms. Chamberlain first joined Pennsylvania Ballet as an Apprentice in 1989 and rose through the ranks to Principal Dancer in 2000, after her inspiring premiere as Juliet in John Cranko's *Romeo and Juliet*. She has channeled her keen understanding of ballet into costume design, having designed for choreographers such as Matthew Neenan, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Jorma Elo, and Edwaard Liang. She especially selected *Who Cares?*, one of her favorite Balanchine works, as her final performance. Upon her retirement from the stage, Ms. Chamberlain plans to focus on her costume design career full-time.

**Tickets to *Building on Balanchine* are on sale now**, with prices ranging from \$20 to \$139. Tickets are available online at [paballet.org](http://paballet.org), by phone at 215.893.1999, or in person at the Kimmel Center Box Office.

**Building on Balanchine performances at the Merriam Theater:**

- Thursday, April 14 at 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, April 15 at 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, April 16 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.
- Sunday, April 17 at 2 p.m.

**Groups of 10 or more receive great discounts and unique perks!** Ask about special talks with staff and dancers and dining options near the theater for your group. For tickets and more information, contact Group Sales Manager Arajua Backman at 215.587.6921 or [abackman@paballet.org](mailto:abackman@paballet.org).

**Enjoy more Pennsylvania Ballet at PIFA!** Pennsylvania Ballet and the Philadelphia Orchestra open the Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts (PIFA) with a rare collaborative performance, *Pulcinella Alive*, April 7-10 at the Kimmel Center's Verizon Hall. Jorma Elo, one of the world's most sought-after choreographers, creates a world premiere version of the classic French ballet *Pulcinella*, featuring the music of Igor Stravinsky, especially for this once-in-a-lifetime series of performances. Pennsylvania Ballet will share the stage with the Orchestra and innovative set and lighting designs by renowned international designer Mikki Kunttu. Principal Dancer Martha Chamberlain is designing the costumes. On the same program, the Orchestra performs Manuel de Falla's *The Three-Cornered Hat*. Rossen Milanov, the Orchestra's Bulgarian-born associate conductor, conducts. For tickets, visit [pifa.org](http://pifa.org).

**Last chance to subscribe and save!** Save 15% off single ticket prices when you purchase both *Building on Balanchine* and *La Fille mal gardée*, a delightful romantic comedy coming to the Academy of Music this June. Visit [paballet.org/1011subscriptions.html](http://paballet.org/1011subscriptions.html) or call 215.893.1955.

**Connect with us!** Follow Pennsylvania Ballet on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to go behind-the-scenes. Plus, text "PABALLET" to 77950 to join our mobile club, MyPABallet, and receive special offers and news about the Company.

*Building on Balanchine* and *Pulcinella* are funded in part by and presented in partnership with the Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts (PIFA), a three-week festival inspired by the

Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, showcasing creativity, collaboration, and innovation throughout Philadelphia's artistic and cultural communities. For more information about PIFA programs and partners, visit [pifa.org](http://pifa.org).

Benjamin Millepied's world premiere is made possible by a generous grant from the William Penn Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Pennsylvania Ballet's 2010-2011 Season sponsors include The Omni Hotel at Independence Park, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Sporting Club at the Bellevue, and US Airways.

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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 six programs of classic favorites and new works, including the Philadelphia holiday tradition, *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*<sup>TM</sup>. For more information, visit [paballet.org](http://paballet.org) or call 215.551.7000.

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