

PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

ROY KAISER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR 2011 - 2012 SEASON

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Photos available upon request

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Pennsylvania Ballet Principal Dancer Arantxa Ochoa to Retire

To transition to new role as Principal Instructor at School of Pennsylvania Ballet

Final performance in *Giselle* this October

Philadelphia, PA (April 26, 2012) – Pennsylvania Ballet Principal Dancer Arantxa Ochoa has announced she will retire from the stage with Marius Petipa's *Giselle* in October, after 16 years dancing with the Company, transitioning to her new role as Principal Instructor of the School of Pennsylvania Ballet, opening this Fall.

“Arantxa is, undoubtedly, one of the most celebrated ballerinas in Pennsylvania Ballet history,” Artistic Director Roy Kaiser says. “We are so lucky that she will continue to share her gifts as a ballet instructor with our new school community.”

Ms. Ochoa's final performance in *Giselle* is scheduled for Saturday, October 27, 2012 at 8 p.m. at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. Casting is subject to change. Subscriptions are on sale now at 215.893.1955 or paballet.org. Single tickets will go on sale on September 4, 2012.

Born in Valladolid, Spain, Ms. Ochoa took her first artistic steps as a rhythmic gymnast. At age 12, she moved to Madrid to study at the Centro de Danza, then continued her studies at the Academie de Danse Princesse Grace in Monte Carlo and The School of American Ballet in New York City.

Ms. Ochoa spent three years at Hartford Ballet before joining Pennsylvania Ballet in 1996 as a member of the Corps de Ballet. She was promoted to Soloist in 1999 and to Principal in 2001. Her starring roles in classical works include Odette/Odile in the world premiere of Christopher Wheeldon's *Swan Lake*, Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Swanilda in *Coppélia*, Lise in *La Fille mal gardée*, Katherina in *The Taming of the Shrew*, and the title roles in James Kudelka's *The Firebird* and Marius Petipa's *Giselle*. Her extensive repertoire of George Balanchine ballets includes principal roles in *Apollo*, *Agon*, *Bugaku*, *Ballo della Regina*, *Concerto Barocco*, *Divertimento 15*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Monumentum pro Gesualdo*, *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*, *Prodigal Son*, *Raymonda Variations*, *Serenade*, *Theme and Variations*, *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*, *Western Symphony*, and *Who Cares?*.

Ms. Ochoa also has danced leading roles in Jerome Robbins's *The Concert* and *In the Night*, Twyla Tharp's *In the Upper Room* and *Nine Sinatra Songs*, Peter Martins's *Fearful Symmetries* and *Waltz Project*, and William Forsythe's *In the middle, somewhat elevated*, and has originated

roles in works by Matthew Neenan, Kirk Peterson, Jorma Elo, and Benjamin Millepied, among others.

Ms. Ochoa has performed in many galas and festivals throughout Europe, including the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland, The Stars of the New York Ballet in London, the Sintra Festival in Portugal, the Northwest Phalen Tanz in Germany, and with the Chicago Ballet. In addition to her performing career, Ms. Ochoa has been a teacher, leading master classes in Boston, Philadelphia, and Connecticut. She is married to former Pennsylvania Ballet Principal Dancer Alexander Iziliaev, and they have a son.

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*TM. For more information, visit paballet.org or call 215.551.7000.

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