

PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

ROY KAISER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR 2013–2014 SEASON



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT

Marissa Montenegro, Public Relations Manager

Desk: 215.587.6923

Cell: 215.873.7891

mmontenegro@paballet.org

Pennsylvania Ballet Principal Dancer Julie Diana to Retire

To end 21-year career with performances in Philadelphia, Washington

Philadelphia, PA (April 4, 2014) – Pennsylvania Ballet Principal Dancer Julie Diana will retire after 21 years on stage with a performance of Christopher Wheeldon’s *After the Rain* on Sunday, May 11, 2014 at 2 p.m. at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. She also will join the Company on its tour to The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC this June. An accomplished writer, Ms. Diana plans to focus on her writing and spend more time with her young family upon her retirement.

“Julie is an artist of exceptional grace and arresting emotion,” Artistic Director Roy Kaiser says. “While we will surely miss her magnetic presence, we join her in celebrating this remarkable achievement and wish her the very best as she pursues her passions off stage and enjoys her beautiful family.”

A New Jersey native, Ms. Diana began her professional career as a member of the Corps de Ballet at San Francisco Ballet in 1993 and rose through their ranks to a promotion to Principal Dancer in 2000. She joined Pennsylvania Ballet as a Principal Dancer in September 2004 and has danced countless roles in both the classical and contemporary repertoire, including principal roles in *Giselle*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Afternoon of a Faun*, and *Serenade*. She dances the principal role in George Balanchine’s *Diamonds from Jewels* in the upcoming nationwide PBS broadcast *Pennsylvania Ballet at 50*, airing Friday, May 2. Ms. Diana holds a B.A. in English from the University of Pennsylvania and writes for various dance publications. She is married to Pennsylvania Ballet Principal Dancer Zachary Hench, and they have two children. To read Ms. Diana’s full biography, click [here](#).

For her final performance in Philadelphia, Ms. Diana will dance Wheeldon’s *After the Rain* with her husband, Principal Dancer Zachary Hench, on Mother’s Day. *After the Rain* joins *Grieg: Piano Concerto* by Robert Weiss and a World Premiere from renowned choreographer Trey McIntyre on the program **Director’s Choice, May 8-11 at the Academy of Music**. Tickets are available online at paballet.org, by phone at 215.893.1999, and in person at the Kimmel Center Box Office. Pennsylvania Ballet then tours to The Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, June 6-8, with Balanchine’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Ms. Diana will dance the leading role of Titania. For tickets to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* at The Kennedy Center, click [here](#). All casting is subject to change.

Ms. Diana will reflect on her career and next steps at **Conversations with Pennsylvania Ballet** – a free, public discussion series – on Monday, April 28 at 6:30 p.m. at the Philadelphia City Institute Library at

1905 Locust Street.

Julie Diana is The Hassel Foundation Principal Dancer.

Pennsylvania Ballet's 2013-2014 Season sponsors include DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, The Sporting Club at the Bellevue, and US Airways.

Pennsylvania Ballet receives support from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts – a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency – and The Philadelphia Cultural Fund.

About Pennsylvania Ballet

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

###