

PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

ANGEL CORELLA, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR 2015–2016 SEASON

For Immediate Release

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Pennsylvania Ballet Brings Physicality to the Stage

Pennsylvania Ballet Presents Strength and Longing: A Program Featuring

NY Export: Opus Jazz and Three Company Premieres – Chutes and Ladders, For Four, and Without Words

Philadelphia, PA (January 6, 2015) – [Pennsylvania Ballet](#) and Artistic Director Angel Corella will take audiences on an emotional journey with four different choreographers in the upcoming performance of *Strength and Longing*. Nacho Duato's *Without Words*, Jerome Robbins' *NY Export*, *Opus Jazz*, Justin Peck's *Chutes and Ladders*, and Christopher Wheeldon's *For Four* will be featured February 4-7 at The Merriam Theater, supported by ALGER.

"This program is like seeing four mini-programs in one," said Artistic Director Angel Corella. "I'm excited to present our first-ever Justin Peck piece along with two other Company premieres, *Without Words* and *For Four*, which are very close to me as I was part of the premiere cast, and a Company favorite, *NY Export*, *Opus Jazz*, by master choreographer Jerome Robbins. These pieces showcase the talent of our male and female dancers in a new way."

The program opens with Nacho Duato's ***Without Words***, which highlights themes of life and death through six stripped-down instrumental compositions by Franz Schubert. Throughout the performance, projected photographs of the dancers will foreshadow the future scene.

Justin Peck's ***Chutes and Ladders*** is primarily an interpretation of the music, exposing details of the music through movement. Set to Benjamin Britten's *String Quartet No. 1 in D Major*, this Company premiere covers a range of moods and tempos as a string quartet performs onstage with the dancers. This is not only a Company premiere, but also the first time the Company will perform a piece by Justin Peck. At only 27 years old Peck, Resident Choreographer of New York City Ballet, is quickly becoming one of the top 21st century choreographers.

"His work really speaks to this generation and will connect with the younger audience because Justin is living in their world and experiencing life like they are," said Jeanette Delgado, performance stager for Justin Peck.

The Company will premiere Christopher Wheeldon's ***For Four***, a work created in California in 2006 for *Kings of the Dance*, an all-star showcase of top male ballet dancers. The piece is performed to Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" quartet. This piece was created for four of the best male dancers in the world from four different schools of dance (Cuban, Russian, Danish and American – the Balanchine style),

including Artistic Director Angel Corella. Each movement demonstrates the different styles of dance and highlights how men have taken their place in the ballet world.

"The ballet is a virtuosic pas de quatre designed to show off the qualities of the four dancers it was made on; Corella the powerhouse, Steifel the classicist, Tsiskeridze the Adagio dancer and Kobborg's danish petit allegro," said Christopher Wheeldon. "Now we find men at Pennsylvania Ballet that share these qualities."

Jerome Robbins' **NY Export: Opus Jazz** is an abstract ballet, set to cool jazz and angst-ridden beats, that reflects the post-war era of New York City streets, bustling with teens expressing their relationships and emotions through movement.

"This great piece shows the freedom of dance while featuring signature Robbins' movements that can also be seen in West Side Story," said Kathleen Tracey, stager. "It's an out of the box ballet that allows the audience to see the personalities of the dancers as they create relationships on the stage."

The performances at The Merriam Theatre run:

- Thursday, February 4 at 7:30pm
- Friday, February 5 at 7:30pm
- Saturday, February 6 at 2:00pm
- Saturday, February 6 at 8:00pm
- Sunday, February 7 at 2:00pm

Tickets are available online at paballet.org or by phone at 215.893.1999, and in person at the Kimmel Center Box Office.

Conversations with Pennsylvania Ballet

Please join Conversations with Pennsylvania Ballet, a free informal discussion, with Principal Dancer Ian Hussey who will talk about his experience preparing for the Strength and Longing performance. This free event will be held on **Monday, February 1 at 6:30pm** at the Philadelphia City Institute Free Library (1905 Locust St, Philadelphia, PA).

Preludes

Ignite your passion for dance with **Preludes** - Pennsylvania Ballet's pre-show discussions. Held in the theater prior to each performances, except the Saturday evening performance, **Preludes** feature an ever-changing roster of company members, artistic and administrative staff, and visiting artists discussing Pennsylvania Ballet's performances, taking questions, and offering unmatched behind-the-scenes insights. **Preludes** begin one hour prior to show time and are free and open to all patrons holding a ticket for the performance that follows. **Preludes** are a great way to meet other ballet fans, enhance your knowledge of the art form, and get to know the artists behind Pennsylvania Ballet's beautiful and thrilling performances.

Please note: Preludes are free and open to all ticket holders for the day listed on the ticket.

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, call 215.551.7000 or connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#) to go behind the scenes at any time.

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Pennsylvania Ballet's season sponsors include DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, The Sporting Club at the Bellevue, and American Airlines

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.

Groups of 10 or more get discounts and great seats! 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.

For downloadable images and captions, [click here](#).