

# PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

ANGEL CORELLA, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR 2014–2015 SEASON

## For Immediate Release

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## **Pennsylvania Ballet Presents Christopher Wheeldon's *Swan Lake* featuring Zachary Hench in a Final Appearance with the Company**

**Philadelphia, PA (February 12, 2015)** – [Pennsylvania Ballet](#) brings the world's most renowned ballet, *Swan Lake*, to the Academy of Music stage, March 5-8 and 14-15, presented by Bank of America. In addition, Zachary Hench, Principal Dancer, will also celebrate his formal retirement from Pennsylvania Ballet at the afternoon performance on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

"Aside from being the best-known ballet story, *Swan Lake* is also paired with one of Tchaikovsky's most well-known and beloved musical pieces," said Artistic Director Angel Corella. "Everyone can relate to this ballet whether it is through the eyes of the White Swan, the Black Swan, the Prince or the Mother, as the story portrays life; from falling in love, to what a relationship is and even betrayal."

*Swan Lake* tells the story of a young prince, Siegfried, and his love for the Swan Queen, Odette. Transformed into a swan by an evil sorcerer, Odette is destined to remain a swan unless she is rescued by true love. The dazzling choreography and visual complexities illuminate ballet's greatest love story.

This production of *Swan Lake*, by world-renowned choreographer and soon to be Broadway Director, [Christopher Wheeldon](#), is based on the original Lev Ivanov and Marius Petipa classic from 1895 and set to the timeless Tchaikovsky score, but has been re-imagined for today's audiences. Wheeldon compares this creative process to "resetting an old diamond heirloom into a contemporary setting." The production features spectacular sets and costumes set in the 19th-century milieu of the Paris Opera Ballet of Edgar Degas.

Premiered in 2004 to national acclaim, Christopher Wheeldon's stellar production of *Swan Lake* was commissioned and performed to sold-out audiences for Pennsylvania Ballet's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. This success led to an invitation to present the ballet at the prestigious Edinburgh International Festival in 2005, where Pennsylvania Ballet made its international debut.

### **The performances at the Academy of Music run:**

- Thursday, March 5 at 7:30pm
- Friday, March 6 at 7:30pm

- Saturday, March 7 at 2:00pm
- Saturday, March 7 at 8:00pm (Bonus performance)
- Sunday, March 8 at 2:00pm
- Saturday, March 14 at 2:00pm
- Saturday, March 14 at 8:00pm
- Sunday, March 15 at 2:00pm

*Tickets are available online at [paballet.org](http://paballet.org) or by phone at 215.893.1999, and in person at the Kimmel Center Box Office.*

### **Zachary Hench's Retirement**

Although [Zachary Hench](#) is retiring from dancing himself, he has stepped into the role of Ballet Master with the Company. This role allows Mr. Hench to guide Pennsylvania Ballet dancers of the future.

"Zachary is an exceptional dancer with technique, style and emotional depth," Artistic Director Angel Corella said. "While his presence will be missed on-stage, I'm honored to have him on my staff to encourage and inspire the current and future dancers of Pennsylvania Ballet."

A native of Loysville, PA, he began training at age seven at Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, where he studied for eight years and then proceeded to train at the Kirov Academy in Washington, DC.

His professional career began as a member of Boston Ballet II in 1993. He was then invited to join Boston Ballet as a member of the Corps de Ballet in 1994. He was promoted to Soloist in 1996 and Principal in 1998. In 2000, he joined San Francisco Ballet as a Soloist, and was promoted to Principal in 2003.

Mr. Hench joined Pennsylvania Ballet as Principal Dancer in 2004 and immediately danced the role of Siegfried in Christopher Wheeldon's *Swan Lake* in June 2004. Mr. Hench has also danced the lead role of Romeo in John Cranko's *Romeo and Juliet*, Colas in Sir Frederick Ashton's *La Fille mal gardée*, Prince Desire in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Prince Charming in Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella*, James in *La Sylphide*, Dracula in Stevenson's *Dracula*, and Oberon in Balanchine's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Additional contemporary ballets include Twyla Tharp's *In the Upper Room* and *Push Comes to Shove*; Hans Van Manneken's *Five Tangos*; Robbins' *In the Night*; Wheeldon's *After the Rain*; and Matthew Neenan's *11:11*, *As It's Going, Keep*, *Carmina Burana*, and *At the Border*. Mr. Hench has also performed throughout Spain with Angel Corella's Foundation and traveled to Beijing and Shanghai in 2006 to appear with Nilas Martins' Dance Company in *Don Quixote* and Peter Martins' *A Food for You*.

"It has been an honor and pleasure to dance for Pennsylvania Ballet these past 10 years," said Ballet Master Zachary Hench. "As I look toward the future, I'm excited to pass on what I've learned throughout my career to future generations of dancers."

### **Conversations with Pennsylvania Ballet – Zachary Hench**

Please join [Zachary Hench](#), Ballet Master and Principal Dancer, at Conversations with Pennsylvania Ballet, a free informal discussion, as he reflects on his career and his new role as Ballet Master for the Company. This free event is held on **Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30pm** at the Philadelphia City Institute Free Library (1905 Locust St, Philadelphia, PA).

### **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 [www.paballet.org](http://www.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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The re-envisioning of Christopher Wheeldon's *Swan Lake* has been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

Pennsylvania Ballet's 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.

**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](mailto:abackman@paballet.org).

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