

PENNSYLVANIA | BALLET

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Pennsylvania Ballet Soloist James Ihde to Retire

Culminating a 25-year career at Pennsylvania Ballet with George Balanchine's Diamonds

Philadelphia, PA (April 10, 2018) – Pennsylvania Ballet Soloist James Ihde has announced he will retire after 25 seasons on stage with Pennsylvania Ballet, with a performance of George Balanchine's *Diamonds* on Sunday, May 13 at 2pm at The Academy of Music.

"James is an amazing dancer and is one of our longest-tenured dancers at Pennsylvania Ballet," said Artistic Director Angel Corella. "He is a true testament to dedication and professionalism in ballet, and his leadership among the dancers will be missed. A performance of *Diamonds* is the perfect way for us to celebrate his career at Pennsylvania Ballet."

Born in Kent, OH, James began his ballet training at the Dance Institute of the University of Akron, where he studied for eight years. In 1993, he came to Philadelphia for a summer session at The Rock School of Pennsylvania Ballet. Upon completion, James was invited to join Pennsylvania Ballet as an apprentice for the 1993-1994 season. In 1995, he joined the corps de ballet, and was promoted to soloist in 2003.

James has performed principal roles in numerous works, including George Balanchine's *Agon*, Jerome Robbins' *In G Major*, William Forsythe's *Artifact Suite* (Pas de Deux 1), Jiří Kylián's *Forgotten Land* (Black Couple), Christopher Wheeldon's *Liturgy* and *After the Rain* (Pas de Deux), along with title roles in George Balanchine's *Apollo* and Ben Stevenson's *Dracula*.

"I've spent 25 years dedicated to Pennsylvania Ballet," said Ihde. "Even when I went through the typical ups and downs dancers face, I always knew this was a good place for me. I love Philadelphia, I love the company and all my amazing coworkers throughout the years."

Some of James' favorite memories are dancing at the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland and working with William Forsythe. "He's famous for doing cutting edge, avant-garde, intellectual ballets but he's the nicest, most personable guy you can work with in a studio," said Ihde. "Working with him was a really revelatory experience."

Diamonds, the third act of George Balanchine's *Jewels*, is an intricate piece influenced by the Russian-born choreographers experience with the pomp and splendor of Russia, set to a score by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

"I feel fortunate to have had such an exciting career with Pennsylvania Ballet," said Ihde. "I'm looking forward to my next chapter, including finishing my degree, and seeing how dance will fit into that."

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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. For more information, visit

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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.

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.

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