

THE SCHOOL OF
PENNSYLVANIA
BALLET

For Immediate Release

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The School of Pennsylvania Ballet Welcomes James K. Payne as New Director

Philadelphia, PA (May 23, 2018) – [Pennsylvania Ballet](#) and Artistic Director [Angel Corella](#) are pleased to announce James K. Payne, founder of Payne Academy of Ballet in Texas, will begin leading The School of Pennsylvania Ballet for the 2018-2019 school year.

“I am happy to welcome Jim Payne as the director of The School of Pennsylvania Ballet,” said Pennsylvania Ballet Artistic Director Angel Corella. “His passion, dedication, and knowledge of classical technique will bring a fresh new energy to our School as we continue to build on the School’s artistic achievements.”

James K. Payne danced professionally for 11 years at Ballet West and Houston Ballet. He performed throughout the United States, Canada, and China, and served on the National Board for the American Guild of Musical Artists. During his dance career, Payne had the honor of performing ballets by many renowned choreographers including; George Balanchine, Marius Petipa, Ben Stevenson, William Forsythe, Jiri Kylian, Glen Tetley, Trey McIntyre, and Sir Kenneth MacMillan.

Upon his retirement from the stage he transitioned to the management side of Houston Ballet, serving as Company Manager for two years. Due to his desire to return to the studio and share his knowledge, he created the Payne Academy of Ballet with his wife Bridget Payne where, for the past 17 years, the Academy has flourished and currently has 200 ballet students.

“Jim brings a breadth of experience from his professional career, years of developing dancers, and his success in building a school,” said Shelly Power, Pennsylvania Ballet Executive Director. “We are eager for his arrival and are confident he will partner well with the community and continue the progress made by Assistant Artistic Director and Interim School Principal Samantha Dunster.”

As School Director Payne will teach a wide variety of classes, provide artistic leadership for the teachers and students, and oversee the administrative operations of the School. He will work to foster an environment that provides a healthy foundation in ballet for students looking for the highest caliber of dance education.

“I am honored that Pennsylvania Ballet has chosen me to lead the School,” said Payne. “With my experience building a successful school and passion for developing dancers as complete artists, I look forward to working with Angel Corella as we build the School for the future.”

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 and new works, visit 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.

The School of Pennsylvania Ballet

The School of Pennsylvania Ballet has 160 young dancer who gather their inspiration from studying in the same space and performing with the professional Company of Pennsylvania Ballet.

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