

For Immediate Release

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Pennsylvania Ballet Announces Promotions and New Company Ranking

Zecheng Liang to Principal Dancer among promotions, plus addition of First Soloist and Demi Soloist titles

Philadelphia, PA (May 14, 2019) [Pennsylvania Ballet](#)'s Artistic Director Angel Corella is pleased to announce updates to the 2019-2020 season roster with two new ranks—Demi Soloist and First Soloist—and 20 promotions, including Zecheng Liang to Principal Dancer and Yuka Iseda, Albert Gordon and Nayara Lopes to First Soloists. The ranks at Pennsylvania Ballet are now (in ascending order): Apprentice, Corps de Ballet, Demi Soloist, Soloist, First Soloist and Principal Dancer.

New Principal Dancer [Zecheng Liang](#) joined Pennsylvania Ballet as a member of the Corps de Ballet for the 2017-2018 season and rose to Soloist for the 2018-2019 season. Since joining the company, Liang has danced principal roles in Angel Corella's *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, and *Giselle*; George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*®, *Theme and Variations*, and *Jewels*; and in Helen Pickett's world premiere *TILT*. Liang is originally from China and trained at the Guangzhou Art School from 2004 to 2010 before continuing instruction with Houston Ballet II.

"I am thrilled to promote Zecheng Liang to Principal Dancer," said Angel Corella. "Since joining Pennsylvania Ballet, Zecheng has consistently shown his immense talent and incredible artistry, and it is wonderful to acknowledge what an asset he is to the company."

Soloists [Yuka Iseda](#), [Nayara Lopes](#), and [Albert Gordon](#) will move into the new ranking of First Soloist. All three dancers joined the company for the 2016-2017 season as members of the corps de ballet and have performed several principal roles. Tokyo-born Iseda has performed as Sugarplum Fairy in George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*® and Medora and Giselle in Angel Corella's *Le Corsaire* and *Giselle*. Gordon calls the DC metro area home and has also excelled in principal and leading roles in Angel Corella's *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Le Corsaire*, Nacho Duato's *Remansos*, and George Balanchine's *Western Symphony*, in addition to world premieres including Andrea Miller's *Evenings* and Matthew Neenan's *It goes that way*. Brazilian Lopes performed as Sugarplum Fairy in George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*® and as Cinderella in Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella*. She's also danced in the world premieres of Helen Pickett's *TILT* and Jorma Elo's *Trigger Touch Fade*, and in a featured role in Nacho Duato's *Remansos*.

"I'm proud to acknowledge these incredible dancers. Twenty promotions and the addition of First Soloist and Demi Soloist roles speaks highly to the level and variety of talent within the company right now," said Corella.

Additional promotions include three to Soloist, six to the new rank of Demi Soloist, four to the Corps de Ballet and three to Apprentice. [Kathryn Manger](#), [Ashton Roxander](#) and [Peter Weil](#) will move from the Corps de Ballet to Soloists.

[Etienne Diaz](#), [Sydney Dolan](#), [Russell Ducker](#), [Thays Golz](#), [Alexandra Heier](#) and [So Jung Shin](#) will move up to Demi Soloists.

Apprentices [Cassidy McAndrew](#), [Julia-Rose Sherrill](#), [Cato Berry](#) and [Pau Pujol](#) will move into the Corps de Ballet, while Pennsylvania Ballet II dancers [Lucia Erickson](#), [Cory Ogdahl](#) and [Santiago Paniagua](#) will join the company as Apprentices.

The updated roster of dancers and biographies can be found on paballet.org this summer.

About Pennsylvania Ballet

Founded in 1963 by Balanchine student and protégée Barbara Weisberger, Pennsylvania Ballet is one of the nation's leading ballet companies. In its most diverse season yet, the Pennsylvania Ballet presents six programs featuring two full length classical ballets, Balanchine classics, contemporary works, world premieres, and 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 get a behind the scenes look at our dancers in the studio and onstage.

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