

PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

ROY KAISER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR 2009 - 2010 SEASON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PENNSYLVANIA BALLET PRESENTS FOUR CONTEMPORARY CLASSICS

Program IV

May 5-9 at the Merriam Theater

Square Dance - Afternoon of a Faun - Requiem for a Rose - In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated

Philadelphia, PA (April 9, 2010) – Pennsylvania Ballet, one of the nation’s leading ballet companies, showcases the breadth of its growing repertoire in one thrilling program at the Merriam Theater, May 5-9. Program IV features Company premieres by Jerome Robbins and William Forsythe, a timeless Balanchine piece, and an encore presentation of a work commissioned by Pennsylvania Ballet.

“When creating a program, I strive to choose ballets that will make our dancers better artists while simultaneously engaging our audience with moving, energetic work,” Artistic Director Roy Kaiser says. “Program IV accomplishes each of these goals beautifully.”

To begin the program, master choreographer George Balanchine’s *Square Dance* marries American folk dance with classical ballet. As its title would suggest, this work is inspired by square dancing, but Balanchine uses a traditional ballet vocabulary to express the intricate, formal patterns of that unique movement.

In the Company’s newest Jerome Robbins acquisition, *Afternoon of a Faun*, the choreographer recreates the essence of the music and the themes in the Vaslav Nijinsky original, *L’Après-midi d’un Faune*, for modern audiences. The work has been called a “miniature masterpiece.” In it, a woman interrupts a male dancer working in a studio, and the pair engages in a delicate duet with the audience as their mirror.

The transient nature of love is explored in *Requiem for a Rose*, a dynamic piece that envisions 12 dancers as a bouquet of roses, with bold and fluid movement hinging on a single heartbeat. A freelance choreographer based in the Netherlands, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa traveled to Philadelphia just last year to create this work with the Company. Ochoa describes her ballets as “constructed chaos.” While *Requiem for a Rose* has no plot, she urges the dancers to tell a story with their bodies.

Nuance and depth saturate *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated*, William Forsythe’s frenetic experiment in abstract movement, set to Thom Willems pulsating, electronic score. An American

choreographer, Forsythe spent most of his working life in Europe, and has become known for his unusual language of dance. It's classical ballet, but with an off-kilter edge: off-balance positions, extreme extensions, and increased hip action. *The New York Times* declares *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated* "changed the way people perceived classical dance: how the fundamental principles of ballet technique could be used in new ways, how dancers could behave onstage, how we could see them."

Tickets for Program IV are on sale now, with prices ranging from \$21.50 to \$126.50. Tickets are available online at paballet.org, by phone at **215.893.1999**, or in person at the **Kimmel Center Box Office**.

Program IV performances at the Merriam Theater:

- Wednesday, May 5 at 7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, May 7 at 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, May 8 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.
- Sunday, May 9 at 2 p.m.

Celebrate mom with brunch and ballet! Join us for our **Mother's Day Brunch** at the Palm Restaurant on Sunday, May 9 followed by a 2 p.m. matinee performance of Program IV at the Merriam Theater. Tickets start at \$85 for brunch (including tax, gratuity, and a glass of champagne) and your seat at the ballet. For more information and tickets, please contact Group Sales Manager Arajua Backman at abackman@paballet.org or 215.587.6921.

Follow us on **Twitter**, **Facebook**, and **YouTube**, and join us in the studio and on stage, 24/7. Visit our newly re-designed website at paballet.org. Plus, **text "PABALLET" to 77950 to join MyPABallet** and receive special offers and news about the Company!

The Company premiere of *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated* is made possible by a grant from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage through Dance Advance.

The Company premiere of *Afternoon of a Faun* is made possibly by a grant from the Jerome Robbins Foundation.

Pennsylvania Ballet's sponsors include the Omni Hotel at Independence Park, the Philadelphia Inquirer, The Sporting Club at the Bellevue, and US Airways.

Pennsylvania Ballet receives state arts funding through a grant 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.

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 or call 215.551.7000.