

# PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET

PETER BOAL, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 20, 2010

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## PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET PRESENTS THE PNB PREMIERE OF GEORGE BALANCHINE'S

# Coppélia

**June 3-13, 2010**

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall  
321 Mercer Street, Seattle Center  
Seattle, WA 98109

June 3-5 at 7:30 pm  
June 5 at 2:00 pm  
June 10-12 at 7:30 pm  
June 12 at 2:00 pm  
June 13 at 1:00 pm

**SEATTLE, WA** – PNB concludes its 2009-2010 Season, and realizes a long-time dream of Artistic Director Peter Boal, with a beautiful new production of George Balanchine's classic comic ballet, ***Coppélia***. Based on Balanchine's memories of the Russian Imperial Ballet production, and staged in close collaboration with the great dancer Alexandra Danilova, ***Coppélia*** has been called one of the happiest ballets in existence. Much of its lasting appeal may be attributed to a melodiously beautiful score by French composer Léo Delibes, legendary for his ability to illustrate dance atmosphere and action. For its new production, which is being co-produced with San Francisco Ballet, PNB has commissioned Italian scenic and costume designer Roberta Guidi di Bagno, whose enchanting conceptions were last admired by audiences of PNB's *The Merry Widow*. Based on the book by Charles Nuitter, ***Coppélia*** is considered a triumphant masterpiece of characterization and comic timing. Enlightened by the wit and wisdom of George Balanchine, ***Coppélia*** offers absolute delight to ballet newcomers and families, as well as PNB's most seasoned patrons. ***Coppélia*** runs for nine performances only, from June 3 to 13 at Seattle Center's Marion Oliver McCaw Hall. Tickets may be purchased by calling the PNB Box Office at **206.441.2424**, online at **[pnb.org](http://pnb.org)**, or in person at the PNB Box Office at 301 Mercer St.

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## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

**Music:** Léo Delibes (*Coppélia, ou la Fille aux Yeux d'Émail*, 1869–1870; with excerpts from *Sylvia, ou la Nymphé de Diane*, 1876, and *La Source [Naïla]*, 1866)

**Book:** Charles Nuitter, after E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann*, 1815

**Choreography:** Choreography by Alexandra Danilova and George Balanchine © The George Balanchine Trust (after Marius Petipa)

**Staging:** Judith Fugate and Garielle Whittle

**Scenic and Costume Design:** Roberta Guidi di Bagno

**Lighting Design:** Randall G. Chiarelli

**Running Time:** 2 hours, 30 minutes

**Original Production Premiere:** May 25, 1870; Paris Opera Ballet, choreography by Arthur Saint-Léon

**Petipa Production Premiere:** November 25, 1884, Imperial Ballet, St. Petersburg, choreography by Marius Petipa after Arthur Saint-Léon; revised 1894 by Enrico Cecchetti

**Balanchine Production Premiere:** July 17, 1974; New York City Ballet (Saratoga Springs, New York)  
**PNB Premiere**

Drawn from ballet's Romantic period and informed by a 19th-century fascination with mechanical toys, **Coppélia** is the tale of cheerful young lovers, Swanilda and Franz, whose courtship is briefly interrupted when Doctor Coppélius, the village's eccentric inventor, creates a doll so life-like that Franz becomes infatuated. When her suitor attempts a clandestine rendezvous, Swanilda evens the score by dressing as the doll and pretending to come to life. Ultimately, the pair is reconciled, and Act III's effervescent wedding-day festivities offer an array of spectacular dances.

**Coppélia** marked the passing of ballet supremacy from France to Russia. Originally choreographed by Arthur St. Léon in Paris in 1870, it was restaged by Marius Petipa in St. Petersburg in 1884 and revised by Enrico Cecchetti in 1894. Little, if any, of St. Léon's choreography remains in today's production, although Acts I and II retain his ideas and the story of mischievous young lovers. Balanchine provided entirely new choreography for Act III.

Balanchine wrote, "In 1974, I decided we should stage **Coppélia** at the New York City Ballet and asked the ballerina and teacher Alexandra Danilova, celebrated for many years for her Swanilda, to collaborate with me on the choreography. I remember very well performances by the Russian Imperial Ballet of **Coppélia** and as a member of the company danced in the mazurka.

"I have often said that Delibes is one of my favorite composers for dance. In our new **Coppélia**, we used the entire score of the three-act version. The first dance drama of really uniform excellence deserves no less! No part of the ballet is subordinate to any other; most important of all, ballet music in **Coppélia** participates in the dance drama as never before, Delibes' charming, melodic music assisting the plot and unifying the music and dance. Tchaikovsky was directly inspired by Delibes' score to write his own ballet music. Delibes is the first great ballet composer; Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky are his successors."  
[Program notes by Doug Fullington.]

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Léo Delibes** (1836-1891) was born in St. Germain du Val and died in Paris. He learned music as a child from his mother and uncle. Renowned as a composer for dance, he had a gift for illustrating action, creating atmosphere, and inspiring movement. Although he spent many years as a church organist, he was drawn more to the theater, and he composed many light operas. The decisive advance in his career came in 1870, with his full-length ballet *Coppélia*, which includes melodic national dances, descriptive passages introducing the main characters, and musical effects that have captured audiences for more than 100 years. His other ballets include *Sylvia* (1876) and *La Source* (1866), which he wrote with Ludwig Minkus. Delibes also composed operas, the last to be completed being the lush *Lakmé* (1883), which contains the famous coloratura showpiece, the Bell Song and the Flower Duet. His operas impressed Tchaikovsky enough for the composer to rate Delibes more highly than Brahms.

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, **George Balanchine** (1904-1983) is regarded as the foremost contemporary choreographer in the world of ballet. He came to the United States in late 1933, at the age of 29, accepting the invitation of the young American arts patron Lincoln Kirstein (1907-1996), whose great passions included the dream of creating a ballet company in America. At Balanchine's behest, the School of American Ballet was founded in 1934, the first product of the Balanchine-Kirstein collaboration. Several ballet companies directed by the two were created and dissolved in the years that followed, while Balanchine found other outlets for his choreography. Eventually, with a performance on October 11, 1948, New York City Ballet was born. Balanchine served as its ballet master and principal choreographer from 1948 until his death in 1983. Balanchine's more than 400 dance works include *Serenade* (1934), *Concerto Barocco* (1941), *Le Palais de Cristal*, later renamed *Symphony in C* (1947), *Orpheus* (1948), *The Nutcracker* (1954), *Agon* (1957), *Symphony in Three Movements* (1972), *Stravinsky Violin Concerto* (1972), *Vienna Waltzes* (1977), *Ballo della Regina* (1978), and *Mozartiana* (1981). His final ballet, a new version of Stravinsky's *Variations for Orchestra*, was created in 1982. He also choreographed for films, operas, revues, and musicals. Among his best-known dances for the stage is *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*, originally created for Broadway's *On Your Toes* (1936). The musical was later made into a movie. A major artistic figure of the twentieth century, Balanchine revolutionized the look of classical ballet. Taking classicism as his base, he heightened, quickened, expanded, streamlined, and even inverted the fundamentals of the 400-year-old language of academic dance. This had an inestimable influence on the growth of dance in America. Although at first his style seemed particularly suited to the energy and speed of American dancers, especially those he trained, his ballets are now performed by all the major classical ballet companies throughout the world. [Copyright © The George Balanchine Foundation. Reprinted by permission.]

**Alexandra Danilova** (1903–1997) was a Russian-born prima ballerina who later became an American citizen. Born in Peterhof, Russia, she studied at the Imperial School in St. Petersburg with Agrippa Vaganova and Olga Preobrajenska. She graduated in 1920 and joined the Imperial Ballet in 1921. Promoted to soloist in 1922, she formed a small group with George Balanchine and left Russia to tour Europe in 1924. She was engaged by Diaghilev for his Ballets Russes from 1924 to 1929 and then danced with de Basil's Ballets Russes (1933-1938) and Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo (1938-1952). She also appeared with Sadler's Wells Ballet (1949) and London Festival Ballet (1951), as well as touring with her own group, Great Moments of Ballet, from 1954 to 1956. Danilova was one of the most popular dancers of her time. Technically versatile with enormous charm, elegance, and wit, she danced all the major ballerina roles and created principal roles in Balanchine's *The Triumph of Neptune* (1926), *Le Bal* (1928), *Dances Concertantes* (1944), and *La Sonnambula* (1946). Although they never married, Danilova had a long intimate relationship with George Balanchine, and after their romance ended, their professional partnership continued. She taught most of his celebrated dancers at the School of American Ballet, where she was a revered faculty member from 1964 to 1989. In 1986, Danilova published an autobiography called *Choura*, which was her nickname. She also appeared in a role as a venerated ballet coach in the movie *The Turning Point*.

Born in Rome, **Roberta Guidi di Bagno** has a worldwide reputation as an acclaimed scenic and costume designer. She has designed for most of the leading European theaters, particularly Teatro alla Scala in Milan. In 1996, she was commissioned to create new scenery and costumes for Ronald Hynd's *The Merry Widow* for Teatro alla Scala, restaged in 2002 by Pacific Northwest Ballet. Recent projects include new costumes for Derek Deane's *Strictly Gershwin* with the English National Ballet performing at the Royal Albert Hall in London in June 2008, and later in August a new production of Ronald Hynd's *Coppélia* for Hong Kong Ballet. In March 2009, Ms. Guidi di Bagno created new scenery and costumes for Hynd's *Coppélia* at the Estonian National Opera in Tallinn and for Vladimir Derevianko's new production of *Don Quixote* for the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino in Florence. In May 2011, she will design new costumes for Francesco Ventriglia's new creation *Immemoria*, a ballet inspired by the holocaust, for the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. Her new production of Balanchine's *Coppélia*, created for Pacific Northwest Ballet, will be shared with San Francisco Ballet. In 1997, Ms. Guidi di Bagno was awarded the "Leonide Massine Prize for Ballet" for her artistic achievements.

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## TICKET & SHOWTIME INFORMATION:

Pacific Northwest Ballet's premiere production of George Balanchine's **Coppélia** runs June 3-13 at Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, 321 Mercer Street at Seattle Center. Showtimes are 7:30 pm June 3-5 and 10-12, with 2:00 pm matinees on June 5 and 12, and a 1:00 pm matinee on April 13.

***Special activities for children and families, including crafts and dance classes, begin one hour before all matinee performances. Children are invited to bring a special doll with them to matinee performances.***

Tickets (from \$25 to \$160) may be purchased through the PNB Box Office:

- By calling 206.441.2424 (Mon.-Fri. 9am-6pm; Sat. 10am-5pm)
- In person at 301 Mercer Street, Seattle (Mon.-Fri. 10am-6pm; Sat. 10am-5pm)
- Online 24/7 at our website, [www.pnb.org](http://www.pnb.org)
- 90 minutes prior to each performance at McCaw Hall, located at 321 Mercer Street. Discounted rush tickets for students and senior citizens (with valid ID) may also be purchased 90 minutes prior to showtime, subject to availability.

## SPECIAL EVENTS & OFFERS

### **Coppélia Seminar**

Saturday, May 22, 2010, 3:00-5:30 pm

*The Phelps Center, 301 Mercer Street, Seattle*

PNB's new production of George Balanchine's **Coppélia** will be the focus of this seminar. Learn the history of **Coppélia**, the 19th-century's best-loved comic ballet, and the classic French score by Léo Delibes, with its musical themes representing the ballet's characters. The seminar includes a preview glimpse at the production's sumptuous costume design and a rare look at some of the **Coppélia** choreography Balanchine remembered from his youth in St. Petersburg and how it informed his own version of the ballet. Tickets to this special event are \$20 and may be purchased through the PNB Box Office.

### **\$15 TICKETS FOR AGE 25 & UNDER**

All Thursday & Friday performances: June 3, 4, 10 and 11 at 7:30 pm

One ticket for \$15 and two for \$25 for patrons 25 years and younger! To purchase tickets, contact the PNB Box Office at 206.441.2424 or visit 301 Mercer Street. This offer good only for performance dates listed above. Offer is subject to availability and not valid on previously purchased tickets. Each attendee must present valid I.D. upon ticket retrieval.

### **TEEN TIX**

PNB is a proud participant of Seattle Center's Teen Tix program. As members of Teen Tix, young people 13 to 19 years old can purchase tickets to PNB performances and other music, dance, theater and arts events for only \$5. To join Teen Tix or view a list of participating organizations, visit Seattle Center's Teen Tix webpage at [www.seattlecenter.com/teentix](http://www.seattlecenter.com/teentix).

### **GROUP SALES**

Discounts are available for groups of 10 or more. For group tickets, please call 206.441.2416, email [juliej@pnb.org](mailto:juliej@pnb.org) or use PNB's Online Group Builder at [www.pnb.org](http://www.pnb.org). (PNB's Online Group Builder is available for audience members to gather friends, family and co-workers to see any performance and save.)

### **FRIDAY PREVIEWS**

Friday, May 21, 6:00 pm

*The Phelps Center, 301 Mercer Street, Seattle*

Join us for an hour-long dance preview led by Artistic Director Peter Boal and featuring PNB dancers performing excerpts from George Balanchine's **Coppélia**. PNB Friday Previews offer an upbeat and up-

close view of the Company preparing to put dance on stage. Tickets (\$10) may be purchased by calling PNB at 206.441.2424, online at [www.pnb.org](http://www.pnb.org) or in person at the PNB Box Office at 301 Mercer Street.

### **CONVERSATIONS WITH PNB — FREE**

Sunday, May 23, 2:00 pm

*Elliott Bay Book Company, 1521 Tenth Avenue*

PNB's Sunday afternoon series features an hour-long discussion about George Balanchine's ***Coppélia*** with principal dancer Kaori Nakamura, and soloist Seth Orza in the Elliott Bay Book Company at their new Capitol Hill location. All *Conversations with PNB* are **FREE** of charge.

### **BALLET PREVIEW — FREE**

Tuesday, June 1, 12:00 noon

*Central Seattle Public Library, 1000 Fourth Avenue, Seattle*

Join PNB for a free lunchtime preview lecture at the Central Seattle Public Library. Education Programs Manager Doug Fullington will offer insights about George Balanchine's ***Coppélia*** complete with video excerpts. **FREE** of charge.

### **PNB LECTURE SERIES & DRESS REHEARSAL**

Wednesday, June 2, 2010

Lecture 6:00-6:50 pm, *Nesholm Family Lecture Hall at McCaw Hall*

Dress Rehearsal 7:00-9:30 pm, *McCaw Hall*

Join Designer Roberta Guidi di Bagno and stager Judith Fugate for an engaging conversation during the hour preceding the dress rehearsal of George Balanchine's ***Coppélia***. Attend the lecture only or stay for the dress rehearsal. Tickets are \$12 for the lecture, or \$25 for the lecture and dress rehearsal. Tickets may be purchased by calling PNB at 206.441.2424, online at [www.pnb.org](http://www.pnb.org) or in person at the PNB Box Office at 301 Mercer Street.

### **Pre-Performance Lectures**

*Nesholm Family Lecture Hall at McCaw Hall*

Join Education Programs Manager Doug Fullington for a 30-minute introduction to each performance, including discussions of choreography, music, history, design and the process of bringing ballet to the stage. One hour before performances. **FREE** for ticketholders.

### **Post-Performance Q&A**

After the show, skip the traffic and enjoy a post-performance Q&A with Artistic Director Peter Boal and PNB dancers. Immediately following each performance in the Norcliffe Room at McCaw Hall. **FREE** for ticketholders.

# # #

PNB's production of George Balanchine's ***Coppélia*** is a co-production with San Francisco Ballet and is made possible by principal sponsors Glenn Kawasaki, Dan & Pam Baty, Brady Richardson, and Maurice Kanbar, major sponsors Nordstrom and the Nesholm Family Foundation, media sponsor KOMO 4, supporting sponsor Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, and opening night dinner sponsor Flexjet. Pacific Northwest Ballet's 2009-2010 Season is sponsored by Microsoft Corporation. Additional season support is provided by ArtsFund, the Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, 4Culture – King County Lodging Tax, and Washington State Arts Commission.

### **Publicity Contact**

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***Programming subject to change. For further information, please visit: [www.pnb.org](http://www.pnb.org).***

PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET

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