



PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET

PETER BOAL, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET PRESENTS

ALL WHEELDON

A Showcase of Works by Choreographer Christopher Wheeldon

September 23-October 2, 2011

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

September 23-24 at 7:30 pm
September 24 at 2:00 pm
September 29-October 1 at 7:30 pm
October 2 at 1:00 pm

"In the past twenty years, only one ballet choreographer has emerged whose work has set off widespread, international excitement: Christopher Wheeldon."—Joan Acocella, *The New Yorker*

"No ballet choreographer of his generation can match his imaginative use of the classical vocabulary."
—Anne Kisselgoff, *The New York Times*

SEATTLE, WA — Pacific Northwest Ballet opens its 2011-2012 season with **ALL WHEELDON**, four works that confirm the scope of rising ballet star Christopher Wheeldon's prodigious talent as well as his artistic influences. An all-dance synopsis of the famous musical, **Carousel (A Dance)** pays homage to composer Richard Rodgers, and to Jerome Robbins' love of Broadway. A large ensemble cast rotates around the ill-fated lovers, who reach for each other in a tender duet "so enriching that one hungers for more" (*New York Times*). Another study of intimacy unfolds in **After the Rain pas de deux**, the couple's tangible physicality acting as metaphor for deeply nuanced emotion. "Spare and poignant, the duet intimates a renewal of faith, the reburgeoning of love" (*Village Voice*). Sleek and technical, **Polyphonia's** cool abstraction suggests George Balanchine's influence, especially the pure lines of its centerpiece, a sinuously sustained duet. In **Variations Sérieuses**, Ian Falconer's (author/illustrator of the *Olivia* series) ingenious set design turns comedic tables on ballet—both literally and figuratively—by offering the audience a view from the wings. The interplay of an hysterical and hilarious cast of characters, on and offstage, evokes Wheeldon's unerring instinct for entertainment. "As much a theater piece as a dance work...filled with intricate personalities" (*Seattle Times*).

In conjunction with **ALL WHEELDON**, PNB is pleased to present **Christopher Wheeldon On Stage** for a special presentation on Wednesday, September 21. For more information, see "Tickets, Discount Offers and Special Events" below.

ALL WHEELDON runs September 23 through October 2 at Seattle Center's Marion Oliver McCaw Hall. Tickets start at \$28 and may be purchased by calling 206.441.2424, online at pnb.org, or in person at the PNB Box Office, 301 Mercer St. Pacific Northwest Ballet thanks **ALL WHEELDON** supporting sponsor Wells Fargo.

The line-up for **ALL WHEELDON** will include:

Carousel (A Dance)[®]

Music: Richard Rodgers ("Carousel Waltz" and "If I Loved You" from *Carousel*, 1945), arranged and orchestrated by William David Brohn

Choreography: Christopher Wheeldon

Staging: Damian Smith and Jackie Barrett

Costume Design: Holly Hynes

Lighting Design: Mark Stanley

Running time: 15 minutes

Premiere: November 26, 2002; New York City Ballet

Pacific Northwest Ballet Premiere: March 12, 2009 (Broadway Festival)

The musical *Carousel*, with music by Richard Rodgers and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, premiered in 1945. The show won acclaim for its many hit musical numbers and for its innovative plot about the ill-fated marriage of young millworker Julie Jordan and carnival barker Billy Bigelow. Christopher Wheeldon's salute to Rodgers includes the composer's melodic and evocative "Carousel Waltz" and "If I Loved You" in a reverie that distills *Carousel's* carnival atmosphere as well as its theme of tragic romance. A large corps de ballet creates a stylized carousel on stage, their movements often separating the lovers. With a simple hint at the story, Wheeldon catches the sweep and emotion of the music and the poignant, doomed nature of the lead couple's relationship with a tender and romantic pas de deux.

After the Rain pas de deux[®]

Music: Arvo Pärt (*Spiegel im Spiegel*, 1978)

Choreography: Christopher Wheeldon

Staging: Damian Smith

Costume Design: Holly Hynes

Lighting Design: Mark Stanley

Running time: 8 minutes

Premiere: January 22, 2005; New York City Ballet

Pacific Northwest Ballet Premiere: September 20, 2008

"Poetic and sublimely beautiful" (R.M. Campbell, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*)

Christopher Wheeldon's pas de deux from *After the Rain* is the second half of a two-part work, the first of which features an ensemble of three couples dancing to Arvo Pärt's *Tabula Rasa*. The following pas de deux is performed to Pärt's spare and tender duet for piano and violin, *Spiegel im Spiegel*. The ballerina is dressed in pink and her partner is bare-chested. In a series of unfolding partnering movements, the dancers explore the shifting emotions of their relationship.

Polyphonia[®]

Music: György Ligeti (various works for piano, 1947–1985)

Choreography: Christopher Wheeldon

Staging: Jason Fowler

Costume Design: Holly Hynes

Lighting Design: Mark Stanley

Running time: 31 minutes

Premiere: January 4, 2001; New York City Ballet

Pacific Northwest Ballet Premiere: March 15, 2007

"Romantic with comic twists" is how Christopher Wheeldon describes his ballet, *Polyphonia* (meaning "many voices"), set to ten eclectic piano pieces by György Ligeti. Overhead horizontal lifts, rolls and pushes off the floor contrast with classical ballet steps. The first of two key duets for the leading principal couple evokes sea creatures swimming, while the second looks like a strange plant growing and closing in on itself. The last horizontal lifts and fade-out arrest the movement, frame it, and let it dissolve like a film. Clive Barnes of *Dance Magazine* wrote, "There is not a step in *Polyphonia* that doesn't progress naturally from the step before it. The dance—prickly, angular—moves with the force of nature like the wind." Jackie McGlone of *scotsman.com* called the ballet an "immaculate masterpiece." *Polyphonia* won the London Critics' Circle Award for Best New Ballet and England's Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production. *Polyphonia* was the first ballet by Christopher Wheeldon to be taken into Pacific Northwest Ballet's repertory.

Variations Sérieuses[®]

Music: Based on the music of Felix Mendelssohn (Op. 54, 1841), adapted and orchestrated by Mack Schlefer

Choreography: Christopher Wheeldon

Staging: Jason Fowler

Scenic and Costume Design: Ian Falconer

Lighting Design: Mark Stanley

Running time: 25 minutes

Premiere: May 10, 2001; New York City Ballet

Pacific Northwest Ballet Premiere: April 17, 2008 (Laugh Out Loud! Festival)

"A Premier Danseur discovers a talented Young Girl rehearsing a new ballet. A haughty Ballerina fights with everyone: other dancers, the ballet master, the pianist, the conductor. Then, after some temper tantrums, she injures herself by accidentally plunging into the orchestra pit during a rehearsal. The Young Girl triumphantly replaces her" (Jack Anderson, *The Dancing Times*).

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847) was a German composer of the Romantic era. Like Mozart, he was a child prodigy who excelled in every aspect of music. He was one of the finest pianists of his time, as well as an excellent conductor and well-known educator. His *Variations Sérieuses* is one of the great masterpieces of Romantic piano music.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Christopher Wheeldon is considered one of the leading ballet choreographers in the world today. He was born in Somerset, England, and trained at the Royal Ballet School, eventually becoming a Royal Ballet company member. Mr. Wheeldon danced with New York City Ballet from 1993 to 2000, when he created *Polyphonia* and *Variations Sérieuses* and became New York City Ballet's first artist-in-residence. He served as the company's resident choreographer from 2001-2008, creating *Morphoses*, *Carousel (A Dance)*, *Carnival of the Animals*, *After the Rain*, *An American in Paris*, and *The Nightingale and the Rose*, among others.

In 2007, Mr. Wheeldon founded Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company, a transatlantic company with a base at New York's City Center and at Sadler's Wells Theatre, London. The new company set out to introduce a spirit of innovation to classical ballet, performing in Vail, London and New York during its first season. Mr. Wheeldon choreographed several new works for the company, including *Fools' Paradise (2007)* and *Prokofiev pas de deux (2007)*, and received commissions by celebrated ballet companies internationally. In 2010, Morphoses announced a new artistic model and Mr. Wheeldon stepped down as its artistic director to concentrate all his energy on choreography. In 2010, he created a new *Sleeping Beauty* for Royal Danish Ballet, and in February 2011, the Royal Ballet staged its world premiere of Mr. Wheeldon's new full-length *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Outside of the ballet world, Mr. Wheeldon choreographed *Tears of St Lawrence* (2009), a joint creation with singer-songwriter Martha Wainwright for New York City Parks Foundation, *Dance of the Hours* for The Metropolitan Opera's production of Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* (2006), ballet sequences for the film *Center Stage* (2000), and Broadway's *Sweet Smell of Success*.

Jackie Barrett (Stager, *Carousel*) trained at the Royal Ballet Lower and Upper Schools, joined London Festival Ballet (now English National Ballet) and over a period of eight years danced soloist and principal roles in the company's repertory. Ms. Barrett then joined Central School of Ballet as ballet mistress and also worked in this capacity for Northern Ballet Theatre and English National Ballet. From 1997 to 2008, Ms. Barrett taught at the Royal Ballet School, working mainly with the graduate female class. A highly experienced instructor at all levels, she now enjoys a busy freelance career teaching with companies such as the Royal Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, and Rambert Dance Company, as well as schools in Europe, Australia, and Japan.

Damian Smith (Stager, *Carousel*, *After the Rain*) trained in Sydney, Australia and at the School of American Ballet. After dancing with Ballet du Nord, he joined San Francisco Ballet in 1996 and was promoted to principal dancer in 2001. He has danced leading roles in Lubovitch's *Othello*; Tomasson's *Romeo and Juliet*, *Giselle*, and *Swan Lake*; and Morris' *Sylvia*, and created roles in Tomasson's *The Fifth Season*, *Chi-Lin*, and *Silver Ladders*; Christopher Stowell's *Opus 50*; and Wheeldon's *Sea Pictures*, *Rush*, *Continuum*, and *Quaternary*, among others. In 2000, Mr. Smith received the Isadora Duncan Dance Award for group performance.

Jason Fowler (Stager, *Polyphonia*, *Variations Sérieuses*) began his ballet training in Dallas, Texas, at the Dallas Ballet Academy under the direction of Vivi Flindt and the School of American Ballet where he studied under Stanley Williams and Adam Lüders. He became an apprentice with New York City Ballet in 1995, joined the corps de ballet in 1996, and was promoted to soloist in 2005. In addition to his numerous corps de ballet roles, Mr. Fowler performed soloist, featured, and principal roles in works by George Balanchine, Mauro Bigonzetti, Boris Eifman, Peter Martins, Jerome Robbins, Susan Stroman, and Christopher Wheeldon. Mr. Fowler has taught master classes and workshops in Dallas and Saratoga Springs and choreographed several ballets for Dallas Ballet Company. He appeared in the movie *Center Stage*, dancing in the ballet sequences choreographed by Mr. Wheeldon. He was ballet master for Morphoses/The Wheeldon Ballet and is currently staging ballets as répétiteur for Christopher Wheeldon. These ballets have been set in Spain, Germany, and for several ballet companies in the United States. He is also a répétiteur for Benjamin Millepied.

Ian Falconer (Scenic Designer, *Variations Sérieuses*) is best known as the author and illustrator of the bestselling Olivia series: *Olivia*, *Olivia Saves the Circus*, *Olivia...and the Missing Toy*, *Olivia Forms a Band*, and *Olivia Helps with Christmas*. His awards include the Caldecott Honor and Parent's Choice (2000), Gold Award Winner, Los Angeles Times Best Books (2000 and 2001), Publishers Weekly Best Books (2000 and 2001), among others, and was voted Favorite Illustrator by more than 50,000 children at the Children's Choice Book Awards in 2008. Mr. Falconer teamed with artist David Hockney to create the costume designs for the Los Angeles Opera production of *Tristan and Isolde* (1987); he served as co-designer (sets and costumes) with Mr. Hockney on the Lyric Opera's production of *Turandot* (1992); and designed the costumes for The Royal Opera's production of *Die Frau Ohne Schatten* at Covent Garden. In 1996, Mr. Falconer designed the sets for The Atlantic Theater's production of *The Santaland Diaries*, written by David Sedaris. For New York City Ballet, Mr. Falconer has designed sets and costumes for Christopher Wheeldon's *Scènes de Ballet* (1999) and *Variations Sérieuses* (2001), and for Stravinsky's *Jeu de Cartes*, choreographed by Peter Martins. In 1999, he designed set and costumes for Boston Ballet's production of *Firebird*, also choreographed by Mr. Wheeldon.

[Continued]

TICKETS, DISCOUNT OFFERS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

TICKET INFORMATION:

Tickets to ALL WHEELDON (\$28-\$168) may be purchased through the PNB Box Office:

- Phone: 206.441.2424 (Mon.-Fri. 9am–6pm; Sat. 10am–5pm)
- In Person: 301 Mercer Street, Seattle (Mon.-Fri. 10am–6pm; Sat. 10am–5pm)
- Online: pnb.org (24 hours a day, seven days a week)

Tickets are also available 90 minutes prior to each performance at McCaw Hall, located at 321 Mercer Street, subject to availability. (Money-saving season subscriptions starting at \$168 are also currently available.)

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Christopher Wheeldon On Stage

Wednesday, September 21, 6:30 pm

McCaw Hall, Seattle Center

Enjoy an onstage preview of ALL WHEELDON hosted by the choreographer himself! Christopher Wheeldon, newly appointed to the artistic team of London's Royal Ballet, returns to Seattle to rehearse the Company for its first program dedicated to his work. Tickets (\$20 for the general public, \$10 for PNB subscribers) may be purchased by calling the PNB Box Office at 206.441.2424, online at pnb.org, or in person at the PNB Box Office at 301 Mercer Street.

STUDENT AND SENIOR RUSH TICKETS

Half-price rush tickets for students and senior citizens (65+) may be purchased in-person with ID, beginning 90 minutes prior to show time at the McCaw Hall box office. Subject to availability.

\$15 TICKETS FOR AGE 25 & UNDER

All Thursday and Friday performances: September 23, 29 and 30 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 is good for September 23, 29 and 30 performances only. 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. 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 seattlecenter.com/teentix.

GROUP SALES

Discounts to **ALL WHEELDON** are available for groups of 10 or more. For group tickets, please call 206.441.2416, email juliej@pnb.org or use PNB's Online Group Builder (at pnb.org) which assists audience members to gather friends, family and co-workers to see any performance and save.

FRIDAY PREVIEWS

Friday, September 16, 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 **ALL WHEELDON**. PNB Friday Previews offer an upbeat and up-close view of the Company preparing to put dance on stage. Tickets, \$10 each, may be purchased by calling the PNB Box Office at 206.441.2424, online at pnb.org, or in person at the PNB Box Office at 301 Mercer Street.

Note: This event will sell out in advance! Friday Previews are sponsored by U.S. Bank.

BALLET PREVIEW — FREE

Tuesday, September 22, 12:00 noon

Central Seattle Public Library, 1000 Fourth Avenue, Seattle

Join PNB for a free lunch-hour preview lecture at the Central Seattle Public Library. Education Programs Manager Doug Fullington will offer insights about **ALL WHEELDON**, complete with film excerpts that illuminate the ballets being discussed. **FREE** of charge.

PNB LECTURE SERIES & DRESS REHEARSAL

Thursday, September 22, 2011

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

Dress Rehearsal 7:00 pm, *McCaw Hall*

Join PNB artistic staff for an engaging discussion during the hour preceding the dress rehearsal. Attend the lecture only or stay for the rehearsal. Tickets are \$12 for the lecture, or \$25 for the lecture and dress rehearsal. Tickets may be purchased by calling 206.441.2424, online at 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

Skip the post-show traffic and enjoy a Q&A with Artistic Director Peter Boal and PNB dancers. Immediately following each performance in the Norcliffe Room at McCaw Hall. **FREE** for ticketholders. (At the Saturday, September 24 7:30 performance, the post-show Q&A will be moderated by KUOW's Marcie Sillman, as part of KUOW's Front Row Center. For more details, including information on discounted tickets to this performance, visit kuow.org/frontrowcenter.)

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Pacific Northwest Ballet thanks **ALL WHEELDON** supporting sponsor Wells Fargo.

The 2009 PNB premiere of *Carousel (A Dance)* was generously underwritten in part by PNB's Board of Trustees, Advisory Board, Members of the Barre, and Stowell Society. The 2008 PNB premiere of *After the Rain pas de deux* was generously underwritten by Ernest & Diane Burgess. The 2007 PNB premiere of *Polyphonia* was generously underwritten by Jeffrey and Susan Brotman. The 2008 PNB premiere of *Variations Sérieuses* was generously underwritten by Peter & Peggy Horvitz.

PNB's 2011-2012 Season is proudly sponsored by Microsoft Corporation. Additional season support is provided by Artsfund, the Mayor's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, 4Culture - King County Lodging Tax and Washington State Arts Commission.

Publicity Contact

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Schedule and programming subject to change. For further information, please visit www.pnb.org.

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