

PNB PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
PETER BOAL, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 16, 2024

CONTACT FOR PUBLICATION:

PNB Box Office, 206.441.2424 or PNB.org

MEDIA CONTACT:

Gary Tucker

206.441.2426

GTucker@PNB.org

She's a Barbie girl in a ballet world...

PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET

presents

George Balanchine's
Coppélia

Production will salute departing PNB Rehearsal Director Otto Neubert.

May 31 – June 9, 2024

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

Seven performances only!

Friday, May 31 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, June 1 at 2:00 and 7:30 pm

Thursday – Saturday, June 6 – 8 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, June 9 at 1:00 pm

Streaming Digitally June 13 – 17

SEATTLE, WA – For the final performances of its 2023-24 Season, Pacific Northwest Ballet presents one of the happiest ballets on earth, George Balanchine's *Coppélia*. A comical case of living dolls and mistaken identity, *Coppélia* promises bravura classical ballet, exquisite scenery and costumes, and pristine choreography for PNB Company dancers and 24 tiny dancers from the PNB School. *Coppélia* runs for seven performances, May 31 – June 9 at Seattle Center's Marion Oliver McCaw Hall. Tickets start at just \$38. The production will also stream digitally June 13 – 17: Digital access is \$40. For tickets and additional information, contact the PNB Box Office at 206.441.2424, in person at 301 Mercer Street, or online 24/7 at PNB.org.

Audiences and critics were mesmerized when the curtain rose on PNB's 2010 premiere of its exquisite, wisteria-hued production of *Coppélia*: "The audience actually gasped when the curtain went up" (*Journal Newspapers*). The story is a

lighthearted comedy about vivacious young Swanilda, her impetuous suitor Franz, and the eccentric toymaker Dr. Coppélius. Though Franz loves Swanilda, he is smitten by Coppélia, a life-sized doll whom he believes is real. When Swanilda steals into Dr. Coppélius' workshop and discovers the truth about Coppélia, she dresses up as her rival and amuses herself by tricking both toymaker and her beau. All ends well in the final act's splendid wedding festivities, enhanced by the addition of 24 "baby" ballerinas who perform as the corps de ballet framing four solo variations. Beautifully detailed by Italian designer Roberta Guidi di Bagno's lavish sets and costumes, this production is a complete delight for all ages. "*Coppélia*...demands repeat viewing" (*criticaldance.com*).

The emergence of the 24 "baby" ballerinas in Act III will have extra significance this time around, as it marks the final performances staged by PNB Rehearsal Director Otto Neubert, who will be retiring at the end of the season. Mr. Neubert joined Pacific Northwest Ballet in 1992 and has assisted PNB's artistic directors in rehearsing, teaching, and scheduling the Company, as well as rehearsing countless PNB School students in their roles for *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*[®] and other productions. He has also performed in PNB's *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Don Quixote*, *Prodigal Son*, *Giselle*, and *Swan Lake*. Prior to joining PNB, he danced as a soloist with New York City Ballet and Stuttgart Ballet.

"I met Otto Neubert 41 years ago when he auditioned for New York City Ballet," said PNB Artistic Director Peter Boal. "He was the most reassuring presence when I arrived at PNB. For twenty years I have watched him welcome countless students into the studio to start the arduous process of learning to be a gliding angel, scampering mouse, darting bug, or raucous Fritz. His talent to nurture and empower dancers of all ages and abilities is unmatched. Otto has always believed in dancers' strength and artistry. He has guided hundreds to find the best path to success. Beyond his vital role as a coach, he's a shoulder to lean on and the go-to guy for a much-needed laugh. I can't quite imagine PNB without this gentle lion, but I take comfort in knowing his legacy of care and commitment lives on in our students and our company."

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

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

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

Choreography: [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: Approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes (including two intermissions)

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)

Pacific Northwest Ballet Premiere: June 3, 2010

Based on the book by Charles Nutter, after E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann*, *Coppélia* is considered one of the triumphant comic ballets of the 19th century and 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.” Balanchine and Danilova’s production celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. [[Program Notes](#) by Doug Fullington.]

About the Designer: Roberta Guidi di Bagno is recognized as one of the world’s most respected and prolific scenic and costume designers. Born in Rome, Italy, she studied at the Accademia Libera del Nudo. She worked as an assistant to the late director and set designer for opera, theater and ballet, Pier Luigi Samaritani. For the past 45 years, she has worked extensively with many of the major opera houses and ballet companies around the world including Houston Ballet, Teatro alla Scala Milano, Teatro dell’Opera Roma, Queensland Ballet, English National Ballet, Zagreb National Theatre, Spoleto Festival Italy and USA, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Semperoper Ballet Dresden, Royal Danish Ballet, Teatro San Carlo Napoli, Maggio Musicale Firenze, Teatro Massimo Palermo, Teatro Filarmonico Verona, New National Theatre Tokyo, Joffrey Ballet, Tulsa Ballet, Hong Kong Ballet, Shanghai Ballet, and Staatsballet Berlin. Ms. Guidi di Bagno has received a number of prestigious awards including the “Positano Massine Prize for Ballet” for her artistic accomplishments (1997), Premio Anita Bucchi, and Giornale della Danza’s “Best Costume Designer in 2012.”

TICKET INFORMATION & SPECIAL EVENTS

Coppélia runs for seven performances only, May 31 through June 9 at Seattle Center’s Marion Oliver McCaw Hall, and streams digitally June 13 – 17. Tickets to PNB’s performances may be purchased through the PNB Box Office:

- Phone - 206.441.2424
- In Person - 301 Mercer Street at Seattle Center
- Online 24/7 - PNB.org

Subject to availability, tickets are also available 90 minutes prior to showtimes at McCaw Hall. Advance tickets through the PNB Box Office are strongly suggested for best prices and greatest availability.

Tickets for the live performances of *Coppélia* are \$38 - \$210 (discounts available for children up to 14.) Groups of ten or more may enjoy discounts up to 20% off regular prices (not valid on lowest-priced tickets or combined with other offers): Visit PNB.org/season/group-sales for more info.

For information about special ticket offers including group discounts, The Pointe, Pay-What-You-Can, rush tickets, Beer and Ballet night, TeenTix, and more, visit PNB.org/offers.

PNB’s digital presentation of *Coppélia* (available for viewing June 13 – 17) is \$40.

PNB CONVERSATIONS & DRESS REHEARSAL

Thursday, May 30, 5:30 pm

Nesholm Family Lecture Hall at McCaw Hall

Join retiring PNB Rehearsal Director Otto Neubert, in conversation with cast members. PNB Conversations offer in-depth interviews with artists involved in putting our repertory on stage. Attend the Conversations event only or stay for the dress rehearsal of *Coppélia*. Tickets (suggested donation of \$25) are available through the PNB Box Office.

BALLET TALK

Nesholm Family Lecture Hall at McCaw Hall

Join dance historian 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.

MEET THE ARTIST

Nesholm Family Lecture Hall at McCaw Hall

Skip the post-show traffic and enjoy a Q&A with Artistic Director Peter Boal and PNB dancers, immediately following each performance. FREE for ticketholders.

Caveat Emptor: Like many performing arts, PNB struggles with [ticket resellers](#). At their most mundane, third-party sites snap up less expensive tickets and sell them for a profit. At their most dastardly, they sometimes sell invalid tickets. For peace of mind and to enjoy the ballet at the best prices available, always purchase tickets directly from PNB. Suspected ticket scams should be reported to the Better Business Bureau.

Health, Safety, and Accessibility: At this time, masks are encouraged but not required as part of the PNB audience experience. For details and info regarding PNB's current health and safety policies, visit [PNB.org/Health](#). For information on McCaw Hall accessibility, visit [PNB.org/Accessibility](#).

The show must go on: Pacific Northwest Ballet is committed to honoring its performance calendar. Performances will not be cancelled for weather, traffic, or acts of Congress. In the unlikely event that the status of a performance does change, an announcement will be posted on [PNB.org](#).

#

PNB's 2024 performances of *Coppélia* are supported by Sally Maimoni. Principal support for the 2010 PNB premiere of George Balanchine's *Coppélia* was provided by Glenn Kawasaki, Dan & Pam Baty, Brady Richardson, Maurice Kanbar, Mrs. Jeannik Méquee Littlefield, and The Rudolf Nureyev Dance Foundation. The works of George Balanchine performed by Pacific Northwest Ballet are made possible in part by The Louise Nadeau Fund. *Coppélia* is a co-production with San Francisco Ballet. Pacific Northwest Ballet's 2023-2024 season is proudly sponsored by ArtsFund, Microsoft, and The Shubert Foundation. PNB's digital season is made possible by Katherine Graubard and William Calvin. PNB media sponsorship provided by *The Seattle Times*.

Publicity Contact

Gary Tucker, Director of Communications

M/T: 206.328.TUCK (8825) / O: 206.441.2426 / E: GTucker@PNB.org / [PNB.org/press](#)

Everything is subject to change. For further information, please visit [PNB.org](#).

PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET

301 Mercer Street Seattle, WA 98109 206.441.2424 www.PNB.org