

PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE

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Patricia Wilde to be Inducted into National Museum of Dance Hall of Fame *Former Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Artistic Director Recognized for Lifelong Achievement in Dance*

Pittsburgh, PA (July 21, 2016) – Joining dance visionaries like George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins, former Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre (PBT) Artistic Director Patricia Wilde will become the National Museum of Dance's 56th Hall of Fame inductee next month. The museum will formally induct her into the Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney Hall of Fame at its annual gala, **Aug. 13**, in Saratoga Springs, New York. As part of the honor, the museum also will curate an exhibit showcasing her more than 50-year career in dance.

From photos to an old pair of pointe shoes, Wilde's daughter Anya Davis helped her mother gather and send memorabilia to Saratoga for the exhibition. Davis will join Wilde in Saratoga for the Hall of Fame induction, along with Wilde's son, Youri Bardyguine, and her two grandsons, Nicholas and Alexei Bardyguine.

A former New York City Ballet (NYCB) principal dancer, Wilde led Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre for 15 years and still resides in Pittsburgh today.

At age 88, Wilde remains deeply connected to the ballet field. Just this summer, author Joel Lobenthal released the first biography on her career: "Wilde Times: Patricia Wilde, George Balanchine, and the Rise of New York City Ballet." The Library Journal wrote, "This first biography of the performer presents a window into the world of Balanchine at an important time in dance history."

As the 56th Hall of Fame inductee, Wilde will join Balanchine, and a diverse group of influential artists, including Martha Graham, Igor Stravinsky, Jerome Robbins, Edward Villella, Arthur Mitchell, Jacques d'Amboise, as well as 2015 honorees, Rudolf Nureyev and Mark Morris.

"Patricia Wilde is a true force. Onstage, she had this captivating presence and a speed and purity to her dancing that was something special," said Terrence S. Orr, PBT artistic director. She brought that incredible sensibility to Pittsburgh, started the company on a new trajectory and really helped put Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre on the map. She continues to drop in to watch rehearsal and catch up with the company. We are incredibly proud to see her honored in the National Museum of Dance Hall of Fame."

Wilde launched her ballet career at age 14 with Marquis de Cuevas Ballet Internationale, went on to dance with the famous Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and joined New York City Ballet in 1950 – just two years after its founding. During her 15 years with NYCB, Wilde worked extensively with choreographer and NYCB co-founder George Balanchine, who created nearly 20 roles for her in ballets including "Scotch Symphony," "Raymonda Variations," "La Valse" and "Square Dance."

After retiring from the stage, Wilde directed the Harkness House of Ballet in New York, helped Balanchine establish the school for the Grand Theatre of Geneva, served as ballet mistress for American Ballet Theatre and as director of the American Ballet Theatre School. She led PBT as artistic director from 1982 to 1997.

During her 15 years at PBT, Wilde passed on the iconic Balanchine technique to another generation of dancers. She worked to diversify PBT's repertoire, introducing Balanchine classics and commissioning new works from emerging choreographers.

In 2013, she received a Dance Magazine Award "for her invaluable work as an educator, dancer and director."

About the National Museum of Dance

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Founded in 1986, the National Museum of Dance is the only museum in this country dedicated entirely to the art of dance. The museum welcomes over 10,000 visitors annually, presents several engaging exhibitions each year, and offers a wide range of live performances including opera, musicals, and theatrical works. The National Museum of Dance is located in Saratoga Spa State Park in New York and is deeply connected to the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. The School of the Arts is one of the leading not-for-profit dance schools in New York State, serving students of all ages and abilities, with a strong focus on technique and artistic development.

About Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre

One of the most exciting ballet companies in the United States, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre has built a legacy of excellence since 1969. Its eclectic style has been shaped by a series of distinguished artistic directors. In the 1980s, former New York City Ballet Principal Dancer Patricia Wilde led the company to national acclaim with an emphasis on virtuosic technique and works by the modern masters, including her mentor, George Balanchine. Since 1997, the company has flourished under the direction of Terrence S. Orr, former American Ballet Theatre ballet master and principal dancer. Mr. Orr has created a powerful repertoire, including fresh versions of traditional ballets, original works commissioned to American music and dramatic works that push the boundaries of ballet. PBT presents more than 50 performances each year at home and on tour and instructs more than 1,000 students annually through its official training institution, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School.

About PBT's 2016-2017 Season

PBT's 2016-2017 Season opens October 28-30, with "Giselle" with the PBT Orchestra, featuring new scenic and costume designs commissioned in honor of Artistic Director Terrence S. Orr's 20th anniversary. The lineup continues with the 15th anniversary of "The Nutcracker" (Dec. 2-27) followed by "Alice in Wonderland" (Feb. 10-19), "PBT and Dance Theatre of Harlem" (March 17-26) and "Romeo and Juliet" with the PBT Orchestra (April 21-23). Subscriptions, offering 20 percent savings over single tickets, are now available at www.pbt.org or 412-454-9107. Single ticket sales open Aug. 22, at www.pbt.org or 412-456-6666.

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