



**PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE +  
DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM**

**March 16 - 26, 2016**

**August Wilson Center, Pittsburgh**

**Audience Production Guide**

**PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE**



# BNY MELLON

Presents

## PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE + DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM

March 16 - 26, 2016

August Wilson Center, Pittsburgh

In collaboration with the Pittsburgh Dance Council and  
the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust

Made possible with support from BNY Mellon; Richard King Mellon Foundation; Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust; The Benter Foundation; Richard E. Rauh; Point Park University; University of Pittsburgh; Mr. Edwin H. Beachler III; Mr. & Mrs. Tom Hotopp; Ms. Mary McKinney & Mr. Mark Flaherty; Mr. & Mrs. Chris Fleischner; Mr. & Mrs. Mark Popovich; Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Todd; Ms. Lois A. Wholey; Holliday Fenoglio Fowler, L.P.

Many thanks to the following organization for their continuing support of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's Education Department and its programs:

Allegheny Regional Asset District	Jack Buncher Foundation
Anne L. and George H. Clapp Charitable Trust	Peoples Natural Gas
BNY Mellon Foundation	Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation	Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
Eat 'n Park Hospitality Group	PNC Bank Grow up Great
ESB Bank	PPG Industries, Inc.
Giant Eagle Foundation	Richard King Mellon Foundation
The Grable Foundation	James M. and Lucy K. Schoonmaker Foundation
Hefren-Tillotson, Inc.	Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust
The Heinz Endowments	UPMC Health Plan
Henry C. Frick Educational Fund of The Buhl Foundation	
Highmark Foundation	

This production guide was created by PBT's Department of Education and Community Engagement, 2017

Cover photo: Ingrid Silva, DTH, and Luca Sbrizzi, PBT. Photo by Duane Rieder

## Contents

**The Collaboration: PBT + DTH · 3**

**The Mixed Rep Format · 3**

**The Programs · 4**

***Black Swan Pas de Deux* · 5**

***Ave Maria and StrayLifeLushHorn* · 6**

***Brahms Variations, New Bach and Return* · 8**

***Dialogues* · 11**

## The Mixed Rep Format

A ballet company's repertory is the collection of all the works that they are prepared to perform, which include full-length ballets, excerpts from full-length ballets, and short, one-act or "abstract" pieces. A company alternates among the ballets in its collection, performing a different combination of works each season. A Mixed Rep performance consists of several shorter ballets that are performed together. The works may be plotless or have a storyline; they may be thematically-related or have completely different styles of choreography, mood, music or historical period. For this production, PBT and DTH chose works to perform from their own repertories and will collaborate on one ballet that is in both of the companies' repertory collections: the *Black Swan Pas de Deux*.

## The Collaboration: PBT + DTH

This historic collaboration—PBT's first known main-stage partnership with another professional ballet company—celebrates the diversity of talent and styles in American ballet today. Five works are on each eclectic program: choreographers include Glen Tetley, Dwight Rhoden and Robert Garland; musical artists range from Johannes Brahms to Aretha Franklin to Pittsburgh native Billy Strayhorn.

Artistic directors Terrence S. Orr, of PBT, and Johnson, of DTH, first had the opportunity to collaborate over 30 years ago. Johnson was a principal dancer at DTH when Orr, then ballet master at American Ballet Theatre, staged the ballets *Fall River Legend* and *Graduation Ball* for the company.

The companies themselves were both founded in 1969, during a golden age in American dance. PBT's founders, including artistic director Nicolas Petrov and chair Loti Falk (Gaffney), were on a mission to change



Artists: Ingrid Silva (DTH), Julia Erickson (PBT); photo by Duane Rieder

Pittsburgh's cultural landscape by giving professional ballet a permanent home in the city. And in New York City, Arthur Mitchell and Karel Shook were inspired to start a school that would offer children – especially in Mitchell's home community of Harlem – the opportunity to train in dance and the allied arts.

Nearly five decades later, this collaboration is an opportunity for the now highly-regarded companies to continue to advance and explore the art form—what ballet is today and what it can be—with each other, with audiences in the theater, and with the Pittsburgh community. Mr. Orr notes that the joint venture “makes a strong statement about the diversity of talent that we have in ballet and how much richer that makes our art.” Ms. Johnson sees the collaboration as a potential “model for a future in which the conversation about art is compelling and inclusive.”

The collaboration also offers numerous community engagement programs that are free and open to the public. For a list of programs and to register, visit the community programs page on our website, [pbt.org](http://pbt.org).

To learn more about both companies, browse through our websites at [pbt.org](http://pbt.org) and [dancetheatreofharlem.org](http://dancetheatreofharlem.org).

## The Programs

Each company performs signatures from its own repertoire and the two troupes collaborate on a staging of the bravura *Black Swan Pas de Deux* from *Swan Lake*. The performance run features two alternating programs. PBT's *StrayLifeLushHorn* and *Ave Maria*, and the collaborative staging of the *Black Swan Pas de Deux* appear on each. DTH will perform two selections for each performance.

### Repertoire for Program 1

Presented on Thurs., March 16; Sat., March 18; Thurs., March 23; Sat., March 25 at 2 pm; Sun., March 26

- *Brahms Variations* (DTH)
- *Ave Maria* (PBT)
- *Black Swan Pas de Deux* (PBT & DTH)
- *Dialogues* (DTH)
- *StrayLifeLushHorn* (PBT)

### Repertoire for Program 2

Presented on Fri., March 17; Sun., March 19; Fri., March 24; Sat., March 25 at 7 pm

- *New Bach* (DTH)
- *Ave Maria* (PBT)
- *Black Swan Pas de Deux* (PBT & DTH)
- *StrayLifeLushHorn* (PBT)
- *Return* (DTH)

## Black Swan Pas de Deux · Marius Petipa

Performed by Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and Dance Theater of Harlem

**Music:** Peter I. Tchaikovsky

**Costume Design:** Peter Farmer

**Premiere:** 1895



This brilliant and dramatic grand pas de deux is one of the defining moments in all of classical ballet. It was choreographed by Petipa for the full-length 1895 ballet *Swan Lake*, the fabled story about a Prince who falls in love with a beautiful maiden, who's been cursed by an evil sorcerer to spend eternity as a swan (Odette—the “White Swan”). The curse can be broken only by the Prince's promise of everlasting love. The sorcerer plots to thwart the Prince's love declaration with an alluring imposter—the sorcerer's own daughter (Odile—the “Black Swan”), whom he's magically transformed to look like Odette. The pas de deux comes in Act III of the ballet when the Prince and Odile meet.

Petipa pulls out all the stops in this dance. The Black Swan's choreography is breathtaking: its 32 fouetté turns alone comprise a feat that is as technically demanding as any in ballet. It is classical ballet movement at its most

commanding, endowing Odile with the power to both seduce and ruin. The Prince's own bravura and rapturous choreography displays his ardor and his weakness: he's incapable of resisting her.

This pas de deux is also significant in classical ballet because of its role in telling and advancing the story. Often a grand pas de deux (which has a specific structure—see page 6) is inserted into a story ballet as a showpiece for principal dancers, without much contextual relevance to the story itself (an example is the *Sugar Plum Pas de Deux* in *The Nutcracker*). Petipa changed the game with the *Black Swan Pas de Deux*—this dance is packed full of information that's essential to the story. In just 15 minutes of dancing we find out all we need to know about Odile's wickedness, her relationship with Rothbart, her power over Siegfried, and her hatred of Odette. It's in this pivotal dance that the Prince is fooled by and falls for Odile. He betrays Odette—and the ballet's final tragedy begins to unfold.

Watch a [2005 performance](#) of the *Black Swan Pas de Deux* by American Ballet Theatre.

## Breaking Down a Pas de Deux

There are five parts of a grand pas de deux: Entrée (*entrance*)—a prelude in which the dancers greet each other—the mood here is one of formal pageantry; Adagio (*slowly*)—the couple dances together, showing off slow and extended technique and partnering; two Variations (solos), one for each partner, which are intended to showcase skill and athleticism; and the Coda, or conclusion, in which the partners dance together in a rousing finale.

### Here's how this structure works in the *Black Swan Pas*:

Entrée: about the first two minutes of the 15-minute dance. A thrilling and potent first meeting between Odile and Siegfried. Odile's tantalizing choreography seizes all of Siegfried's senses.

Adagio: a slow and sinuous violin melody starts the Adagio. Odile's movements are coy and seductive; in his choreography Siegfried fawns over her and we plainly see his increasing desperation for her.

Variations: Siegfried's solo is first, with acrobatic leaps and airborne turns. With stunningly assured technique, Odile's variation confirms her victory over Siegfried.

Coda: begins when Siegfried enters the stage after Odile's variation. This is one of the most thrilling scenes in ballet, with virtuosic partnering and sparkling technique, including Odile's 32 fouettés—a bravura achievement for the ballerina. The coda ends with Siegfried kneeling at the triumphant Odile's feet.

PBT and DTH are sharing the *Black Swan Pas de Deux*, with dancers from both companies alternating in the Entrée / Adagio and the Variations / Coda.

## *Ave Maria and StrayLifeLushHorn* · Dwight Rhoden

Dwight Rhoden is the founding Artistic Director/Resident Choreographer of Complexions Contemporary Ballet. He has established a remarkably wide-ranging career, earning distinction from The New York Times as “one of the most sought out choreographers of the day.”

A native of Dayton, Ohio, Rhoden began dancing at age 17, and was a principal dancer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. In 1994, Rhoden and legendary dancer Desmond Richardson founded

Complexions Contemporary Ballet. Since then, Rhoden has created over 80 ballets for Complexions, as well as numerous other companies. “Rhoden's work is post-Balanchinean choreography, a new aesthetic in movement, stage, picture, and performance concepts reflecting a post-modern, techno-savvy worldview (Dance Magazine).” Rhoden is a recipient of various honors and awards, including the New York Foundation for the Arts Award, The Choo San Goh Award for Choreography, and The Ailey School's Apex Award in recognition of his extensive contributions to the field of dance.



Rhoden has created seven world premiere ballets for PBT. Learn more about his body of work at the [Complexions website](#).

## ***Ave Maria***

Performed by Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre

**Music:** Biulio Caccini

**Costume Design:** Dwight Rhoden

**Premiere:** 1995



Eva Trapp, Robert Moore, photo by Rich Sofranko, 2010

When Rhoden first heard Caccini’s *Ave Maria* he was in the middle of choreographing his 1995 ballet *The Grapes of Wrath*. He was “blown away” by the music’s mesmerizing and sacred quality and felt compelled to include it in the ballet. Along with two dancers he created this pas de deux in just two or three rehearsals. It has become a signature piece for the choreographer and is regularly performed as a stand-alone work.

*Ave Maria*’s choreography is innovative and athletic, characterized by deceptively difficult lifts, jumps, slides and falls. The dancers must be intensely musical and fully in sync—the ballet constantly shapes and reshapes sculptural moments that require them to “fill out” every

nuance of the music. Its imagery is personal for Rhoden—a way of processing and referencing the religious traditions he grew up with. But it also evokes a more universal spirituality, connecting physicality, music and self-reflection in a modern masterpiece.

Learn More: watch [Ave Maria: Behind the Scenes of a Sacred Creation](#).

## ***StrayLifeLushHorn***

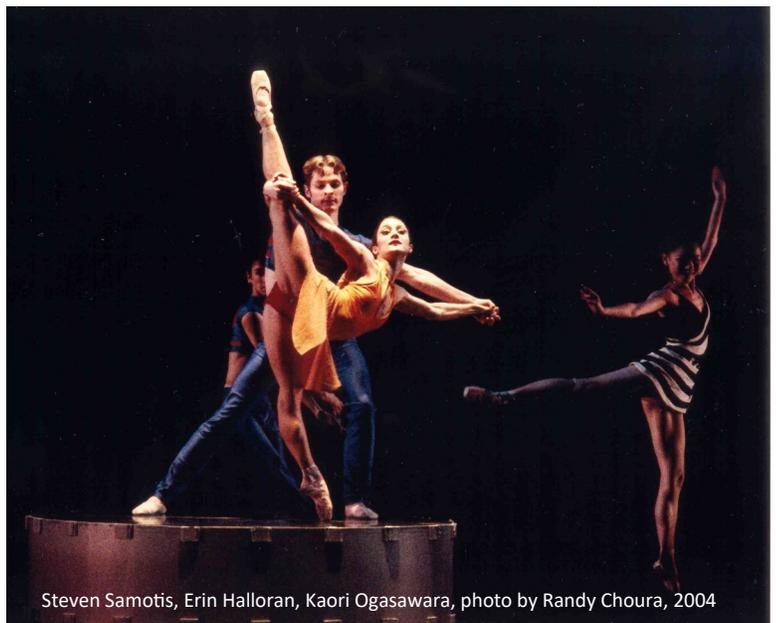
Performed by Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre

**Music:** Billy Strayhorn

**Costume Design:** Miho K. Morinoue

**Premiere:** 2000

17 years ago PBT commissioned Rhoden to create a ballet set to the music of Pittsburgh native and jazz genius Billy Strayhorn. *StrayLifeLushHorn* is set to nine Strayhorn selections composed during his thirty years of collaboration with the legendary Duke Ellington. They show the depth and versatility of Strayhorn’s remarkable talent, from the relatively obscure “Schwiphti” to “Take the A Train,” one of the most recorded compositions of all time.



Steven Samotis, Erin Halloran, Kaori Ogasawara, photo by Randy Choura, 2004

Though the feel throughout the ballet is improvisational—mirroring the very nature of jazz—Rhoden’s choreography is precise, with movement that sharply punctuates the music. High velocity lifts, weighted legs and pliés, and dancers that slide with (controlled) abandon across the floor on pointe stretch the classical ballet idiom to its outer limits. The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette describes the ballet as a “dazzling kaleidoscope of choreography (with) as many layers as (the) fabulously edgy Strayhorn soundscape.”

**The Music of *StrayLifeLushHorn*** (click on the title to listen)

[Chelsea Bridge](#), 1941—a popular jazz standard that was recorded by many of the greatest jazz musicians. The lyrics, by Bill Comstock, were added in 1958.

[Far Eastern Weekend](#), written in 1957 for the Ellington band drummer Louie Bellson.

[Lush Life](#), 1933—38. Strayhorn wrote most of this song when he was just 16. He played it only in private until 1948, when Duke Ellington’s band performed it at Carnegie Hall in New York.

[RainCheck](#), ca 1940s. When Strayhorn died from cancer in 1967 at age 51, Ellington was so devastated he didn’t leave his bed for days. A few months later he and his band recorded an all-Strayhorn tribute album: *And his Mother Called him Bill*. This was one of the works Ellington included.

[Schwiphti](#), second movement from *Suite Thursday*, commissioned in 1960 by the Monterey Jazz Festival.

[Something to Live For](#), ca. 1930s. Duke Ellington heard Strayhorn play this tune (with lyrics Strayhorn wrote as a teenager) when Ellington and his band were performing for a week-long series of concerts at the Stanley Theater (now the Benedum Center) in December 1938. Ellington saw his talent and took him under his wing. Strayhorn became part of his band and they released the song the next year.

[Take the A Train](#), 1939. When Strayhorn first traveled from Pittsburgh to New York City to work with Ellington, Ellington wrote out directions for Strayhorn to get to his house by subway. Those directions began “Take the A train . . .” — a routine exchange that inspired one of the most well-known tunes in all of American music.

[Tonk](#), written in 1940 as a mini-piano concerto for Duke Ellington—at parties Strayhorn and Ellington sometimes played this together sitting at the same piano.

A brief biography of Strayhorn can be found [here](#).

## *Brahms Variations, New Bach and Return* · Robert Garland



Robert Garland was born in Philadelphia and studied dance at the Philadelphia School for the Performing Arts and the School of the Pennsylvania Ballet. At 15 he joined the Philadelphia Dance Company (Philadanco) as its youngest member. He received a BA in Fine Arts from Julliard and joined Dance Theatre of Harlem as an apprentice in 1983. He rose to the rank of principal dancer at DTH.

After creating a ballet on the DTH School Ensemble,

DTH founding director Arthur Mitchell invited Garland to create a work for the Company and appointed him the organization's first Resident Choreographer.

He is also Director of the Professional Training Program of the DTH school and the organization's webmaster.

In addition to choreographing several ballets for DTH, Mr. Garland has also created works for New York City Ballet, Britain's Royal Ballet, Oakland Ballet and many others. His commercial work has included music videos, commercials and short films, including the children's television show *Sesame Street*, a Nike commercial featuring New York Yankee Derek Jeter, the NAACP Image Awards, a short film for designer Donna Karan, and the Charmin Cha-Cha for Proctor and Gamble.

### ***Brahms Variations***

Performed by Dance Theatre of Harlem

*The ballet is dedicated to former DTH Ballerina Lorraine Graves, and Fabian Barnes, our good friend and colleague  
...rest in peace brother.*

**Music:** Johannes Brahms, *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, 1873

**Costume Design and Execution:** Pamela Allen-Cummings

**Premiere:** 2016

Garland says his elegant *Brahms Variations* is inspired by Louis XIV, French patron of the arts and grandfather of the ballet canon: "Arthur Mitchell was a big persona in my life, a Harlem version of the French monarch. So, the ballet is, in part, Louis the XIV's court meeting Harlem swag." Garland's clean and muscular precision shows off the Company's polished classical technique. The ballet becomes "joyously cacophonous"\* as Brahms' theme and variations build to a cascading and thrilling finale.

\*seechicagodance.com

Listen to [Brahms Variations.](#)

### ***New Bach***

Performed by Dance Theatre of Harlem

*As soon as the beautiful (DTH) dancer clapped her hand to start the Allegro Moderato you sensed right away that something new,  
fresh, and contemporary was ripening within the classical ballet tradition. — Broadwayworld.com*

**Music:** Johann Sebastian Bach, *Violin Concerto in A minor*, ca. 1723

**Costume Design:** Pamela Allen-Cummings

**Premiere:** 1999

The dynamism of George Balanchine's neoclassical ballet style was instilled in Dance Theatre of Harlem by its founder, Arthur Mitchell, who danced for Balanchine's New York City Ballet. Garland captures the essence of the style with *New Bach* and its playful exploration of classical ballet technique and modern movement. The New York Times called it an "authoritative and highly imaginative blend of classical vocabulary and funk,"

filled to the brim with wit and intelligence. Garland's crisp, formal patterns effervescently erupt in moments of hip-swaying, shoulder-shimmying attitude, which are surprising suited to the nearly 300-year old music.

Watch excerpts from [New Bach](#)

### *Return*

Performed by Dance Theatre of Harlem

**Music:** *Mother Popcorn, Superbad* and *I Got the Feelin,'* performed by James Brown; *Baby, Baby, Baby* and *Call Me* performed by Aretha Franklin

**Costume Design:** Pamela Allen-Cummings

**Premiere:** 1999

Garland created *Return* for Dance Theatre of Harlem's 30th anniversary and calls the ballet "an attempt to fuse an urban physical sensibility and a neoclassical one." Staged for 12 dancers to songs performed by James Brown and Aretha Franklin, *Return* is a rousing blend of the elegance of classical ballet and the gritty drive of soul music. This "quintessential DTH ballet" pushes the boundaries of ballet technique and form, incorporating and blending vernacular movement from the African-American experience. From pas de bourrée to the Cabbage Patch, ballonné to the bump, the ballet fulfills Dance Theatre of Harlem's idea of what it means to be "classically American."



Anthony Savoy and Stephanie Williams in *Return*, photo by Matthew Murphy

Watch a clip from [Return.](#)

## Dialogues · Glen Tetley

Glen Tetley (1926-2007) was born in Cleveland and grew up in the Wilksburg area of Pittsburgh. He served for two years in the Navy, attended Franklin and Marshall College, and earned a B.S. in Chemistry from New York University. When he attended an American Ballet Theatre performance of Antony Tudor's *Roméo and Juliet* he decided he wanted to be a dancer — taking four dance classes a day while he completed his degree. He trained at the School of American Ballet, as well as with Tudor, Martha Graham and other dance luminaries. He was an original member of the Joffrey Ballet and also danced with American Ballet Theatre and Jerome Robbins' Ballets: USA. He directed his own company from 1962 - 1969.

Tetley at times seemed more at home in the Old World than the New. He closed his company in 1969 and headed to Europe to choreograph. He was ubiquitous on the dance scene there from the 1960s to the '90s, including as director of the Stuttgart Ballet from 1974 - 76. He is said to have reversed a traditional pattern: America had imported ballet from Europe, but Tetley introduced and integrated American modern-dance aesthetics and movement into European choreography.

As a choreographer he pioneered the fusion of ballet and modern dance, influencing major companies worldwide. He choreographed in the United States for American Ballet Theatre, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Houston Ballet and more; and his works have been performed by numerous other companies, including PBT (*Voluntaries* and *The Rite of Spring*, in 2001).

Performed by Dance Theatre of Harlem

**Music:** Alberto Ginastera, *Piano Concerto No. 1 (Op. 28)*

**Costume Design:** John MacFarlane

**Premiere:** 1991



DTH presented the world premiere of *Dialogues* at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC in 1991. It comprises four pas de deux choreographed to the four movements of Ginastera's *Concerto*: each pas de deux seems to explore different human "conversations." The partnering, both fluid and explosive, reflects the couples' varying emotional states. The ballet "exults in the drama of stretched limbs, high extensions and sumptuous, arching lifts," defining the "modern ballet aesthetic." (*LA Times*).

Artists: Christina Johnson and Donald Williams; photo: Martha Swope; source: Pinterest.

Listen to the first movement of the [Concerto](#).