

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Meghan Swartz  
Associate Director of Communications  
412-454-9117  
mswartz@pittsburghballet.org

**Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Signs Four More New Dancers for 2018-2019 Season**  
*Total of six dancers recruited from PBT School Pre-professional Division*

**Pittsburgh, PA (May 21, 2018)** - Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre (PBT) Artistic Director Terrence S. Orr has signed four more dancers to the company roster for the 2018-2019 Season, which opens Oct. 26-28, with “Mozart in Motion” with the PBT Orchestra.

Orr recruited the following four dancers from PBT School’s Pre-professional Division: Jonathan Breight, of Pittsburgh; Colin McCaslin of Vineland, New Jersey; Yu-Chieh Chao of Pingtung, Taiwan; and Caitlyn Mendicino of Pittsburgh. All four dancers will join the company as apprentices.

Earlier this season, Orr announced the hire of PBT School graduate students Christian García Campos, of Puebla, Mexico, and Tommie Kesten, of Pittsburgh, who also will join the company as apprentices for the 2018-2019 Season.

In total, Orr has hired six dancers from PBT School’s Pre-professional Division this year.

“The Pre-professional Division is where dancers begin making the transition from student to professional. At this stage, dancers are honing their performance skills, cultivating their individuality as artists and testing their technique in company repertoire,” Orr said. “It has been a pleasure to work closely with these dancers. They’ve stood out on stage in both student and professional performances, and they’ve proven their passion, not only for their art but for this company.”

PBT School’s Pre-professional Division prepares students for professional ballet careers. The intensive training schedule, which includes ample performance opportunities, reflects the realities of a professional company. Each year, PBT School conducts a nation-wide audition tour for prospective students. This year’s Pre-professional Division enrollment of 133 includes 78 out-of-state and 16 international students. The program also serves as a powerful cultivation and recruiting tool for PBT’s company roster: More than half of PBT’s professional dancers are PBT School alumni.

The four new dancers, along with García Campos and Kesten, will make their final performance as students in the school's Spring Performance 2018, May 25-26, at the Byham Theater.

Later, they'll make their professional debuts at PBT's free "Ballet Under the Stars" performance at 7 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 19, at Hartwood Acres, followed by "Mozart in Motion," the company's main-stage season opener, Oct. 26-28, at the Benedum Center.

Tickets for Spring Performance 2018 are available at [www.pbt.org](http://www.pbt.org).

Single ticket sales for "Mozart in Motion" and other 2018-2019 Season productions open Aug. 7, at [www.pbt.org](http://www.pbt.org), 412-456-6666 or the Box Office at Theater Square. Tickets start at \$28. Subscription packages, starting at \$81, are available now by visiting [www.pbt.org](http://www.pbt.org) or calling 412-454-9107.

## **About the New Dancers**

### **Jonathan Breight**

Pittsburgh native Jonathan Breight has trained in PBT School's Pre-professional Division since 2013 – first as a full-time high school student and then as a Graduate student. Breight also has participated in PBT School's Intensive Summer Program and in Point Park University's International Summer Dance Program. Breight has performed in PBT productions of "West Side Story Suite," "PBT: New Works," "Swan Lake," "The Nutcracker," "Alice in Wonderland" "Giselle" and "Beauty and The Beast." He also teaches pre-ballet classes for PBT School's Children's Division and assists PBT's education department with adaptive dance classes for students with special needs. He will perform in excerpts from George Balanchine's "Western Symphony" and in PBT Principal dancer Yoshiaki Nakano's "The Symphony" among other works at PBT School's Spring Performance 2018.

### **Yu-Chieh Chao**

A native of Pingtung, Taiwan, Chao has trained in PBT School's Pre-professional Division as a full-time high school student since 2015. Prior to PBT School, he trained with the Taipei National University of Arts. Chao has performed in PBT productions of "The Nutcracker," "PBT: New Works" and "West Side Story Suite" and in PBT School performances of "Etudes" and the Bluebird pas de deux from "The Sleeping Beauty." He will perform in "Graduation Ball" and excerpts from "Western Symphony" among other works at PBT School's Spring Performance 2018.

### **Colin McCaslin**

Colin McCaslin, of Vineland, New Jersey, has trained for two year's in PBT School's Pre-professional Division as a member of the full-time high school program. Before joining

PBT School, McCaslin trained with the Atlantic City Ballet School under Phyllis Papa and in Miami City Ballet School's summer intensive. He has performed with PBT in "The Nutcracker" and "West Side Story Suite" and with Atlantic City Ballet in "Carmen" and "Swan Lake." His repertoire also includes excerpts from "Giselle," "La Sylphide," "The Sleeping Beauty" and "Don Quixote." McCaslin will perform in "Graduation Ball" as well as excerpts from "Paquita" and "Western Symphony" at PBT School's Spring Performance 2018.

### **Caitlyn Mendicino**

Pittsburgh native Caitlyn Mendicino has trained in PBT School's Graduate Program since 2016. She began ballet classes at PBT at age 4 and continued her training in Pittsburgh with Nicolas Petrov, PBT's founding artistic director, and Mansur Kamelatdinov in 2007. She continued at the Ballet Academy of Pittsburgh and went on to graduate from North Carolina School of the Arts. She danced as an apprentice with Charlotte Ballet for two years before joining the PBT School Graduate Program. She also has completed summer intensives at American Ballet Theatre, Ballet Austin and Boston Ballet among others. Mendicino has performed in PBT productions of "Swan Lake," "The Nutcracker," "Dracula," "Romeo and Juliet," "Alice in Wonderland" and "Giselle." Her repertoire also includes "The Sleeping Beauty," "Le Corsaire," and Balanchine's "Valse Fantasie" and "The Four Temperaments." Mendicino will perform in excerpts from "Swan Lake" and "Western Symphony" at PBT School's Spring Performance 2018.

**Learn about fellow PBT School graduates and incoming company dancers, Christian García Campos and Tommie Kesten, [here](#).**