



***Pasha Kambalov, Artistic Director***

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **FIRST STATE BALLET THEATRE EXPANDING TO OPEN A SATELLITE SCHOOL IN THE TOWN OF WHITEHALL**

***The School of First State Ballet Theatre named in the Top 5% of U.S. Ballet Academies\****

First State Ballet Theatre, Delaware's professional ballet company based at The Grand Opera House in downtown Wilmington, will be opening a Satellite School in the Town of Whitehall in Middletown, DE in the fall of 2024. Groundbreaking is expected in March.

First State Ballet Theatre was founded in 1999 in Newport, DE by Pasha and Kristina Kambalov and moved to The Grand Opera House in 2003. The School of First State Ballet Theatre, currently based at The Grand, was recently named in the Top 5% of U.S. Ballet Academies in a study by Northeastern University.\*

FSBT is excited to partner with the EDiS Company, the co-developer of Whitehall, to create a new state-of-the-art facility that will serve the communities of lower New Castle and Kent Counties, and expand its programming to serve more Delawareans. The School of FSBT at Whitehall will offer a wide range of dance and specialty classes for ages 16 months to seniors with a focus on the quality ballet instruction that FSBT is known for. FSBT will continue to

operate its school based at The Grand, serving northern New Castle County and surrounding counties in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

“We are thrilled and grateful for this incredible opportunity to expand our reach and make our programming even more accessible,” says Kristina Kambalov, co-founder and executive director of First State Ballet Theatre. “FSBT is grateful for the support of EDiS, the Longwood Foundation, and the Welfare Foundation, that have made this expansion possible.”

According to Town Founder Brian DiSabatino, CEO of EDiS Company, “We could not be more thrilled. From the very beginning of Whitehall, we were committed to the arts. We know that no great community thrives without them. And with the arts in our core, we know that the Whitehall community and the communities surrounding Whitehall will benefit for generations to come.” The School of First State Ballet Theatre will be in a new building that will be located in the town center, adjacent to the Whitehall Wellness Center, across from Lorewood Grove Elementary School, and withing walking distance to Whitehall’s Ducklings Daycare Center.

*\*\*\*according to “Quantifying Hierarchy and Prestige in U.S. Ballet Academies as Social Predictors of Career Success,” published by Northeastern University, October 2023.*

## **ABOUT FIRST STATE BALLET THEATRE**

*Established in 1999, First State Ballet Theatre (FSBT) is Delaware’s leader in ballet performance, training, education and outreach. Our mission is to present ballet boldly to Delaware; to enrich our community with live professional performances; to inspire and educate dancers and audiences of the future; and to connect local youth with a creative, inclusive movement experience.*

*First State Ballet Theatre is Delaware’s only professional ballet company and employs a diverse roster of professional dancers from around the world. FSBT is based in Wilmington’s historic Grand Opera House and presents classical and contemporary ballet programming and new works from local and internationally-recognized choreographers.*

*Each year FSBT reaches over 6,000 people through our performances and outreach programs. The School of FSBT offers ballet classes and other dance programming year-round for students ages three years to*

*seniors and attracts students from Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and all three counties in Delaware.*

## **Photos available upon request**

### **CONTACT**

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