



**For Immediate Release**

## **Goh Ballet Creates Unique Dance Opportunity between Canada and China**

*Forms Partnership with National Ballet of China, Guangzhou Ballet Company  
and Guangzhou Art School of China ~ A Canadian First*

**November 6, 2013 - Beijing, China** - In a Canadian ballet first, the Vancouver-based Goh Ballet Academy, lead by Director Chan Hon Goh, has created a unique opportunity to foster dance between Canada and China.

Goh has formalized her long-standing relationship with the National Ballet of China, signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) while in Beijing, which will benefit dancers and teachers in both countries. She will do the same with the Guangzhou Ballet Company and the Guangzhou Art School of China later this week, underscoring the importance of Guangzhou as Vancouver's sister-city. The MoU's, supported by the Canadian and Chinese governments, will enable the companies, their dancers, instructors and choreographers to collaborate on productions, broaden their scope of dance to include both Eastern and Western choreography, participate in educational and cultural exchanges, and co-present ballets in both countries.

"I am so humbled and honoured that these revered companies – including the National Ballet of China, China's first and largest ballet company – have chosen the Goh Ballet for their first formal Canadian partnerships," said Goh. "This expression of mutual support is incredibly significant for the companies and related dance professionals, but also signifies a collaborative arts relationship between Canada and China which has both cultural and economic benefit."

Goh, a former Prima Ballerina with the National Ballet of Canada, is touring China as part of the *Vancouver-China Business & Cultural Mission*, led by Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson and the Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC).

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With the support of the City of Vancouver and the VEC, the signing of the arts MoU's were incorporated into the official Mission calendar. This Mission is taking Chinese-Canadian community leaders and senior executives from more than 18 companies in various sectors, including arts & culture, on an 10-day exchange to facilitate investment and strategic partnerships, as well as promote deeper cultural ties.

The invitation to join the Cultural Mission is the latest recognition of personal and cultural contributions for Goh and the Goh Ballet in 2013, the company's 35th anniversary year. In January, both generations of the Goh family, Chan Hon Goh and her parents, Choo Chiat Goh and Lin Yee Goh, who founded the Goh Ballet, were honoured with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. In May, Goh was given the prestigious YWCA Women of Distinction award for her exceptional vision and leadership on the Canadian arts landscape. June saw her act as Artistic Director of the closing gala of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, held in Vancouver. This was immediately followed by her attendance at dance competitions in Asia where she was the only Canadian to serve on the international judging panels for both the Korea International Ballet Competition in Seoul and the Yokosuka International Ballet Competition in Japan.

Since retiring from a 20-year career with the National Ballet in 2009, Goh has passionately engaged in expanding, supporting and showcasing Canadian dance at home and abroad. The recognitions and awards for her efforts have been numerous, all citing her unwavering commitment as an ambassador for Canada's dance communities.

In particular, Goh has put significant focus on Canada's next generation of ballet dancers, both in dance training and expanding their global awareness. Her 2011 participation in various Asian competitions assisted in shaping their on-going curriculum and programming. In 2010, at the invitation of the Chinese government, she took a group of 35 young Canadians on a cultural exchange tour to China. Over the course of three weeks, the troupe performed in four different cities, staging an original program by Goh which included a traditional Chinese fan dance as well a classical ballet piece choreographed to Chinese music

In December, the Goh Ballet will stage its fifth annual locally produced, professional production of The Nutcracker. This holiday tradition was initiated by Goh when she retired from the National Ballet of Canada and returned to Vancouver to helm the company started by her parents.

- 30 -

Media contact:

Jill Killeen, Killeen Communication Strategies

E-mail [jill@killeencommunication.com](mailto:jill@killeencommunication.com)

Cellular(778) 837-8907

Web [www.gohballet.com](http://www.gohballet.com)

Twitter [@gohballet](https://twitter.com/gohballet)

### ***About Chan Hon Goh***

Born in Beijing, Ms. Goh immigrated with her family to Vancouver, where she studied in the professional program at the Goh Ballet Academy. Upon graduation in 1988, she joined The National Ballet of Canada and danced as Principal Dancer from 1994 – 2009 where she employed her delicate lyricism and emotional depth to personify the essence of lead roles in ballets such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Onegin* and the title roles in *Giselle*, *Madame Butterfly* and *La Sylphide*. Ms. Goh is also a much sought-after international guest artist and has appeared with numerous companies throughout Europe, Asia, Australia, and North America.

In 2005, Ms. Goh received the New Pioneers Arts Award for her contributions to dance in Canada. Her autobiography *Beyond the Dance, A Ballerina's Life* was a finalist nominee for the 2003 Norma Fleck Award and the 2005 Rocky Mountain Book Award. Ms. Goh is the founder of PRINCIPAL by Chan Hon Goh® Inc. a manufacturer and distributor of ballet footwear. PRINCIPAL received the ACCE Innovation Award for the *Diamond Pointe Shoes*. [www.principalshoes.com](http://www.principalshoes.com) and [www.chanhongoh.com](http://www.chanhongoh.com).

### ***About Goh Ballet***

At the forefront of the dance and arts communities in Vancouver for over 35 years, Goh Ballet believes in fostering local talents and is the training ground for future dance professionals. The Academy offers diversity of programming that empowers youth, building a greater awareness of themselves through expression in the dance vocabulary as well as empathy for others, while sowing the seeds for healthy living through exercise. A multitude of classes are available for children and adults with extensive curriculum and Goh Ballet furthers their dedication to world-class training, with the Goh Ballet Youth Company Canada which provides performance and touring opportunities essential for those striving for a career in dance.

The Goh Ballet is consistently committed to technical excellence showcased through a wide-ranging and ever expanding repertoire of classical and contemporary ballet, jazz, character and Chinese dance. Goh Ballet has trained students that have received medals and first prizes at the world's most prestigious dance competitions. Its influence is also felt internationally where Goh Ballet graduates have gone on to fill the ranks of top notch companies the world over. It is this commendable success that has merited invitations to perform at numerous civic, corporate and charitable events each year locally and internationally.

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