



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Canadians Triumph at Vienna International Ballet Competition

*Michelle Khoo (Goh Ballet) takes home the Gold Medal – 1<sup>st</sup> Prize and Chihiro Abe (Goh Ballet) receives Silver Medal – 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize at the Wien Welt Wettbewerb Ballet Competition, Vienna.*

**Vienna, Austria – (July 30, 2014).** For the first time in the 7 year history of the International Ballet & Contemporary Dance Competition Vienna, two Canadian dancers are bringing home the top two prizes. This past weekend, Michelle Khoo and Chihiro Abe of the Goh Ballet were honourably awarded the Gold and Silver Medals (respectively) making history and raising awareness for the status and strength of arts and arts education in Canada.

Both dancers were first required to pass a demanding video audition to earn eligibility to compete on stage in Vienna with over 200 dancers from 20 countries around the world. For her first round performance, Ms. Khoo chose the Flames of Paris variation receiving top marks in her category before moving onto the second and final round to dance a variation from the ballet Coppelia. A perfect example of her consistency in performance, she was awarded the First Prize in Ballet as well as the “Most Talented Young Performer” award in Contemporary. Ms. Abe impressed the judges with her performance of the Bluebird variation from Sleeping Beauty in the first round and the solo from La Fille Mal Gardée in the finals ultimately earning her the Second Prize.

A true testament to the training and coaching these dancers receive in their home town of Vancouver, this honour ascertains that young artists from Canada can claim their spot on the world’s stage and bring home the most coveted prizes from top international competitions. Both dancers have been training with the Goh Ballet for over a decade and this was the first time they each participated in an international competition.

All 200 competitors performed for a panel of over 12 judges from around the world headed by ballet superstar Vladimir Malakhov. Chan Hon Goh represented Canada as the only North American member of the jury. Shortly after the results of the competition, she explained, *“I was extremely proud of the Canadian representation here in Vienna as their love of dance radiated across to the audience. Vienna is a recognizable centre for the arts that is well-respected and admired for its cultural history – it brought such joy to my heart to be able to see Goh Ballet dancers prove their accomplishments on this international stage”*

Ms. Khoo and Ms. Abe are a part of the Senior Professional Program at the Goh Ballet. Their next performance will be Goh Ballet’s *The Nutcracker* December 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Centre in Vancouver where they will share the stage with Prima Ballerina, Paloma Herrera of the American Ballet Theatre. ([www.gohnutcracker.com](http://www.gohnutcracker.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. The Goh Ballet furthers dancers' 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 all over the world. 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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