

**COLORADO CONSERVATORY OF DANCE PRESENTS
TIMELESS FAMILY CLASSIC "THE NUTCRACKER"**

Professional Production Features Internationally Renowned Guest Stars, Offers Affordable Tickets

(DENVER, CO, September 26) Colorado Conservatory of Dance (CCD) presents a full-length production of the family favorite ballet *The Nutcracker* December 8, 9, 15, and 16 at the Performing Arts Complex at Pinnacle Charter School, 1001 W. 84th Ave., Denver. With ticket prices beginning at \$20 and a maximum premium seating price of only \$45, the CCD production offers an ideal balance of professional quality and affordability for families wishing to share this one-of-a-kind experience together.

The CCD production, presented yearly since 1993, boasts gorgeous sets and costumes, stunning choreography, and professional guest artists from around the world. With ample free parking included, the production is the only one in the Denver metro area that invites all children from the audience onstage after the performance to learn choreography from the holiday classic. Audience members also have the opportunity to meet the Nutcracker Prince, Clara, and many other characters from the ballet for autographs and photos to complete the magical experience.

The 2018 production features international guest stars Ji Young Chae and John Lam, both principal dancers with Boston Ballet, who perform the roles of Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier on December 8 and 9; these leading roles are danced by Adiarys Almeida (Boston and Cincinnati Ballets) and Taras Domitro (former principal dancer, San Francisco Ballet) on December 15 and 16.

CCD's mission statement, "we unleash individual potential and invigorate community through dance," manifests itself through its production of *The Nutcracker*, as it features five cast members who attend classes at the conservatory on either need- or merit-based scholarships. In fact, CCD provides nearly \$90,000 per year in such awards as part of its belief that dance should be an enriching and fulfilling experience that is accessible to all. Rehearsed for over 150 hours before it hits the Pinnacle stage, the result is a visually stunning, beautifully executed production which delights audiences of all ages. Dancing the role of Clara, 12 year-old Paige says, "It's an honor knowing that I have been given the opportunity to dance alongside world-famous dancers. It is not an opportunity that most 12 year olds get every day. I am thankful that CCD is able to bring in such talent and that we as students can watch and learn from them as dancers and as professionals. It is a very unique and I can't believe I get to take part in it!" One audience member said of the 2017 version, "Incredible dancers—very high level of professionalism!" while another raved, "I've never clapped so hard or so much. Really impressive performance!"

In addition to the performances listed above, CCD is especially proud to offer for the fifth consecutive year its signature "sensory-friendly" performance of the ballet on December 14 at 6:30 PM. Building on its expertise from its groundbreaking *Ballet Expressions* program, which uses dance to build critical developmental skills and physical strength & flexibility for children with challenges ranging from cerebral palsy to Down syndrome, the conservatory has developed a revolutionary theatre-going experience for people with special needs. For the sensory-friendly performance, the conservatory alters the "typical" house rules, fostering the opportunity for audiences with special needs family members to feel welcomed in a theatre setting. The performance looks and feels identical to others on the calendar offered to the general public, but allows for authentic reactions among its audience members that may otherwise be seen as distracting in a typical theatre setting. Specifically, sound levels are adjusted to a moderate, consistent level to avoid surprises or distractions; house lights are left up to prevent total darkness; special needs "Guests of Honor" are encouraged to bring manipulatives into the theatre and may react to the story on stage in ways that feel correct to them (including standing, walking around, taking breaks, etc.); and seating is limited to no more than half the house to ensure each audience member has adequate space around them.

AT A GLANCE

- WHAT:** *The Nutcracker* with international guest stars Ji Young Chae, John Lam, Adiaris Almeida, and Taras Domitro
- WHO:** Colorado Conservatory of Dance
- WHEN:** December 8 (1:00pm and 6:30pm); December 9 (1:00pm); December 15 (1:00 and 6:30pm); December 16 (1:00pm)
- Special “sensory friendly” performance on December 14 (6:30pm)
- WHERE:** Performing Arts Complex at Pinnacle Charter School
1001 W. 84th Ave., Denver, CO 80260
(West of I-25 at 84th Ave. and Huron St.)
- TICKETS:** Adult: \$45 prime | \$35 standard | \$25 value
Child/Senior: \$40 prime | \$30 standard | \$20 value
Sensory Friendly Performance: \$10 general admission | Guest of Honor FREE
- To order tickets please visit <http://www.nutcracker2018.com> or call 303.466.5685

For exclusive photo and interview opportunities with Artistic Director Julia Wilkinson Manley or cast members, e-mail or call CCD Communications Coordinator Rachel Long at rlong@ccdance.org or 303.466.5685.