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

Professional Production Features Internationally Renowned Guest Stars, Offers Affordable Ticket

(DENVER, CO, September 17) Colorado Conservatory of Dance (CCD) presents a full-length production of the family favorite ballet *The Nutcracker* December 14, 15, 21, and 22 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 \$47, 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 14 and 15; these leading roles are played by Beckanne Sisk and Chase O'Connell (principal dancers with Ballet West) on December 21 and 22.

CCD's mission statement, "we unleash individual potential and invigorate community through dance," manifests itself through its production of *The Nutcracker*, as it features over 70 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. One audience member said of the 2018 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 20 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, Beckanne Sisk, and Chase O'Connell

WHO: Colorado Conservatory of Dance

WHEN: December 14 (1:00pm and 6:30pm); December 15 (1:00pm); December 21 (1:00 and 6:30pm); December 22 (1:00pm)

Special "Sensory-Friendly" performance on December 20 (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: \$47 prime | \$37 standard | \$27 value
Senior: \$42 prime | \$32 standard | \$22 value
Teen/Child: \$40 prime | \$30 standard | \$20 value
Sensory-Friendly Performance: \$10 general admission | Guest of Honor FREE

To order tickets please visit <http://www.nutcracker2019.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.