



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FESTIVAL BALLET THEATRE presents

The Nutcracker

Irvine Barclay Theatre | December 12-24, 2008

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif. – **Festival Ballet Theatre** celebrates the beauty, pageantry and tradition of the holidays with its lavish professional production of ***The Nutcracker at Irvine Barclay Theatre***. This Yuletide tradition features internationally acclaimed guest artists from American Ballet Theatre. Family-friendly and affordable, there are **13 scheduled performances** beginning Friday, December 12 at 7 p.m. and closing with an 11 a.m. showing on Wednesday, December 24.

The full-length traditional production, choreographed and directed by Festival Ballet Theatre's Artistic Director **Salwa Rizkalla**, honors the international themes and fantasy aspects of the popular story ballet that features a cast of more than 180 Southern California children and professional dancers.

Special guest artists from American Ballet Theatre include:
Irina Dvorovento & Maxim Beloserkovsky (Dec. 12-14 matinee);
Gillian Murphy & Gennadi Saveliev (Dec. 20 & 21)

The performance schedule is as follows:

Friday, Dec. 12 at 7pm	(Dvorovento/Beloserkovsky)
Saturday, Dec. 13 at 2 & 7pm	(Dvorovento/Beloserkovsky)
Sunday, Dec. 14 at 1pm	(Dvorovento/Beloserkovsky)
Sunday, Dec. 14 at 6pm*	(Nutcracker Family 4-Pack Performance)
Friday, Dec. 19 at 7pm*	(Nutcracker Family 4-Pack Performance)
Saturday, Dec. 20 at 2 & 7pm	(Murphy/Saveliev)
Sunday, Dec. 21 at 1 & 6pm	(Murphy/Saveliev)
Monday, Dec. 22 at 2pm*	(Nutcracker Family 4-Pack Performance)
Tuesday, Dec. 23 at 2 pm	
Wednesday, Dec. 24 at 11am	

Tickets:

Single Tickets: \$38 for adults; \$33 for children, seniors and students

* Family 4-pack of tickets is \$100

9527 Garfield Avenue
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

T: 714.962.5440
www.festivalballet.org

Irvine Barclay Theatre box office: **949.854.4646**

Online purchases: visit **thebarclay.org** or **ticketmaster.com**

Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover accepted.

Download high-resolution images at: <http://press.thebarclay.org>

Irvine Barclay Theatre is located at **4242 Campus Drive** [Bridge and West Peltason Roads in Irvine]

To learn more about Festival Ballet Theatre, go to **festivalballet.org**

Synopsis:

The Nutcracker is the story of a young lady, Clara, who receives the gift of an enchanting wooden nutcracker soldier from her mysterious godfather, Dr. Drosselmeyer. During the night, magical events unfold – the Christmas tree grows taller, toy soldiers and little mice become larger, Clara’s beloved toy comes to life and battles the ferocious Mouse King. Just as it seems all is lost, Clara distracts the evil Mouse King and saves her beloved Nutcracker Soldier. Her act of bravery transforms the Nutcracker into a handsome Prince. To show his gratitude, he takes Clara on a magical journey – complete with a storm of swirling snowflakes – to the Kingdom of Sweets. Upon their arrival, the Sugar Plum Fairy calls for a celebration in honor of Clara. One after another, delectable and exotic dancers from faraway lands pay tribute to our heroine. Set to the music of Peter Tchaikovsky, *The Nutcracker* was first performed in St. Petersburg, Russian, on December 18, 1892.

A tradition for the entire family, Festival Ballet Theatre’s *The Nutcracker* is made even more magical with sets and costumes by Simon Pastukh and Galina Solovyeva, as well as lighting design and special effects by Brock Cielley.

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Company History

Under the direction of Salwa Rizkalla, since its founding in 1988, Festival Ballet Theatre has become one of Southern California’s most vibrant and accomplished regional ballet companies. Celebrating its 20th anniversary of artistic service to Orange County, FBT is dedicated to presenting works that epitomize the artistry of professional ballet, offering cultural awareness of dance through educational programs, and nurturing a creative environment for some of our county’s most talented dancers. Boasting a roster of impressive talent, the company’s productions also feature internationally acclaimed guest artists from American Ballet Theatre, Boston Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, the Kirov Ballet, New York City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, San Francisco Ballet and Scottish Ballet.

Festival Ballet Theatre strives to enrich the experience of Orange County’s dance audience by highlighting the work of world-renowned guest and resident choreographers who have received critical acclaim for original ballets around the globe. With reverence for masterpieces of the past and a clear

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focus on developing future tour de forces, FBT presents a varied repertoire of full-length classical ballets including *Coppélia*, *Don Quixote*, *Giselle*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake*; as well as contemporary works by some of the nation's most sought-after choreographers.

Aspiring to the heights of artistic excellence, Festival Ballet Theatre simultaneously attracts the best in professional dance to its home-base while sending its own dancers out as artistic ambassadors to the nation. FBT's significant work has been recognized with a 2001 Arts Orange County Award for *Outstanding Arts Organization of the Year*.

Salwa Rizkalla, Artistic Director

Salwa Rizkalla's artistic vision and community involvement led to the creation of Festival Ballet Theatre, and its precursor Southland Ballet Academy. Her credentials as a classical ballet dancer include an impressive list of leading roles in well-known classical ballets, as well as appearances in original contemporary pieces. During her distinguished career as a professional dancer, Rizkalla had the privilege of working under the direction of world-renowned choreographers Leonid Lavrovsky and Serge Lifar. Trained in the Russian Vaganova method and having studied with ballet masters of the Bolshoi and the Kirov, Rizkalla holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Ballet Pedagogy. In addition to her responsibilities as the artistic director of Festival Ballet Theatre and her busy teaching schedule at Southland Ballet Academy, Rizkalla was a faculty member of several area institutions, including Goldenwest College and the Huntington Beach Academy for the Performing Arts. A fully credentialed California teacher, she has been a dedicated educator, a tireless promoter of the arts, and an active participant in the cultural life of her community for more than 25 years. Her contributions have been recognized by The Orange County Music and Arts Administrators and Orange County Performing Arts Center with an *Orange County Arts Educator of the Year Award* for Secondary Dance (2003). Youth America Grand Prix awarded Rizkalla *Outstanding Teacher* accolades in 2002, 2004 and 2005.

Irina Dvorovento, Guest Artist

Dec. 12 at 7 pm, Dec. 13 at 2 pm & 7 pm, Dec. 14 at 1 pm

A principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre, Irina Dvorovento was born in Kiev, Ukraine, and began her ballet training at the Kiev Ballet School. She joined the National Opera Ballet of Kiev in 1990 as a soloist, rising to the rank of principal dancer in 1992. An artist of infinite range, her repertoire with the company included leading roles in many of the great classics: *La Bayadère*, *Don Quixote*, *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, *Paquita* and *The Sleeping Beauty*.

Dvorovento's superlative style and technique have been recognized in competitions throughout the world. Her most notable awards include the Grand Prix at the International Ballet Competition Serge Lifar in the Ukraine (1994), the Gold Medal and "Anna Pavlova" Prize at the International Ballet Competition in Moscow (1992), the Bronze Medal at the International Ballet Competition in Osaka, Japan (1991), and the Silver Medal at the Jackson International Ballet Competition in Jackson, MS (1990). A member of ABT since 1996, Dvorovento was appointed principal dancer in 2000. Her diverse repertoire with ABT includes leading roles in *Apollo*, *Coppélia*, *Le Corsaire*, the title role in Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella*, *HereAfter*, *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux*, *The Merry Widow*, *Offenbach in the Underworld*, *Onegin*, *Prodigal Son*, *Raymonda*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Odette/Odile* in *Swan Lake*. Her talents have been showcased in works such as *Études*, *In The Upper Room*, *Petite Mort*, *Without Words*, *Push Comes to Shove* and *The Brahms/Haydn Variations*. Dvorovento has danced with an impressive list of premier companies around the world, appeared in television specials and videos, and has been featured on numerous magazine covers. She is married to Maxim Beloserkovsky; together they are the proud parents of Emma Galina.

Maxim Beloserkovsky, Guest Artist

Dec. 12 at 7 pm, Dec. 13 at 2 pm & 7 pm, Dec. 14 at 1 pm

A principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre, Maxim Beloserkovsky received his dance training at the Kiev Ballet Institute. In 1990, he danced as leading soloist with the National Opera of Bulgaria. As a principal dancer with the National Opera Ballet of the Ukraine (1991-1994), he toured Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Mexico, Spain and the U.S., and performed most of the major roles in the classical repertory: *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *Giselle*, *Le Corsaire*, *Don Quixote* and *La Sylphide*. In 1993, Beloserkovsky was honored by the president of the Ukraine for outstanding artistic achievement. Joining ABT in 1994, Beloserkovsky was appointed principal dancer in 2000, following a brilliant season in which he was repeatedly cited for his superior artistry. Equally confident in both classical and contemporary works, his repertoire with ABT includes the Prince in Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella*, *Coppélia*, *The Dream*, *La Bayadère*, *La Fille mal Gardée*, *The Merry Widow*, *Onegin*, *Raymonda*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Snow Maiden*, *Sylvia*, *The Nutcracker* and *Themes and Variations*. He has also danced leading roles in *The Leaves are Fading*, *Lilac Garden*, *Dim Lustre*, *Bruch Violin Concerto*, *Mozartiana*, *Symphonic Variations*, *Études* and *Apollo*. His athleticism and style have earned him leading roles in *Push Comes to Shove*, *The Elements*, *The Brahms-Haydn Variations*, *Without Words*, *Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes*, *Sinfonietta*, *Spring and Fall*, *Kaleidoscope*, *Diversion of Angels* and *Afternoon of a Faun*. Beloserkovsky has appeared as a guest artist with numerous companies around the world, in videos and television specials, as well as on covers of such publications as *People* and *Dance Magazine*. He is married to Irina Dvorovenko, and they are the proud parents of Emma Galina.

Gillian Murphy, Guest Artist

Dec. 20 at 2 pm & 7 pm, Dec. 21 at 1 pm & 6 pm

Gillian Murphy is a principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre (ABT). Her repertoire includes leading roles in such full-length works as *Swan Lake*, *Don Quixote*, *Manon*, *La Fille mal Gardée*, *Sylvia*, *Cinderella*, *Le Corsaire*, *La Bayadère*, *Giselle*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. She danced the dual roles of Odette/Odile in ABT's television production of *Swan Lake*, seen throughout the world and available on DVD. Recent additions to her repertoire include the ABT premiere of George Balanchine's *Ballo Della Regina*, Agnes de Mille's *Fall River Legend* and a new work by Benjamin Millepied. She has been prominently featured in the company's shorter works by Balanchine, Twyla Tharp, Jerome Robbins, Jiri Kylian, Antony Tudor, William Forsythe, Martha Graham, Lar Lubovitch, Frederick Ashton and de Mille. She appeared in world premieres by Stanton Welch, Jorma Elo, Peter Quanz, Natalie Weir, John Neumeier and Robert Hill. Murphy is a director of *Dreamcatchers*, a summer training program for dancers aged 12 to 14, held in a special facility on Martha's Vineyard. She is a charter member of the concert ensemble, Stiefel and Stars. She appears as a guest artist throughout the United States, Germany, Italy, Greece and Japan. Her television credits include ABT's *Le Corsaire*; the Washington Opera's *Die Fledermaus*; The Balanchine Foundation's video of *Stars and Stripes* and *Donizetti Variations*; and the feature film *Center Stage*. Her honors include the Prix de Lausanne Espoir award and the Princess Grace Foundation--USA grant. Murphy's primary training was at the North Carolina School of the Arts.

Gennadi Saveliev, Guest Artist

Dec. 20 at 2 pm & 7 pm, Dec. 21 at 1 pm & 6 pm

Born in Moscow, Russia, Gennadi Saveliev began his ballet studies at the Bolshoi Ballet School. At 18, he joined the Bolshoi Ballet Grigorovich Company where he was showcased in classics such as *The Nutcracker*, *Raymonda* and *Swan Lake*. Saveliev went on to dance with the Nevada Dance Theatre, Tulsa Ballet, Los Angeles Classical Ballet and the New Jersey Ballet. He won the Silver Medal at the

1996 New York International Ballet Competition and was a finalist at the Nagoya Ballet Competition in 1999. A member of American Ballet Theatre since January 1996, his repertoire with the company includes featured roles in *La Bayadère*, *Coppélia*, *Le Corsaire*, *Diana and Acteon*, *Diversion of Angels*, *Don Quixote, VIII*, *Flames of Paris*, *Giselle*, *Manon*, *The Merry Widow*, *Onegin*, *Pillar of Fire*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. He has danced leading roles in ballets such as *Without Words*, *Ballet Imperial*, *In The Upper Room*, *Les Sylphides* and *Theme and Variations*, as well as *Black Tuesday*, *Clear*, *HereAfter*, *Petite Mort* and *Symphony in C*. Saveliev is a member of two touring ensembles – Angel Corella and Friends; and Stiefel and Stars. He is the founder and artistic director of Youth America Grand Prix, America's first student ballet scholarship competition.