Festival Ballet Theatre Presents The Nutcracker

INTERNATIONAL BALLET STARS DANCE IN BELOVED HOLIDAY TRADITION TO ENCHANT AUDIENCES OF ALL AGES

Festival Ballet Theatre presents the return of its critically acclaimed production of *The Nutcracker* to the Irvine Barclay Theatre, one of Orange County's premiere entertainment venues. The production has been delighting audiences in Orange County for more than 30 years. *The Nutcracker,* set to Tchaikovsky's renowned score, opens December 10 with 13 matinee and evening performances through December 24. This year Festival Ballet Theatre welcomes back international ballet stars as guest artists, and families can once again enjoy the pre-show Nutcracker Tea Party.

"*The Nutcracker* is a time-honored treasure for so many people during the holiday season. We are honored to be part of their traditions and welcome new audience members every year," said Artistic Director, Salwa Rizkalla. "There is something for everyone in this stunning production, which captures the joyful holiday spirit and showcases our Company through iconic music, sets, costumes and choreography."

Festival Ballet Theatre's breathtaking production of *The Nutcracker* makes this age-old holiday tradition sparkle like new. Audiences will be swept away as Clara, the Sugar Plum Fairy, dancing toys, mischievous mice, sparkling snowflakes, waltzing flowers and a cast of hundreds take them on a magical journey to mystical lands.

The beautiful Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier are a highlight of Clara's adventure. These roles will be performed by international ballet stars, Festival Ballet Theatre's spectacular guest artists. The Sugar Plum Fairy will be danced by **Maria Kochetkova** (former San Francisco Ballet), **Lauren Lovette** (former New York City Ballet) and **Jeraldine Mendoza** (Joffrey Ballet). The handsome Cavalier will be danced by **Constantine Allen** (Dutch National Ballet), **Dylan Gutierrez** (Joffrey Ballet) and **Connor Walsh** (Houston Ballet).

The full-length traditional production is choreographed and directed by Festival Ballet Theatre's Artistic Director, Salwa Rizkalla. In addition to the world-renowned guest artists, it features professional Festival Ballet Theatre Company dancers and exceptional young talent from across the Southland.

IRVINE BARCLAY THEATRE
4242 Campus Drive
Irvine
FestivalBallet.org
(714) 309-1280