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Save the Magic! Nutcracker Fundraiser set for Dec. 13 Holiday Classic Goes Virtual

(Pueblo, Colo. - October 21, 2020) To kick off the holiday festivities, the Arts Center will host a fundraiser on Sunday, December 13 at 2 pm to raise funds for the School of Dance. The event will include dinner, the premiere of Act II of this year's *Nutcracker, The Ballet*, and a live performance by the principal dancers in the Jackson Conference Center. Tickets are \$100 and must be purchased in advance by visiting the Arts Center Box Office, by phone at 719-295-7200, or online at sdc-arts.org.

For the first time ever, *Nutcracker, The Ballet* will be streamed to the public free of charge on December 14 via sdc-arts.org/dance/nutcracker-fundraiser. The decision to go virtual became clear when it was realized that due to COVID-19 the performance could not be held live for safety concerns.

This year, students have the exciting opportunity to bring a traditional holiday classic to life virtually. The ballet will be produced by the local Emmy award-winning agency, The Media Center, featuring this year's student dancers. There will be special features including behind-the-scenes interviews addressing the challenges of this rigorous process and the added layer of COVID-19 precautions.

Nanine Wainwright, Artistic Director, says, "Our whole social and artistic environment demanded that we do something different for Nutcracker this year. The idea of working in a growing technological medium for dance was so appealing and the possibility of being able to film scene-by-scene resolved so many safety concerns for us." In addition, the performers will experience how the art of dance adapts to its environment through the evolution of this holiday staple into a production within the bounds of current safety standards.

Returning this year, costume designers include the award-winning Michelle Gray, Dr. Carol Foust, Mia Harberts, and Joslyn Rafferty as well as Rebecca Musso and Anakacia Shifflet. "This amazing team of artists has rallied to make our dancers look and feel amazing in designs that reflect the beauty of the ballet and meet the demands of classical performance," says director Nanine Wainwright.

Principal dancers in this year's production include Gabriella Harberts as Clara, Logan Stanifer as the Nutcracker Prince, Connor Foust as Drosselmeyer/Cavalier, Emma Rafferty and Nadia Jackson as the Sugarplum Fairy, Nicholas Parker as the Snow King, Madeline Stanifer and Nadia Jackson as the Snow Queen, Emma Eide as the Rat Queen, and Meena Ropp and Jewel Sirota as Dewdrop Fairy. Choreography is by Nanine Wainwright, Brittany Nunes, and Nancy Tracey.

Lead sponsor of *Nutcracker, The Ballet* is Balance A/V with additional support from Black Hills Energy, Dill/Rawlings Southern Colorado Community Foundation Fund, Lenore Chamberlain Nondiscretionary Fund, Mary Graham Rawlings Fund, Donald & Raelene Moore, and Robert H. Rawlings Endowment.

The sets, costumes, and unique choreography of this joyous classic will leave audiences with cherished memories for years to come. For complete information, visit sdc-arts.org.

About the Sangre de Cristo Ballet:

Sangre de Cristo Ballet is a youth company comprised of students from the Sangre de Cristo School of Dance who make the commitment to study each form of dance recommended for the company and perform in community outreach projects and stage performances. SDC Ballet members learn professional skills they can apply to succeed in all walks of life. In order to successfully manage their demanding class, rehearsal, and performance schedule, they must learn time-management skills and cultivate exceptional levels of focus, discipline, and emotional intelligence.

About the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center:

The cultural hub of Southern Colorado, the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center gives visitors the tools to think and act creatively through a three building complex including seven galleries offering the best in historic and contemporary art by artists of local, regional and national renown. The Arts Center offers the Buell Children's Museum, recognized as the second-best for art by Child magazine, a 500-seat theater featuring a variety of performing arts programs, both local and national, and two gift shops. Over 100 fine arts, dance, and leisure classes are available quarterly providing unique offerings to everyone from children to adults of all skill levels. Admission to the Arts Center is \$10 for adults, \$8 for children, seniors 65+, and military. For more information, please call 719-295-7200; stop by the Arts Center located at 210 N. Santa Fe Ave., just off of I-25, exit 98B, or visit online at www.sdc-arts.org.

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