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American Ballet Theatre

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RELEASE DATE

For Immediate Release

Segerstrom Center for the Arts
announces the return of SoCal's favorite holiday tradition
American Ballet Theatre's captivating production of *The Nutcracker*
December 9-18, 2022 in Segerstrom Hall
Tickets on Sale Now at scfta.org



Photo by Gene Schiavone

**"A production like no other, made with complete theatrical authority from first to last."
-*The New York Times***

**Casting Announced:
Devon Teuscher and Joo Won Ahn to lead the opening night cast
The triumphant return of James Whiteside**

**Artistic Director Kevin McKenzie retires
following this engagement after three decades at the helm of American Ballet
Theatre**

**American Ballet Theatre is the Official Dance Company of
Segerstrom Center for the Arts**

Music Performed Live by Pacific Symphony

COSTA MESA, CA – Segerstrom Center for the Arts announces the return of SoCal's favorite holiday tradition - American Ballet Theatre's captivating production of *The Nutcracker*. Co-presented by the Center and ABT with choreography by ABT Artist in Residence Alexei Ratmansky, *The Nutcracker* is the beloved holiday story based on *The Nutcracker and the King of Mice* written by E.T.A. Hoffmann and set to a magical score by Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky that will be performed live by Pacific Symphony.

In its annual holiday engagement, American Ballet Theatre will give 12 performances between December 9 through December 18, 2022, in Segerstrom Hall. This year marks the seventh time that The Center has presented ABT's *The Nutcracker*, Southern California's grandest production of this beloved holiday tradition, featuring ABT's international all-star cast.

This engagement marks ABT's last performances with Kevin McKenzie as Artistic Director, who is retiring after three decades at the helm. McKenzie was a leading dancer with both The Joffrey Ballet and the National Ballet of Washington before joining American Ballet Theatre as a Soloist in March 1979. He was appointed a Principal Dancer the following December and danced with the company until 1991. McKenzie, 68, was appointed ABT's Artistic Director in October 1992.

American Ballet Theatre has a long, storied history of producing several critically acclaimed productions of this annual family-friendly classic tale of Clara and the Nutcracker over the years. *The Nutcracker*, with its timeless music by Tchaikovsky and splendid costumes and scenery, is the perfect way to introduce children to ballet and even inspire them to study dance and become a little Clara or Nutcracker Prince. This production, with choreography by Alexei Ratmansky, scenery and costumes by Tony Award®-winner Richard Hudson (Disney's *The Lion King*), and lighting by Tony Award®-winner Jennifer Tipton, received its World Premiere in 2010.

The *Los Angeles Times* said, "Choreographer Alexei Ratmansky has made his own Christmas miracle: a joyful "Nutcracker" ballet that is ravishing and clever enough to inspire multiple viewings ... in 'Waltz of the Flowers,' Busby Berkeley-esque waves of complex human patterns make this waltz one of the most astounding and beautiful you'll ever see ... in all its wondrousness, an unreserved classic."

The *Orange County Register* said, "A visual tour de force ... a *Nutcracker* without parallel ... Ratmansky is an undisputed master; few choreographers combine his qualities of invention, wit, pacing, and theatricality ... Ratmansky has created a work that celebrates the wonder and transformative power of live performance."

The *New York Times* said, "Mr. Ratmansky here is an enchanting storyteller, but his is among the most original, fascinating for children and adults alike. A production like no other, made with complete theatrical authority from first to last."

Single tickets for American Ballet Theatre's *The Nutcracker* start at \$29 and are now available online at SCFTA.org, at the Box office at 600 Town Center Drive in Costa Mesa, or by calling (714) 556-2787. For inquiries about group ticket discounts for 10 or more, call the Group Services offices at (714)755-0236.

The ABT William J. Gillespie School offers students unrivaled performing opportunities, Master Classes, lectures by visiting artists, and the highest quality of classical ballet training through the American Ballet Theatre National Training Curriculum. Forty students are featured annually in ABT's production of *The Nutcracker*, and students have performed alongside ABT dancers in the World Premiere productions of *The Sleeping Beauty* (2015), *Whipped Cream* (2017), and the West Coast premiere of ABT's *Harlequinade* (2019).

From March 29 to April 2, 2023, American Ballet Theatre will give the North American Premiere of ***Like Water for Chocolate*** at the Center. From the award-winning team of choreographer Christopher Wheeldon and composer Joby Talbot, with costumes by Bob Crowley, this co-production with the Royal Ballet is inspired by Laura Esquivel's bestselling novel of the same name. Wheeldon and his team have turned "Latin-American magical realism into a fluid, clear, and cohesive dance narrative" (Culture Whisper).

Casting for *The Nutcracker*

ABT Artistic Director Kevin McKenzie has released principal casting which will include Devon Teuscher as Clara, the Princess, and Joo Won Ahn as The Nutcracker Prince on Opening Night, Friday, December 9.

Friday, December 9 at 7 p.m. – Devon Teuscher, Joo Won Ahn
Saturday, December 10 at 2 p.m. – Isabella Boylston, James Whiteside
Saturday, December 10 at 7 p.m. – Catherine Hurlin, Aran Bell
Sunday, December 11 at 12:30 p.m. – Cassandra Trenary*, Calvin Royal III*
Sunday, December 11 at 5:30 p.m. – Christine Shevchenko, Thomas Forster

Wednesday, December 14 at 7 p.m. – Hee Seo, Cory Stearns
Thursday, December 15 at 7 p.m. – Skyler Brandt, Herman Cornejo
Friday, December 16 at 7 p.m. – Cassandra Trenary, Calvin Royal III
Saturday, December 17 at 2 p.m. – Devon Teuscher, Joo Won Ahn
Saturday, December 17 at 7 p.m. – Skylar Brandt, Herman Cornejo
Sunday, December 18 at 12:30 p.m. – Catherine Hurlin, Aran Bell
Sunday, December 18 at 5:30 p.m. – Hee Seo, Cory Stearns

*Indicates the first time in the role.

More about Kevin McKenzie

One of McKenzie's greatest achievements was appointing Alexei Ratmansky as the Company's Artist in Residence in 2009, adding a wealth of original works – including this production of *The Nutcracker* – and reconstructed classics to the repertoire.

McKenzie has hired and guided throughout his tenure some of the biggest names in ballet, from Angel Corella, Paloma Herrera, and Ethan Stiefel to Gillian Murphy, Stella Abrera, Misty Copeland, David Hallberg, and Herman Cornejo. This summer he elevated a new group of Principal Dancers with the promotions of Catherine Hurlin, Roman Zhurbin, and Daniel Camargo.

In 2004, McKenzie established the ABT Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School in New York and later oversaw the creation of its National Training Curriculum. There are now more than 1,600 ABT Certified teachers throughout the world.

The partnership between Segerstrom Center for the Arts and American Ballet Theatre

This engagement of *The Nutcracker* continues the partnership of the co-presented annual production of Alexei Ratmansky's *The Nutcracker* and continues with World and West Coast Premieres and engagements each spring through 2024 combining the resources of America's National Ballet Company® and one of the nation's leading presenters of dance.

Since 2015, ABT has wowed Southern California audiences at Segerstrom Center for the Arts with annual holiday engagements of *The Nutcracker* for over 75 performances. Segerstrom Center and ABT have a robust long-standing relationship. At the Center, ABT gave the World Premiere of Mikhail Baryshnikov's *Swan Lake* in 1988. In 1999, the ABT production of *Le Corsaire* was taped for broadcast on PBS's *Dance in America*, winning an Emmy Award. In 2003, *The Dream* was also taped at the Center for broadcast on *Dance in America*. In 2008, ABT co-commissioned Twyla Tharp's *Rabbit and Rogue* with Segerstrom Center for the Arts, which received its World Premiere in New York and its West Coast Premiere at the Center.

Other ABT productions at the Center have included the West Coast Premiere of Artistic Director Kevin McKenzie's production of *The Sleeping Beauty* in 2007, the World Premiere of a new production of *Firebird* by ABT Artist in Residence Alexei Ratmansky in 2012, and three additional ballets by Ratmansky including the West Coast premiere of *The Nutcracker* in 2015, the World Premiere of *Whipped Cream* in 2017, the West Coast Premiere of *Harlequinade* in 2019, and the World Premiere and co-commissioned production *Of Love and Rage* in 2020.

In April of 2021, the Center presented *Uniting in Movement*, a unique dance project that brought 18 ABT dancers together for safe collaboration and exhilarating performance of new works by Jessica Lang, Lauren Lovette, and Darrell Grand Moultrie.

In March 16-19, 2022, ABT and the Center presented a mixed repertory program that included the World Premiere *Single Eye* by Alonzo King to the music of Jason Moran and West Coast Premieres of Ratmansky's *Bernstein in a Bubble* and Jessica Lang's *ZigZag*, featuring songs recorded by Tony Bennett.

Upcoming March 29 to April 2, 2023, American Ballet Theatre will give the North American Premiere of *Like Water for Chocolate* at the Center. ABT and the Center's partnership in 2024 will include a third World Premiere (details to follow at a later date).

American Ballet Theatre is one of the greatest dance companies in the world. Revered as a national treasure since its founding season in 1940, its mission is to create, present, preserve, and extend the great repertoire of classical dancing for the widest possible audience. Headquartered in New York City, ABT is the only cultural institution of its size and stature to extensively tour, enchanting audiences for eight decades in 50 U.S. states, 45 countries, and over 480 cities worldwide. ABT's repertoire includes full-length classics from the nineteenth century, the finest works from the early twentieth century, and acclaimed contemporary masterpieces. In 2006, by an act of Congress, ABT was designated America's National Ballet Company®. Find out more at ABT.org and follow ABT dancers at @abtofficial on Instagram, on Twitter at @ABTBallet, and on Facebook at @AmericanBalletTheatre.

Segerstrom Center for the Arts is an innovative, nonprofit arts organization committed to supporting artistic excellence, creating impactful educational programs, and dedicated to engaging a culturally connected, inclusive, and vital Orange County community for all, through the power of live performance.

As the leading cultural arts hub, the Center presents a variety of programming with performances by international dance companies, Broadway national tours, jazz and cabaret musicians, chamber orchestras and ensembles, comedy, and speaker series. Through the Education and Community Engagement departments, the Center also delivers family-friendly programming and performances on the Julianne and George Argyros Plaza; these events include outdoor movie screenings, concerts, dance classes, diverse festivals, and more.

With six venues on a beautiful multi-disciplinary campus, Segerstrom Center for the Arts proudly serves as the artistic home to three of the region's major performing arts organizations: **Pacific Symphony**, **Philharmonic Society of Orange County**, and **Pacific Chorale** as well as two independently acclaimed organizations: Tony Award®-winning **South Coast Repertory** and a site opening this fall as the home of the **Orange County Museum of Art**. Segerstrom Center is also home to the American Ballet Theatre William J. Gillespie School and Studio D, Arts School for All Abilities.

Seegerstrom Center for the Arts applauds its corporate partner Kaiser Permanente, its Official Health Care Partner, and recognizes Riviera Magazine as the official media partner for the 22/23 Dance Series.

American Ballet Theatre
The Nutcracker

Pacific Symphony

Segerstrom Center for the Arts
Segerstrom Hall

December 9– 18

Friday, December 9 at 7 p.m.

Saturday, December 10 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Sunday, December 11 at 12:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 14 at 7 p.m.

Thursday, December 15 at 7 p.m.

Friday, December 16 at 7 p.m.

Saturday, December 17 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Sunday, December 18 at 12:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

In-person and Phone-

The Box Office

600 Town Center Drive

Costa Mesa, CA 92626

(714) 556-2787

Monday 10 am – 2 pm

Tuesday through Friday Noon- 5 pm

Closed Saturdays and Sundays

Tickets start at \$29

Online - SCFTA.org

Group Sales - (714) 755-0236

Information provided is accurate at the time of printing, but is subject to change. Segerstrom Center for the Arts is a public, non-profit organization. "Segerstrom Center for the Arts" is a registered trademark.

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