



PRESS RELEASE

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New Dance Works to be Premiered at “Dancer’s Choice” Benefit for Inland Pacific Ballet

A delightful evening with heavenly hors d’oeuvres, select wines, delectable desserts and a showcase of brilliant new work awaits guests at Inland Pacific Ballet’s “Dancer’s Choice.” The intimate evening is IPB’s 2009-2010 season finale and will be held on Saturday, May 8, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the Garrison Theatre in Claremont. Tickets are \$65 per person with proceeds supporting Inland Pacific Ballet’s programs.

The highlight of the evening is a showcase of original dance works created by choreographers Stephanie Orza, IPB Principal Dancer, special guest Stephanie Gilliland, known as an original voice in cutting edge dance, Arturo Fernandez, an exciting Bay Area choreographer and Brandon J, Hip Hop Master and founder of Envy Dance Company. Both Orza and Gilliland have been working with IPB dancers to explore ideas for future ballets. Their project is funded in part by a grant from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.

Stephanie Orza will premier her new ballet “Tolerance.” Originally inspired by music her husband selected, the work features seven IPB company dancers exploring their limitations and emotional boundaries. “When I heard the Vitamin String Quartet’s “Third Eye Open: A Tribute To Tool” I thought the music sounded beautiful,” said Orza, “but it was different...a little out there. I wasn’t ready to choreograph to it at the time.” After leaving it on the backburner for about four years, she began working with dancers to create this dynamic new ballet. Orza comes from a family of dancers and started her dance training at age seven with the San Francisco Ballet. She joined IPB in 2005 as a principal dancer.

Los Angeles based choreographer Stephanie Gilliland is conducting workshops with IPB dancers to explore movement ideas. “The dancers and I are engaged in a rigorous physical experiment,” said Gilliland, “an exploration from which the dance will begin to unfold and reveal itself.” Hailed by the

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Los Angeles Times for her “dare devil dance till you drop athleticism,” Gilliland’s work is dynamic and complex. Her original movement is a language that is “alternately liquid and explosive,” and she pushes both male and female dancers to their limits by demanding an equal display of support, strength, and stamina. She describes her work as kinetic, sculptural, and architectural with “emotional content that originates in action, and speaks to and from a range of human experience.” Gilliland has presented her work throughout the United States and abroad, and is a two-time recipient of the Lester Horton Award for Choreographic Achievement.

IPB Principal Dancers Jennifer Friel and Eric Shah will showcase a duet choreographed by Arturo Fernandez to the Sarabande from Bach's 4th Cello Suite in E Flat that will be performed live by cellist Mason Dille. Fernandez, known to IPB fans as the choreographer for the Company's dramatic and sensual production of *Dracula*, is a mainstay of the dance scene in San Francisco where he is the Ballet Master for the critically acclaimed Alonso King's Lines Ballet.

Brandon J and ten dancers from Envy Dance Company are performing an upbeat and entertaining work to a musical medley that includes Jay-Z’s “Run This Town” and Ludacris’ “How Low”. Brandon’s high energy, afro-centric style of hip hop shines through in his work. He began choreographing while in college at Florida A&M, where he developed works for the FAMU STRIKERS. Since moving to Los Angeles, he has performed for a variety of hip hop artists and educational institutions. Brandon seeks to educate youth and their families about the positive aspects of hip hop culture, and is also an IPB company member.

Garrison Theatre is located at 231 East 10th Street, Claremont, CA 91711. For tickets and information, visit www.ipballet.org or call 909-482-1590.

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