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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Inland Pacific Ballet World Premiere: *Beauty and the Beast* April 12 through May 11, 2014

Inland Pacific Ballet will premiere its newest full-length story ballet, *Beauty and the Beast*, this spring with nine performances from April 12 through May 11 at Bridges Auditorium, the Lewis Family Playhouse and the Arcadia Performing Arts Center. Tickets are on sale now at ipballet.org.

Beauty and the Beast is IPB's fourth original ballet creatively adapted from adventure-filled stories in a series that already includes *Dracula*, *The Little Mermaid* and *Cinderella*.

"We are thrilled to once again bring exciting, new work to the local stage, both for our ever expanding audience and our amazing dancers," states Artistic Director Victoria Koenig.

"We've brought together a wonderfully creative artistic team, and through their collaborative process a spectacular production of this well known story is coming together. After months of work, sharing ideas, changing our minds, and delving deeper into the work, the story and the characters, everything is starting to fall into place."

"It is inspiring, and I think *Beauty and the Beast* promises to be one of the most beautiful ballets we have yet produced."

IPB's production came together after reading numerous versions of the fairytale story that first appeared in France in the mid 1700s. Discovering that each story had different characters and plot variations, Koenig and choreographer Clinton Rothwell created an original libretto that accommodates the art of telling the story through dance.

Living at the edge of a mystical forest, Beauty is a young girl pure of heart, whose father is accosted by a mysterious Beast after picking a single white rose from the Beast's beloved garden. To save her father, Beauty offers herself in exchange for his freedom, and begins a journey of love and transformation for both herself and the Beast.

"The basic elements are there, but in true IPB fashion, we have put our own twist on the story," says Koenig with a smile. "One signature change is the use of a single white rose imbued with

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magical powers that is passed between Beauty, her father and the Beast. For choreographer Clinton Rothwell, the white rose represents both Beauty’s pure heart and the transformation that takes place in the story.”

In a real life “A Star is Born” fashion, dancing the role of Beauty will be Shelby Whallon of Upland, who began her training at the IPB’s Academy in 2001. Only 17 years old, Shelby was just promoted to the rank of Soloist from Company Apprentice. According to Koenig, she was given the role of Beauty based on her extraordinary debut in the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy in IPB’s 2013 production of *The Nutcracker*.

Dancing the role of the Beast is guest artist Cameron Schwanz, who has also performed with Ballet San Jose, Los Angeles Ballet and Texas Ballet Theatre. A total of 47 dancer roles also include Jonathan Sharp as the Father, Miranda Farmer and Jessie Parmelee as the Sisters, Reece Taylor and Evan Swenson as the Husbands, and Meilu Zhai and Abigail Zamora as the White Roses.

With major funding from The Ahmanson Foundation, IPB is creating new scenery, sets and costumes for *Beauty and the Beast*. Award-winning set designer and scenic artist Daniel C. Nyiri has designed the village, forest, garden and castle scenes that will serve as backdrops for the jewel-toned costumes by designer Jeanne Nolden. Special masks for the Beast and a pack of wild wolves are being created by Bonnie Sinclair, an inspired designer who worked for many years with Maurice Sendak on projects including *Where the Wild Things Are*.

Music for the new ballet will feature a sound collage of music chosen by Rothwell and edited by James Linahon, Linahon Music Productions, Claremont. The music features selections by a variety of classical composers including: Antonin Dvorak, Dimitri Shostakovich, Jules Massenet, Pytor Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Felix Mendelssohn and Alexander Glazounov.

Founded in 1994 by Southern California natives Victoria Koenig and Kevin Myers, Inland Pacific Ballet has become one of the Inland Empire’s cultural jewels. Its mission is to build and sustain a professional ballet company of national stature in the Inland Empire of Southern California. IPB is committed to producing exquisitely staged productions of full-length classic story ballets as well as presenting the best in contemporary choreography.

Programs are supported, in part, by The Ahmanson Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, ArtWorks, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, The Victor Elmaleh Foundation, US Bank, Target, The Doubletree Hotel – Claremont, Hank and Jean Voznick, The Claremont Community Foundation, and The Haskell Fund.

Tickets for *Beauty and the Beast* start at \$30 for adults, with senior, child and group discounts available. Tickets can be ordered online at ipballet.org.

Bridges Auditorium is located at 450 N. College Way in Claremont. The Lewis Family Playhouse is located at 12505 Cultural Center Dr. in Rancho Cucamonga. The Arcadia Performing Art Center is located at 188 Campus Dr. in Arcadia. Free parking is available near each theatre.

For more information about *Beauty and the Beast* and Inland Pacific Ballet, visit ipballet.org.

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In addition to the public performances, IPB also offers its Educational Outreach Program for pre-K through high school students. “A Young Person’s Guide to the Ballet” offers morning performances during the school day for public, private and homeschool students. Each 75 minute performance includes an educational talk about ballet, a demonstration of theatre stagecraft and audience participation that has students “dancing in their seats.”

Outreach performances are scheduled for April 10 and 11 at the Lewis Family Playhouse in Rancho Cucamonga, and on April 24 and 25 at Bridges Auditorium. IPB’s Educational Outreach Program is supported, in part, by funding from the National Endowment for the Arts – ArtWorks, Target, The Claremont Community Foundation and The Haskell Fund. For more information, visit ipballet.org or contact Outreach Coordinator Lynn Klug at 909-482-1590 or lynn@ipballet.org.

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EVENT INFORMATION:

WHO: Inland Pacific Ballet

WHAT: Beauty and the Beast

WHERE #1: Lewis Family Playhouse
12505 Cultural Center Dr., Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

WHEN: Saturday, April 12, 2014 1:00 and 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 13, 2014 1:00 p.m.

WHERE #2: Bridges Auditorium, The Claremont Colleges
450 North College Way, Claremont, CA 91711

WHEN: Saturday, April 26, 2014 1:00 and 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 27, 2014 1:00 p.m.

WHERE #3: Arcadia Performing Arts Center
188 Campus Drive, Arcadia, CA 91007

WHEN: Saturday, May 10, 2014 2:00 p.m.
Sunday, May 11, 2014 2:00 p.m.

TICKETS: \$40 Premium Seat (all ages)
\$32 Adults
\$30 Seniors
\$22 Child
Group rates available.

TICKETS & INFORMATION: ipballet.org

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