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Inland Pacific Ballet Presents
The Nutcracker

Spectacular holiday tradition returns to the Inland Empire and San Gabriel Valley

Performances in four So-Cal theaters from November 28 - December 20, 2015
Arcadia, Claremont, Riverside & Rancho Cucamonga

LOS ANGELES (Oct. 20, 2015) – **Inland Pacific Ballet**, returns with its spectacular production of ***The Nutcracker***, the classic holiday story danced to Tchaikovsky's beloved score. Critically acclaimed Inland Pacific Ballet (IPB) brings *The Nutcracker* to life with dazzling sets complete with falling snow, an antique original Albany Flyer One Horse Open Sleigh, a 40-foot Chinese Dragon, beautiful costumes handmade in-house at IPB's costume department, and a cast of 80 dancers. New to this year's production is a completely re-choreographed Snow Scene for an expanded cast of 20 and a brand new lighting design. IPB's *Nutcracker* will have 12 performances (plus five educational outreach performances) in four theaters from November 28 through December 20, 2015 at the **Arcadia Performing Arts Center, Pomona College's Bridges Auditorium, Riverside's Fox Performing Arts Center, and Lewis Family Playhouse in Rancho Cucamonga.**

This annual holiday favorite tells the story of a young girl named Clara who receives a magical nutcracker doll on Christmas Eve, and sets out on a wondrous journey to the Land of the Snow and the Kingdom of Sweets. A fantastic dream with battling mice, dancing snowflakes, waltzing flowers, and the delightful Sugar Plum Fairy stir the imagination. Meet the cast after the performance for photos and autographs. A dazzling holiday tradition for the entire family, see it again or for the first time and be swept away in a winter wonderland.

"We are thrilled to again take our wonderful production on tour to four beautiful southern California theaters. As always, *The Nutcracker* showcases our key Company Principals and Soloists, who are in top form," says Artistic Director Victoria Koenig. "Cameron Schwanz (Cavalier) and Meilu Zhai (Sugar Plum Fairy) are extraordinary. They really honed their partnership in *Beauty and the Beast* last spring and are a joy to watch. We look forward each year to enhancing the show to surprise our audiences and this year is no exception. We're re-choreographing the Snow Scene for 20 dancers, which is fun and inspiring for the dancers, and I think will make for an exciting new addition. We also have a brand new lighting design. Our fans who return year after year really look forward to these fun changes to the choreography and production values."

This season's cast features brilliant young talent from the region, most notably **Emily Baggarly**, and **Lauren Collett** alternating in the role of Clara. Both Emily and Lauren continue to receive their training at the IPB Academy. Both attended prestigious Summer Intensive programs in New York City – Emily at American Ballet Theatre and Lauren at New York City Ballet. IPB Principal Dancer, the exquisite **Meilu Zhai** of Montclair, will reign over the Kingdom of Sweets as the Sugar Plum Fairy. Meilu is a former dancer with the National Ballet of

China and returns for her fourth season with IPB. Also returning is IPB Principal Dancer **Cameron Schwanz** of Corona, who will dance as the Cavalier and the Nutcracker. Cameron is a thrilling dancer who returned to southern California three years ago to join IPB as the Beast for its premiere of *Beauty and the Beast*. He previously danced with Texas Ballet Theater, Ballet Pacifica/Festival Ballet Theater, Los Angeles Ballet, and Ballet San Jose. IPB Principal Dancer **Jonathan Sharp** as Drosselmeyer, returns for a seventh season with IPB and brings an extensive resume of dancing professionally with the Boston and Pennsylvania Ballet companies, and appearances in original casts of five Broadway shows. Jonathan is currently appearing in San Diego's Old Globe production of *In Your Arms*.

IPB is a professional ballet company based in the Inland Empire of Southern California since 1994. The Company is committed to producing exquisitely staged productions of full-length classic story ballets as well as presenting the best in contemporary choreography. Their large studio facility in Montclair also includes in-house costume and scenic departments. In addition, through creative marketing and an extensive Educational Outreach Program, IPB strives to introduce new audiences to the magic of ballet, and to make the experience more available and accessible to all. For students pre-school through grade 12 enrolled in public, private and home schools, IPB offers "A Young Person's Guide to the Ballet," connecting the arts to learning through music and movement with five educational outreach performances scheduled for *The Nutcracker*. The Company is also committed to the nurturing of new talent and provides an essential training ground for serious young dancers.

Choreography for *The Nutcracker* is by **Laurence Blake** and **Victoria Koenig**; Scenic Design by **Nancy Seruto** and **Daniel C. Nyiri**; Costume Design by **Jeanne Nolden**; Brand new Lighting Design by **Joseph Walls**; and Music by **Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky**.

IPBs Founders/Artistic Directors/Choreographers **Victoria Koenig** and **Kevin Myers**, are southern California natives who bring a wealth of experience to their visionary leadership of this young Company. Over the past 21 years they have built IPB into the premiere ballet company and a key creative force in the region, enjoying critical acclaim while performing the largest and most varied repertoire in the area. Victoria Koenig is a native of Los Angeles now residing in Claremont. After many years as a professional dancer, and extensive international travel as a guest artist and teacher, Ms. Koenig returned to Southern California and has become a shaping force in the region's dance community. She co-founded the Los Angeles Chamber Ballet, was on the faculty of the Stanley Holden Dance Center, and served on the dance faculty of California State University, Long Beach. Ms. Koenig has brought her many years of professional experience to the Inland Valley, one of the fastest growing cultural assets in Southern California and is also on the dance faculty at Pomona College. Kevin Myers is a native of Riverside, California. He danced with the Houston Ballet in solo roles in the classic repertoire including *Giselle*, *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker* and *Sleeping Beauty* and in work created for him by Houston Ballet's renowned Artistic Director, Ben Stevenson. Later as soloist with the Los Angeles Ballet, he danced principal roles in a variety of Balanchine ballets, including *Tarantella* and *Jewels*. As a Co-Founder and Associate Director of Inland Pacific Ballet and of the Inland Pacific Ballet Academy, Mr. Myers is fulfilling a dream of widening the opportunities for the young people of the Inland Empire to experience the art of ballet and providing local talent with the chance to pursue a career in the field.

Performances of *The Nutcracker* take place at the **Arcadia Performing Arts Center**, 188 Campus Drive, Arcadia, CA 91007, Saturday, November 28th at 7:30pm and Sunday the 29th at 2pm; **Pomona College's Bridges Auditorium**, 450 North College Way, Claremont, CA 91711, Saturday, December 5 at 2pm and 7:30pm and Sunday the 6th at 2pm; **Fox Performing Arts Center**, 3801 Mission Inn Avenue, Riverside, CA 92501, Saturday, December 12th at 2pm and 7:30pm and Sunday the 13th at 2pm; and **Lewis Family Playhouse**, 12505 Cultural Center Drive, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91739, Friday, December 18th at 7:30pm, Saturday the 19th at 2pm and 7:30pm, and Sunday, the 20th at 2pm. Tickets start at \$38 with senior/child/group discounts available. For more information and tickets, please go to IPBALLET.org.

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Details for Calendar Listings

Inland Pacific Ballet's *The Nutcracker*

What: *The Nutcracker*

Critically acclaimed Inland Pacific Ballet's *The Nutcracker* comes to life in this magnificent holiday ballet with dazzling sets, beautiful costumes, and more than 80 dancers on stage. This annual yuletide favorite tells the story of a young girl named Clara who receives a magical nutcracker doll on Christmas Eve, and sets out on a wondrous journey to the Land of the Snow and the Kingdom of Sweets. Toy soldiers, life-sized dancing dolls, and a fantastic dream with battling mice, dancing snowflakes, waltzing flowers, and the delightful Sugar Plum Fairy stir the imagination. IPB's *The Nutcracker* is the holiday tradition your family will treasure!

Who:

- Music by **Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky**
- Choreography by **Laurence Blake** and **Victoria Koenig**
- Scenic Design by **Nancy Seruto** and **Daniel C. Nyiri**
- Costume Design by **Jeanne Nolden**
- Lighting Design by **Greta Welsh**

When/Where:

Arcadia Performing Arts Center, 188 Campus Drive, Arcadia, CA 91007

Saturday, November 28, 2015	7:30 pm
Sunday, November 29, 2015	2:00 pm

Bridges Auditorium, Pomona College, 450 North College Way, Claremont, CA 91711

Saturday, December 5, 2015	2:00 pm & 7:30 pm
Sunday, December 6, 2015	2:00 pm

Fox Performing Arts Center, 3801 Mission Inn Avenue, Riverside, CA 92501

Saturday, December 12, 2015	2:00 pm & 7:30 pm
Sunday, December 13, 2015	2:00 pm

Lewis Family Playhouse, 12505 Cultural Center Drive, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91739

Friday, December 18, 2015	7:30 pm
Saturday, December 19, 2015	2:00 pm & 7:30 pm
Sunday, December 20, 2015	2:00 pm

Information & Tickets: IPBALLET.org; tickets from \$38 with senior/child/group discounts available

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

In just 21 years Koenig and Myers have built Inland Pacific Ballet into the premier ballet company in the region, enjoying critical acclaim while performing the largest and most varied repertoire in the area. The Company's repertoire includes such classics as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Les Sylphides*, *Graduation Ball* and *Swan Lake Act II*. Full length classical masterpieces include *Giselle*, *Coppélia* and a lavish production of *The Nutcracker*. Contemporary classics include

masterpieces by the legendary George Balanchine including *Serenade*, *Concerto Barocco* and *Who Cares?* and a growing body of original work which includes creative adaptations of much loved stories such as *The Little Mermaid*, *Cinderella*, *Dracula* and *Beauty and the Beast*.

Based in the Inland Empire, the Company performs its home season from October to May as Company in Residence at the historic Bridges Auditorium in Claremont. In 2010 the Company began adding other southern California venues to its regular season including the Lewis Family Playhouse in Rancho Cucamonga (2010), the Arcadia Performing Arts Center in Arcadia (2013), and the Fox Performing Arts Center in Riverside (2014). Festival programs such as the Redlands Bowl Music Festival, Balletfest and Dance Kaleidoscope have also allowed the Company to reach an ever-expanding audience.

Regional touring has also included the Luckman Fine Arts Complex in Los Angeles, the Civic Arts Plaza in Thousand Oaks, the Annenberg Theater in Palm Desert, the Haugh Performing Arts Center in Glendora, and the Warner Grand Theatre in San Pedro. In 2009 the Company embarked on its first national tour, performing at the Globe-News Center for the Performing Arts in Amarillo, Texas.

Through creative marketing resulting in attendance now averaging 15-20,000 patrons annually, an extensive Educational Outreach Program that has reached more than 128,000 children, and an impressive artistic profile, Inland Pacific Ballet has become a cultural staple in the Inland Empire. Inland Pacific Ballet's performances are an introduction to the arts and live theater for many young people in the community. Through its Trainee and Apprentice Program, the Company is also committed to nurturing new talent and providing an essential training ground for serious young dancers.

The Company has widespread community support throughout the region and has earned funding from leading philanthropic organizations, including The Ahmanson Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, The Weingart Foundation, Target, The Disneyland Resort Cast Community Fund. Public support includes the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and the City of Montclair.

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