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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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**Youth Ballet presents 5th Annual Family Holiday Special:
*A Nutcracker Ballet and Holiday Tea***

CALENDAR

Who: Colorado's Classical Youth Ballet and actor David Sckolnik

What: *A Nutcracker Ballet and Holiday Tea:* The 5th annual holiday presentation from the Classical Youth Ballet features the Nutcracker Ballet presented by the great Tchaikovsky himself (Sckolnik). All are treated to a delicious Holiday Tea of sweets and refreshments following the ballet.

Where: Rampart High School Theatre, 8250 Lexington Drive

When: Four performances:
Saturday, Dec. 20, 2008 at 1:00 and 5:00pm
and
Sunday, Dec. 21, 2008 at 1:00 and 5:00pm

Tickets: **\$19, \$15 for children (12 and under) and senior citizens.**
Group discounts available

Available by calling (719) 272-7078 (Ballet Society studio) or by email at info@danceinthesprings.com - Reservations accepted.

Information on the Youth Company is available at www.coclassicalyouthballet.com

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Winding up a year of performances throughout the city with various arts organizations, **Colorado's Classical Youth Ballet** is preparing for its annual *A Nutcracker Ballet and Holiday Tea*. This traditional holiday favorite will feature 50 Youth Ballet members along with 23 selected younger students from the **Ballet Society of Colorado Springs**. Four performances are scheduled on Sat. Dec. 20 and Sun. Dec. 21, at 1 and 5 pm, on each day at Rampart High School Theatre, 8250 Lexington Drive in Colorado Springs.

"Our dancers consider this Nutcracker their gift to the community," says Patricia Hoffman, co-artistic director of the Youth Ballet. "The hour length presentation is perfect for families. Add the delicious Holiday Tea that follows each performance and we are offering a delightful respite in the midst of all the hustle and bustle of the season."

A Nutcracker Ballet and Holiday Tea features the most beloved ballet of all time and, *yes!*, the ballet's composer, Piotr Illyich Tchaikovsky, is back again to host. For this production, he will take us back to the holiday season of 1892 in St. Petersburg in Czarist Russia. The world premiere of the Nutcracker is only a few days away at the Imperial Marinsky Theatre, and he has invited you (the audience) for a special preview of the ballet, complete with the finest excerpts and a full telling of the story.

"For years now I've been writing the scripts and performing the role of Tchaikovsky for the Youth Ballet's holiday presentations," said David Skolnik who will portray the great composer. "But this incarnation is my favorite. I get to share all kinds of great history and take the audience on a wonderful fantasy back in time. We're aiming to truly transport everyone."

In 2007 all four Holiday Tea performances sold out. This year additional seating is being made available to accommodate larger audiences. "We are bringing back the same great moments and dances from last year's performance, but we are including some adult actors to add to the fun of the opening Party Scene," said Holly Marble, Co-Artistic Director of the Youth Ballet and its founding organization, the Ballet Society of Colorado Springs. "We want our audiences to come away from the ballet excited and with a thirst for more. But even those who are already fans of the ballet and *The Nutcracker* will greatly appreciate the excellence of our dancers and the charm and unique elements of our production." A *Nutcracker Ballet and Holiday Tea* will be presented with full sets, costumes and lighting. But the quality of the dancing will be what sets these performances apart from the many regional presentations of this famous ballet. The Youth Ballet, often in league with its parent organization, the Ballet Society of Colorado Springs, has become the preeminent source of quality dance in Southern Colorado.

"Ballet Society is amazing," said Thomas Wilson, Associate Conductor of the **Colorado Springs Philharmonic**, who has frequently collaborated with the studio and company for the orchestra's *Family Concerts*. "They are always so prepared, professional, artistic and accessible to the audiences. I can't say enough about the work they have done with our orchestra and for the community."

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Other Youth Ballet performances over the past year have included: *Classic Fairy Tales: Firebird Suite and Coppelia excerpts* performed with Philharmonic at the Pikes Peak Center in October; *Fanfare and Fire* with the **Colorado Springs Youth Symphony** at the Pikes Peak Center in May; *Firebird Suite and Touch of Class* performed with the Pre Professional Division of the Ballet Society of Colorado Springs also in May; *Beautiful Chaos*, a collaboration with the **Colorado Springs Conservatory** showcasing original student choreography and live music; and *The Many Colors of Doctor Seuss* again with the Philharmonic at Pikes Peak Center in March. January 25, 2009 will find the Youth Ballet back at the Pikes Peak Center with the Philharmonic in a brand new rendition of Mendelssohn's music for Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Spring 2009 will bring the return of the full length comedic ballet *Coppelia* which was last performed by the Youth Ballet in 2004 to an enthusiastic, sold out audience.

Admission to *A Nutcracker Ballet and Holiday Tea* is \$15 for children, 12 and under & senior citizens; and \$19 for all others. A group rate of \$15 is available for groups of 35 or more. Reservations are recommended. Tickets and information are available by calling the Ballet Society office at (719) 272-7078 or by email: info@danceinthesprings.com. Information on the Youth Ballet is available at www.coclassicalyouthballet.com.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

30 Second PSA

A Nutcracker Ballet and Holiday Tea is the 5th annual holiday presentation from Colorado's Classical Youth Ballet and features Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker followed by a Holiday Tea of sweets and refreshments. This family friendly presentation is hosted by the great Tchaikovsky with performances at Rampart High School on Saturday and Sunday December 20th and 21th at one and five. Tickets and information are available at the Ballet Society of Colorado Springs at 272-7078.

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Photos are from the Dec. 2007, A Nutcracker Ballet and Holiday Tea and feature Youth Ballet performers. All are available as high-res images upon request. Photography by Ted Mehl.



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