

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THRILLING LIVE MUSIC, EXTRAVAGANT SETS AND COSTUMES AND
ENCHANTING DANCING:**

**For the first time ever at The Aronoff Center
Cincinnati Ballet's *Frisch's presents The Nutcracker*
set to enthrall young and old alike**

Young student dancers take on top children's role

CINCINNATI, OH – December 13, 2007 – *The Nutcracker* is the ballet world's annual holiday tribute to the child in all of us – the enchanting light-hearted story of a small girl's dream on Christmas Eve.

December 19 – 29, 2007, during over a dozen performances, the curtain will come up on Cincinnati Ballet's *Frisch's presents The Nutcracker*, for the first time ever at downtown Cincinnati's Aronoff Center.

Tickets, from \$21 - \$66, are available at the Cincinnati Ballet Box Office, 513-621-5282 and online at www.cincinnatiaballet.com.

NEW VENUE FOR HOLIDAY FAVORITE

"The Aronoff Center will provide a more intimate and enjoyable experience for our patrons," says Cincinnati Ballet Executive Director Paul Kaine. "We are very excited about presenting *The Nutcracker* for the very first time at The Aronoff Center."

"Having Cincinnati Ballet's *Frisch's presents The Nutcracker* at The Aronoff Center will add to the air of holiday celebration in the core of downtown Cincinnati, and for our patrons, it is closer than ever to downtown shopping and dining."

**BRILLIANT BLEND OF COSTUMES, SETS AND CHOREOGRAPHY UNIQUE
TO CINCINNATI BALLET'S *FRISCH'S PRESENTS THE NUTCRACKER***

"One of my favorites, renowned choreographer Val Caniparoli, has created for us an enchanting journey—a magical celebration danced to the cadences of the steadily building, strongly climactic and captivating score by Tchaikovsky," says Cincinnati Ballet Artistic Director Victoria Morgan, "which will again be conducted live by our Music Director Carmon DeLeone, who is celebrating his 39th season with Cincinnati Ballet.

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“Herr Drosselmeyer, the toymaker, is central to Val’s *Nutcracker*, as the storyteller who’s in charge of everything, filling the ballet with magic and surprises. He is modeled on E.T.A. Hoffmann, (1776 – 1822) who wrote the original story, *Nutcracker and the King of Mice*.

“The role of Marie is a powerhouse role for the ballerina. In our version, she is played throughout the ballet by an adult principal dancer, not a student dancer. Her challenge is portray Marie both as child and adult. Physically, her role is as demanding as a lead role in any major full-length ballet.

“Val has created two extremely virtuosic *pas de deux* for Marie, plus variations, coda and finale, and lots of acting in between.

“Our amazing scenic and costume designer Alain Vaës is very well-known for his sumptuous, painterly illustrations in children’s books, and has previously created many sets and stage designs for companies like New York City Ballet,” says Morgan.

“The wonderful costumes and sets he has designed for us were built in St. Petersburg, Russia.”

TWO YOUNG DANCERS TAKE ON TOP CHILDREN’S ROLE

For all the glistening bravura choreography for adults in the second act, *The Nutcracker* is a celebration of its children. And ten year old Daniel Durrett and Caleb Schirmer, who’s thirteen, couldn’t be more excited. This year they share the top children’s role-- Marie’s mischievous little brother Fritz.

After auditioning for the role September 15 and being selected, the two have been rehearsing since October. As students of The Otto M. Budig Academy of Cincinnati Ballet, they have already gathered plenty of onstage experience.

Last season the two were cast in children’s roles in *Giselle* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. Caleb also danced in *Boléro*. In addition, the two boys have previously danced in *Frisch’s presents The Nutcracker* for four years in a row.

Daniel and Caleb agree on one fundamental aspect of their role: the impetuous Fritz is more a trouble maker than a docile party boy, and he makes even more disruption by getting the other boys to follow his lead.

“They are so good because they always think about their parts,” laughs children’s rehearsal coach Melina Bower. “They don’t just do it. They’ve got that good thought process going on!”

DID YOU KNOW?

NUTCRACKER FACTOIDS

Cincinnati Ballet performed its first *Nutcracker* in 1974, at Music Hall. This season it premieres at The Aronoff Center for the very first time.

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Renowned choreographer Val Caniparoli unveiled his celebrated version of this family favorite to glowing reviews. It's Cincinnati Ballet's fifth version of the holiday classic.

The very first *Nutcracker* was performed by the Kirov Ballet at the Maryinsky Theater in St. Petersburg on December 17, 1892.

The current production has toured previously to Anchorage, Alaska (three times), Cleveland, Ohio (twice), and will appear this season for the third time in Detroit, Michigan and for the very first time in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The intriguing choreography, by top-notch choreographer Val Caniparoli, is both spontaneous and grounded in strong ballet vocabulary.

Cincinnati Ballet's Wardrobe Department fits the entire cast (professionals, supplementals and supers) for costumes.

Cincinnati Ballet dancers and supplemental dancers are cast in over 35 roles. Some have 7 costume changes.

There are 97 children in the cast, 37 of whom appear in any single production.

During the course of the ballet, Marie dances in a total of four *pas de deux* (in the dance world, it means a "dance for two"). In two separate "pas," she dances with Drosselmeyer and with her Nutcracker doll. She is partnered by the Nutcracker Prince in the last two virtuosic duets--first in the "Snow" scene, and finally in the culminating *Grand Pas de Deux*, to Tchaikovsky's thrilling romantic motif of a repeating, descending scale.

Marie also gets to dance to the Sugar Plum Fairy music, featuring the tinkling celeste, a small set of tuned orchestral bells with a keyboard mechanism, which was used for the first time when Tchaikovsky composed the score in 1892.

It takes two days just to install the floor, scenery and lights at The Aronoff Center before the dancers even step onto the stage. It takes thirty people to do that—it's called the "load in."

It takes 25 crew members to run the show.

The actual height of the huge Christmas tree that grows in Act I is sixty feet. It's 45 feet wide and weighs over half a ton.

The tree is on a giant backdrop which travels up. As it "grows" it reveals more of the tree, but you never see the entire tree from top to bottom.

There are five different outfits and seven costume changes for Marie. In chronological order they are: party dress, nightgown, snow dress I, snow dress II, classical tutu, nightgown, and tutu again (for the bow).

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There are no costume shortcuts like Velcro, according to Wardrobe Mistress Diana Vandergriff. The tutus have hooks and eyes (a set of 15 or so), and the long dresses zip up. The secret is that four people help Marie with the shortest costume changes, using tricks like swooshing her nightgown over her head while she steps into a tutu at the same time. It's all choreographed and well-rehearsed.

When Marie's bed moves as by magic on the stage, there is a stagehand inside on his belly propelling it with his hands. He sees where he is going through the footboard, which is made of a spray painted screen which looks solid onstage.

There is a "pyrotechnician" at each performance, because actual powder is used in the three onstage explosions: two in Drosselmeyer's workshop and one "canon" explosion in the battle between the Nutcracker and The Mouse King.

For 2007, you will see one of six Maries: Adiarys Almeida, Kristi Capps, Mishic Marie Corn, Sarah Hairston, Janessa Touchet or Tricia Sundbeck.

WHAT: Cincinnati Ballet's

Frisch's presents The Nutcracker choreographed by Val Caniparoli

Music – Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Choreography – Val Caniparoli
Staged by Devon Carney and Johanna Bernstein-Wilt
Scenic & Costume Design – Alain Vaës
Lighting Design – Trad A Burns
Children's Rehearsal Coach – Melinda Bower
Conductor – Carmon DeLeone
Assistant Conductor – James Hart

WHERE: The Aronoff Center
650 Walnut Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

WHEN: Performance dates December 19 – 29, 2007

Wednesday, 12/19/07 at 7:30pm
Thursday, 12/20/07 at 7:30pm
Friday, 12/21/07 at 7:30pm
Saturday, 12/22/07 at 2:00pm
Saturday, 12/22/07 at 7:30pm
Sunday, 12/23/07 at 2:00pm
Sunday, 12/23/07 at 7:30pm
Wednesday, 12/26/07 at 2:00pm
Wednesday, 12/26/07 at 7:30pm
Thursday, 12/27/07 at 7:30pm
Friday, 12/28/07 at 7:30pm
Saturday, 12/29/07 at 2:00pm
Saturday, 12/29/07 at 7:30pm

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TICKETS: \$21 - \$66

**At the Cincinnati Ballet Box Office (513) 621-5282;
or the Aronoff Box Office (513) 621-2787;
or visit www.cincinnati-ballet.com.**

About Cincinnati Ballet Webisodes

Cincinnati Ballet Webisodes, which premiered during the 2006-07 season to popular acclaim, aim to propel fun-loving young professionals to the web stratosphere in starring roles with professional dancers. Wednesday, November 28, at 6:30 p.m., a mix of cast members and the general public united to party and view the newest world premiere at Bang, 314 W. Fourth Street, in downtown Cincinnati. "Project Ballet," the newest webisode, is a hilarious episode in the ongoing series, in which four "regular" people are roomies with real ballet dancers. Go to www.cincinnati-ballet.com to see the zany Project Ballet version of *The Nutcracker*, with special guests Cammy Dierking from Local 12 and Constance from my64. Vote and get \$10 off your ticket to *Frisch's presents The Nutcracker*.

About Cincinnati Ballet

For 44 years, Cincinnati Ballet has been the cornerstone professional ballet company of the Cincinnati tri-state area, presenting a mix of full-length and mixed repertory ballets, regularly with live orchestral accompaniment. The company has maintained an annual *Nutcracker* series since 1974. During 2006-07, Cincinnati Ballet celebrated the tenth anniversary season of Artistic Director Victoria Morgan, who has choreographed extensively for the company, and attracted an intriguing mix of renowned choreographers to challenge her dancers in well-received world premieres. Under Morgan's guidance, Cincinnati Ballet has also established a national and international presence and enjoyed ground-breaking collaborations. The Otto M. Budig Academy, the official school of Cincinnati Ballet, is dedicated to developing dancers with a strong classical technique and unified style.

Cincinnati Ballet's 2007-2008 season is generously sponsored by:

The Otto M. Budig Family Foundation and the Larry and Rhonda Sheakley Family Foundation.

Cincinnati Ballet also receives generous support from organizations and individuals throughout the Tri-state including:

Frisch's Restaurants Inc, RiverPoint Capital Management, Inc., the Ohio Arts Council, the City of Cincinnati, the National Endowment for the Arts and Delta Airlines.

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