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**CINCINNATI BALLET ANNOUNCES
AN EXUBERANT, VIBRANT, WHIMSICAL NEW NUTCRACKER**

All-new production opens December 2011 with magic, humor, whimsy

CINCINNATI –Cincinnati Ballet, its Board of Trustees and Frisch’s Restaurants are delighted to announce a new *Frisch’s Presents The Nutcracker* to premiere in Cincinnati December 2011. The production features new sets and scenery, new costumes and new choreography by Cincinnati Ballet Artistic Director and CEO Victoria Morgan.

“This new *Nutcracker* will be simply spectacular, with vivid colors and whimsical design, quickly moving action, and lively, entertaining, even surprising moments,” says Morgan. “We take ourselves so seriously. Why can’t we introduce a little humor and a lot of magic?”

“I come from a long line of multiple Nutcrackers spanning from age 8 to when I retired from dancing at 35,” says Morgan. “I have not only been in multiple versions, I’ve also danced every female role from party scene to snow to Sugar Plum Fairy. There will be parts of that long history that I will be running away from, and sections that hopefully will surprise me, you, the audience and our dancers.”

Production

The production features 15 entirely new sets: full-stage, seamless drops by renowned set designer John Ezell, hand-painted by scenic artists at Michael Hagan studio. Cincinnati Ballet’s local I.A.T.S.E. union will build 20 large deck units, including a growing wardrobe, grandfather clock, trick kitchen tables and antique furniture. More than 200 new costumes designed by Tony Award- nominated costume designer Carrie F. Robbins are being constructed by Cincinnati Ballet’s wardrobe department, Playhouse in the Park and Madcap Puppets workshop. Swirling special effects, lighting and projected images add to the excitement.

Cincinnati Ballet’s *Frisch’s Presents The Nutcracker* has traditionally been the most exuberant, opulent production of the company’s annual season, with ornate costumes and sets and an enormous cast, which includes supernumeraries from the community and dozens of children. This new production features even more children, performing not just as children of the partygoers but also as gymnasts, baby mice, snowflakes, chicks and more.

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Why a new *Nutcracker*, why now?

“I’ve been thinking about this for a long time,” says Morgan. “We have just closed the final production of our current, beloved *Nutcracker*, which delighted us for a glorious ten years. It’s time to give the city the gift of something new.”

“It was also important to me for our community to feel the strength and confidence of Cincinnati Ballet, by offering something bold and exciting to capture our community’s imagination.”

The mainstay of American ballet repertoire, *The Nutcracker* provides enjoyment for ballet audiences everywhere – and for many dance lovers, it is their first dance experience, whether they perform in it or sit in the audience. It’s also known for its spectrum of different interpretations, offering dance companies the opportunity to re-tell the familiar story with new costumes, designs and dances.

“*The Nutcracker* offers so much freedom to interpret the story and the characters,” says Morgan. “Unlike a highly structured classical ballet such as *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker* is open to interpretation.” This version will have a larger-than-life feeling to it, with scenery imitating patterns from costumes, laser lights beaming from trees and enormous ornaments, snowflakes and sweets.

The choreography will feature an exaggerated vocabulary as well, says Morgan, who is looking forward to challenging the company dancers with new movement and ideas. “The company is strong, and the same dancers have been together for a long time, so I feel there’s a familiarity – they will be generous with me and willing to be adventurous.”

What else is new? The original *Nutcracker* story was written by E.T.A. Hoffmann, centered around a young girl named Marie, while the ballet based on the story traditionally features Clara. Cincinnati Ballet’s recent *Nutcracker* presentation featured a grown-up Marie in the lead role, danced by a Cincinnati Ballet company dancer. For the first time in over a decade, the lead role will be danced by a child, a young pre-teen Clara, who will be selected from Cincinnati Ballet Otto M. Budig Academy, the prestigious dance school associated with Cincinnati Ballet.

One thing that will never change: the Christmas tree that grows, giving the young heroine the curious feeling that she is shrinking while everything around her grows larger. “When the tree grows – that is one of my favorite moments in the music, and visually it’s incredible,” says Morgan. “That’s the moment when the stage really does become a world of magic, and we’re all transported to another land.”

Support and Capital Campaign

For 36 years, Cincinnati Ballet has enjoyed a tremendous partnership with Frisch’s Restaurants. The support of Frisch’s makes the magic of Cincinnati Ballet’s *Nutcracker* possible.

“Frisch’s has sponsored the Cincinnati Ballet’s *Nutcracker* since the very first performance in 1974. We’re pleased to help bring a real treasure to the region that showcases the combination of dance, artistry and music.” says Craig Maier, Frisch’s Restaurants President & CEO. “We can’t wait to see the new version and congratulate Cincinnati Ballet on the hard work and imagination that will bring it to life.”

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Additionally, the gift from the Louise Dieterle Nippert Musical Arts Fund ensures live music by Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra for performances of *The Nutcracker*.

To support the creation of the new project, Cincinnati Ballet kicked off a capital campaign, which is now 74% to goal, having raised \$1.17 million with a goal of \$1.56 million.

“This is a project we truly believe in. We know it will have substantial community impact and support Cincinnati Ballet’s mission for years to come,” says Jay Kalagayan, Director of Development for Cincinnati Ballet. “That’s why, even through a challenging economy, we have forged ahead, and we have received some incredibly generous responses.”

Cincinnati Ballet has received capital support for the creation of the new *Nutcracker* in the form of a lead gift from Frisch’s Restaurants, Inc. Additional *New Nutcracker* partners are PNC Bank, Robert H. Reakirt Foundation, Sheakley Group of Companies; Eleanora C. U. Alms Trust, Fifth Third Bank Trustee; Gannett Foundation; The Louise Taft Semple Foundation; Procter & Gamble; The Greater Cincinnati Foundation; The Thomas J. Emery Memorial; The Sutphin Family Foundation; Dinsmore & Shohl LLP; Frost Brown Todd LLC; Jack J. Smith, Jr. Charitable Trust, PNC Bank, N.A. and James S. Wachs, Co-Trustees; Western & Southern Financial Group; Anonymous; and Karen & Christopher Bowman.

“*The Nutcracker* is our most important community outreach tool we have,” says Morgan. “The production itself is a cultural ambassador to our region, offering so many their first experience or exposure to our art form. It’s so important for us to provide an exciting, vibrant, fun adventure to instill that love of dance in our community.”

About Cincinnati Ballet

Since 1963, Cincinnati Ballet has been the cornerstone professional ballet company of the region, presenting a mix of important classical full-length ballets and an adventurous, vibrant mix of repertory ballets, regularly with live orchestral accompaniment. Cincinnati Ballet’s mission is to inspire hope and joy in our community and beyond through the power and passion of dance. Our mantra is “Everybody dances.” To that end, Cincinnati Ballet presents exhilarating performances, extensive education outreach programs (including professional lecture-demos, residencies, scholarship programs and student matinees), and offers top level professional ballet training at Cincinnati Ballet Otto M. Budig Academy, which enjoys an enrollment of more than a thousand participants in multi-level programs across two studio campuses. BRAVO! is the Ballet Resource and Volunteer Organization committed to the financial stability and the artistic excellence of Cincinnati Ballet.

Cincinnati Ballet’s *New Nutcracker* is generously sponsored by Frisch’s Restaurants, Inc. Additional *New Nutcracker* partners are PNC Bank, Robert H. Reakirt Foundation, Sheakley Group of Companies; Eleanora C. U. Alms Trust, Fifth Third Bank Trustee; Gannett Foundation; The Louise Taft Semple Foundation; Procter & Gamble; The Greater Cincinnati Foundation; The Thomas J. Emery Memorial; The Sutphin Family Foundation; Dinsmore & Shohl LLP; Frost Brown Todd LLC; Jack J. Smith, Jr. Charitable Trust, PNC Bank, N.A. and James S. Wachs, Co-Trustees; Western & Southern Financial Group; Anonymous; and Karen & Christopher Bowman.

Cincinnati Ballet's 2010 -2011 Season is generously sponsored by Season Sponsor The Otto M. Budig Family Foundation, Music Sponsor The Louise Dieterle Nippert Musical Arts Fund, Associate Sponsor Rhonda and Larry A. Sheakley Family Foundation and Season Funder ArtsWave.

Cincinnati Ballet gratefully acknowledges support from organizations and individuals throughout the Tri-state region including Cincinnati Bell, Bill & Sue Friedlander, Mr. & Mrs. Lorrence T. Kellar, Norma Peterson, Doris M. and Charles B. Levinson Fund of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Mr. & Mrs. John Boorn and Mona S. Foad, M.D. Cincinnati Dermatology Center.

Additional funding is provided by Ohio Arts Council and the Ohio Cultural Facilities Commission.

Special Thanks to

Arnolds Bar & Grill, Arnold's Printing ,Christian Moerlein,Coffee Emporium, Dewey's Pizza, Diana's Dance Wear, Embers Restaurant, Harlan Graphics, Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Hotels, InstaProPhoto, LaRosa's Pizzeria Inc., Ludlow Wines, Madison's Gelato, Merten Printing, Mike Albert Fleet Management, Park Lane Apartments, Penny Lane Florist, Penske Truck Rental, Row House Gallery, Subway Restaurant, Q 102, Wellington Orthopaedic & Sports Medicine, WMKV 89.3.

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