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CONNECTICUT BALLET EXPANDS ‘NUTCRACKER’ SHOWS AND ANNOUNCES MAJOR GUEST STARS

STAMFORD, CT ----- Artistic Director Brett Raphael has announced the expansion of the company’s *Nutcracker* run from one weekend to two at **Palace Theatre, Stamford Center for the Arts** this coming December and appearances by four of the world’s most celebrated international stars. Performances are **December 17 at 1:00pm & 5:00pm, December 18 at 2:00pm, and December 23 at 7:30pm**. Dancing the roles of Sugar Plum Fairy and Her Cavalier will be **Julie Kent and David Hallberg and Gillian Murphy and Jose Manuel Carreno**. Ms. Kent and Mr. Hallberg will dance all performances on the weekend of December 17-18 and Ms. Murphy and Mr. Carreno will appear one night only on Friday, December 23rd. All but one are currently principal dancers with American Ballet Theatre. Mr. Carreno retired from ABT last June and is now making guest appearances around the world. David Hallberg was recently named the first-ever foreign-born dancer to join the renowned Bolshoi Ballet as a principal dancer and is known as one of America’s greatest classical ballet stylists.

“**Connecticut Ballet’s production is an annual holiday tradition in downtown Stamford and we are delighted to bring even more star power to this most loved of ballets,**” stated Raphael. Tickets for performances at Stamford Center for the Arts, 61 Atlantic Street, Stamford, are priced between \$50-\$25 and are available online at www.scalive.org.

Xerox Foundation is the corporate sponsor of the production, with additional support from RBS, City of Stamford, Connecticut Office of the Arts, Connecticut Public Radio & Television, Marriott Stamford Hotel & Spa, Moffly Media, Purdue Pharma, and Star 99.9. A special **Nutcracker Tea ‘n Sweets Holiday Party** will be held between the two matinees on Saturday, December 17th. Sponsored by RBS, the event will benefit Connecticut Ballet’s educational outreach and production programs. Party goers ages four and up will have a chance to meet the Sugar Plum Fairy, dine on delectable holiday sweets, and receive a stocking stuffed with quality holiday gifts. For reservations, call Connecticut Ballet at 203-964-1211 or visit www.connecticutballet.com.

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