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Dance in America Presents a Special Encore of
San Francisco Ballet's **Nutcracker** this Holiday Season

Olympic Champion Figure Skater **Kristi Yamaguchi**
Hosts Lavish Holiday Treat

(New York, NY – October 28, 2009) San Francisco Ballet makes the beloved **Nutcracker** its own, resetting it during the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exhibition and introducing *Dance in America* viewers to the dazzling Maria Kochetkova and Davit Karapetyan. Recorded in December 2007 by KQED Public Television to help commemorate the company's 75th anniversary, the work is choreographed by Artistic Director Helgi Tomasson and features sets and costumes by, respectively, Michael Yeargan and Martin Pakledinaz, both repeat Tony Award-winning designers. "Striking, elegant and beautiful," assessed The New York Times.

Introduced by Olympic champion figure skater Kristi Yamaguchi, a native of the Bay Area and winner of 2008's *Dancing with the Stars*, the production encores in high definition and 5.1 surround sound Monday, December 21 at 9 p.m. EST (check local listings) on THIRTEEN's *Great Performances* on PBS. San Francisco Ballet Music Director and Principal Conductor Martin West conducts Tchaikovsky's sprightly score.

"I have grown up with this wonderful company," says Yamaguchi. "It was with them that my mom, Carole, took me to my first Nutcracker. Pretty

impressive for a little girl, with all that magic and sparkle, thrilling music and those costumes! I think that's when I fell in love with performing."

Tchaikovsky's beguiling score is one of the most popular pieces of music ever written. Think "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" and "Waltz of the Snowflakes." Inspired by E.T.A. Hoffman's 1816 story, *The Nutcracker and The Mouse King*, it was first proposed to Tchaikovsky by legendary choreographer Marius Petipa as a follow-up to Tchaikovsky's other successful ballets at Russia's famed Mariinsky Theatre: *Swan Lake* (1877) and *The Sleeping Beauty* (1890). The composer began work on it in 1891.

San Francisco Ballet's ***Nutcracker*** was recorded on stage in performance at the War Memorial Opera House December 19 and 21, 2007. It is a co-production of San Francisco Ballet and KQED Public Television San Francisco, in association with Thirteen for WNET.ORG. Matthew Diamond (***Dance in America***'s Emmy Award-winning *Swan Lake* with American Ballet Theatre; ***Great Performances***' *Crazy for You*) directs; Judy Flannery (***Great Performances***' *A Streetcar Named Desire* From the San Francisco Opera) produced. Michael Isip is Executive Producer for KQED.

An expanded version of San Francisco Ballet's *Nutcracker*, featuring additional behind-the-scenes interviews with the production's creators and a background piece on the 1915 World's Fair, is available on DVD from Opus Arte/Naxos of America.

Great Performances is funded by the Irene Diamond Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, Vivian Milstein, the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, public television viewers and PBS. Major corporate funding for this telecast was provided by First Republic Bank, a division of Merrill Lynch Bank & Trust, Co., FSB. Special funding for the telecast was provided by Jim and Cecilia Herbert & Family. Additional support was provided by The Flora Family Foundation and members of the San Francisco Ballet's 75th Anniversary Sponsors Council: major sponsors include the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, The Hellman Family and Yurie and Carl Pascarella; with additional sponsors including Stuart Francis and Diana

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For ***Great Performances***, Bill O'Donnell is series producer and David Horn is executive producer. Visit **Great Performances Online** at www.pbs.org/gperf for additional information about this and other programs.

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