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NC Dance Theatre's Next Generation of Stars Perform

*Featuring Pre-Professional Students and School Alumni, including recent
So You Think You Can Dance Top 12 Finalist, Caitlin Kinney*

Thursday, June 3, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Charlotte, N.C. - Catch the dance stars of tomorrow in the North Carolina Dance Theatre School of Dance Rising Stars Benefit Performance Thursday, June 3, at 7:30 p.m. The performance features students from the School of Dance's Pre-Professional Division and alumni.

NC Dance Theatre Associate Artistic Director Patricia McBride is restaging George Balanchine's *Raymonda Variations*. At age 18 McBride became the youngest principal dancer in New York City Ballet, under the artistic leadership of George Balanchine. She now stages many of Balanchine's ballets for North Carolina Dance Theatre and the School of Dance.

Choreographers and School faculty members Mark Diamond, Heather Ferranti Ferguson and Kathryn Moriarty will all present works. NC Dance Theatre 2 Company Member David Morse, who was recently promoted to the first Company, is presenting *Brahms Quintet*. The ballet earned Morse the Habich-Corey award for most promising male choreographer at the 2010 Southeastern Regional Ballet Association Festival's Emerging Choreographer Concert.

The Pre-Professional Division is the highest division in the School of Dance. Many students in this division move on to have professional careers in dance, including three School alumni who will perform. Caitlin Kinney, a former student and member of NC Dance Theatre 2, is performing a solo. In 2009 Kinney was a top 12 contestant on Fox's hit television show *So You Think You Can Dance*. She is now pursuing a professional dance career in Los Angeles. Nadia Mara and Jesse Tyler, members of Atlanta Ballet, are performing a contemporary pas de deux at the Benefit. Mara is a former student and Tyler is a former student and company member of North Carolina Dance Theatre. Ellen Hummel, a former student and Clara in Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux's *Nutcracker*, is returning from her studies at the San Francisco Ballet School to perform a solo.

"The School's Pre-Professional Division strives to provide students interested in a professional career with the technique and training that will enable them to pursue their goals," said Darleen Callaghan, director of the School of Dance.

VIP Reception

Artistic Director Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux and Associate Artistic Director Patricia McBride will host a pre-performance champagne and dessert reception. Alumna Caitlin Kinney will also attend the reception. Tickets for the reception are \$50 for adults and \$25 for children and also include premium performance seating. Regular tickets for the performance are \$15. Tickets may be purchased by calling 704.372.1000 or visiting ncdance.org. All proceeds benefit North Carolina Dance Theatre School of Dance.

Students Attending Prestigious Summer Intensive

Many of the students performing in the Benefit Performance are attending prestigious summer intensive programs, including four students attending the School of America Ballet's exclusive summer program. Each year over 1000 students audition for the School of American Ballet, the feeder school to New York City Ballet, and only 250 are selected. School of Dance students Ellie Frith, Allie Parsons, Jasmine Perry and Taylor Wolfe, were all chosen this year.

"Having four students from our school attend SAB's Summer Program is quite remarkable," said Callaghan. "It definitely confirms the quality of instruction being offered by the faculty at our School. Three of the four students have been offered full tuition scholarships based on merit. SAB continues to be the most competitive ballet intensive program in the country, so these scholarships are very hard to receive."

About the Pre-Professional Division

Under the direction of Bonnefoux, McBride and Callaghan, members of the School's Pre-Professional Division work with NC Dance Theatre's professional company in class, rehearsals and performances.

"These students are extremely committed to their training and are usually in class and rehearsals six days a week," said Callaghan.

The Pre-Professional Division is open to students ages 14 and up by audition only. Students are primarily training for professional performing careers in classical ballet or modern dance, but are also encouraged to pursue their interests in teaching, choreography and arts administration.

About the North Carolina Dance Theatre School of Dance

North Carolina Dance Theatre School of Dance opened its doors in September 1993. In early June 2010 the School of Dance will move to the new Patricia McBride & Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux Center for Dance at 701 N. Tryon St. The School also holds classes at Charlotte Country Day School. As the only dance school in North Carolina affiliated with a nationally recognized professional dance company, the School offers the highest quality of dance instruction to students of all ages and levels of ability. The School of Dance parallels the professional Company's tradition of excellence by providing a nurturing and structured environment that encourages individuality, creative expression and an appreciation for the art of dance.

Performance Details

Date: Thursday, June 3, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Location: Booth Playhouse
North Carolina Blumenthal Performing Arts Center
130 North Tryon Street
Charlotte, NC 28202

Tickets: VIP tickets are \$50/adult or \$25/child and include premium performance seating and a pre-performance champagne and dessert reception hosted by artistic leaders Patricia McBride and Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux.

Reserved tickets are \$15 and include performance ticket only. Tickets available at 704.372.1000 and ncdance.org.

Sponsor: Moore & Van Allen

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Details:

North Carolina Dance Theatre is supported, in part, with operating support by the Arts & Science Council. Dance Theatre is also supported by individuals, corporations, and local and national foundations, the North Carolina Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

To find out more about NC Dance Theatre visit ncdance.org.