

# NEWS RELEASE

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## CONTACT

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## A CONDUCTOR IN THE MAKING

Music Student, William Zauscher Rehearses "The Nutcracker" with the San Diego Symphony  
Next Week

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SAN DIEGO, CA (December 8, 2008) -- Arts enthusiasts everywhere will be delighted to hear about a new mentoring program for aspiring conductors that will help change the face of how live symphonic music and ballet co-exist around the globe. Ballet conducting programs are essentially unheard-of and for this reason, violinist, John Stubbs of the San Diego Symphony and music director for California Ballet Company (CBC), has launched Conducting Preparations, a unique mentoring program designed to inspire young music artists in pursuing the art of ballet conducting.

As an art that is rarely taught in music institutions, skilled ballet conductors around the world are in limited numbers. When ballet companies must hire a conductor of the symphony or opera due to challenges in finding an experienced ballet conductor, the dance companies become vulnerable to a guest conductor that may be less inclined to accommodate their dancers' needs because of the necessity to adjust the music tempo's to the needs of the dancers and choreographers.

The passionate few experienced ballet conductors work closely with the dancers to gain a clear understanding of their needs to ensure that the timing of the music is perfectly synchronized with every dance movement. Many seasoned ballet conductors share that they find the ballet to be the most invigorating form of conducting.

Stubbs serves as CBC's conductor during their annual "Nutcracker" at the Civic Theatre and is married to Prima Ballerina, Denise Dabrowski. Inspired by the ballet in both his private and professional life, he took to the ballet barre for a year and a half to better understand what it's like for the dancers to perform to various music tempo's. The experience proved to be invaluable to Stubbs' ability to read the dancers and accurately anticipate their timing with music.

Under Stubbs' Conducting Preparations program, students are mentored one on one for approximately two years. The program starts with the conducting basics and leads up to the challenge of rehearsing in the orchestra pit with the San Diego Symphony during CBC's "Nutcracker" production rehearsal. Stubbs finds "The Nutcracker" music score to be an ideal work for teaching, as it challenges the student and requires a concise understanding of the most essential conducting techniques. "My approach to teaching conducting is much like my approach to performing music. My natural tendency leans toward the intuitive rather than the analytical. I observe and discuss with my students what I feel works for them rather than having a rigid set of

guidelines. It's very much an improvisatory process," says Stubbs.

Once the student has demonstrated readiness to conduct, the student has an opportunity to work directly with the dancers to discuss appropriate music tempo's and conduct a section of the score during "The Nutcracker" rehearsal with CBC and the San Diego Symphony.

When Stubbs began mentoring his first student in September of 2005, the initial intent was to train a backup ballet conductor. Over the course of the two years he spent with his first pupil, Stubbs observed that his student had career potential. What started as a short-term resolution for Stubbs to have a conducting understudy evolved into a program that could help improve the vitality of the ballet conducting art everywhere by raising a new generation of ballet conductors. Stubbs shares, "I see this program being helpful in elevating the reputation ballet conducting has as being third place in the music world. I want to show that it is probably the most challenging."

Stubbs' current ballet conducting pupil is UCSD graduate, William Zauscher. Now in his second year under Stubbs' tutelage, Zauscher will begin rehearsing in the orchestra pit with the San Diego Symphony during CBC's "Nutcracker" rehearsal at the Civic Theatre on December 18, 2008 from 9pm - 9:30pm. The media is invited to attend this rare anticipated event. Guests who wish to attend, please RSVP by Monday, December 15, 2008 via email at [minacommunications@gmail.com](mailto:minacommunications@gmail.com).

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For questions or to schedule an interview with Mr. Stubbs, please contact Jasmine Rios at 619.851.3920 PST or [minacommunications@gmail.com](mailto:minacommunications@gmail.com).

12/18/08 "Nutcracker" Rehearsal Location: San Diego Civic Theatre / 1100 Third Ave./ SD CA 92101/ [www.sandiegotheatres.org](http://www.sandiegotheatres.org)

Mina Communications is a private consulting business 4 the Arts. The company was founded in January 2007 by Jasmine Rios to facilitate advertising, public relations, and marketing communication service needs to independent artists and arts groups with limited resources. Rios is also a freelance writer for the national publication Dancer Magazine and an associate writer for San Diego Performer Magazine.

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