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NUTCRACKER SWINGS TO BENEFIT PASADENA JAZZ INSTITUTE

Concert features Duke Ellington's sophisticated rewrite of Tchaikovsky's holiday classic, Vince Guaraldi's Charlie Brown Christmas and more, with stars including James Tormé, Renee Olstead, Maestro Victor Vener, the Pasadena Jazz Orchestra, Sylvia St. James and the Sacred Nation Gospel Choir. Noted personality Bryan Gallyot hosts the event and future jazz legends the PJI Junior Superstars perform the pre-concert entertainment, setting the stage for some of today's living jazz legends, all the while sharing the Christmas spirit with the community.

PASADENA, Calif. Christmas stories don't get much more fanciful than the story of The Nutcracker, written by E.T.A. Hoffmann. However, Duke Ellington knew how to bring fancy to new heights, which is just what he did when he jazzed up Tchaikovsky's famous suite from the beloved holiday ballet. On December 19th, this sophisticated jazz classic will bring the magic of Christmas to life at the new Pasadena Convention Center's Grand Ballroom in a concert entitled *The Nutcracker Swings*, which will benefit the Pasadena Jazz Institute.

"There's no better way to celebrate Christmas than with music and community" says Paul Lines, Artistic Director of the Pasadena Jazz Institute and Music Director of the event, "so we've put together a stellar lineup including music by the Pasadena Jazz Orchestra, redwhite+bluezz all stars and the Sacred Nation Gospel Choir, with appearances by special guests James Tormé (son of jazz legend Mel Tormé), Renee Olstead, Sylvia St. James and Maestro Victor Vener, plus we've got Pasadena's Best Local Personality Bryan Gallyot as Master of Ceremonies and we'll even have a visit from Santa!" Featured music on the program includes highlights from Vince Guaraldi's *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and of course the Ellington/Strayorn arrangement of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*. Rounding out the bill is a diverse sampling of Christmas favorites ranging in style from Gospel to Big Band to R&B/Jazz Fusion and more. "This is a great way to celebrate Christmas with family, friends and the community—to share in the joy of the season. What's more, it's an elegant way to experience the great musical heritage that jazz embodies."

The evening begins at 6:00pm with holiday dining, accompanied by the PJI Junior Superstars, a select group of gifted young artists from the Jazz Institute's Jazz Camp For Kids summer program. The concert, which will benefit the Institute's Jazz Camp program, begins at 7:00 and lasts till 10:00. "We're thrilled to be helping the Jazz Institute bring great music to the community and to help establish one of the city's newest event venues—the Pasadena Convention Center's Grand

Ballroom—as a destination of choice for large-scale functions,” notes Executive Producer André Vener. “What’s more, we’ve put together a real entertainment value that is suitable for family, friends or business entertaining and really catches the Christmas spirit.”

Concertgoers will be seated at tables and have the option of purchasing a full service three course meal with their seats for \$35 per person. A self-serve buffet will also be available, with entrées from \$10-\$18. Beverages including wine and a cash bar will also be available. Tickets for the event range from \$30.00 to \$70.00 per seat and can be purchased through Ticketmaster by calling 800 745 3000 or at ticketmaster.com or by visiting nutcrackerswings.com.

Sponsors of the event include Pasadena Entertainment, redwhite+bluezz, Pasadena Independent, Pasadena Weekly and Waltrip’s Music. For more information about The Nutcracker Swings, please visit nutcrackerswings.com.

*Dedicated to jazz education, preservation and participation, the **Pasadena Jazz Institute** is a non-profit, community benefit organization that celebrates this uniquely American art form. Known throughout the region for its innovative programming, with series like **Jazz On The Terrace** and **Jazz At Paseo**, the Institute has brought some of the area’s most exciting jazz artists to thousands of eager music lovers and have set hundreds of young people on their way to incorporating jazz into their lives as performers and listeners since its inception in 2001. Following on the Institute’s successful first season of concerts Lines added **Jazz Camp For Kids** in the summer of 2002 and the **Pasadena Jazz Orchestra** the following December. In addition to its public concerts, the Institute presents school concerts in the Pasadena Unified School District in order to share the legacy of jazz throughout the Pasadena community. For more information on its concerts and programs, visit the Institute online at pasjazz.org or call 626 398 3344.*

Pasadena Entertainment brings the area’s best music, venues, wine and event producers together to create incredible events and continue Pasadena’s tradition of excellence in community involvement. The company, spearheaded by André Vener, has produced many noted events in the past year including the Freedom Concert, Cal Phil Festival on the Green, Pasadena Wine Festival, the exhibition match between the Los Angeles Galaxy and FC Barcelona and a free concert by the Spazmatics on the steps of the Pasadena Civic Auditorium. For more information, visit pasadena-entertainment.com or call 626 304 0333.

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