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CONTACT:  
Payal Kumar  
Director of Communications  
714-541-8314 Ext. 19  
[Payal@saintjosephballet.org](mailto:Payal@saintjosephballet.org)

SAINT JOSEPH BALLET PRESENTS 26<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONCERT, *FROM HERE...*  
AT IRVINE BARCLAY THEATRE MAY 28 - 31

SANTA ANA, California (May 4, 2009) – Saint Joseph Ballet, one of the nation’s most innovative arts-based programs for youth, presents its 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Concert, *From Here...* at the Irvine Barclay Theatre, May 28 – 31.

Regarded in the world of modern and contemporary dance as choreographers who are shaping dance today, Jeff Slayton and Nami Yamamoto premiere new commissions created especially for Saint Joseph Ballet. Mark Haim returns to reprise his acclaimed piece *What Is Too Strong For Breaking*. *From Here...* is a not to be missed Southern California event, featuring a cast of over 100!

Mark Haim, a Fulbright Senior Specialist, returns to choreograph at Saint Joseph Ballet for a fourth time by reprising his thrilling piece, *What is Too Strong For Breaking*. The piece is based on the music of Ravel’s *Bolero*, with additional music composition by Alan Terricciano and was an audience favorite at Saint Joseph Ballet’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert. Haim says he continually returns to choreograph for Saint Joseph Ballet because, “On an artistic level, each time I come to create for SJB, I feel that I am able to realize my visions. Melanie (Saint Joseph Ballet’s Executive and Artistic Director) says I make my best work here, and I must agree.”

Jeff Slayton began his professional career performing with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company and he later became a principal dancer with the Viola Farber Dance Company. He is the recipient of several National Endowment for the Arts choreography grants, and has served as faculty and guest faculty at institutions such as California State University, Long Beach and UC Berkeley. His World Premiere work, *TRIBUTE*, features an original score composed by Eric Ruskin, and, according to Slayton, was choreographed with two things in mind, “One was to give the dancers, and the audience, a sense of what the choreography styles of Viola Farber and Merce Cunningham are like. The second was for me to thank my two mentors, whom without I would not have had the career that I had and continue to have.” This is Slayton’s first commission for Saint Joseph Ballet’s Annual Concert, and according to him, “I feel that I have grown as an artist and as a human being throughout this process.”

Nami Yamamoto, originally from Matsuyama, Japan, graduated from New York University in 1993 with a MA in Dance Education. Her work has received critical accolades, and has been funded by the likes of the Manhattan Community Arts Fund and the Jim Henson Foundation. Yamamoto returns to Saint Joseph Ballet for her second SJB commission, a World Premiere featuring Puppet Artist Matthew Acheson and a cast of over 40.

Performances of Saint Joseph Ballet’s *From Here...* take place May 28-30 at 8:00pm, with matinee performances at 2:30pm on May 30 & 31. Tickets are \$20-\$50 and available now via the Irvine Barclay Theatre Box Office at 949-854-4646 and [www.thebarclay.org](http://www.thebarclay.org), as well as through Ticketmaster. Complete concert information is online at [www.SaintJosephBallet.org](http://www.SaintJosephBallet.org).

Saint Joseph Ballet in Santa Ana is an after-school program that provides hope using dance to teach young people what it takes to succeed in life - self-esteem, confidence, leadership, cooperative learning and discipline. Through cutting edge programs, professionals ignite creativity and awaken the spirits in nearly 400 low-income youth each year. In the dance studios and onstage, young people passionately engage in the artistic process. Academic, family and college scholarship programs build on the skills students learn through dance. Since 1998, 98% of Saint Joseph Ballet’s graduates have enrolled in college, far exceeding the national average for their peers. Youth who enter Saint Joseph Ballet with few resources leave with the tools and skills to build healthy futures for themselves, their families and the community.

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To schedule an interview with Executive and Artistic Director, Melanie Ríos Glaser or any of the three Choreographers please call Payal Kumar at 714-541-8314 Ext. 19 or e-mail [Payal@saintjosephballet.org](mailto:Payal@saintjosephballet.org). Bios of Choreographers and high resolution photos are available upon request.