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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly's Orchesis to Debut Student-Choreographed Dances in Concert Jan. 31-Feb. 8

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly's Orchesis Dance Company will debut dances choreographed by select students for the 44th anniversary concert, "Vitality," taking place in January and February at the Spanos Theatre on campus.

The dance program will be held at 8 p.m. Jan. 31, Feb. 1 and Feb. 6-8. There will also be a matinee at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 1.

The motivation behind creating "Vitality" is the dance company's mission of providing consistently higher quality performances each year and to align with Cal Poly's Learn by Doing mantra. This year's shows will feature guest choreographers who have worked alongside students to put this production together.

"Vitality," a result of interaction between dancers, choreographers and instructors, produces a blend of perspectives woven throughout the concert.

Student choreographers include Kiira Norris-Turin, a fifth-year English major minoring in dance. Turin has choreographed a 7-minute contemporary piece examining the issues of human pain.

Lauren Elizabeth Creger, a third-year psychology major with minors in child development and dance, has created a piece showcasing 18 dancers. Also featuring contemporary, choreography, Creger has dedicated the dance to the U.S., the troops, her father, and military families like her own. She has incorporated elements from her life into the choreography.

Fourth-year business major Nikki Sullivan and Tiffany Davids, a third-year business major, have choreographed a dance number titled "Resistance." Exploring the struggles and tensions of human communication, Sullivan and Davids use their choreography to depict the desire to connect with the need to protect oneself from society.

Kate O'Leary, a comparative ethnic studies major, and Ella Richards, a fourth-year liberal studies major, have both acquired choreographing experience elsewhere and are now contributing to this year's Orchesis performance.

Richards has choreographed a dance titled "On Making Decisions" that explores the individual decision-making process, focusing on the difference between making decisions with the mind versus the heart. Chairs are used as props to represent "decisions" and the props are manipulated to represent the different types of decisions.

Local choreographers and nationally acclaimed guest artists who contributed to the show include Douglas Nielsen, Damon Rago, Daniel Cruz and Nancy Cranbourne. The concert will also feature the work of Theatre & Dance Department faculty choreographers Diana Stanton, Christy McNeil and Michelle Walter.

Richards' dance, "On Making Decisions," and McNeil's piece, "Crash," will be representing the Cal Poly Dance program at the American College Dance Festival this year at Arizona State University.

The collaboration between the range of choreographers seeks to explore current dance trends and new perspectives on classical forms.

Tickets for "Vitality" are \$20 for the public and \$12 for students, seniors and children. Tickets are on sale at the Performing Arts Center ticket office from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays. To order by phone, call 805-756-4TIX.

The Orchesis Dance Company concert is sponsored by Cal Poly's Theatre & Dance Department, the College of Liberal Arts, and the Instructionally Related Activities program.

Links

- Theatre & Dance Department: <http://www.cla.calpoly.edu/thtrdanc.html>
- College of Liberal Arts: <http://www.cla.calpoly.edu/>

About Cal Poly's Orchesis Dance Company

The Orchesis Dance Company is Cal Poly's oldest dance organization, founded in 1969 by Professor Moon Ja Minn Suhr. The company is comprised of 25-30 dancers whose skill levels range from intermediate to advanced. The dance company organizes an annual winter dance concert, prepared in the fall and spring quarters. The company performs a variety of dance styles including ballet, hip-hop, jazz, tap and world. Faculty, staff and students from all majors are eligible to participate and are selected through a rigorous audition process.

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