

Local Rising Star Featured in Ventura County Ballet's Beloved Holiday Performance, "The Nutcracker" in Oxnard

When you first meet her, Jasmine Duncan appears to be a shy and quiet 16-year-old girl, but when she hits the stage, she comes out of her shell to dazzle audiences with her pure technical talent and knowledge of ballet.

Jasmine started ballet with the Ballet Academy Ventura when she was only 4 years old in the pre-ballet class. Ballet quickly became a passion for Duncan, a Junior Honors/AP student at Ventura High school, spending all her free time, weekends and after school practicing her moves, and helping to teach the pre-ballet students. Her talent and drive earned her a scholarship to continue to dance and teach the aspiring ballerinas.

Twelve years later, Jasmine has rose through the ranks of the Academy and now will be dancing three principle roles in this year's performance of The Nutcracker, Dew Drop Fairy, Sugar Plum Fairy and Arabian, in this year's Nutcracker performance. Her performance comes after a major injury sidelined her from performing for 5 months.

This may be one of the last times to see the rising star in action, as she prepares to leave for college in less than two years.

"I worked hard to get healthy again," Jasmine said. "I love how technical my roles are this year, it's all in the technique. You can always make each performance better and stronger each time. I love ballet, and even though I'm not 100% sure where I go to college, I hope I can still incorporate my love of dance into whatever direction I decide to pursue."

"We are truly lucky to have Jasmine dancing with us," said VCB Executive Director Kathleen Noblin. "Jasmine is so talented and all the little girls look up to her so much; they even buy her pointe shoes at the end of the performance."

Before the curtain rises at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center's matinee performances, Ventura County Ballet invites children to join in the dazzle and excitement of The Nutcracker with a Sugar Plum Party celebration at 1 pm. Face painting, photo opportunities, treats, and a special gift are available to all children, at no additional cost.

Performances will also feature the Rubicon Harmonix adding vocals to the snow scene and singing holiday carols during intermission.

Event Information:

What: Ventura County Ballet presents "The Nutcracker"

When/Where:

Oxnard Performing Arts Center, 800 Hobson Way: Saturday December 2nd at 2 p.m. and Sunday December 3rd at 2 p.m.

Ventura College Performing Arts Center, 4700 Loma Vista Road (at Seton Hall): Friday December 8th at 7 p.m., Saturday December 9th at 2 p.m. & 7 p.m. and Sunday December 10th at 2 p.m.

Cost:

Oxnard Performing Arts Center: Tickets are priced from \$10 - \$45. Child, military & senior discounts available. There is a special on children's tickets for only \$10.

Ventura College Performing Arts Center: Tickets are priced from \$20 - \$40. Child, military and senior discounts available.

About the Ventura County Ballet Company and Ballet Academy Ventura:

Celebrating its 19th year, the Ventura County Ballet features professional dancers as well as VCB pre-professionals and students from Ballet Academy Ventura, the official school of the VCB.

Kathleen Noblin, a recipient of the City of Ventura 2008 Mayor's Arts Award, founded Ballet Academy Ventura in 1992 as the official school of the Ventura County Ballet where the company is in residence.

She has served as executive director of the company since its inception. VCB strives to connect artists, audience and community with artistically engaging performances. VCB features national and international ballet stars performing alongside pre-professionals and students, which provides unique training, production experience and mentorship for the next generation of dancers. For more information and for tickets, visit www.venturacountyballet.com.

Cost: \$10-\$45

Phone: (805) 616-8950

Tickets: www.venturacountyballet.com

Event url: www.venturacountyballet.com

<http://events.vcstar.com/oxnard/events/ventura-county-ballet-nutcracker-/E0-001-107552750-3>