

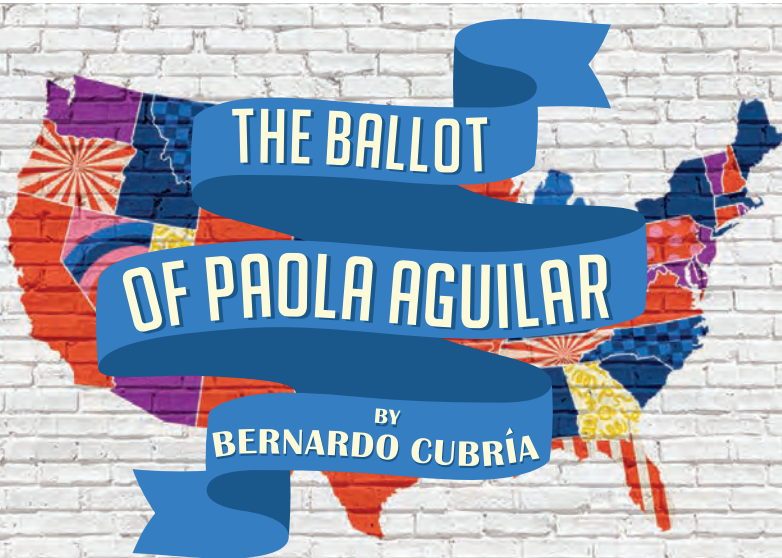
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SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2024



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Friends,

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On behalf of the University of Colorado Boulder **College of Music**, I'm thrilled to introduce the diverse and enriching experiences that await you.

With a lineup showcasing pinnacles of artistic expression, our current season promises to be extraordinary: The Artist Series—featuring performances from legendary soprano Renée Fleming to the ingenious Martha Graham Dance Company—complements captivating productions from the College of Music's Eklund Opera and musical theatre programs.

This season, we're especially excited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our resident **Takács Quartet** (page 24) whose mastery continues to inspire audiences worldwide. Additionally, the College of Music is proud to present more than 350 free events this academic year showcasing the talents of our students, faculty and guest artists.

This fall, I invite you to join me in extending warm congratulations to **Andrew Metzroth** (page 12)—our new executive director of CU Presents—whose leadership promises to bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas; as well as **Rudy Betancourt** (page 15) in his expanded role as director of Macky Auditorium and our long-running Artist Series, ensuring memorable experiences for you—our valued patrons.

We believe in the power of the arts to unite and transform. As we gather once again to celebrate creativity and community, let us remember the profound impact of what we do: Through the performing arts, we not only entertain but also enlighten, provoke thought and inspire change. Thank you for your continued support of the College of Music and CU Presents. We look forward to sharing this remarkable season with you.

Enjoy!

Dean, College of Music
University of Colorado Boulder

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CU ★ PRESENTS

SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2024

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Eklund Opera: *Promotional art*, Hänsel und Gretel
Takács Quartet: *Photo by Amanda Tipton*

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SPOTLIGHT



***Hänsel und Gretel* Defies Fairy-Tale Expectations**

By Adam Goldstein

Engelbert Humperdinck's 19th-century opera *Hänsel und Gretel* is hardly the simple stuff of fairy tales.

That may seem like a contradiction for audience members taking in their first performance of the beloved opera based on the familiar folk tale. Like the well-known story, the opera follows the trials of two siblings who get lost in the woods and ultimately run afoul of a witch.

Humperdinck, the German composer of the opera (who just happens to share a name with the British pop singer who achieved fame in the 1970s) described it himself as a

"*Märchenoper*," quite literally a "fairy tale opera."

But those attending the Eklund Opera Program's performance of the opera may be surprised. According to Leigh Holman, stage director for the production and director of the Eklund Opera Program, the piece defies expectations.

"If someone has never seen it before, they might think it's a children's composition with sing-songy pieces," Holman says. "Humperdinck's musical idol was Richard Wagner, who's known for big, sweeping orchestral arrangements and themes that

recur. That's all to give the idea of the sumptuousness of the piece, the variety of the piece, the depth of it."

"It's a lot more glorious than we might think," Holman adds.

The opera's scope, scale and ambition are part of what's made it a perennial favorite among operagoers of all backgrounds for more than a century. With its demanding and evocative music shared by the lead mezzo soprano and high soprano (Hänsel and Gretel, respectively), and the witch's score sung by a mezzo soprano or a tenor, the opera offers a blend of voices that truly summons character and conflict.

The vocals find a complement in the lush orchestration of the piece, as well as the dynamic staging—from a ballet featuring 14 dancers representing angels to a final, dramatic conflict with the witch, *Hänsel und Gretel* offers plenty in the way of stagecraft.

All of this is to say that the opera has long encapsulated the most grandiose elements of opera—the larger-than-life music, costumes, sets and action.

This makes it ideal for audiences, and for relatively new performers taking their first steps in the world of opera.

"Our orchestra is made up of students. To be able to work on a piece like this that is so grand—it's difficult, but our students are up for it, for sure," Holman says, adding that the piece is a favorite of Music Director Nicholas Carthy. "The major roles are all done by grad students. It requires large voices and people who are adept at reading challenging music."

(Story continues on page 13)



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ARTIST SERIES



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Ryan Gardner, trumpet | Sept. 10

Margaret McDonald, piano | Sept. 17
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Nathan Mertens, saxophone | Sept. 24
A Celebration of Japanese Saxophone

Nicolo Spera, guitar | Oct. 1
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Yoshi Ishikawa, bassoon | Oct. 8
With Pan Pacific Wind Quintet

Lillian Gordis, harpsichord | Oct. 15
Solo harpsichord works by J.S. Bach

Alejandro Cremaschi, piano | Oct. 22
Palimpsest: Folk Traditions Through New Music

**Abigail Nims, mezzo soprano
and Mutsumi Moteki, piano** | Oct. 29

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SPOTLIGHT



College of Music welcomes new executive director of CU Presents

By Marc Shulgold and Sabine Kortals Stein

Andrew ("Metz") Metzroth can't contain his joy when he talks about his new job as executive director of CU Presents, effective since Aug. 5. "I've worked toward this for a decade—it's truly exciting," he enthuses. As part of the University of Colorado Boulder College of Music, CU Presents is the home of performing arts on campus annually presenting hundreds of events by CU Boulder students and faculty, as well as world-famous guest artists.

Overseeing CU Presents requires administrative skill, a steady hand and a cool head. Just consider the competition Metzroth had to contend with after longtime director Joan Braun retired at the end of last season. "I'm happy that the College of Music conducted a national search," says Metzroth. "I think there were about three dozen applicants." But one look at his résumé and it's not surprising that Metzroth landed the position.

For starters, his years of experience in nearly every aspect of the theater—backstage, onstage, above-stage, you name it—is mind-boggling. As his local credits will attest, he's been everywhere at CU Presents for decades. Plus, his enthusiasm is contagious.

"I've always had a love for the theater,"

he says. As for his relationship with CU Boulder, he became box office manager in 2007, handling ticketing for campus performing arts events for nine years. That's no small task, he emphasizes: "The ticketing software [Tessitura] goes incredibly deep, and takes a long time to learn and teach." Moving further up the ladder, he became director of operations at CU Presents in 2017.

Today, Metzroth's responsibilities entail close involvement in managing the Artist Series in Macky Auditorium and Takács Quartet concerts in Grusin Music Hall. But there are more shows to handle—a lot more. "There are some 450 on-campus events including about 350 College of Music events, 50 Theatre & Dance Department events and 50 Colorado Shakespeare Festival performances," he explains. "I'll be involved in strategy, ticketing, and marketing and communications for all our series, particularly College of Music events. You have to know what's important to all of them, to know their goals."

Not that he intends to remain invisible. "I never want this to be a desk job," stresses the four-time CU Boulder alumnus. "I see myself as a community ambassador—I want to bring audiences into performing arts experiences."

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(Hänsel und Gretel: *continued*
from page 6)

For its impressive scope, the piece also holds an allure to modern audiences of all backgrounds and ages. At a running time of a little more than two hours with intermission, it's an ideal length for children, teens and first-time operagoers. The libretto, penned by Humperdinck's sister, is entirely in German, but the production in Macky Auditorium will include supertitles in English for an accessible story.

That combination of accessibility and sheer scope is part of what has made *Hänsel und Gretel* a favorite for more than a century for both audiences and artists alike; it's also what's bound to defy the expectations of those who only know a simple, straightforward version of the old story.

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SPOTLIGHT



Evolution of a Legacy

Macky Auditorium Director Rudy Betancourt takes over as director of CU Boulder's beloved Artist Series

By Clay Bonnyman Evans

After almost 15 years at the helm of Macky Auditorium at the University of Colorado Boulder, Rudy Betancourt has also been named the new director of the long-running Artist Series which has brought the finest jazz, classical, world music and dance performers to town for more than eight decades.

Betancourt—a native of Venezuela and an accomplished classical guitarist—will continue to serve as director at Macky which welcomes more than 100,000 people to over 100 events every season. He says adding the

beloved series to the venue's portfolio has the potential to turn over a new page for both.

"The Artist Series has been evolving for decades with an unparalleled cultural impact," he says. "Having the Artist Series within Macky's portfolio helps the venue to be a presenter as much as a facility for rent."

Betancourt says the Artist Series will continue to delight long-time patrons as it also seeks to expand and diversify its programming.

"The series will still include dance, classical music, jazz, performing arts from all over the world, as well as new genres. Keeping true to its well-established mission while feeling the cultural pulse in Boulder will help determine its evolution," he says. "There will be wonderful choices for our legacy and new audiences to enjoy."

When CU Presents Executive Director Joan Braun retired at the end of June after 30 years, it was determined that it made sense to separate the curation of the Artist Series from the operations of CU Presents. Braun and CU Boulder College of Music Dean John Davis recommended Betancourt to be the Artist Series director as the most natural choice.

"Rudy is an excellent, accomplished musician and he has impeccable taste and awareness of the music scene," Braun says. "As director of Macky, he also is very aware of audience tastes and preferences, and what they respond to. He can see some different pathways and possibilities and I'm excited to see what he does with it."

"Joan's legacy of innovation in the arts and securing the Artist Series' place in the hearts of its audiences is a tall order—one that I am honored to continue. I am excited to work with the College of Music's leadership and the Artist Series Advisory Board. It is a real privilege," Betancourt says.

Betancourt will continue to work closely with the staff at CU Presents. "The CU Presents team brings unparalleled knowledge of how to reach our audiences and cultivate our relationship with them," he says. "Continuing and deepening this collaboration will be paramount to the success of the series."

CU Presents will continue to work with other College of Music programs as well as with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and CU Theatre & Dance.

Tickets for the 2024-25 Artist Series are on sale now.



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ABOUT THE QUARTET

Described as having “an enormous wealth of colors ... and sparkling rhythms,” (All News Press), Quartet Integra are quickly developing a reputation of international prestige. In 2022, the Quartet won Second Prize and the coveted Audience Award at the 2022 ARD International Music Competition, First Prize at the 2021 Bartók World Competition, and First Prize and the Prize of Beethoven and Grand Prix Award at the 2019 Akiyoshidai Music Competition. Additionally, Integra have received the prize Banca Monte dei Paschi in the 2021 Accademia Musicale Chigiana, the Kirishima International Music Festival Prize and Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi Music Director Prize in the 2021 Kirishima International Music Festival.

Quartet Integra’s upcoming performances include a New York debut at the Schneider Concert series at the New School, a recital as part of the Discovery Series at the La Jolla Music Society, the ECHO Chamber Music Series, Les Salon Musiques, the Nevada Chamber Music Festival, Santa Ynez Valley Series, and at the California Club in Los Angeles and Thayer and Zipper Halls at the Colburn School, among others. Additionally, they have over twenty performances throughout Japan at venues such as Tokyo Opera City, Toppan Hall and Suntory Hall, among others, and recitals planned throughout Germany. The Quartet Integra has performed and worked with artists including Orion Weiss, Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, Kazuhide Isomura, Shigeo Neriki and Kazuhide Isomura.

Quartet Integra are active festival participants. They were invited by Günter Pichler (formerly Alban Berg Quartet) to attend the Chigiana Summer Festival in Siena on a scholarship

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Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Minuet - Trio
- III. Andante
- IV. Finale. Presto

String Quartet No. 2

György Ligeti (1923-2006)

- I. Allegro nervoso
- II. Sostenuto, molto calmo
- III. Come un meccanismo di precisione
- IV. Presto furioso, brutale, tumultuoso
- V. Allegro con delicatezza

—Intermission—

String Quartet No. 3, Op. 67

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

- I. Vivace
- II. Andante
- III. Agitato (Allegretto non troppo)
- IV. Poco Allegretto con Variazioni

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and have attended festivals such as Crans Montana Classics, Toyama Chamber Music Festival and Kirishima International Music Festival. Past performances include the Suntory Chamber Music Garden Festival, the Kanazawa, Hukuyama and Takefu International Festivals, among others. Committed to contemporary works, Quartet Integra has commissioned many new works from Japanese composers and have given over a dozen world premieres. Integra have participated in coaching's and master classes with Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Milena Pajaro-Van de Stadt, Jean-Guihen Queyras, and the Jerusalem, Henschel, Atrium, Voce and Shanghai String Quartets.

The Quartet Integra, consisting of first violinist Kyoka Misawa, second violinist Rinato Kikuno, violist Itsuki Yamamoto, and cellist Ye Un Park, formed in 2015 and began their studies with Kazuhide Isomura and Nobuko Yamazaki at Toho Gakuen School of Music. They continued their academic work as a quartet as Fellows at the Suntory Hall Chamber Music Academy. They are currently enrolled in the Chamber Ensemble-in-Residence Program at the Colburn School, where they study with Martin Beaver, Clive Greensmith and Tatjana Masurenko. Quartet Integra is supported by grant funding from the Matsuo Foundation and are on the roster of Colburn Artists.

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SPOTLIGHT



Guitar Without Borders

By Henry Michaels

Once or twice in a generation, a musician emerges of such prodigious and rare talent that their very name comes to be a byword for their instrument. Pablo Sáinz-Villegas—a Spaniard whom Billboard Magazine called the “global ambassador of Spanish guitar”—is one such generational talent.

Born in Logroño, the capital of the La Rioja province of Spain, Sáinz-Villegas has built an international career of such sterling repute that he’s been described as the successor to the great Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia. Sáinz-Villegas has performed in more than 40 countries including as a soloist with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the National Orchestra of Spain and the Berlin Philharmonic (their first solo guitarist in 38 years!). He’s also an activist, having founded “The legacy of music without borders” in 2006 as a way of promoting cross-cultural understanding through music.

The program he will perform at Macky Auditorium on Saturday, Nov. 9, certainly showcases these ideals featuring a wide-ranging musical program that encompasses works from a variety of backgrounds and inspirations.

Heitor Villa-Lobos’s Five Preludes, which open the program, are evocative of Brazilian musical culture. They are followed by the *Chaconne* from J.S. Bach’s Partita No. 2 in D minor, unquestionably one of the greatest works ever composed for solo instrument (for violin, originally). This pairing is fitting. For one, the third of the Brazilian Villa-Lobos’s preludes is subtitled “*Homenagem a Bach,*” or “Homage to Bach.” But at the same time, Bach’s chaconne owes a debt of gratitude to the New World; the chaconne in its original form was a Spanish dance said to have been inspired by indigenous South American music.

Like the Bach Chaconne, Spanish composer Isaac Albéniz’s *Asturias* was originally conceived for a different instrument, in this case piano. But the work—featuring flamenco flair—was meant to *mimic* the guitar and thus works all too well on the instrument that inspired it. The program continues with another homage: Joaquín Rodrigo’s *Invocación y danza* written in honor of composer Manuel de Falla.

Paraguayan guitarist and composer Agustín Barrios-Mangoré’s *Un sueño en la Floresta* is a virtuosic showstopper, while Italian guitarist and composer Carlo Domeniconi’s *Koyunbaba* is a Turkish-inspired work whose distinctive sound comes from its use of *scordatura* (a non-typical tuning of the guitar’s strings). Sáinz-Villegas is a proponent of new music, as well, so it’s no surprise that the program features a work he commissioned from the Spanish composer Francisco Coll.

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CU Boulder's
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celebrates 50 years

By Marc Shulgold and Sabine Kortals Stein

HARUMI RHODES has mixed feelings about observing The Milestone. As second violinist of the world-renowned, Grammy Award-winning Takács Quartet, she understands the significance of the group's founding a half-century ago.

"It's a monumental moment and we're approaching it with a sense of awe," she admits. "I feel humbled. Yet, in another sense, for us it's business as usual." Much of that business takes place right here in Boulder.

Joining Rhodes in conversation is first violinist Ed Dusinberre, who's also her husband. The English-born musician reflects on the group's remarkable musical journey filled with loss, personnel changes and—most of all—brilliant music making.

"I find myself thinking about all our former quartet members—we wouldn't be celebrating this milestone today except for them," says Dusinberre, recalling that the original quartet was formed by students at the Music Academy in Budapest, Hungary, in 1975.

"They were so young, living behind the Iron Curtain, wondering how they could fulfill their musical aspirations worldwide," he adds.

HARD WORK AND WINNING PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS in several European competitions led to an American tour in 1982 and—following several U.S.-based short-term residencies—the decision to permanently relocate their families to the United States in 1985-86. Soon after, the players accepted an invitation to become the resident quartet at the University of Colorado Boulder—and they've resided here ever since, though not without challenges. Gábor Takács-Nagy stepped down in 1993 and now enjoys a successful career as a conductor and teacher worldwide. The following year, violist Gábor Ormai was diagnosed with cancer and retired, passing away in 1995. The late Roger Tapping succeeded him, leaving to spend time with his family in 2005; in turn, he was succeeded by Geraldine Walther.

As the first new member in 1993, Dusinberre recalls the challenge of being a non-Hungarian. "It was a big adjustment for me, but I appreciated the welcoming, adventurous spirit of the players and the warmth of their collective sound," he says. "The process was similar when Harumi and then Richard joined"—referring to current violist Richard O'Neill who succeeded Walther in 2020. Grammy-Award winner for Best Classical Instrumental Solo Performance in 2021, O'Neill is only the second person to receive an award for a viola performance in the history of this category.

Today, cellist András Fejér remains the sole original member of the Takács Quartet.

For Rhodes, becoming a member of the Takács was thrilling. "The College of Music is a musical home for us. We feel grateful to be embedded in this university and the community."

ALTHOUGH THE TAKÁCS maintain an international touring schedule that takes up about half of their time, the foursome prioritizes time with their students, working in partnership with Meta Weiss, the College of Music's chamber music coordinator.

It may surprise some audience members who've been regulars at sold-out Takács Quartet concerts to learn that the group's campus connection extends beyond Grusin Music Hall. As Dusinberre notes, their decades-long residency is centered around daily hands-on work with College of Music students.

"Our relationship with the college is the glue that keeps us together," he stresses. "Our graduate string quartet program inspires us to think about future generations." This two-year program consists of intense work with a promising ensemble, preparing and guiding the young artists into the demanding world of quartet playing.

"The newest quartet we're working with is the Michigan-based Koa Quartet," adds Rhodes. "We'll listen to their interests and help them to develop a unique musical voice."

THE COLLEGE OF MUSIC's chamber music program has a long track record of success. The Brisbane, Australia-based Orava Quartet is a good example: Via email, first violinist Daniel Kowalik shared that his group met the Takács at a music festival in Sydney in 2011—at that time, the Orava had been together for five years. They soon came to CU Boulder to study with the Takács.

"We always worked with one member at a time," wrote Kowalik. "They rotated, so we had time with each member. I asked lots of questions, from general well-being to dealing with the pressures of performing."

Today, the Orava Quartet enjoys an active schedule and has been signed by Deutsche Grammophon. Their Boulder experience "really helped launch us into having a career," Kowalik noted. "Our coachings were invaluable and absolutely essential to learning the craft. Being mentored by the Takács forever changed how I think about and approach music making."

FOR MANY STUDENTS at the College of Music, a career as a performer isn't their only goal—and the Takács Quartet is sensitive to that, too. "It's only partly about making music," Rhodes emphasizes. "Much of what we focus on when we're talking with students has to do with how to make a life in music."

Dusinberre treasures those conversations. "I ask students to identify individual favorite moments in a piece and we explore different ways to heighten those moments. Hopefully they learn about each others' musical tastes and how to use their individual ideas to shape a unified interpretation."

When touring and recording sessions wind down, these beloved artists find a special joy in coming home to Boulder, visiting with faculty colleagues, and sharing their knowledge and experience with students. As Rhodes says, "The gritty and beautiful work of a string quartet happens offstage in the rehearsal room. We feel so grateful that—after many decades—this process continues in our home at CU Boulder."

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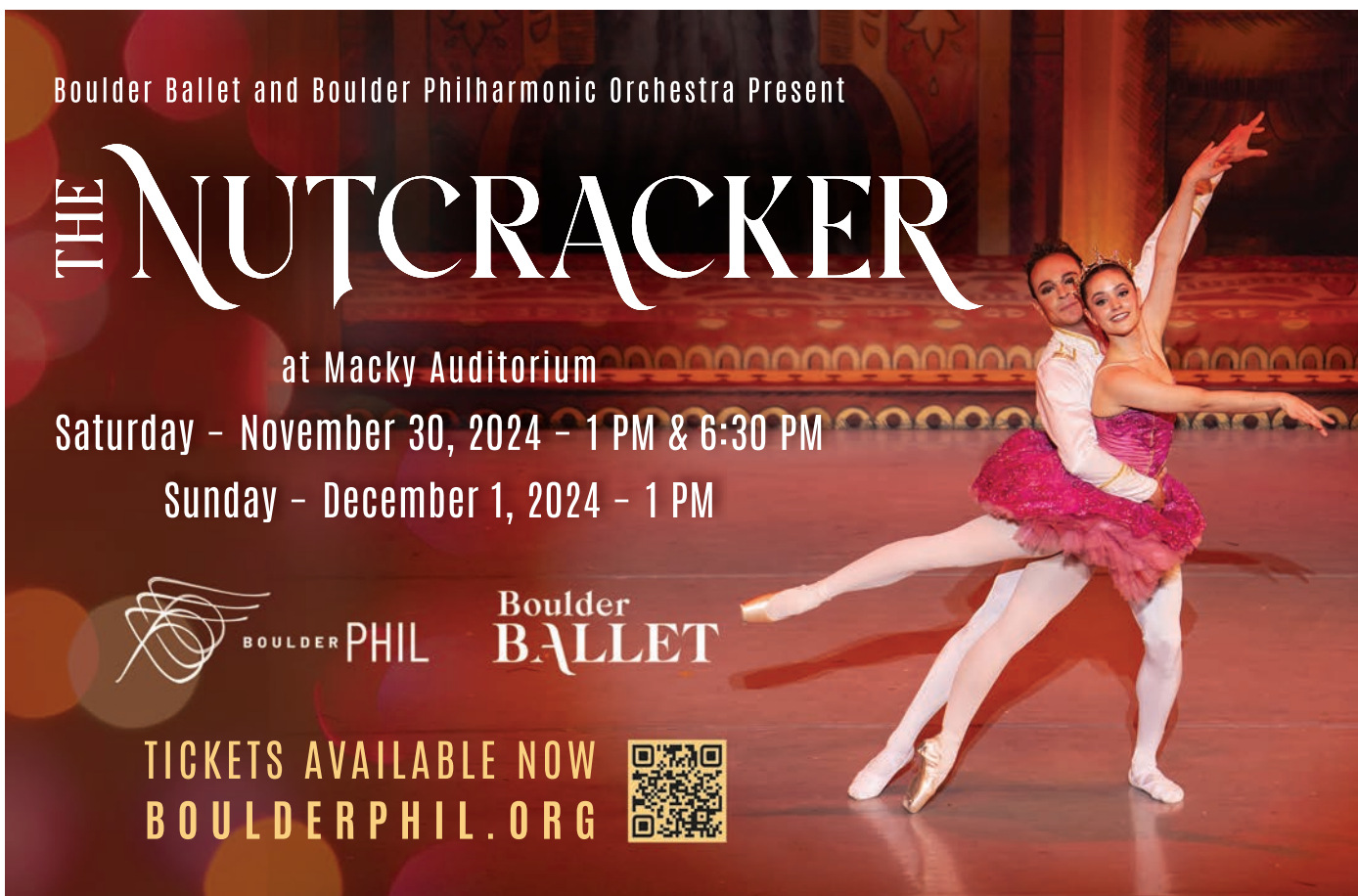
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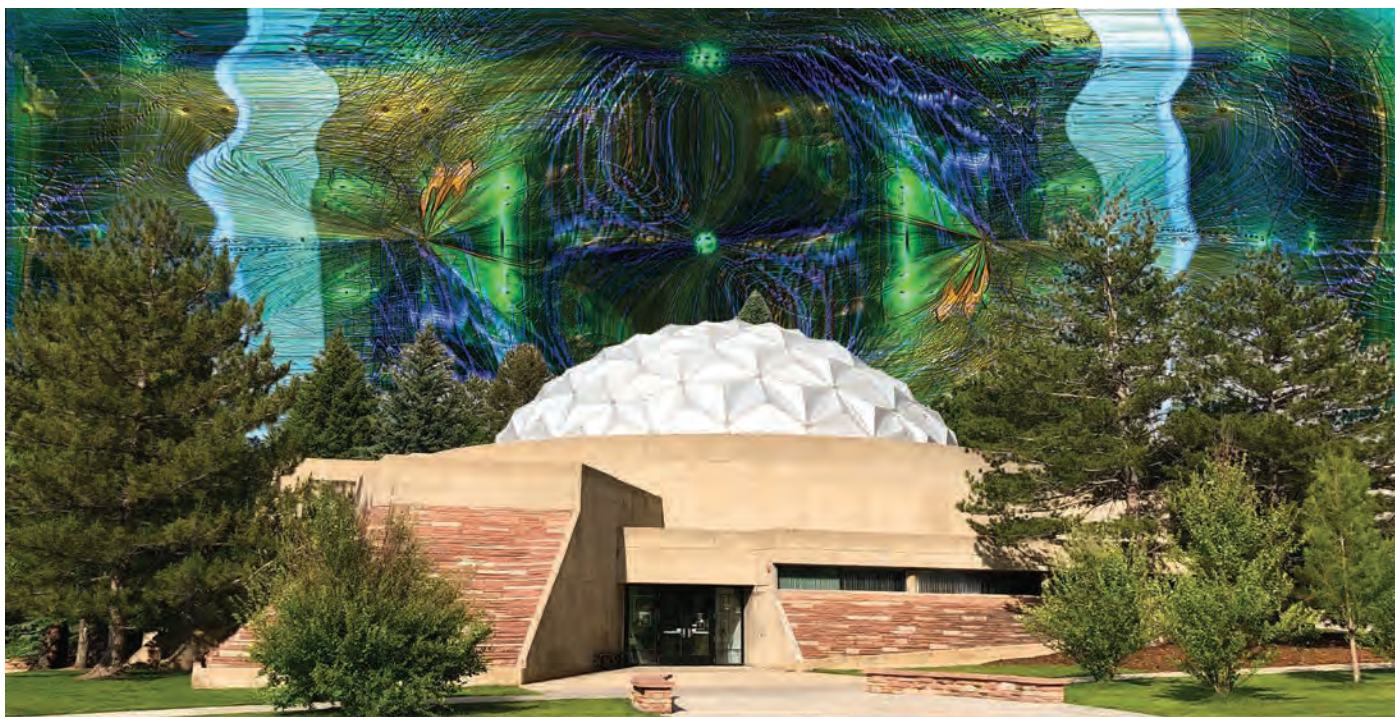
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