On the heels of a record-setting production of The Nutcracker, Colorado Ballet's first production in 2009 offers a fresh perspective on the Shakespearean classic, A Midsummer Night's Dream, opening Feb. 28 and running through March 14.

For the first time, Colorado Ballet will collaborate with the Colorado Children's Chorale, as well as feature two soloists and a live orchestra for this production, thus offering audiences of all ages a bountiful artistic production packed with mystical dance entertainment and enchanting musical artistry.

Emily O'Neal, 12, has been cast as Grecian and also as Empire Fairy for Colorado Ballet's upcoming production.

The orchestra, conducted by Adam Flatt, will perform the music of Felix Mendelssohn, which was inspired by the play and composed in 1826. The Colorado Children's Chorale will perform alongside the orchestra in accompanying the ballet at all performances. A total of 72 children, in two rotating casts will be singing during the first act.

"A Midsummer Night's Dream is a ballet for audiences of all types, especially families. Colorado Children's Chorale will enhance the experience, as audiences will really enjoy the collaborative performance," said Colorado Ballet artistic director Gil Boggs.

"It has been a goal of mine for Colorado Ballet to collaborate more with other arts organizations, and we hope it's only the first of many more to come among all of our talented performing arts groups here in the state."

A Midsummer Night's Dream was Christopher Wheeldon's first full-length ballet and was originally choreographed on Colorado Ballet and given its world premiere in Denver in 1997.

This will be the third time Colorado Ballet delights audiences with the dance rendition of Shakespeare's classic tale of nighttime mischief, young love and misplaced magic. Staying true to Wheeldon's creative vision, A Midsummer Night's Dream is being staged by ballet mistresses Sandra Brown and Lorita Travaglia.

Boggs said excitement is building in rehearsal in anticipation of opening night. "Wheeldon's A Midsummer Night's Dream is a ballet that was created on and for this company, and we take great pride in sharing again the early work of a now world-renowned choreographer with audiences right here in Colorado. This is a challenging work for our artists as dancers and actors, but one that is also deeply rewarding for all involved."

Performing the principal roles in Colorado Ballet's 2009 production of A Midsummer Night's Dream will be Maria Mosina and Chandra Kuykendall as Titania; Igor Vassine and Alexei Tyukov as Oberon; Koichi Kubo and Sean Omandam as Puck; Sharon Wehner and Sayaka Karasugi as Helena; Jesse Marks and Shunsuke Amma as Demetrius; Dana Benton and Caitlin Valentine as Hermia; Vyachesslav Buchkovsky and Christopher Ellis as Lysander.

Joining two full company casts in performing the ballet will be nearly 50 students from the central and south studios of the Academy of Colorado Ballet. Academy students will be featured in many roles, including baby cupid, mini Puck, changeling, peacock fairy, Grecian/empire fairy, wood sprite, flower girl and wedding attendant.

In addition to eight ticketed performances of A Midsummer Night's Dream, Colorado Ballet will also present a student matinee on Feb. 27 for school children.

Performances are scheduled as follows: Saturday, Feb. 28 at 2 and 7:30 p.m., Sunday, March 1 at 2 p.m., Saturday, March 7 at 2 p.m., Sunday, March 8 at 2 p.m., Wednesday, March 11 at 6:30 p.m., Friday, March 13 at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 14 at 2 p.m.

To purchase tickets for A Midsummer Night's Dream, call 303-837-8888, send an e-mail to info@coloradoballet.org or visit Colorado Ballet's Web site at www.coloradoballet.org.

About Colorado Ballet

Under the direction of artistic director Gil Boggs, Colorado Ballet's dancers come from all parts of the world. Established in 1961 by Lillian Covillo and Freidann Parker, Colorado Ballet is a nonprofit organization presenting superior quality classical ballet and innovative dance through performances, training and education programs that enhance the cultural life of the community.

About The Colorado
Children's Chorale

With a diverse repertoire and dynamic choreography led by Artistic Director Deborah DeSantis, the Colorado Children's Chorale presents its own series of concerts as well as collaborates regularly with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Opera Colorado and Central City Opera.

More than 400 Chorale members between the ages of 7 and 14 perform annually by invitation. The tour choir delights audiences throughout Europe, Asia and the U.S., including appearances at the White House and Lincoln Center.