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Ring in the Holiday Season at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts with two family-friendly, high-energy performances

*Experience the music of the Emerald Isle with the festive holiday show
Irish Christmas in America featuring beautifully sung Irish
holiday carols and thrilling Irish dancing*

*Then, travel down to the Big Easy with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band as they
perform classic holiday hits with a jazzy New Orleans twist*

(Philadelphia, November 12, 2009) — Celebrate the Holiday Season at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts with not one but two incredible performances guaranteed to put you in the holiday spirit! Celebrate the yuletide traditions of the Emerald Isle with **Irish Christmas in America** on **Friday, December 11, 2009 at 8:00 PM**. Tickets for the performance are \$20-\$40. Then, head down to the Big Easy with **Preservation Hall Jazz Band** as they perform holiday classics with a twist of ragtime, blues and jazz in A Creole Christmas on **Saturday, December 12, 2009 at 8:00 PM**. Tickets for the performance are \$20-\$45 For tickets or for more information on both performances, please visit www.AnnenbergCenter.org or call 215.898.3900. Tickets can also be purchased in person at the Annenberg Center Box Office.

Conceived in 2005 by Irish fiddler Oisín Mac Diarmada of the popular Irish musical group Téada as way to share traditional and often unknown Irish holiday customs, **Irish Christmas in America** features evocatively-sung Irish ballads, holiday carols, sing-alongs, lively fiddle tunes and thrilling Irish dancing. Rich narration brings to life ancient Irish customs and stories, while photographic images provide a backdrop of rich historical context. Mac Diarmada will be joined on stage by leading award-winning Irish singer & accordionist, Séamus Begley, Gráinne Hambly (Irish harp), Seán Earnest (guitar), Tommy Martin (uilleann pipes/whistles), Tristan Rosenstock (narration/bodhrán), and Brian Cunningham (dancer).

Named after Preservation Hall, the revered music venue located in the heart of New Orleans's French Quarter, Grammy®-award winning ensemble **Preservation Hall Jazz Band** has traveled worldwide spreading their mission to preserve the art form of traditional New Orleans Jazz. An annual must-see production for New Orleans families since 2005, 2009 marks the first year that Preservation

Hall Jazz Band takes their stomping, syncopated holiday spirit on the road. A Creole Christmas features swinging jazz versions of Holiday tunes including “Blue Christmas,” “Santa Claus Is Coming to Town,” and “The Dreidel Song,” as well as New Orleans holiday jazz classics like “Swingin’ in a Winter Wonderland.” No Preservation Hall show is complete without a Bourbon Street-style parade as the band plays their classic finale, “When the Saints Go Marching In.”

Preservation Hall Jazz Band’s current lineup features an impressive roster of musicians with deeply rooted connections to the art form and to the band itself, including Creative Director Ben Jaffe (tuba), son of Preservation Hall Jazz Band co-founders Allan and Sandra Jaffe. Other current members include Mark Braud (trumpet, vocals), Charlie Gabriel (clarinet, saxophone, vocals), Clint Maedgen (reed, vocals), Joe Lastie, Jr. (drums), Frank Demond (trombone), Walter Payton (bass, vocals), and Rickie Monie (piano).

Preservation Hall Jazz Band last performed at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in 2003.

Give the gift of the performing arts to family and friends this holiday season! No returns, no fuss, and plenty of options to choose from beyond the month of December, Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts gift certificates make the perfect gift for even the most difficult to shop for person on your list! Annenberg Center gift certificates are redeemable for tickets to any Penn Presents or Dance Celebration performance and may be purchased in any dollar amount by calling the Annenberg Center Box Office at 215.898.3900 or online at www.AnnenbergCenter.org. Gift certificates can also be purchased in person at the Annenberg Center Box Office.

The Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

The University of Pennsylvania’s Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts has been the region’s leading multi-disciplinary performance venue for Theatre, Dance, Jazz, World Music, New Music and children’s programming since its inception in 1971. The Annenberg Center’s curatorial vision emphasizes four primary values: artistic integrity, cultural diversity, curatorial balance and a willingness to take risks. By presenting world renowned and cutting edge artists and companies who express adventuresome perspectives on contemporary issues, timeless ideas and diverse cultures, the Annenberg Center promotes critical thinking and dialogue among its audiences, creating a uniquely rewarding arts experience.

The Annenberg Center has achieved national recognition for its outstanding Dance Celebration series (presented in partnership with Philadelphia’s Dance Affiliates), touring theatre series, and for its superior offerings for children, including both its Student Discovery Series and the acclaimed 25-year-old Philadelphia International Children’s Festival, the oldest festival of its kind in the United States. Through a generous grant from the Wallace Foundation, the Annenberg Center also showcases its commitment to local artists each year through its By Local series.

Throughout its history, the Annenberg Center has presented innovative and critically-acclaimed theatre productions with some of the biggest stars of stage and screen including Liv Ullmann and Sam Waterston in *A Doll's House*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* with Glenn Close, Jessica Tandy in Beckett's *Not I*, and Tennessee Williams' *Sweet Bird of Youth* with Irene Worth and Christopher Walken of which Ms. Worth won a Tony® for her performance when the show moved to Broadway. University of Pennsylvania alumnus and noteworthy Broadway producer and director Harold Prince and Joseph Papp staged many of their plays at the Annenberg Center before taking them to Broadway. As part of the Dance Celebration series, a broad range of world-class and emerging dancers and companies have appeared at the Annenberg Center each season including the Pilobolus Dance Theatre, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, MOMIX, Parsons Dance Company, Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor and Alvin Ailey.

IRISH CHRISTMAS IN AMERICA

Friday, December 11 at 8:00 PM

Zellerbach Theatre at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

Celebrate the yuletide traditions of the Emerald Isle with Irish Christmas in America. Featuring festive fiddles, traditional Irish dancing and multimedia projections with rich historical narratives, this family-friendly show takes the spirit of Christmas on a distinctively Irish journey!

Tickets: \$20-\$40. For more information please call 215.898.3900 or visit www.AnnenbergCenter.org

PRESERVATION HALL JAZZ BAND A Creole Christmas

Saturday, December 12 at 8:00 PM

Zellerbach Theatre at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

Ring in the holidays in true Creole style with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. Straight from the Big Easy and featuring a flavorful gumbo of Christmas classics with a twist of ragtime, blues and jazz, this family-friendly event will surely put you in the holiday spirit!

Media support for the Annenberg Center's 09/10 Jazz Series is provided by WRTI FM and *City Paper*.

Tickets: \$20-\$45. For more information please call 215.898.3900 or visit www.AnnenbergCenter.org

For further press information or to set up interviews, please contact:

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