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For More information Contact:

ARC Dance Company

www.arcdance.org

206-352-0798

ARC Dance Company Artistic Director Marie Chong to Join Cirque du Soleil

Seattle, WA – ARC Dance Company and Arc School of Ballet is excited to announce Artistic and Executive Director Marie Chong has been chosen to serve as an Artistic Director with the internationally acclaimed Cirque du Soleil. Over the next six months, Ms. Chong will be overseeing the implementation of the Cirque du Soleil show *Kooza* during its tour of Japan.

During her leave of absence, Ms. Chong will maintain the title of Artistic and Executive Director of the ARC Dance Company and Arc School of Ballet while handing off daily operations to a handpicked team of professional instructors, dancers/choreographers and administrators. Ms. Chong will return to Seattle November 27th through December 18th to oversee the ARC Dance Company production of *Nutcracker Sweets* scheduled for performances between December 9th and December 17th, 2011 in partnership with the Arc School of Ballet.

ARC Dance Company Board member John Brooks stated, “While we are saddened to see such a cherished artistic and educational leader leave the immediacy of our community, we’re also quite proud to have one of Seattle’s finest representing us on the international stage that is Cirque du Soleil and excited by the prospect of creative enrichment Marie will bring home to us upon her return. We have every confidence in the team Marie has put in place to manage ARC while she is away and know she will be in close contact with them to assure artistic continuity.”

Ms. Chong founded the ARC Dance Company in 1999 with a mission to provide opportunities for emerging dancers, choreographers and musicians. The company’s accomplishments to date include over 60 world premiere dance pieces, employment to over 300 dancers at various stages in their professional careers, and developmental opportunities to 42 choreographers. In 2004 Ms. Chong founded the Arc School of Ballet which currently serves over 150 families, providing ballet training at a variety of levels for students ranging in age from 3 to 18 years old.

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