

THE  BROWN-FORMAN
NUTCRACKER

Choreography by Val Caniparoli

PROGRAM NOTES



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Choreography by Val Caniparoli

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Music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Scenic + Costume Design by Peter Cazalet

Lighting Design by Michael T. Ford

Magic + Illusion Design by Marshall Magoon

Russian Variation Choreography
by William Christensen

ACT I

SCENE I: Herr Drosselmeyer's Workshop

Our story begins on Christmas Eve. Herr Drosselmeyer is putting the finishing touches on special toys that he has lovingly made for his godchildren, Marie and Fritz. He plans to give these toys to them this evening at the annual party held at the home of the Stahlbaum family. As he prepares to close his store, Marie and her Mother make a surprise visit to do some last-minute shopping. Marie immediately becomes infatuated with a toy, the Nutcracker, which is not quite finished. Herr Drosselmeyer tries in vain to distract Marie from this special toy. . .

SCENE II: Marie's Bedroom

Marie can hardly contain her excitement as she prepares for the party.

SCENE III: The Party

The Stahlbaum home is festive and alive with dancing and holiday celebrations. A magnificent Christmas tree adorns the parlor. Suddenly, Herr Drosselmeyer bursts into the room bearing gifts, including several amazing dancing dolls; he also performs a number of magic tricks. He gives Fritz a gift that resembles a menacing rat, which is later banished from the room because Fritz behaves so mischievously with it.

Drosselmeyer, saving the best for last, presents Marie with the special Nutcracker that she so admired in his workshop earlier that evening. Marie immediately falls in love with her wonderful gift. It seems that the Nutcracker was meant to be Marie's

all along, and she begins to dance with him. Fritz, in a fit of jealousy, grabs the Nutcracker from Marie and accidentally breaks it. Fortunately, Drosselmeyer is able to repair the broken Nutcracker. The festivities draw to an end as Marie and Fritz's grandparents lead the final dance of the evening. The guests depart into the night and the family retires for the evening to dream of Christmas morning.

SCENE IV: The Battle

With everyone asleep, Marie sneaks downstairs into the darkened parlor to search for her beloved Nutcracker. As the clock strikes midnight, Marie, feeling tired, falls asleep on the daybed and slips into a vivid dream. In her dream, she is startled as two rats steal her Nutcracker. The room appears to transform itself and the Christmas tree also seems to grow and grow before her very eyes.

A fierce battle ensues between the giant rats and the toy soldiers. The Nutcracker escapes the rats' clutches and challenges the Rat King to a duel. With Marie's help, the Nutcracker fatally wounds the Rat King. Magically, the Nutcracker is then transformed into a handsome prince who invites Marie to join him on an enchanted journey.

SCENE V: Journey through the Land of Snow

Marie and her Nutcracker Prince begin their magical journey through a swirling snowstorm.

INTERMISSION

ACT II

SCENE 1: The Journey to the Land of the Sugar Plum Fairy

Marie and her Nutcracker Prince continue their travels to the Land of the Sugar Plum Fairy under Drosselmeyer's watchful eye.

SCENE 2: The Palace of the Sugar Plum Fairy

Marie and her Nutcracker Prince arrive at an ornate palace under a starry sky where the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier reside. The palace is decorated with columns that seem to be made of spun sugar. It is an enchanting land graced by several dancing Angels. Marie and her Nutcracker Prince are greeted by Drosselmeyer, the Sugar Plum Fairy, and her Cavalier. Marie is astonished that the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier resemble the very dolls that Drosselmeyer presented at the party. Marie and the Nutcracker Prince are entertained by several dances from distant lands – chocolate, tea, coffee, and caviar representing Spain, China, Arabia, and Russia, respectively. These are followed by the French Pastilles, deliciously danced by four beautifully clad maidens. A comical but fantastic Madame Derby with eight tiny guests then entertain Marie. Next, a beautiful Rose appears, accompanied by her bouquet. Finally, the most wonderful dance of all is danced by the Sugar Plum Fairy and her gallant Cavalier. As Marie and the Nutcracker Prince prepare to leave, everyone returns for one last farewell as, alas, all dreams must come to an end. Or was it a dream?

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Scenic Artwork

YWorks: Cape Town's Scenic Studio (South Africa)
Magic by Marshall Magoon (Los Angeles, CA)
Craig Grigg (New York) – Remote Controlled Props
Ron Riall and the Scenic Construction Crew of
Louisville Ballet

Costumes

Shari Cochran of Actors Theatre of Louisville
Margret Fenske of Actors Theatre of Louisville
Teresa Greer (Indiana)
Charles Heightchew and the Boston Ballet Costume Shop
David Heuvel and Cindy Farrimond of Ballet West
Patricia Mallet (New Jersey)
Sarah Havens (Rhode Island), milliner
John Hiatt (Salt Lake City, UT), bootmaker
Jim McGough of Virginia Opera, wig and facial hair maker
Dan Fedie and the Costume Shop of Louisville Ballet

Character Masks and Bodies

Allison Anderson of StageOne
Donna Bailey (Louisville)
Donna Lawrence-Downs (Louisville)
Headpieces constructed by Alun Jones (Louisville)

We sincerely thank these talented artists for their dedication. This production would not be possible without them.

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