Community Ballet Association
Presents
Huntsville Ballet Company
In

The Nutcracker

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Artistic Director

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School Director

Thursday, December 8, 2011
Friday, December 9, 2011
Von Braun Center Concert Hall

The Nutcracker School Shows
are sponsored by

The ALABAMA State Council on the Arts · National Endowment or the Arts · Doris Burwell Foundation · Huntsville Ballet Women’s Guild · Gothic Guild · Lite 96.9 · Just for Women Magazine & Inside Huntsville Magazine · Boeing
Did you enjoy the ballet performance?

What was your favorite part?

Children attending these performances may send thank you notes and pictures to:

Community Ballet Association
800 Regal Drive
Huntsville, Alabama 35801
The Nutcracker

Act I

The story begins at a family party in Germany on Christmas Eve about 1850. Little Clara receives a gift from her magical godfather, Drosselmeyer. It is a nutcracker dressed as a soldier. Clara's brother, Fritz, is jealous of the nutcracker and breaks the toy in anger. The nutcracker comes to life in Clara's dreams that night. He battles the wicked mice who try to steal the children’s Christmas toys. The nutcracker takes Clara on an enchanted journey through the Kingdom of Snow to the Kingdom of Sweets.

Act II

The Sugar Plum Fairy welcomes Clara and The Nutcracker, who is now her prince. The Sugar Plum Fairy introduces dancers from many lands to entertain Clara while she is visiting the Kingdom of Sweets. The climax of the magical evening is a grand pas de deux (a dance for two) by the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier. There is a grand finale which is a happy ending to all.
The Nutcracker Story

"The Nutcracker" is a beautiful ballet that has become a Christmas tradition. It is a fairy tale set to music and dance. It was written more than 100 years ago.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The main characters</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clara, a little girl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drosselmeyer, Clara's godfather</td>
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The story opens at a Christmas party at Clara's home. Gifts are exchanged. Clara's godfather, Drosselmeyer, arrives with magic tricks and toys.

Drosselmeyer gives Clara a Nutcracker doll. Clara's jealous brother, Fritz, breaks the doll. Drosselmeyer fixes the toy and the party ends.

Clara goes to bed but cannot sleep. She creeps downstairs to see the nutcracker doll. She picks it up and goes to sleep on the sofa.

Suddenly mice, led by the Mouse King, scamper about. The toys come alive. An army of wooden soldiers, led by the Nutcracker, battle the mice.

Clara saves the Nutcracker by throwing her slipper at the Mouse King. The Nutcracker wins the battle and turns into a handsome prince.

The Prince and Clara travel to the Kingdom of Sweets where they meet the Sugarplum Fairy.

As a reward for the bravery of the Prince and Clara, dancers put on a show in their honor. Each group dances to its own special music.

The Sugarplum Fairy and her partner do a dance together called a "pas de deux" (pah duh dewh), or dance for two.

Clara wakes up from her dream with the nutcracker doll in her arms.
Theatre Manners

1. Please use the restroom before leaving school! At the ballet, you may use the restroom BEFORE the performance if absolutely necessary. It is not good manners to get up during the show.

2. No food, drink, or gum is allowed in the concert hall.

3. Before the performance, it is all right to talk quietly with your neighbors. When the lights go out, no talking is allowed.

4. It is fine to applaud politely when you see something that you enjoy! Please applaud when the dancers take their bows. This is their reward for all their hard work.

5. It is fine to laugh when something funny happens in the ballet, but you should never laugh if someone falls.

6. Intermission is the time between the first and second acts and will last about 10 minutes. Please stay seated at this time. Presentations may be made and you will also receive a preview of Act II.

7. This is a special occasion. You may dress up a bit or, wear your favorite outfit, if you like.

8. At the end of the ballet, remain in your seats until your teacher leads your class to the bus.

9. Please turn off all cell phones and pagers during the performance!

10. No flash pictures or videos during the performance. This is dangerous and distracting to the dancers.
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT BALLET

1. What is the best age for me to start studying ballet?
   
   **Answer:** Nine or ten is the best age to start. Your mind and muscles are now ready for proper ballet training.

2. Why should I take ballet if I don’t want to be a dancer when I grow up?
   
   **Answer:** Exercise is necessary for a healthy body. While ballet is indeed a strengthening exercise, it is also a beautiful art form. Dance helps everyone become more graceful. Ballet helps with sports, cheerleading, and modeling. It gives you confidence to perform and be the best you can be. Ballet makes you think, helps you to enjoy music and movement, and most of all is FUN!

3. Why is ballet good for boys?
   
   **Answer:** In almost any professional sport you can find athletes who take ballet. Ballet training strengthens your muscles and gives you the ability to run faster, jump higher and play longer.

4. What do I wear in ballet class?
   
   **Answer:** Girls need to wear a leotard and tights for class and boys usually wear a white tee shirt and sweat or jazz pants. With this type clothing the teacher can check the way a student’s body is working in class and make sure that the muscles are moving correctly. All girls wear their hair pulled back in buns in order to look neat and keep hair out of their faces. This also enables the teacher to check their shoulders and neck.

5. How do dancers stay on their toes?
   
   **Answer:** There are special shoes that allow a girl to dance on her toes. The dancers earn pointe shoes when they have worked hard enough to strengthen their muscles. It is important not to wear pointe shoes too soon in your training because you can damage your feet.
The Art of Dance

A ballet is a story acted out through the art of dancing. There are no words.

The French did much to develop the classical type of ballet we know today. Many of the ballet words we use are French.

Today, many kids are taking classical ballet. Some start at a very early age with pre-ballet lessons. They learn to move about and enjoy music and dance.

When they are about 9 years old, many begin their ballet training.

Without years of training, they will not be able to do the difficult and unnatural steps that look so graceful and easy when done by a pro.

While more girls take ballet than boys, it is enjoyed by both. Older pro football players have taken ballet to improve their moving skills!

The five positions in dance

First  Second  Third  Fourth  Fifth

All ballet movement is based on one or more of these positions. You may want to try them yourself.

All ballet dancers do exercises and learn basic positions at the "barre" (pronounced bar) or rail.

Later they move away from the barre to "center practice," where they learn complicated ballet steps.

When they are at least 11 years old and after several years of training, they get their toe shoes. Ballet dancers must build strong legs "lift them out of their shoes." Their weight does not go completely down into onto their toes. Their legs help carry the weight.

Beginning dancers wear ballet slippers.
The History of Dance

Dancing is the oldest and liveliest of the arts. People in all countries and in all times have expressed their feelings in rhythm and body movements. Dance is the language of the body. It draws people together in their thoughts and feelings. A dancer can communicate any subject and any idea to his audience.

A dance may be social, so that everyone may take part in it; or it may be theatrical and tell a story or describe an idea. It may be funny or sad.

Dancing has been called the mother of the other arts. Throughout the ages, the dancing body has inspired musicians, sculptors, and painters.

The earliest records of people dancing are cave paintings in northern Spain. Probably the most important activity in the life of primitive peoples and ancient civilizations was dance. From the distant past, primitive man danced when his children were born, when they were old enough to be accepted as adults, when they were married, and when they died. Early man danced for courage, celebration, to drive away evil spirits, and even to bring rain.

Egyptians believed that their gods danced and their kings danced. Greek dancing also came from religion. The Greeks had other forms of dancing, too. Specially trained performers gave educational and acrobatic dances. Even the philosophers danced in ancient Greece. Great men such as Plato and Socrates admired the dance.

The Romans added little new material to the dance. Like the Greeks, they had religious ceremonial dances. They founded the art of pantomime, acting without speech, and developed the pantomime in dance. The dancers acted out stories through movements of their bodies.

The Middle Ages saw the growth of social dancing and the rise of the dancing master, or teacher. There was little stage dancing.

Ballet originated in Italy about 1450. At that time, it was a series of sophisticated social dances whose steps were often combined with other steps devised by the choreographer. Ballet flowered in Italy during the next hundred years and about 1550 was carried to France. The Renaissance (about 1500) brought a new liveliness that took the place of the stately dances.

The dance became clearly divided into two types in the 1600’s. One type was dance as a social enjoyment and the other was dance as a show, with performers dancing for an audience. Ballet reached its first artistic peak under Louis XIV of France, who ruled from 1643 to 1715. He was seriously interested in ballet as an art and spent a great deal of money on elaborate ballets.

During the course of the 1600’s, male, and later female, professional ballet dancers appeared. In the 1700’s the first ballet with no speech at all was created. Around 1830, romantic ballet won world-wide fame.

Ballet appeared in theaters and other show places in the United States during the 1800’s. European ballet companies toured the country. The first significant American-born ballet company was the Ballet Theatre.

The 1900’s brought new life and new forms to the dance. This new life started with the ideas of Isadora Duncan. She fought for a simple and natural dance. Inspired by the art of ancient Greece, she wanted a natural use of the body clothed in easy flowing garments. Her feet were bare as she danced.

Other types of dance such as jazz, tap, and musical comedy base much of their technique on ballet movements.
(1600’s) The Sun King, Louis XIV, earned his nickname from his early appearance in the court ballet. The splendor of the costuming conveys the extravagance which went into the presentation of the ballet.

(1800’s) The dancers’ dress of a generation before has now been replaced by more elegantly free clothing. As theatrical costuming became lighter, female technique developed.

(1832) The Romantic Ballet, showed the beautiful ballerina as the heroine. Ballets presented the ballerina as a vision of ideal beauty.
Early 1900's) Modern dance or contemporary dance emerged as theatrical art. Its early and formative years were much dominated by women. Emphasis was on natural, free dance.

As dancing technique improved in female dancers, their skirts got shorter. This enabled the audience to see the difficulty of their dancing. The pas de deux (dance for two) allows male dancers to present the ballerina. The adagio is frequently the supreme moment in a classical ballet. The tempo is slow and the ballerina, supported by her partner, executes steps and achieves positions designed to display her line and technique. This is followed by the male dancer's variation in which he is allowed to show off his skills. Then there is a solo variation for the ballerina. The partners are reunited for the coda which is a traditionally in fast tempo and calls for both speed and difficulty. The pas de deux in The Nutcracker is danced by the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier.
Tchaikovsky lived a very long time ago, but his music is still played all the time. His music is so beautiful that audiences never grow tired of it. The Nutcracker ballet is a great favorite, and every holiday season there are hundreds of performances all over the world.

The music is very different in each act of the Nutcracker. In the first act, Tchaikovsky's music paints musical scenes. You will hear magical sounding music for Herr Drosselmeyer's magic feats; naughty music for the little boys at the party; tired sounding music when everyone goes home; mysterious music when the Christmas tree grows larger; and battle music when the Nutcracker defends Clara against the Mouse King and his army.

In the third scene, the music sounds like the swirling of snowflakes in the Kingdom of Snow. Next, in the Land of Sweets, you hear dances from different countries: Spain, Russia, Arabia, and China. There are also dances for the Shepherdess and sheep, Mother Ginger, the Sugar Plum Fairy, and others.

There are many recordings of the Nutcracker, so if you really like the music, someday, you may take your own children to the performance of the Nutcracker.
Huntsville Ballet School, previously called Community Ballet School, was started in 1965. Originally only ballet was taught, but now the school also offers other forms of dance as well.

Creative Movement is for 3-6 year olds. Modern Dance (where dancers sometime create their own dances) is usually done with bare feet and the body bends in different ways and with different meanings. Jazz is a popular dance form with a trendy type of music. Jazz is used a lot in the Broadway Musicals, theater shows, and music videos. Tap Dance is an old American form of dance where dancers make clicking rhythms with metal taps on their shoes.

Huntsville Ballet School also offers classes just for boys. They can learn to jump higher and turn in the air.

The dancers in the Nutcracker are students, age 6 and up, from the Huntsville Ballet School. The cast also features members of the Huntsville Ballet Company in special dances. These company dancers take advanced classes at our school and perform at schools, festivals, and in other cities. On April 10, 2010, the Huntsville Ballet Company will present The Firebird and the second Discover Dance performance will feature students from the Discover Dance in school residency program.

Discount student tickets are available.
Ballet

Words about ballet are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally. See if you can find: BALLET, DANCERS, STEPS, DANCE, POINT, SHOES, REHEARSE, POSITIONS, PLIE, TUTU, ACT, BARRE, CHOREOGRAPHY, LEOTARD, TOES, WALTZ, SCENE, STAGE, STAR.

CAN YOU DANCE THE BALLET?

POINT TOES BALLET
YHPARGEROHTCRB
PLIECNGRSVWXUED
DRATOELWDHPHTHA
DSTAGEFAAQOLUEN
AENECGGLCSBEOAC
NSTEPSHTTCTPSRE
CERRABJZDQSRAUSR
ESNOITISOKERES

Mini Spy ...

Mini Spy and Casey Count are dancing in “The Nutcracker.” See if you can find:

- word MINI
- swan
- sword
- ladder
- number 8
- witch’s hat
- ice cream cone
- letter X
- ruler
- frying pan
- squirrel
- number 3
- carrot
- letter V
A Nutcracker Name Tag

Color, punch a hole in the hat and thread a piece of yarn through the hole to wear around your neck as a name tag!