

**IN CURRENT REPERTORY**

**TIMING:** Act 1 – 47:00  
Act 2 – 45:00

**THE NUTCRACKER**

Ballet in Two Acts

**Choreography by** Alexei Ratmansky

**Music by** Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky

**Scenery and Costumes by** Richard Hudson

**Associate Designers:** Justin Arienti and Mauricio Elorriaga

**Lighting by** Jennifer Tipton

**ACT I, Scene 1, The Kitchen:** On Christmas Eve, the Stahlbaum kitchen is alive with activity as cooks and housekeepers bustle about preparing for the family’s annual holiday party. The Nanny keeps a watchful eye over the Stahlbaum children, Clara and Fritz. Once preparations are done, everyone adjourns to the parlor to greet the guests. Clara turns back as she exits and is startled to see a mouse. She runs to join the others in the dining room. With the kitchen completely empty, more mischievous mice appear and scurry about looking for scraps of the holiday meal.

**ACT I, Scene 2, The Party:** The Stahlbaums welcome family and friends to their grand parlor replete with holiday decorations, including a beautiful Christmas tree. The party grows festive with music and dance as Clara’s godfather, Drosselmeyer, magically appears. A skilled toymaker always full of the most inventive surprises, Drosselmeyer entertains everyone as he presents four life-sized dolls. However, these dolls cannot be played with, and Clara is disappointed. Then, Drosselmeyer gives Clara a unique Nutcracker handsomely dressed as a soldier. Fritz becomes jealous of his sister and rushes at her, snatching the Nutcracker from her and breaking it. A heartbroken Clara looks on as Drosselmeyer repairs the Nutcracker. As the evening grows late, the guests depart and the Stahlbaum family retires for a long winter night’s rest.

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## **THE NUTCRACKER – Synopsis – Page 2**

**Act I, Scene 3, The Battle:** During the night, a sleepy Clara tiptoes back down the staircase in search of her beloved Nutcracker. As the clock strikes midnight, Clara sees Drosselmeyer’s face on the clock and becomes distressed by mice scampering into the room from all sides. The Nutcracker tries to help her but is carried away by the mice. Drosselmeyer appears just in time to catch Clara as she faints from fright.

As she recovers, Clara sees her house change all around her. The Christmas tree grows large and wondrous. The Nutcracker heroically summons the toy soldiers to help fend off the scurrying mice. The fierce Mouse King arrives and engages in a duel with the Nutcracker. Just as it seems the evil Mouse King may be victorious, Clara takes off her shoe and bravely throws it at him, casting a fatal blow. As the mice quickly retreat, the Nutcracker transforms into a young Prince.

**Act I, Scene 4, The Snow:** The Stahlbaum parlor suddenly becomes quite cold and snowflakes begin to fall. At first, the snow falls gently as if in a waltz, but it builds into a frightful blizzard. Drosselmeyer brings a small sleigh to rescue Clara and the Prince from the freezing snow, and the moonlight guides them on a shining path for their journey over snow-covered hills.

**Act II, Land of the Sugar Plum Fairy:** Drosselmeyer navigates the sleigh through the blizzard to safety in the sunny Land of the Sugar Plum Fairy. The Sugar Plum Fairy and her subjects are amazed to learn of Clara’s bravery in killing the Mouse King, and the Fairy commands a festival in honor of Clara, featuring charming dances from around the world. As the celebration draws to a close, Clara receives her greatest Christmas wish and sees herself transformed into a beautiful Princess to dance in the arms of her Nutcracker Prince.

**Epilogue, Christmas morning:** As the joyous celebration and magic kingdom fade, Clara suddenly finds herself alone in her room on Christmas morning, wondering: “Was this all a dream?”

The World Premiere of *The Nutcracker* was given by the Imperial Ballet, Maryinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg, Russia on December 18, 1892, danced by Antoinetta dell’Era (Sugar Plum Fairy) and Pavel Gerdt (Cavalier).

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### **THE NUTCRACKER – Synopsis – Page 3**

American Ballet Theatre's first production of *The Nutcracker*, choreographed by Mikhail Baryshnikov, received its first performance at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D. C. on December 21, 1976. Baryshnikov's production received its New York premiere at the Metropolitan Opera House on May 18, 1977.

American Ballet Theatre's second production of *The Nutcracker*, choreographed by Kevin McKenzie, received its World Premiere at the Orange County Performing Arts Center in Costa Mesa, California on December 3, 1993, danced by Yan Chen (Clara), Robert Wallace (Nutcracker-Prince), Victor Barbee (Drosselmeyer), Julie Kent (Sugar Plum Fairy), Robert Hill (Cavalier), Christina Fagundes (Snow Queen) and Kathleen Moore (Dew Drop). A new staging of *The Nutcracker* by McKenzie was given its World Premiere at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D. C. on December 12, 2000.

This new production of *The Nutcracker*, choreographed by Alexei Ratmansky, was given its World Premiere at the Howard Gilman Opera House, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, New York on December 23, 2010 danced by Gillian Murphy (Clara, The Princess), David Hallberg (Nutcracker, The Prince), Catherine Hurlin (Clara), and Tyler Maloney (The Nutcracker Boy).

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