

## **Sensory-Inclusive Nutcracker Ballet**

### **Pre-Show Welcome and Introduction**

Armour Dance Theater, New World School of the Arts, Miami-Dade County Auditorium, and Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs would like to welcome you to this performance of The Nutcracker Ballet. We are delighted that you are here with us to share in this holiday tradition.

This morning's performance is extra special because you are here. We want you to be comfortable so we have made the music just a little bit softer, and we have kept the lights on just enough so you will be able to see both the stage and your friends sitting around you.

If you need to get up and more around or feel that you would like to find a quiet place, please tell your teacher so we can be sure you are with an adult who will keep you safe.

Teachers and Parents: if you need any help, such as finding the restrooms or quiet room, just ask one of our wonderful ushers or helpers to assist you. We also have noise reducing ear muffs, a pre-show guide and souvenirs available in the lobby for your comfort and convenience.

Today's performance will be presented in two acts. The first act will be 45 minutes, followed by a 15-minute intermission. The second act will also be 45 minutes.

We are about to begin, but first I am going to tell you a short story about what you are going to enjoy today...

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The Nutcracker was first performed in 1892 at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia. The beautiful music was composed by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky. The original cast included ballet students from the Kirov School. Now, 122 years later, our cast of 160 is ready to perform for you.

In just a few minutes when the curtain rises behind me, we find ourselves in the ballroom of a splendid home set in Germany in the 1800s. The time is Christmas Eve. The party is a family affair for close friends and relatives, but most of all, it is a party for the children. Clara and Fritz, the two children of the house, have been joined by their friends and cousins. The children come forward, take partners, and dance. They parade around the ballroom before their parents, showing off their new gifts.

Suddenly a mysterious guest arrives. He is Dr. Drosselmeyer, Clara's godfather and a wonderful toy maker. The children are not quite sure what to make of this Drosselmeyer, a fascinating yet frightening character. He entertains the children with human-sized mechanical dolls that actually dance and gives Clara a wonderful nutcracker shaped like a wooden soldier. She is so delighted she dances around the room with it, but her jealous brother stomps on it until it breaks. Using a magical bandage, Dr. Drosselmeyer fixes it and Clara falls asleep with the nutcracker in her arms. She dreams of mysterious things such as a magical Christmas spirit that makes the tree grow. Suddenly, mice and toy soldiers are fighting everywhere. There is a fierce battle between a giant Nutcracker and a terrifying King Rat who finally falls down dead when Clara joins the fight and hits him with her shoe. The mice vanish, and as if by magic the Nutcracker turns into handsome young prince. The prince invites Clara to go with him to an enchanted Land of Snow.

Now, we hope you will enjoy our performance of The Nutcracker.

## **Intermission**

We will now take a short break for a 15-minute intermission before the performance resumes. The lights will get dimmer when the intermission is over and the show is about to begin.

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Welcome back to the second act. We hope you are enjoying the show so far. Now I will resume our story...

As the curtain rises, 24 precious angels set the mood for Clara and her Prince to enter the enchanting Kingdom of Sweets. The Sugar Plum Princess dances among them before Clara and her prince arrive at a splendid throne room in a Candyland fantasy. The Sugar Plum Fairy listens carefully as the Nutcracker Prince describes his battle with the King Rat. Dancers from Spain, China, Arabia and around the world come forward to entertain Clara and the prince. The Sugar Plum Fairy and her partner dance together, then everyone comes together for the finale. In the end, they fade away as a dream, leaving Dr. Drosselmeyer, Clara, her Nutcracker Doll and wonderful memories of her most magical Christmas ever.

We are about to begin again and I hope you will enjoy our final act of The Nutcracker Ballet.

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## **POST PERFORMANCE**

Thank you for joining us for today's special presentation. It would so helpful if you would please take a few minutes to complete our online Sensory-Inclusive audience survey when you get home, so that we may continue to bring you programs such as today's Nutcracker Ballet. You will find the URL to our short survey printed on the survey handout. Thank you and have a wonderful holiday season!