

CANADA'S NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE DANCE DEPARTMENT

PRESENTS

**GEORGE BALANCHINE'S**  
**THE NUTCRACKER™**

BY

**PENNSYLVANIA BALLET**



**STUDY GUIDE FOR TEACHERS**

NAC 2011-2012 DANCE SEASON

Cathy Levy, Dance Producer

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## PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

# *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*™

NAC Dance ~ Student Matinée

Date: Friday, December 2, 2011

Running Time: 11:30 am – 1:30 pm, includes a 20-minute intermission

Location: Southam Hall, National Arts Centre

PLEASE NOTE THAT NO FOOD OR DRINK IS ALLOWED IN THE HALL. PLEASE EAT LUNCH BEFORE THE SHOW.

### CREDITS

Artistic Director: Roy Kaiser

Choreography: George Balanchine, ©The George Balanchine Trust

Music: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky played by The National Arts Centre Orchestra

Music Director: Beatrice Jona Affron

Scenic Designer: Peter Horne

Costume Designer: Judanna Lynn

Lighting Designer: John Hoey



The performance of **George Balanchine's The Nutcracker**™, a **Balanchine® Ballet**, is presented by arrangement with **The George Balanchine Trust** and has been produced in accordance with the **Balanchine Style®** and **Balanchine Technique®**. The **Balanchine® Ballet** presented in this program is protected by copyright. Any unauthorized recording is prohibited without the expressed written consent of **The George Balanchine Trust** and Pennsylvania Ballet.

Students participating in this production are from the National Capital Region.

Children's Ballet Mistresses: Merrilee Hodgins, Mary Ross, Nicola Henry and Tanis Waller  
of The School of Dance . Children's Ballet Master: Jon Martin

Go behind-the-scenes at rehearsals and check out a sneak preview of Pennsylvania Ballet in **George Balanchine's The Nutcracker**™! <http://paballet.org/nutcracker.html>

# THEATRE ETIQUETTE

**For your students to have the best experience possible, we have prepared a small outline of what is expected of them as audience members. As a teacher bringing your students to a performance at the NAC, please keep in mind that you are responsible for the behaviour of your students.**

**Being an audience member is as essential to the ballet performance as the dancers themselves. What helps to make a show a success is in part how the audience reacts to it, whether through applause, laughter or surprise. Discuss proper audience etiquette with students before the performance. Arrive approximately half an hour before show time to get settled in to enjoy the show.**

## **AUDIENCE ROLE ACTIVITY CHECKLIST**

### **Children should be encouraged to:**

- ✓ Freely react to the performance within reason (please no yelling). Dancers love to hear applause for something done well, or something you enjoyed seeing. There is no right or wrong time to show your appreciation for what you see on stage.
- ✓ Clap at the end of a dance (when there is a pause in the music) if you feel like showing appreciation.
- ✓ Watch in a quiet concentrated way. This supports the dancers so they can do their best work on stage.
- ✓ Enjoy the music and look at the sets and costumes.
- ✓ Consider that constructive criticism is always appreciated more than purely negative criticism.
- ✓ Remember, to turn off cell phones and no recording devices are allowed.

### **Children should not:**

- ✿ Move about in the seats or get up to leave during a performance (except in an emergency situation).
- ✿ Eat, drink, speak aloud, or otherwise cause a disturbance to those around you (these things are not only a distraction to other audience members, but also to the performers on stage, which can be dangerous for them.)

# CANADA'S NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE

Officially opened on June 2, 1969, **the National Arts Centre** was one of the key institutions created by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson as the principal centennial project of the federal government.

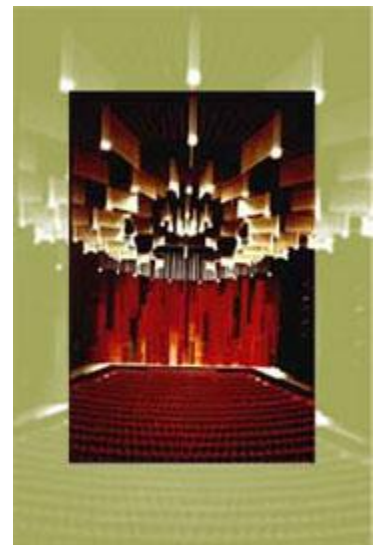


Built in the shape of a hexagon, the design became the architectural leitmotif for Canada's premier performing arts centre. Situated in the heart of the nation's capital across Confederation Square from Parliament Hill, the National Arts Centre is among the largest performing arts complexes in Canada. It is unique as the only multidisciplinary, bilingual performing arts centre in North America and features one of the largest stages on the continent. Designed by Fred Lebensold (ARCOP Design), one of North America's foremost theatre designers, the building was widely praised as a twentieth century architectural landmark.

A programme to incorporate visual arts into the fabric of the building has resulted in the creation of one of the country's most unique permanent art collections of international and Canadian contemporary art. Pieces include special commissions such as, *Homage to RFK* (mural) by internationally acclaimed Canadian contemporary artist William Ronald, *The Three Graces* by Ossip Zadkine and a large free standing untitled bronze sculpture by Charles Daudelin. In 1997, the NAC collaborated with the Art Bank of the Canada Council of the Arts to install over 130 pieces of Canadian contemporary art.

The NAC is home to four different performance spaces, each with its own unique characteristics. *Nutcracker* will be performed in Southam Hall, a 2323 seat theatre.

Today, the NAC works with countless artists, both emerging and established, from across Canada and around the world, and collaborates with scores of other arts organizations across the country. The Centre also plays host to the Canada Dance Festival. The NAC is strongly committed to being a leader and innovator in each of the performing arts fields in which it works - classical music, English theatre, French theatre, dance, variety, and community programming. It is at the forefront of youth and educational activities, supporting programmes for young and emerging artists and programmes for young audiences, and producing resources and study materials for teachers.



# DANCE AT THE NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE



*Welcome teachers and students! Welcome to those who are devotees and those who are new to the art form. Dance is a magical force: it can connect to one's heart and soul like a beautiful song or a touching story. Through its largely non-verbal format, it can speak universally to both simple and complex themes, enriching our experience and our lives. Dance can be pleasurable, but it can also be compelling and engaging...even confronting.*

*I joined the NAC as Dance Producer in 2000, and since then have had the great fortune of inviting choreographers from around the world to the National Arts Centre dance season, and presenting a broad spectrum of artistic expressions and ideas.*

*One of our many priorities is to bring dance to young audiences and support education and outreach to the school community. This will be my fifth year of presenting dance works for school audiences that are also part of my regular program. Feedback from teachers and our youth dance connection group, during our youth commission project phase, was instrumental in this development in our programming.*

*Along with our matinees for schools this year, there are many performances in our regular season that would be educational and entertaining for your students. We invite you to consider returning with your class to an evening show or enjoy a night out with your own family. Visit our dance page on [www.nac-cna.ca](http://www.nac-cna.ca) to learn more.*

**A World of Dance in Ottawa awaits you.**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'y'.

CATHY LEVY  
DANCE PRODUCER, NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE

# George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*™

*The original story of The Nutcracker was written in 1816 by a German man named E.T.A. Hoffmann. (His initials stand for Ernst Theodore Amadeus.) Although Hoffmann's story was a fairy tale with characters like the Mouse King in it, it was not a story for children. Eventually a French man named Alexander Dumas rewrote it as a children's story and in 1892 in Russia the choreographer Marius Petipa asked Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky to write music for what was to become one of the most popular ballets in the world (Illustrations for this workbook were adapted from original drawings by Doris Rice.)*

*Premiere: February 2, 1954, New York City Ballet, City Center of Music and Drama*

## ACT ONE

### The Stahlbaum House

Once upon a time, long, long ago, in a little village in Germany, there was great excitement. It was Christmas eve and all the townspeople were getting ready to go to a party. They put on their finest clothes and started to make their way through the snow to the Stahlbaum house where Marie, her mother and father, her brother Fritz, and all the servants were busy with preparations for the celebration.

Soon the guests arrived and the festivities began. Everyone was having a good time when Marie's godfather, Herr Drosselmeier arrived with his nephew. They brought with them three large boxes, each containing a magical, life-sized doll. Everyone watched in amazement as



the Harlequin and Columbine dolls danced together and the Toy Soldier performed a lively dance of leaps and turns.

Then Drosselmeier gave Marie the most special doll of all, the Nutcracker! Marie loved it at once. Fritz, seeing how much she enjoyed the special gift, got very jealous. He grabbed the Nutcracker away from Marie and broke it! The nephew chased Fritz away but it was too late. Drosselmeier tried to comfort Marie by tying the pieces back together. His nephew gave her a little bed so the hurt Nutcracker could rest.

Before long, it was time for all the guests to leave. Marie reluctantly said good night to the nephew and went to bed. But she couldn't sleep. She kept thinking about her Nutcracker doll. She slipped out of bed and tiptoed downstairs where the Nutcracker was still resting on his little bed. She cradled the Nutcracker in her arms and fell asleep on the sofa in the parlor.

Suddenly, Drosselmeier appeared out of the darkness. He gently took the Nutcracker from Marie and fixed it. Just as he was placing it back in her arms, she started to wake up. The lights on the tree began to flicker and Drosselmeier appeared on top of the grandfather clock, flapping his arms like a giant owl.

Marie was frightened. She ran and hid just as big, fat mice as tall as grown men began to scurry about the room. Lights flashed and everything around her grew larger. The tree with all its lights stretched magically to the ceiling. Fritz's toy soldiers were suddenly as tall as Marie.

The Nutcracker, who had also grown taller, rose from his bed to lead the toy soldiers in battle against the giant mice. The mice advanced, using their long pointy tails as swords. The toy soldiers responded with cannon balls of cheese, which the mice greedily gobbled up.

The Nutcracker and the Mouse King, with gold crowns on each of his seven heads, fought with their swords and just as the Mouse King was about to win the battle, Marie hit him in the head from behind with one of her slippers. He turned in surprise and approached her with his sword raised. But before the Mouse King could reach her the Nutcracker got up and ran him through with his sword as Marie collapsed onto the bed. The Nutcracker took the Mouse King's crown and held it triumphantly in the air as the sad mice slowly dragged away the body of their King.

Suddenly the Stahlbaum living room changed into a beautiful; wintery forest. The bed, with Marie on it, started to glide gracefully into the snowy night and eventually arrived in the Kingdom of Snow. There Marie was awakened by the Nutcracker, who had changed into a handsome prince who looked very much like Drosselmeier's nephew! Together they began a magical journey into the snowy forest with beautiful dancing snowflakes.

## **ACT TWO**

### **The Land of Sweets**

Marie and the Prince, traveling in a nutshell sailboat, arrived in the Land of Sweets, where they were greeted by the beautiful Sugar Plum Fairy and all of her subjects. The Prince told them the story of the fight between the soldiers and the mice and how Marie helped them win the battle. The Sugar Plum Fairy congratulated them both and invited them to stay and be entertained by the citizens of the Land of Sweets.



The first to perform represented hot *chocolate* ... five couples in dark, velvety costumes doing an exciting Spanish-style flamenco dance. They were followed by *coffee* ... a beautiful Arabian princess dressed in gold performing delicate twists and turns. Next came *tea* ... three dancers in colorful costumes of ancient China in a short number featuring difficult mid-air splits. Jumping

through hoops, the lead Candy Cane and his eight attendants, all in striped suits, performed an exciting dance to fiery music based on a Ukrainian folk dance.

Marzipan, a sweet candy made from egg whites, sugar and almond paste was represented in the dance by sugary shepherdesses. The huge and comical Mother Ginger made a grand appearance with eight little clowns, her Polichinelles, hidden under her skirt. Next, Dewdrop and her flowers danced to the beautiful "Waltz of the Flowers"

Finally, the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier performed a slow and romantic pas de deux (dance for two). They then led all the dancers in an exciting grand finale to end the festivities. Marie and the Prince were now ready to leave the Land of Sweets and all the sweets and candies gathered together to bid them farewell as they sailed off into the sky in their nutshell sailboat.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- The first public performance of the Nutcracker was in December 1892.
- The tutu appeared in the 1800s.
- The average tutu takes 60-90 hours of labour and 100 yards of ruffle to create. The same tutu costs up to \$2000!
- A male ballet dancer lifts over 1.5 tons worth of ballerinas during a performance.
- A three-hour ballet performance is roughly equivalent to two 90-minute soccer games back to back, or running 18 miles.
- A prima ballerina can complete 32 fouette turns, while staying in the exact same spot on the floor. After the turns, her pointe shoe tip is HOT to the touch and it is so worn out that it is used then only for rehearsal. On average, ballerinas wear out three pairs of pointe shoes per week. A ballet pointe shoe lasts an average of only eight dancing hours. A single pair of pointe shoes costs approximately \$100, which means each dancer goes through about \$15,000 worth of pointe shoes in a season!



# PENNSYLVANIA BALLET

## Company History and Overview

Pennsylvania Ballet is one of the premier ballet companies in the United States and has been at the forefront of American dance since 1963.

A leading Philadelphia cultural institution, the Company has earned a national reputation for its impassioned artistry and technical virtuosity, and has received widespread critical acclaim for its performances of a diverse classical and contemporary repertoire with a Balanchine base. The energy and exuberance of its versatile dancers are the Company's enduring signature.

The Company was established in 1963 by Barbara Weisberger, a protégée of George Balanchine, through a Ford Foundation initiative to develop regional professional dance companies. A leader in the regional ballet movement of the 1960s, the Company performed in the national spotlight for the first time in 1968 at City Center in New York — a highly successful debut that led to a decade of national touring, appearances on PBS' acclaimed "Dance in America" series, and a stint as the official company of the Brooklyn Academy of Music during the 1970s. From 1987 to 1989, Pennsylvania Ballet forged an alliance with Milwaukee Ballet in an unprecedented venture to create one company. The new organization, with 43 dancers and a greatly expanded repertoire, was the first in the country to offer its dancers year-round employment.

In 1995, the Trustees of Pennsylvania Ballet selected its first homegrown Artistic Director, Roy Kaiser. A former company member hired in 1979 by Barbara Weisberger, Mr. Kaiser rose through the ranks from Corps de Ballet to Soloist to Principal by 1990. Following his retirement from the stage in 1992, Mr. Kaiser served as Principal Ballet Master and Associate Artistic Director under Christopher d'Amboise before being named to his current position.

Under Kaiser's leadership, the Company has expanded its Balanchine-based repertoire to include bold, innovative new works from both established and emerging choreographers. New works have included premieres of original ballets from choreographers such as Merce Cunningham, Christopher d'Amboise, Trey McIntyre, Matthew Neenan, David Parsons, Val Caniparoli, Benjamin Millepied, and Christopher Wheeldon, as well as the highly acclaimed 40th anniversary commission of **Swan Lake** by Christopher Wheeldon and the 2007 world premiere of Matthew Neenan's **Carmina Burana**.

Currently comprised of 37 dancers, Pennsylvania Ballet annually presents a season of six programs (including **George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™**) that balance classic ballets with new works that challenge the dancers and attract a diverse audience. The Company also tours throughout Pennsylvania and the East Coast to venues such as New York City Center and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The Company made its international debut at the Edinburgh International Festival in August 2005.

Over the past several years, Pennsylvania Ballet has increased its reach through creative programming initiatives such as the Family Matinee Series and Prologue Lecture Series, and its outreach and education program, *Accent on Dance*, which serves over 11,000 youngsters each year. In 2002, Pennsylvania Ballet II, the Joyce and Herbert Kean Trainee Program, was created as a pre-professional training company that also performs outreach and educational activities in area schools. In 2010, fourteen Pennsylvania Ballet dancers performed in the Academy Award-winning film “Black Swan.”

## **ROY KAISER, Artistic Director**

### **Pennsylvania Ballet**

Born in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, Mr. Kaiser began tap dancing at age 4, and started his professional dance career by age 7. Together with his four brothers, he performed on television and across the United States, including the 1967 World’s Fair in New York. He began his ballet training at age 17 under the guidance of Karen Irvin, and earned a scholarship to the San Francisco Ballet School and later the School of Pennsylvania Ballet.



Mr. Kaiser joined Pennsylvania Ballet in 1979, and was subsequently promoted to Soloist and Principal Dancer. He performed nearly all the principal male roles in the Company’s classical repertoire, and originated roles in works by such noted choreographers as Peter Martins, Robert Weiss, Lynne Taylor-Corbett, Paul Taylor, Choo San Goh, and Christopher d’Amboise. In 1987, while still performing, Mr. Kaiser was appointed Assistant Ballet Master and was later named Ballet Master upon his retirement from performing in 1992. In October 1993, he was appointed Associate Artistic Director of the Company under the leadership of Christopher d’Amboise and later succeeded him as Artistic Director in February 1995.

Under his direction, the Company launched its 1994–1995 Season with a critically acclaimed appearance at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and returned in 2000 as part of a *Balanchine Celebration* which featured six companies highlighting fourteen Balanchine works. In November 2009, Mr. Kaiser returned to Kennedy Center once again with Pennsylvania Ballet’s critically acclaimed production of *George Balanchine’s The Nutcracker*, presenting Balanchine’s version of the beloved ballet for the first time ever in Washington, DC.

The Company made its international debut at the Edinburgh International Festival in August 2005 with its 40th anniversary commission of Christopher Wheeldon’s *Swan Lake*. An active member of the dance community, Mr. Kaiser is often invited to be a guest instructor and has served on numerous dance panels.

Roy Kaiser is celebrating his 30th year with Pennsylvania Ballet and his 15th as Artistic Director.

## GEORGE BALANCHINE, Choreographer

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, George Balanchine (1904-83) is regarded as the foremost contemporary choreographer in the world of ballet. He came to the United States in late 1933, at the age of 29, accepting the invitation of the young American arts patron Lincoln Kirstein (1907-96), whose great passions included the dream of creating a ballet company in America. At Balanchine's behest, Kirstein was also prepared to support the formation of an American academy of ballet that would eventually rival the long-established schools of Europe.

This was the School of American Ballet, founded in 1934, the first product of the Balanchine-Kirstein collaboration. Several ballet companies directed by the two were created and dissolved in the years that followed, while Balanchine found other outlets for his choreography. Eventually, with a performance on October 11, 1948, the New York City Ballet was born. Balanchine served as its ballet master and principal choreographer from 1948 until his death in 1983.

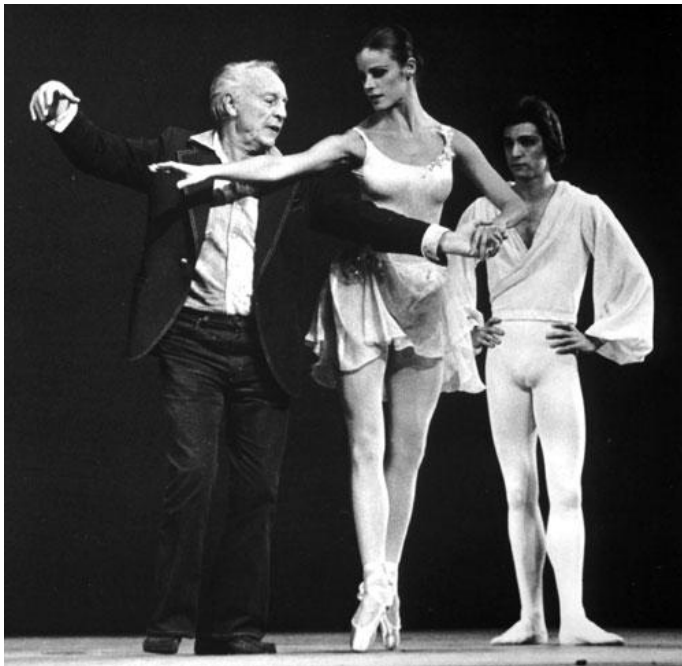


Photo: George Balanchine in rehearsal – *Ballo della Regina*, Balanchine, Ashley, Weiss  
Choreography by George Balanchine © The George Balanchine Trust  
BALANCHINE is a Trademark of The George Balanchine Trust.

Balanchine's more than 400 dance works include *Serenade* (1934), *Concerto Barocco* (1941), *Le Palais de Cristal*, later renamed *Symphony in C* (1947), *Orpheus* (1948), *The Nutcracker* (1954), *Agon* (1957), *Symphony in Three Movements* (1972), *Stravinsky Violin Concerto* (1972), *Vienna Waltzes* (1977), *Ballo della Regina* (1978), and *Mozartiana* (1981). His final ballet, a new version of Stravinsky's *Variations for Orchestra*, was created in 1982.

He also choreographed for films, operas, revues, and musicals. Among his best-known dances for the stage is *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*, originally created for Broadway's *On Your Toes* (1936). The musical was later made into a movie.

A major artistic figure of the twentieth century, Balanchine revolutionized the look of classical ballet. Taking classicism as his base, he heightened, quickened, expanded, streamlined, and even inverted the fundamentals of the 400-year-old language of academic dance. This had an inestimable influence on the growth of dance in America. Although at first his style seemed particularly suited to the energy and speed of American dancers, especially those he trained, his ballets are now performed by all the major classical ballet companies throughout the world.

Founded by Balanchine student Barbara Weisberger, Pennsylvania Ballet is a company steeped in Balanchine style and repertoire.

## **PETER HORNE, Set Designer**

*The Nutcracker* is Peter Horne's favorite classic of the ballet repertoire. Pennsylvania Ballet's world premiere production marked Mr. Horne's fifth design of this piece, always finding new ways to illustrate this wonderful story ballet. In 2005, Mr. Horne designed a *Nutcracker* for Washington Ballet following his productions for Atlanta Ballet, Ballet Met, and Les Grands Ballets. Other notable ballet designs include *Scheherazade*, *Casse Noisette*, and *Coppélia* for Montreal and *Skeleton Clock* for Houston Ballet. As the assistant to Maurice Sendak, Mr. Horne was part of the creation of *The Nutcracker* for Pacific Northwest Ballet, which later became a movie. After many years working in the opera world as a designer, production and technical director for Houston Grand Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, and the Glyndebourne Festival in England, Mr. Horne has now retired to the South Coast of England near Rye, where he will focus on painting, designing for the stage, and gardening.

## **JUDANNA LYNN, Costume Designer**

Judanna Lynn began her career as a ballet dancer and spent nine years with the San Francisco Opera Ballet before moving to New York City to design costumes at the encouragement of Ming Cho Lee. Ms. Lynn has designed costumes for most major dance companies and choreographers in the United States, including several Pennsylvania Ballet productions for works by Benjamin Harkavy, Peter Martins, Jeffrey Gribler, Matthew Neenan, and Kirk Peterson. She created over 190 costumes for the Company's world premiere production of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker* in 2007.

Ms. Lynn has created costumes for many non-dance productions including the new musical *Hats*, which opened at the Denver Civic Theatre in October 2006, and enjoyed a run at The Royal George Theater in Chicago in July 2007. She also created the costumes for the *Festival of the Lion King* show at Hong Kong Disneyland.

Ms. Lynn has served as the Resident Designer at The Juilliard School and is a painter whose work has been shown at the Rizzoli and Miniatura Galleries in New York City and at the Philadelphia Museum of Fine Art.

## PETER TCHAIKOVSKY, Composer

Source: The National Arts Centre's [www.ArtsAlive.ca](http://www.ArtsAlive.ca)



during Tchaikovsky's lifetime.

Peter Ilych Tchaikovsky was born in Russia in 1840. He loved and created great music all his life. Music was a big part of Peter Tchaikovsky's schoolwork. His class often went to plays and operas together. He sang in the school choir and took piano lessons. Tchaikovsky was born in Russia where music was not considered a proper profession. It was only encouraged as a pastime for young ladies from wealthy families. The only Russian music that was really heard were the folk songs of the peasants and the choral singing in the church services. At first there weren't many schools that even offered training for Russian musicians. That all changed

Peter Tchaikovsky became a full-time music student when he was 22 years old. He enrolled in the Russian Musical Society. It was like going to university. When he graduated, he moved to Moscow to become a professor at the Music Conservatory there.

Peter Tchaikovsky composed operas, ballets, orchestral music, fantasy overtures, chamber music, piano music and vocal music as well. Tchaikovsky is famous for using Russian folk themes in many of his works.

Here is a list of some of Tchaikovsky's compositions you may know or want to listen to:

*Romeo and Juliet*

*Swan Lake*

*The Maid of Orleans*

*Queen of Spades*

*Piano Concerto No. 1*

*The Nutcracker Suite*

*The 1812 Overture*

When Tchaikovsky was 51, he left Russia to do a very successful music tour in North America. He even came to see the Canadian side of Niagara Falls. In 1893, two years after that North American tour, Peter died. His funeral was held in St. Petersburg. Huge numbers of people attended Tchaikovsky's funeral. Everyone wanted to show their respect for a great musician. Peter Ilych Tchaikovsky was buried in a little Russian village that he loved.

# THE NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE ORCHESTRA

Consistent praise has followed this vibrant orchestra throughout its history of touring both nationally and internationally, recording, and commissioning Canadian works. Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra, now under the direction of renowned conductor/ violinist/ violist Pinchas Zukerman, continues to draw accolades both abroad and at its home in Ottawa where it gives over 100 performances a year.

The NAC Orchestra was founded in 1969 as the resident orchestra of the newly opened National Arts Centre, with Jean-Marie Beaudet as Music Director and Mario Bernardi as founding conductor and (from 1971) Music Director until 1982. He was succeeded by Franco Mannino (1982 to 1987), Gabriel Chmura (1987 to 1990), and Trevor Pinnock (1991-1997). In April 1998, Pinchas Zukerman was named Music Director of the NAC Orchestra.

In addition to a full series of subscription concerts at the National Arts Centre each season, tours are undertaken to regions throughout Canada and around the world. Since the arrival of Pinchas Zukerman, education has been an extremely important component of these tours. Teacher Resource Kits have been developed for distribution to elementary schools in the regions toured and across Canada, and the public has been able to follow each tour through fully interactive websites which are now archived on the NAC's Performing Arts Education Website at [www.ArtsAlive.ca](http://www.ArtsAlive.ca).

The NAC Orchestra offers a number of programs dedicated to fostering a knowledge and appreciation of music among young people. In addition to a highly popular subscription series of *TD Canada Trust Family Adventures with the NAC Orchestra*, the Orchestra presents a variety of opportunities for schools to learn about classical music: *Student Matinees*, and *Open Rehearsals* to allow students to hear the Orchestra perform in its home at the NAC. In addition, *Musicians in the Schools* programs including ensemble performances and instrument sectionals take the music to the students in their schools.

# ABOUT BALLET

**ballet** – (noun) an artistic dance that usually tells a story or expresses a mood, performed by either a soloist or a group of dancers in a theatre, concert hall, etc.

**balletic** – (adjective) of or having to do with the ballet

**balletomane** – (noun) a person who is enthusiastic about ballet

The word ballet refers to a specific dance technique that has evolved over the last 350 years. Its roots lie in the royal courts of the 16th century. Ballet involves a combination of movement, music and design where emotions and stories are translated through precise body movement and facial expressions.

## **A Short History of Ballet**

People have always danced. The first dances were part of religious and community ceremonies, but by the time of the Ancient Greeks and Romans, dancing had also become a form of entertainment. In the Middle Ages, the church in Europe claimed that dancing was sinful, but when the Renaissance arrived in the 1400s, dancing had become popular once again. It is in the European courts of the 16th and 17th centuries that the true origins of ballet lie.

### **The First Ballet**

In 16th century France and Italy, royalty competed to have the most splendid court. Monarchs would search for and employ the best poets, musicians, and artists. At this time, dancing became increasingly theatrical. This form of entertainment, also called the *ballet de court* (court ballet), featured elaborate scenery and lavish costumes, plus a series of processions, poetic speeches, music and dancing. The first known ballet, *Le Ballet Comique* was performed in 1581 at the wedding of the Queen of France's sister.

### **The Sun King**

In the 17th century, the popularity and development of ballet can be attributed to King Louis XIV of France. He took dancing very seriously and trained daily with his dance master, Beauchamp. One of his famous roles was the Rising Sun and this led him to become known as the "Sun King." King Louis also set up the Academie Royale de Danse (Royal Academy of Dance) in 1661, where for the first time steps were structurally codified and recorded by Beauchamp. These are the same steps that have been handed down through centuries, and which now form the basis of today's classical ballet style.

### **The First Professional Dancers**

At first, ballets were performed at the Royal Court, but in 1669 King Louis opened the first opera house in Paris. Ballet was first viewed publicly in the theatre as part of the opera. The

first opera featuring ballet, entitled *Pomone*, included dances created by Beauchamp. Women participated in ballets at court, but were not seen in the theatre until 1681. Soon, as the number of performances increased, courtiers who danced for a hobby gave way to professional dancers who trained longer and harder. The physical movement of the first professional dancers was severely hindered by their lavish and weighty costumes and headpieces. They also wore dancing shoes with tiny heels and pointed toes, which made it rather difficult to dance.

### **Revealing Feet and Ankles**

Early in the 18th century, the ballerina Marie Camargo shocked the audiences by shortening her skirts – to just above the ankle. She did this to be freer in her movements and to allow the audience to see her intricate footwork and complex jumps, which often rivalled those of the men. At this time, female dancers also began to dominate the stage over their male counterparts. Ballet companies were now being set up all over France to train dancers for the opera. The first official ballet company (a collection of dancers who train professionally) was based at the Paris Opera and opened in 1713.

Photo: Bruce Monk



### **The Pointe Shoe**

By 1830, ballet as a theatrical art truly came into its own. Influenced by the Romantic Movement, which was sweeping the world of art, music, literature and philosophy, ballet took on a whole new look. The ballerina reigned supreme. Female dancers now wore calf-length, white bell-shaped tulle skirts. To enhance the image of the ballerina as light and elusive, the pointe shoe was introduced, enabling women to dance on the tips of their toes.

### **Classical Ballet**

Although the term “classical” is often used to refer to traditional ballet, this term really describes a group of story ballets first seen in Russia at the end of the 19th century. At this time, the centre of ballet moved from France to Russia. In Russia, the French choreographer Marius Petipa collaborated with the Russian composer Pyotr Tchaikovsky to create the lavish story ballet spectacles such as *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*. Today, these ballets still form the basis of the classical ballet repertoire of companies all over the world.

### **One Act Ballets**

In 1909, the Russian impresario Serge Diaghilev brought together a group of dancers, choreographers, composers, artists and designers for his company, the Ballets Russes. This company took Paris by storm, introducing short, one act ballets such as

*Schéhérazade, Les Sylphides, The Rite of Spring, Firebird and Petrouchka.* Some of the world's greatest dancers, including Anna Pavlova (1881– 1931), Vasslav Nijinsky (1889–1950) and choreographers Mikhail Fokine (1880–1942) and George Balanchine (1904–1983) were part of Diaghilev's company.

### **Establishing Dance in North America**

Almost all contemporary ballet companies and dancers are influenced by Diaghilev's Ballet Russes. The first visit by this company to North America in 1916–1917 stimulated great interest in ballet. Dancers from the Ballets Russes were instrumental in furthering this new interest in ballet. For example, dancer George Balanchine went to the United States and founded the New York City Ballet (originally called the American Ballet). He became renowned for perfecting the abstract ballet and for establishing neo-classicism through his choreographic masterpieces such as *Serenade, Agon* and *Concerto Barocco*. Ninette de Valois and Marie Rambert also went on to found, respectively, England's Royal Ballet and the Rambert Dance Company.

## **BALLET TRAINING**

The career of a dancer is relatively short and it is not unusual to spend more years training than dancing professionally. The movements demanded of the human body in ballet are of a very specific nature, requiring great precision and care. As a result, the physique must be prepared for this future at a young age. A student aspiring to be a classical ballet dancer must undergo much preliminary work in order to become accustomed to the demands that will be imposed upon the body when dancing the many hours required of a professional dancer. The professional training period usually consists of at least eight or nine years of intensive, precise work. Ideally, girls and boys should begin their professional training at the age of nine. Training is a very progressive process. The young professional student begins with daily classes, practicing the basic ballet positions and movements, learning body placement, correct carriage, balance and artistry. As the student progresses, time spent in classes each week increases, as does the difficulty and extensiveness of the skills taught. As well as the daily class in classical technique, students are required to receive instruction in variation (solo) work, pointe (dancing on the toes), pas de deux (a dance for two), character (ethnic), jazz and modern dance.

Prior to the introduction of pointe work, a number of criteria must be considered. These include the amount of previous training, a student's strength and ability, as well as age as it relates to the bone development in the dancer's feet. Pas de deux and repertoire (the collection of different ballets that a dance company performs) are introduced only when the student has adequate strength, ability and training. Students who graduate to a professional ballet company usually begin dancing as a member of the corps de ballet (ensemble). After

a few years, corps de ballet members who demonstrate growth in artistry, technical ability, musicality and ability to communicate with the audience may be promoted to the rank of soloist or second soloist. Finally, the highest achievement in the company, the position of principal dancer or ballerina, is attainable by only a few gifted dancers.

## BASIC BALLET POSITIONS

*Source: Connexions® <http://cnx.org> by Alex Volschenk*

Every new step you will learn will make use of the basic positions. All dancers, even the greatest, use exactly these positions every day.  
Positions of the Feet

**FIRST POSITION:** turn your feet out to the side with your heels touching – turn your whole leg out at the hip, not just the foot.

**SECOND POSITION:** turn your toes out on the same line as first position – stand with feet apart – the space between your heels should be about the length of one of your feet – place the whole of both feet on the floor – don't roll forwards and put too much weight on your big toes.

**THIRD POSITION:** cross one foot halfway in front of the other – your weight should be balanced evenly on both feet.

**FOURTH POSITION:** place one foot exactly in front of the other with some space between them. **FIFTH POSITION:** your feet should be turned out, fully crossed and touching each other firmly.



# BALLET TERMS

<p><b>Adage:</b> In ballet, a slow section of a pas de deux or an exercise in a dance class focusing on slow controlled movements that highlight balance and extension, and require strength and poise.</p>
<p><b>Adagio:</b> The part of a dance class where exercises for balance and sustained movement are performed; a musical composition performed at a slow tempo.</p>
<p><b>Alignment:</b> Creating harmony with the body so that unbroken lines are formed with the arms and legs without displacement of the torso.</p>
<p><b>Arabesque:</b> In ballet, a pose held on one leg with the other leg and both arms extended away and up from the centre of the body; also, positioning of the arms in relation to the legs. As with positions of the feet, each position is distinguished by a number, such as first, second and third arabesque.</p>
<p><b>Barre:</b> A horizontal pole, either attached to the wall or freestanding, to support dancers while stretching, warming up or doing exercises "at the barre". Barre exercises like pliés, battements and ronds de jambe form the first part of a traditional ballet class and are the basis for all technique.</p>
<p><b>Battement:</b> In ballet, the "beating" of either a stretched or flexed leg. The types are : a battement tendu, a battement dégagé, a battement fondu, a petit battement et a grand battement.</p>
<p><b>Corps de ballet:</b> In ballet, performers who do not have lead roles and perform during group scenes or action. In narrative ballets, members of the corps de ballet will perform roles such as peasants, wedding guests and swans.</p>
<p><b>Enchaînement:</b> A "chain" or linked sequence of movements.</p>
<p><b>Turnout:</b> A way of standing and using the legs that is initiated in the pelvis, where both sides of the body rotate outwards from the hips, away from the spine.</p>
<p><b>Pas de deux:</b> In ballet, a sequence or dance for two dancers.</p>
<p><b>Pirouette:</b> In ballet, a spin or turn of the body performed on one leg. Pirouettes may be performed <b>en dehors</b> (turning away from the supporting leg) or <b>en dedans</b> (turning toward the supporting leg).</p>
<p><b>Plié:</b> In ballet, a bending of the knees. This can be done either in <b>demi-plié</b> ("half-plié"), where the heels remain on the floor, or in <b>grand plié</b> (large or full plié), where, except in second position of the feet, the heels leave the floor at the deepest point of the bend.</p>
<p><b>Port de bras:</b> In ballet, arm movements around the body.</p>
<p><b>Rond de jambe:</b> In ballet, a movement that goes "round the leg". A rond de jambe may be performed in two ways:  <b>À terre</b> ("on the ground"), where the pointed toe of a stretched working leg traces a circular pattern <b>en dehors</b> (from the front of the body to the back), or <b>en dedans</b> (from back to front), passing each time through first position of the feet.  <b>En l'air</b> ("in the air"), either <b>petit</b>, with the working leg raised just a few centimeters from the ground, or <b>grand</b>, where it is raised to 90°. A rond de jambe en l'air may also be performed as an isolated movement with the working leg raised <b>à la seconde</b> (to the side) and the knee bending and straightening as the toe describes quick circular patterns in the air without moving the thigh.</p>

# WATCHING AND APPRECIATING DANCE

## CURRICULUM CONNECTION – Reflecting, Responding and Analysing

Attending Dance Matinees at the NAC, and using questions and activities here and in Student Activity Section, are intended to develop students' competency in applying *The Critical Analysis Process* for all grades, in The Arts (Ontario) Curriculum Grades 1-12.

A ballet is a choreographic composition interpreted by the dancers. Each dancer tells a story in movement and pantomime. There are no words spoken in a ballet. Watch the show and look for the choreography, the movement, gestures and facial expressions of each dancer and how they work in relationship to each other. In dance there are basic elements that are always present in this live art form, where the body is the dancer's instrument of expression. Try to recognize the elements of dance such as the placement of the body, whether the body is moving through space or on the spot, type and quality of the movement, the timing and musicality, how space is used, the energy and the relationship between the dancers. Each person watching may have different interpretations about what they saw and how they felt. All are valid.

Relax, breathe deeply and open yourself to the spirit of dance.

### **During the show, watch for:**

- ✓ The dancer's movements, such as the dance technique used of jumps, pirouettes, and ballet positions of the feet, as well as the emotions and facial expressions used.
- ✓ How the dancers use the space on stage.
- ✓ Your real impressions of the piece during the show, for example: excitement, curiosity, frustration, surprise, sadness, humour etc.
- ✓ The combination of sequences or *enchaînements* and shapes on stage.
- ✓ The relationship between the choreography, the music, the props, costumes and set.

# *STUDENT ACTIVITY SECTION*



# THE NUTCRACKER

## WORD SEARCH

AUDIENCE  
BALLERINA  
CHARACTER  
CHOREOGRAPHER  
CLASSICAL  
COMPOSER  
CONDUCTOR  
COSTUME  
CROWN  
DANCE  
NUTCRACKER

KINGDOM  
ORCHESTRA  
PERFORMANCE  
POINTE  
PRESENTS  
REHEARSAL  
RUSSIA  
SHOE  
RAT KING  
TALE  
TUTU

V X H R C L A S S I C A L T D  
D A N C E M O D G N I K Z A F  
X A L A S R A E H E R U I L I  
X N N S H O E U C R O W N E Z  
S T N E S E R P O I N T E C B  
T Z J R E A R T S E H C R O N  
X E C N E I D U A I P X J S U  
I O C D F A I S S U R U O T T  
E C N A M R O F R E P P M U C  
Z D C H A R A C T E R G Q M R  
D L B A L L E R I N A Y R E A  
G C O M P O S E R R T H G I C  
U T U T H J V G N I K T A R K  
D R O T C U D N O C H L U D E  
R E H P A R G O E R O H C P R

# ACTIVITY WORK SHEET


**Name:**

**Age:**

**Grade:**

**What was your favorite part of *The Nutcracker* ballet?**

**Draw a picture of it here:**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to draw their favorite part of the ballet.

**Describe your favorite part here:**

**Did you enjoy watching the ballet? Why or Why not?**

**Was this the first ballet performance you've seen? YES / NO**

**Would you like to see more ballet? YES / NO**

# ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS FOR: YOUNGER STUDENTS

Movement is an integral part of the ballet experience. Below are a few more exercises for younger students to participate in to get them engaged in the theatre-going process.

1. Dancing is the communication of dialogue or emotion through movement rather than words. Choose a section of a story that you are reading in class and communicate it through movement or expressions rather than words. Ask the students to laugh if the character finds something funny; to frown if the character becomes sad, or to show fearful faces if the character is scared.
2. The corps de ballet consists of dancers who dance together in one group on stage. They must work together to create the beautiful patterns that we see on stage. Students can also work together to create a simple dance. Here would be an example:
  - a. Holding hands in one big circle, everyone walks 8 steps to the right and stops.
  - b. Walk 4 steps into the middle of the circle. Then, walk four steps out of the circle.
  - c. Everybody lets go of each other's hands. Bend to touch the ground and then reach up high into the sky.
  - d. Hold hands once again and repeat to the left
  - e. Add on one movement sequence that you or the students create, and repeat.
3. In the Nutcracker there are many different characters and creatures represented. Along with costumes, the quality of the movement and the choreography used expresses the different types of animals or characters. Movement quality defines a specific use of weight, tension and flow. Through changing movement quality students can express themselves in many different ways. Begin by discussing and imitating how the soldiers or rats moved in the show:
  - The Soldiers: heavy movement, strong, precise and big arm gestures. Experiment and explore imitating how the soldiers moved. Create a movement sequence of walks, jumps, travelling through space and on the spot, moving like a soldier.
  - The rats: quick and small movements, bold jumps and arms darting out from the body, travelling in zigzags, jerky, through the space. Creative a movement sequence of runs, jumps, turns and jumps using all the space you have.
4. Then explore your favorite character in the show and get inspired by his/her movements.
  - 1- The Nutcracker – describe the movement qualities of this character, then explore.
  - 2- Marie – describe the movement qualities of this character, then explore.

5. Have the students choose an animal of their choice; explore how that animal moves and describe, in words, the movement qualities the animal possess when it moves. Create a movement sequence that can be memorized and repeated and perform for each other. Try to match similar and contrasting movement qualities of the animals and perform them in small groups.
6. The Nutcracker is a story set during Christmas. Use the show as a way of discussing how students and their family celebrate special holidays from religions and cultures of the world.
7. Have the children make a 'ticket' for *The Nutcracker*. What is listed on a ticket to a performance (Name of the show, Time, Date, etc.)? How much does the ticket cost? Role-play with selling tickets (sell tickets to different shows at different costs), collecting tickets, and entering the performance.

## POST-SHOW QUIZ

1. What is the name of the principal character in this ballet?
2. When was the *Nutcracker* first performed?
3. What holiday is being celebrated?
4. Who gives Marie the nutcracker?
5. Who composed the music for *Nutcracker*?
6. Which ballet company performs this production?
7. Who reigns over the kingdom of the sweets?
8. After killing the Mouse King what does the Nutcracker become?
9. How many regions/countries dances are performed?
10. What country is this Nutcracker set in?

# ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Marie
2. December 1892
3. Christmas
4. Herr Drosselmeier
5. Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
6. Pennsylvania Ballet
7. The Sugar Plum Fairy
8. A handsome human prince
9. 4 – Spain, Arabia, China, Russia
10. Germany

# ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS FOR: OLDER STUDENTS

1. Write a creative short story about your visit to The National Arts Centre to see this Ballet. Use the following sentence as a starting point:

*It all began when I sat down in my seat at The National Arts Centre to see Pennsylvania Ballet perform...*

2. This Nutcracker, by the Pennsylvania Ballet, is a set-in-Germany production. Discuss with your students how the production would look if it was made as a set-in-Canada production. Use this as a basis for discussion around national identity. What does it mean to be a Canadian? How is this identity constructed? Have your students imagine what the production would be like if it was set in a different country. What would it look like? Have them design their own modern Nutcracker set in a location and time period of their choice.
3. Have students create their own modern *Nutcracker* story. What would the different characters do or say in modern times?
4. Why do you think this ballet has become such a classic that it still resonates with audiences today? Compare and contrast classic ballets with classic novels or pieces of music. Why did they stand the test of time?
5. What similarities and differences does ballet have with other dance forms, such as modern, break dance, jazz dance, folk dance, Latin dance?
6. Compare the qualities of professional dancers with professional athletes. What are their similarities and differences?

# MORE QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Summarize the story of the ballet.
- Talk about your first impressions of the ballet.
- What part of the show was your favourite?
- How were the various parts of the performance different? How were they the same?
- Describe the movements and choreography you saw; describe the music; describe the set and costumes.
- Discuss the relationship between choreography and dance, music, lighting, costume, set and props.
- How did the dancers tell the story without any words? How did their movements and dancing express a story?
- Did the dancers express different emotions during the ballet? What emotions did you see?
- What emotions did you feel when watching the ballet?
- Dancers play different characters in the ballet. How did the dancer's movements let you know which character they were playing?
- Which character was your favourite, why? Describe the movement of the dancer in words and by trying to move like that character. What type of movement was used (Low, high, sustained, light, heavy, fast slow, jump, pirouette, rond de jambe, plié, battement, etc.) Refer to section later in the guide on ballet technique and ask your students to look for and identify the technique in the show.
- How did the costume, wigs, make-up, help to portray a character?
- How did the music affect or influence the dance?

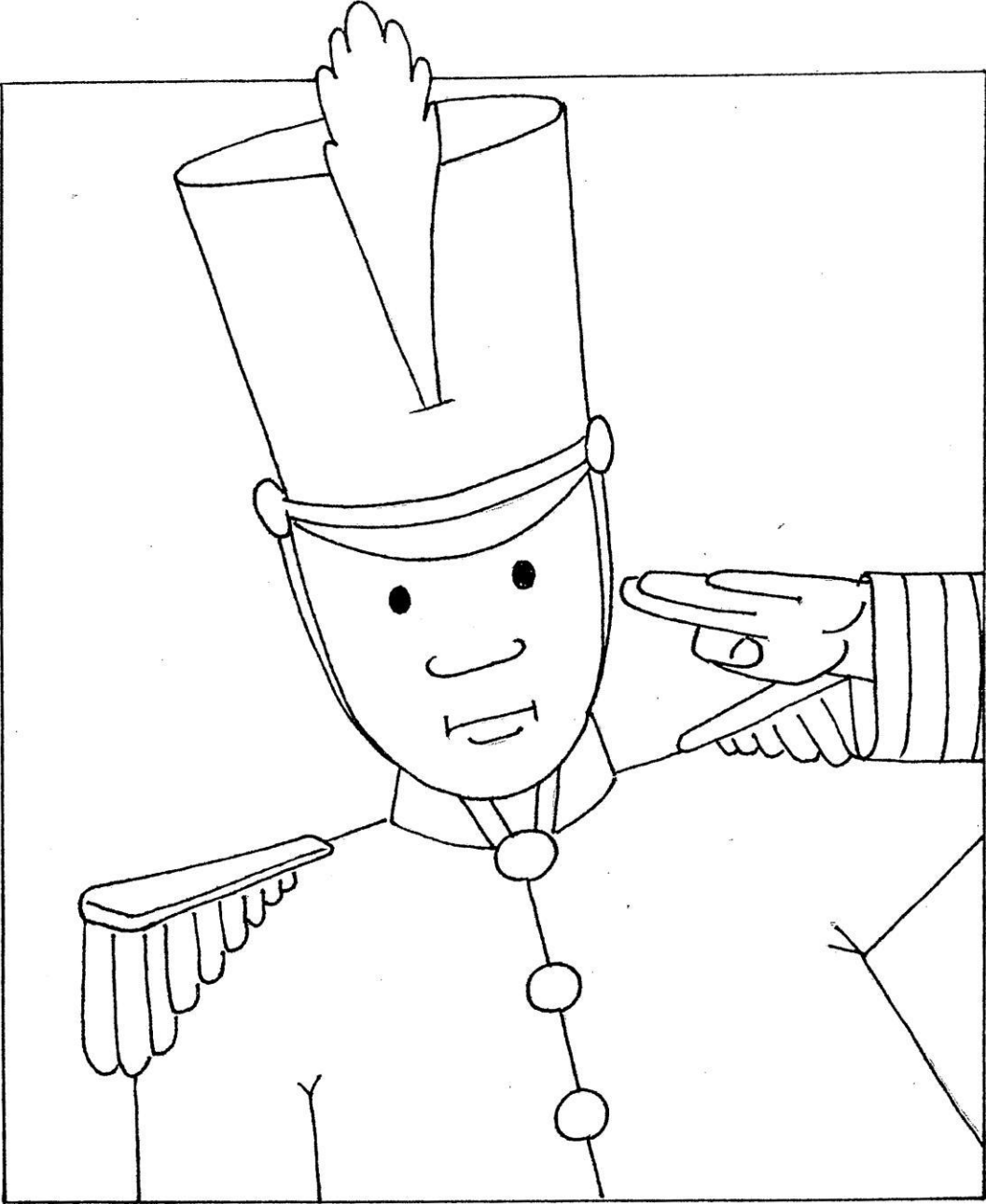
*We'd love to hear from you!*

*Please send completed assignments to:*

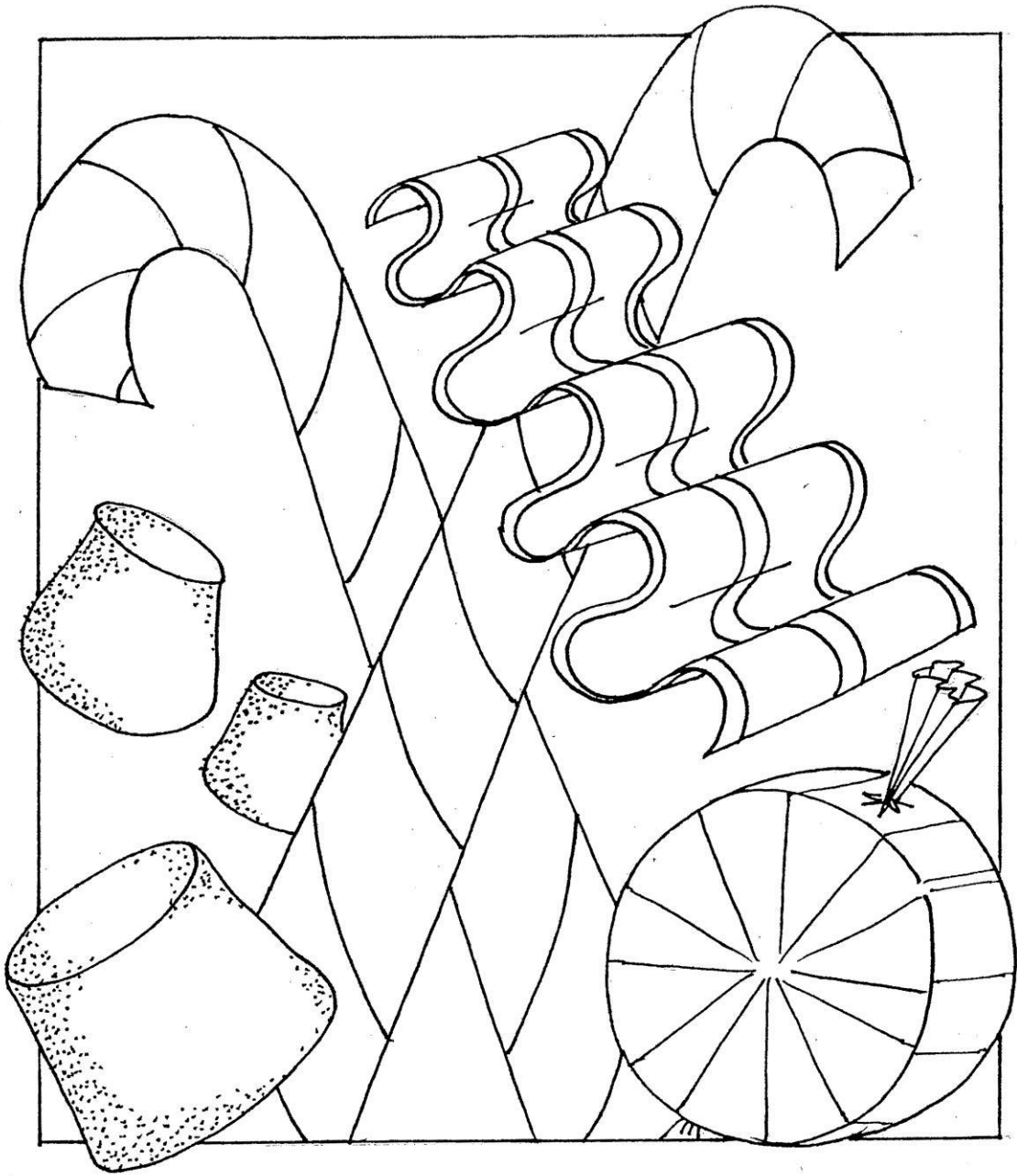
**The National Arts Centre, Dance Department**

**P.O. Box 1534, Station B, Ottawa ON K1P 5W1 Fax: 613-943-1401 [dance@nac-cna.ca](mailto:dance@nac-cna.ca)**

NUTCRACKER COLOURING BOOK









# Bibliography of Resources Available at the Ottawa Public Library

Compiled by Rebekah McCallum,  
Children's Services, Ottawa Public Library



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The Nutcracker	Koppe, Susanne	KOPPE
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The Barefoot Book of Ballet Stories	Yolen, Jane	792.84 Y54

## History, Facts, and Activities

Corbett, Pie	<i>Dancing and Singing Games</i>	J 796.13 Dan
Lundsten, Apryl	<i>Dance!</i>	J 792.8 L962
Malam, John	<i>Song and Dance</i>	J 780.9 Mal
Maze, Stephanie	<i>I Want to Be a Dancer</i>	J 792.802 Maze
Murphy, Liz	<i>A Dictionary of Dance</i>	J 792.803 M978
Wilson, Sarah	<i>The Day We Danced in Underpants</i>	J PIC Wilso

## Dance Around the World

Ancona, George	<i>Capoeira</i>	J 793.31981 A542
Collins, Pat Lowery	<i>I am a Dancer</i>	J PIC Colli
Connolly, Liz	<i>Let's Dance</i>	J ER 792.8 C752
Grau, Andrée	<i>Dance</i>	J 792.8 G774 2000
Hudak, Heather C.	<i>Cultures of Canada: Dance</i>	J ESL 792.8 Dance
Jonas, Ann	<i>Color Dance</i>	J PIC Jonas
McMahon, Patricia	<i>Dancing Wheels</i>	J 792.8087 M167
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Morris, Neil	<i>Music and Dance</i>	J 793.31 Mor
Raczek, Linda Theresa	<i>Rainy's Powwow</i>	J F Rac
Spalding, Andrea	<i>Secret of the Dance</i>	J FIC Spald
Thomas, Mark	<i>African Dancing</i>	J 793.3196 T459

## Ballet

Burgess, Melvin	<i>Billy Elliot</i>	J PB FIC Burge
Bray-Moffat, Naia	<i>Ballet School</i>	J 792.8 B827
Ellison, Nancy	<i>Becoming a Ballerina</i>	J 792.8 E47
Gladstone, Valerie	<i>A Young Dancer</i>	J 792.80973 G543
Holabird, Katherine	<i>Angelina Ballerina</i>	J PIC Holab
Isadora, Rachel	<i>On Your Toes: A Ballet ABC</i>	J 792.8 I74
Lee, Laura	<i>A Child's Introduction to Ballet</i>	J 792.8 L478
Littlesugar, Amy	<i>Marie in Fourth Position</i>	J PIC L
Mayhew, James	<i>Ella Bella Ballerina and the Sleeping Beauty</i>	J PIC Mayhe
McMullan, Kate	<i>Noel the First</i>	J PIC M
Streatfeild, Noel	<i>Ballet Shoes</i>	J PB FIC Strea
Tatchell, Judy	<i>World of Ballet</i>	J 792.8 Tat
Young, Amy	<i>Belinda the Ballerina</i>	J PIC Young

# INTERNET RESOURCES

- Pennsylvania Ballet: [www.paballet.org](http://www.paballet.org)
- National Arts Centre: [www.nac-cna.ca](http://www.nac-cna.ca)

## DANCE AND ARTS EDUCATION WEBSITES

- ArtsAlive, the NAC's performing arts education site [www.artsalive.ca](http://www.artsalive.ca)
- Council of Drama and Dance in Education (Ontario) [www.code.on.ca](http://www.code.on.ca)
- Kennedy Centre (USA) [www.artsedge.kennedy-centre.org](http://www.artsedge.kennedy-centre.org)
- Canadian Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance [www.cahperd.ca](http://www.cahperd.ca)

## CANADIAN BALLET COMPANIES

- The National Ballet of Canada [www.national.ballet.ca](http://www.national.ballet.ca)
- Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet [www.rwb.org](http://www.rwb.org)
- Les Grands Ballet Canadiens de Montréal [www.grandsballet.scom](http://www.grandsballet.scom)
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- Ballet British Columbia (Ballet BC) [www.balletbc.com](http://www.balletbc.com)
- Alberta Ballet [www.albertaballet.com](http://www.albertaballet.com)

## BALLET RESOURCES

- ABT - American Ballet Theatre Library: Ballet Dictionary and Repertory Archive, USA <http://www.abt.org/education/library.asp>
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- American Ballet Theatre's Ballet Dictionary [www.abt.org/education/dictionary/index.html](http://www.abt.org/education/dictionary/index.html)
- Ballet.co, UK <http://www.ballet.co.uk/>

- CBC.ca: "Into a fantasy world: A history of ballet"  
A brief history of the deceptively simple but evocative dance form.  
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/ballet/>
- [Ladanse.net](http://www.ladanse.net)  
History of dance from prehistory to 18th century ballet (in French), France and Belgium  
<http://www.ladanse.net/histoire/accueil.html>
- Chorème [www.choreme.ca](http://www.choreme.ca)

#### ONLINE DANCE PUBLICATIONS

- Dance Collection Danse [www.dcd.ca](http://www.dcd.ca)
- The Dance Current [www.thedancecurrent.com](http://www.thedancecurrent.com)
- Dance International Magazine [www.danceinternational.org](http://www.danceinternational.org)
- Dance Magazine [www.dancemagazine.com](http://www.dancemagazine.com)

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