

Nutcracker Spiers + Holiday Magic



Photo courtesy of Herbert Migdoll

The magic of the Nutcracker comes alive at The Joffrey Ballet.

By Mira Temkin

The music, the story and the costumed pageantry of The Nutcracker are holiday magic at its best. From “Waltz of the Flowers” to “Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy,” Tchaikovsky’s masterpiece is always a delight to experience and one to share with your family. The first American Nutcracker was performed in 1944 by the San Francisco Ballet. This season, there are more ways than ever to enjoy a performance ... on stage, with puppets, even on horseback.

Introduce your children to the world of ballet

“Many people tell me their first introduction to ballet was at a holiday performance of the Nutcracker,” said Ashley C. Wheater, artistic director of The Joffrey Ballet, Chicago. “Tchaikovsky’s

beautiful music is one of most recognized classical scores ever written. The Joffrey’s production features top-quality live music, played by the Chicago Philharmonic. The story is family-friendly, yet the production is so carefully choreographed and detailed that audiences find something fresh and exciting year after year.”

The Joffrey Nutcracker
Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University
50 East Congress Parkway, Chicago
December 7 through December 27

To celebrate its 25th anniversary production of Nutcracker, the Joffrey Ballet will hold a special Nutcracker Family Dinner December 15. Bring your family for a performance at 2 or 7 p.m. and magical dinner at 4 p.m. For more information, call (312) 386-8921 or visit joffrey.org/nutcracker.

The Great Russian Nutcracker
Akoo Theatre (formerly The Rosemont Theatre)
December 2, 3 p.m.

Come celebrate the 20th anniversary production of the Moscow Ballet’s Great Russian Nutcracker. Your kids will be mesmerized by a Christmas tree that grows seven feet tall, towering silk puppets and a colorful Troika-styled sleigh, bringing the grandeur of Russian culture to the stage. For tickets, call (800) 745-3000, or visit www.ticketmaster.com.

DanceWest Ballet Presents:
The Nutcracker
Pfeiffer Hall North Central College
310 E. Benton Ave, Naperville
December 14 at 7 p.m.
December 15 at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.
December 16 at 1 p.m.

The 21st annual production of

The Nutcracker has become a holiday tradition in Du Page County. Performances feature guest artists from major international and national ballet companies, members of DanceWest Ballet Company and more than 120 children from Chicago’s western suburbs. More information and tickets are available at (630) 637-7469 or at www.dancewestballet.com.

Salt Creek Ballet’s The Nutcracker

Center for Performing Arts - Governors State University
1 University Parkway, University Park
December 8, 1 and 5 p.m.
(708) 235-2222
www.centertickets.net

This annual production features a cast of 100 dancers, including local children and young adults ages 8 to 17 from the school of the

Photo courtesy of Beverly Horne

The dancers and the sets for the Salt Creek Ballet's performance of The Nutcracker are mesmerizing.



Photo courtesy of Scott Lewis

The Dance of the Mirlitons is performed with elegance and style.



Salt Creek Ballet, and accompanied by the Chicago Youth Symphony. Between shows, kids can get their picture taken with Santa Claus, sing along with holiday carolers and enjoy holiday treats! Tickets range from \$15 to \$50.

North Shore Center for the Performing Arts

9501 Skokie Blvd, Skokie
Saturday, December 15, 1 and 5 p.m.

Sunday, December 16, 2 p.m.
(847) 673-6300

www.northshorecenter.org

This annual production features a cast of 100 dancers, including local children and young adults ages 8 to 17 from the school of the Salt Creek Ballet, and accompanied by the Chicago Youth Symphony.

The Nutcracker by the Barrington Youth Dance Ensemble

Barrington High School Auditorium
616 West Main St., Barrington
December 1 through December 2, 2 p.m.

The Barrington Youth Dance Ensemble features more than 70 local area dancers and international guest artists. Enjoy "Tea with Clara" before the performances at 12:30 p.m. For tickets, call (847) 382-6333 or e-mail info@byde.org.

The Nutcracker on Horseback Noble Horse Theatre

1410 Orleans, Chicago
Through January 1, 2013
Take the kids to see this holiday classic, the only Nutcracker

Joffrey Ballet dancers Christine Rocas and Temur Suluashvili perform during last year's Nutcracker.



Photo courtesy of Herbert Migdoll

on horseback. Amazing white stallions and trick riders from around the world tell the story. You can even take the kids for a ride in a horse and carriage after the show. More information is at (312) 266-7878 or www.noblehorsechicago.com/nutcracker.

Indiana Ballet Theatre

Star Plaza Theater
Merrillville, Indiana
December 12 & 13, 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Indiana Ballet Theatre will celebrate its 17th year performing The Nutcracker at the Star Plaza with a delightful Children's Choir. Be swept away by the music, dance and elaborate costumes. For tickets, call (219) 755-4444 or visit www.ibtnw.org.

The Nutcracker – A Fantastical Expansion of a Holiday Classic

The House Theatre of Chicago
Chopin Theatre
1543 W Division St., Chicago
Through December 30

Using imaginative puppetry, this innovative tale tells the story of Clara's journey to rescue Christmas with the help of a magical Nutcracker. For tickets, call (773) 769-3832 or visit www.thehousetheatre.com.

"Many children have grown up with Nutcracker and now bring their young children to continue the tradition," Wheeler added. "The Nutcracker reminds us of the importance of our dreams and the distance we can travel on the wings of imagination." •