

connecticutballet

41ST ANNIVERSARY SEASON



The Nutcracker

The Bushnell/Hartford
December 10 - 11

The Palace/Stamford
December 17 - 18

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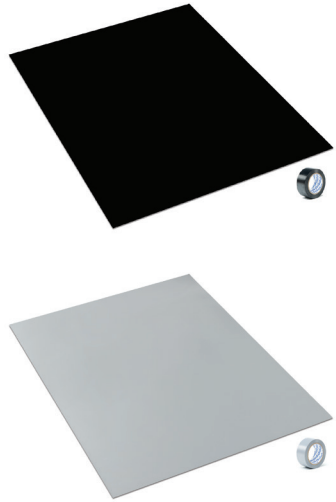
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Connecticut Ballet obtained its 501(c)3 charitable organization designation from the Internal Revenue Service in June 1981. All contributions are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

CONNECTICUT BALLET

Brett Raphael, *Artistic Director*

presents

The Nutcracker

Choreography and staging by Brett Raphael
(Connecticut Ballet premiere: December 1984)

Music by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Costumes by Elena Comendador & Christina Giannini

Scenery after Rouben Ter-Arutunian

Lighting design by John Salutz

* * * * *

ACT I

At the Party

Street Children	Charlotte Novoa, Nava Pei
Beggar Woman	Laurel Fuda
Frau Stahlbaum	Angelique Joseph
Herr Stahlbaum	Eric Hu
Herr Drosselmeyer	PATRICK PIRAS
Clara	ISABELA PINTO (12/10, 12/17) GABRIELLE HUGHES (12/11, 12/18)
Fritz	Briany Rivera (12/10, 12/17) Caroline Cheney (12/11, 12/18)
Maids	Liah Sandoval, Marguerite Triggiani
Governess	Ava Prentice
The Guests:	
Parents	Mary Ferrara, Margo Libre, Ricardo Lopez, Michael Manna, Aneriz Re, Jose Rojas, Ellie Telzer, Michael Young
Grandmother	Camille Rodriguez
Grandfather	Paulo Gutierrez
Party Scene Girls	Georgiana Flaherty, Caitlin Jossem, Eleanor Lubeley, Lauren MacLochlainn, Lillian McGowan, Florence Redpath
Party Scene Boys	Emily Brandt, Caroline Cheney/Briany Rivera, Isabella Erensen, Annabella Leung, Beste Ozcelik, Liana Visentin
Little Sisters	Angelique Agulay, Margaret Del Boccio, Alexa Hughes, Molly Monteleone
Harlequin & Columbine	Marcus Salazar & Carla Hernandez
Soldier Doll	Jafet Reynoso

Battle Scene

Mouse King	Joshua Kolberg
Big Mice	Paulo Gutierrez, Marcus Salazar
Nutcracker Prince	Jose Maria Rojas
Mice Regiment	12/10 & 12/11: Sierra Grasso, Abigail Katz-Glotzer, Taylor Mooney, Lauren Sheatsley, Anna Stone, Madison Striker 12/17 & 12/18: Caroline Cheney/Briany Rivera, Riley Anderson, Isabella Erensen, Annabella Leung, Beste Ozcelik, Florence Redpath
Meece	12/10 & 12/11: Abigail Brugger, Riley Feldman, Aliza Mirsky, Avery Rucker, Hannah Winiarski 12/17 & 12/18: Amalia Baptista, Sophia Davis, Keira Miller, Madeleine Nielsen, Maclaine Newman
Baby Mouse	Charles Marzik (12/10 & 12/11) Jenna Marino (12/17), Simon Bangser (12/18)
Cadets	Mirabel Aggarwal, Farrah Kostin, Lilian McNamara, Liana Sandhu, Lydia Schiff, Audrey Walsh
Cavalry	Dec. 10/11: Penelope Avery, Julianna Bendezu, Anna Garrison, Abigail Kristofak, Brooke Long, Keli Beth Staltaro, Alina Tringali Dec. 17/18: Amanda Curtin, Hannah Friedman, Nava Pei, Rifey Procaccini, Liah Sandoval, Harper Wagner, Sofia Yelyashkevich
Cannoneers	Dec. 10/11: Gabriela Perez, Tyler Perez Dec. 17/18: Lilian McNamara, Lydia Schiff
Soldiers	Kathryn Curtin, Beliz Kan, Emilia Manna, Lorelei McGowan, Iverleigh Tarateta, Lulu Wills
Bed Bug	Liana Visentin

The Enchanted Forest

Snow Queen	Lucy Nevin
Snow King	Jafet Reynoso
Snowflakes	Verica Canseco, Andrea Dusel-Foil, Nicole Fedorov, Anastasiia Fedorova, Dania Galicia, Carla Hernandez, Mairead Moore, Ava Prentice, Joelle Rane, Aneriz Re, Elizabeth Seibel, Anaka Weiss-Jones
Reindeer	12/10 - 1:00pm: Natalia Perez, Lucianna Scelza 12/10 - 5:00pm: Zinnia Reid, Ozias Reid 12/11: 1:00 & 5:00pm: Lilah DeNovellis, Hadley Mirando 12/17: 2:00 & 6:00pm: Indra Pethtel, tba 12/18: 1:00 & 5:00pm: Fiora Monk, Larkin Newman

ACT II
Kingdom of the Sweets

Ice Fairies	Fiona Burton, Laurel Fuda, Alyssa Strezoski
Angels	12/10 & 12/11: Zoey Allen, Emma Barstis, Abigail Brugger, Brianna DeNovellis, Riley Feldman, Avery Rucker, Eliza Scherer, Hannah Winiarski 12/17: Este Aggarwal, Siona Barua, Phillipa Del Boccio, Elle Johnson, Grace Lacerenza, Caroline McNamara, Caroline Walsh, Noa Wilson 12/18: Aanya Ameresh, Emma Cooperman, Giana James, Khloe Lin, Guilietta Monk, Elena Pei, Abby Rendell, Angela Tang
Heralds	12/10 & 12/11: Giana Cieri, Miranda Costa, Arielle Santilli, Hannah Shurn 12/17 & 12/18: Molly Carey, Lucia James, Jenna Marino, Sophie Micewicz
Bakers	12/10 & 12/11: Julianna Bendezu, Anna Garrison, Charles Marzik, Aliza Mirsky 12/17 & 12/18: Amalia Baptista, Maddie Neilsen, Maclaine Newman, Charlotte Novoa
Candy Carriers	12/10 & 12/11: Andre Clemens Rodriguez Lane, Tyler Perez 12/17 & 12/18: Farrah Kostin, Lilian McNamara
Crown Carriers	12/10 & 12/11: Stella Harrington, Ruby Naples 12/17 & 12/18: Karina Michalzyk, Harper Wagner
Spanish Dance	Dania Galicia & Marcus Salazar Ava Prentice & Joshua Kolberg
Arabian Dance	Anastasiia Fedorova & Jose Maria Rojas
Marzipan Dance	Carla Hernandez with:
Shepherdesses	Kathryn Curtin, Beliz Kan, Lorelei McGowan, Lulu Wills
Lambs	Angelique Agulay, Margaret Del Boccio, Lauren MacLochlainn, Molly Monteleone
Chinese Tea	Paulo Gutierrez with: Reagan Anderson, Nida Bozkurt, Jonna Galic, Caitlin Jossem, Sofie Miller, Beste Ozelik, Lydia Shiff, Marguerite Triggiani
Candy Canes	Jafet Reynoso with: Caroline Cheney, Gabrielle Hughes (12/10 & 12/17) Emilia Manna, Isabela Pinto (12/11 & 12/18), Florence Redpath, Ivereigh Tarateta
Mother Ginger and Her Polichinelles	Eric Hu with: Mirabel Aggarwal, Hannah Friedman, Alexa Hughes, Keira Miller, Penelope Monk, Nava Pei, Audrey Walsh, Buzzy Williamson Bambina: Sophia Davis

Waltz of the Flowers

Dew Drop Fairy
Flowers

Nicole Fedorov

Verica Canseco, Andrea Dusel-Foil Anastasiia Fedorova,
Dania Galicia, Carla Hernandez, Mairead Moore,
Ava Prentice, Joelle Rane, Aneriz Re, Caroline Rodrigues,
Elizabeth Seibel, Anaka Weiss-Jones

Sugar Plum Fairy

12/10: GILLIAN MURPHY*
12/11: UNITY PHELAN**
12/17: OKSANA MASLOVA***
12/18: CHRISTINE SHEVCHENKO*

Her Cavalier

12/10: BLAINE HOVEN*
12/11: ANDREW VEYETTE**
12/17: JACK THOMAS***
12/18: THOMAS FORSTER*

*Appears courtesy of American Ballet Theatre

**Appears courtesy of New York City Ballet

***Appears courtesy of Philadelphia Ballet

SYNOPSIS OF *THE NUTCRACKER*

It is Christmas Eve in old Vienna at the home of the Stahlbaums, Clara and her brother, Fritz eagerly await the start of the annual party where all their friends and parents gather for holiday festivities. As the guests settle in, the excitement mounts, until finally everyone has arrived and Clara’s father invites all the children to dance. As the lights on the family Christmas tree begin to sparkle, a mysterious guest arrives: Herr Drosselmeyer, Clara’s godfather, who brings toy dolls and tricks to dazzle the guests. The festivities continue until Herr Drosselmeyer presents Clara with his Christmastide gift, an enchanted nutcracker doll. Finally, it is time for the guests to collect their coats and return home. Clara leaves her beloved nutcracker doll under the Christmas tree as she is hastened to bed.

After the household is fast asleep, Clara creeps back to the parlor to curl up with the nutcracker just as the clock strikes midnight. Herr Drosselmeyer’s magic begins to unfold: menacing mice enter the house and circle Clara. Clara begins a frantic search for the missing gift, only to find that it has been transformed by Herr Drosselmeyer into a real-life Nutcracker Doll. He summons soldiers to fight the mice and the Mouse King, all the while protecting Clara. In the heat of battle, she strikes the Mouse King with her shoe, momentarily distracting him but saving the life of the Nutcracker Doll who reveals himself as a Prince! After the Mouse King’s defeat, the Prince whisks Clara through the Enchanted Forest and finally to his palace in the Kingdom of the Sweets.

Once there, Clara is greeted by the Sugar Plum Fairy. Candy carriers, crown carriers, heralds, and bakers welcome her arrival. Dancers from many lands entertain her. Finally, it is time for magical visit to come to a close. The Prince and Sugar Plum Fairy join all the dancers in sending her home. Curled up on her parlor couch, she wakes up with her beloved nutcracker, only to realize it was all a fantastic dream.



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Connecticut Ballet is a nationally-recognized professional dance company currently celebrating its 41st season! Founded in 1981 by Brett Raphael, Connecticut Ballet is headquartered in Stamford and Hartford and performs statewide, including annual seasons at The Bushnell in Hartford and Stamford Center for the Arts.

In addition to full-scale classical ballet productions, the *Center for Dance Education* offers a comprehensive educational program including school assemblies, and outreach classes at residential facilities, schools and community centers. Connecticut Ballet Center is the official school of Connecticut Ballet, offering recreational and pre-professional classes for children and adults in Stamford.

Visit connecticutballet.org for more information about **SEASON 41!**, the Center for Dance Education, and Connecticut Ballet Center, our affiliated school.

CONNECTICUT BALLET STAFF

Artistic Director/Producer	Brett Raphael
Backstage Coordinator	Kimberly Levesque
Production Stage Manager	Sarah Ford
Children's Cast Coordinator	Caitlin Duffy
Children's Rehearsal Assistant	Caitlynn Pia
Ballet Mistress	Christina Fagundes
Company Teachers	Antonio Carmena
	Christina Fagundes
	Carla Korbes,
	Irina Lebedeva
Lighting Designer	John Salutz
Lighting Assistant	Bentley Heydt
Wardrobe Coordinator	Theo Foster
Prop Supervisor	Felicia Kovacs
Make-up Coordinator	Ingrid Okola
Make-up Assistants	Emily Goldstein
	Paul Mafuz
Wig Master	Ron Wolek
Wig Mistress	Peggi de la Cruz
Boutique Coordinator	Holly Pia
Graphic Artist	Marla Laney
Company Videographer	Nick of Time Productions
Company Photography	Thomas Giroir
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connecticutballet



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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Thomas Forster (Cavalier) was born in London, England and began his ballet training at the age of eight with The Royal Ballet School Associate Programme. At 11, he commenced full-time dance training at the Elmhurst School of Dance and then joined the Upper School of The Royal Ballet School in 2002. Forster joined ABT Studio Company in May 2006, the main Company as an apprentice in January 2007, and the corps de ballet in December 2007. He was promoted to Soloist in 2015 and to Principal Dancer in 2020. His repertoire with the Company includes *La Bayadère*, *Cinderella*, *Don Quixote*, *Fancy Free*, *La Fille mal gardée*, *Firebird*, *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, and many one-act ballets. He created Pierrot in Alexei Ratmansky's *Harlequinade*, the Mouse King in Ratmansky's *The Nutcracker*, the English Prince in Ratmansky's *The Sleeping Beauty*, leading roles in *Garden Blue*, *Single Eye*, and *A Time There Was*, and featured roles in *Aftereffect* (2013), *Convivium*, *Dumbarton*, *Everything Doesn't Happen at Once*, and *From Here On Out*. This marks his first appearance with Connecticut Ballet.

Blaine Hoven (Cavalier) Born in Mobile, Alabama, Blaine Hoven began his training at Mobile Ballet under the direction of Winthrop Corey and Ann Duke. Hoven received American Ballet Theatre's National Training Scholarship from 1999 through 2002 and attended ABT's Summer Intensive for five summers. He joined ABT Studio Company in September 2003 and the main Company as a member of the corps de ballet in April 2004. His repertoire with the Company includes Benvolio and Paris in *Romeo and Juliet*, Bacchus in *The Seasons*, the Bluebird, the Russian Prince and a Fairy Knight in *The Sleeping Beauty*, the Bluebird and a Fairy Cavalier in Ratmansky's *The Sleeping Beauty*, Benno and the Neapolitan Dance in *Swan Lake*, and featured roles in *Airs*, *After You*, *Bach Partita*, *Baker's Dozen*, *Brief Fling*, *Clear*, *Deuce Coupe*, *In the Upper Room*, *One of Three*, *Overgrown Path*, *Private Light*, *Raymonda Divertissements* and *Sinfonietta*. Hoven was a recipient of the 2008 Princess Grace Award and the *Chris Hellman Dance Award*, a specially designated prize awarded to one recipient in the dance category each year. Hoven was appointed a Soloist in August 2016. He made his debut with Connecticut Ballet in 2016 dancing with Christine Shevchenko in *The Nutcracker*.

Oksana Maslova (Sugar Plum Fairy) Oksana Maslova's artistic development began early on with rhythmic gymnastics, which eventually led her to an intensive ballet program. Oksana then went on to the Kiev Choreographic College. After graduating from Kiev, Oksana became a student at the Institute of Culture and Arts, where she received her master's degree as a choreographer and ballet master. In 2004, she became a member of the Odessa National Opera House, where she rose to the rank of soloist and performed a variety of principal roles. In 2008, she joined Grand Rapids Ballet as a principal dancer, performing their entire classical repertoire. And, in June 2011, she joined Connecticut Ballet as a principal dancer where she created the role of Alice in Brett Raphael's *Alice in Wonderland*, and performed leading roles in *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Giselle*, and *Cinderella*. Oksana joined Philadelphia Ballet in 2014 and was promoted to principal dancer in 2016. Her repertoire includes all the major classical ballets, including *Don Quixote*, *La Bayadere*, *Swan Lake*, *Giselle*, and *The Nutcracker*. This is her debut as Sugar Plum Fairy with Connecticut Ballet.

Gillian Murphy (Sugar Plum Fairy) was raised in Florence, South Carolina, and was a member of Columbia City Ballet before attending high school at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Murphy joined American Ballet Theatre as a member of the corps de ballet in August 1996, was promoted to Soloist in 1999 and Principal Dancer in 2002. Her repertoire with the Company includes *La Bayadère*, Frederick Ashton's *Cinderella*, *Coppélia*, *Le Corsaire*, Kitri in *Don Quixote*, Titania in *The Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and numerous other roles. She made her debut with the Mariinsky Ballet in March 2008, dancing Odette-Odile in *Swan Lake*. Other guest appearances include the Royal Swedish Ballet, the Mariinsky Ballet, the world premiere of a new production of *The Nutcracker*, directed and choreographed by Ethan Stiefel for the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and Nikiya in *La Bayadère* with The Australian Ballet in November 2014. Other

(cont'd on next page)

international guest appearances include dancing with the Royal Swedish Ballet, the Staatsballett Berlin, the Kiev Ballet, and Royal New Zealand Ballet. This marks her fifth guest appearance with Connecticut Ballet since 2006.

Unity Phelan (Sugar Plum Fairy) was born in Princeton, New Jersey and began her dance training at the age of five at the Princeton Ballet School, where her teachers included Douglas Martin, Maria Youskevitch, and Mary Barton. During the summers of 2008 and 2009, Ms. Phelan attended the summer sessions at the School of American Ballet, the official school of New York City Ballet, and enrolled as a full-time student in fall of 2009. She became an apprentice with NYCB in December 2012 and joined the Company as a member of the corps de ballet in November 2013. In February 2017, Ms. Phelan was promoted to the rank of soloist, and in October 2021, she was promoted to principal dancer. Outside of the company, she has also danced in films *John Wick: Chapter 3 – Parabellum* and *I'm Thinking of Ending Things*. This is Ms. Phelan's third appearance as Sugar Plum Fairy with Connecticut Ballet.

John Salutz (Lighting Designer) is a New York based Lighting and Sound Designer/Assistant Designer working in Theatre, Dance, and Live Performance. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison before receiving an MFA in Lighting and Sound Design at Ohio University. His work has been seen and heard at both universities, as well as the Monomoy Theater (Chatham, MA), Forward Theatre (Madison, WI), and Four Seasons Theatre (Madison, WI). In 2015, he designed the lighting for Brett Raphael's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The lighting design for *The Nutcracker* was his fourth commission for the company.

Christine Shevchenko (Sugar Plum Fairy) was born in Odessa, Ukraine where she was chosen to train in rhythmic gymnastics and ballet at an Olympic School. At the age of eight, she moved to the United States and trained at Pennsylvania Ballet's Rock School, under the direction of Bo and Stephanie Spassoff. Shevchenko danced the children's lead in Pennsylvania Ballet's *The Nutcracker* for three years, and was featured in the NBC special, *Degas and the Dance*. In 2003, Shevchenko became the youngest recipient of the Princess Grace Award. Other awards include the Bronze Medal in the USA International Ballet Competition and 2005 Gold Medal at the Moscow International Ballet Competition. Shevchenko joined American Ballet Theatre's Studio Company in 2006, the main company as an apprentice in 2007 and the corps de ballet in 2008. She became a Soloist in 2014 and a Principal Dancer in 2016. This is her second appearance in *The Nutcracker* with Connecticut Ballet.

Jack Thomas (Cavalier) began ballet studies at age five as a form of rehabilitation after breaking his leg in a skiing accident. He received his training at several studios throughout Colorado, supplementing that training with summer intensives at Jacob's Pillow, Houston Ballet Academy, Carreno Dance Festival, and Pacific Northwest Ballet. In 2012, he joined the year-round training program at Houston Ballet Academy on a full scholarship, and, in 2015, competed as a finalist at the Prix de Lausanne. Jack joined Philadelphia Ballet in 2016, was promoted to Soloist in 2018, and was made a Principal Dancer by Artistic Director Angel Corella following a performance of George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*®. Since joining the company, he has performed as the Prince in Ben Stevenson's *Cinderella*, the Prince in Angel Corella's *Swan Lake*, Espada in Angel Corella's *Don Quixote*, Solor in Angel Corella's *La Bayadère*, and Cavalier in *The Nutcracker*. This marks his debut with Connecticut Ballet.

Andrew Veyette (Cavalier) was born in Denver, Colorado, and began his dance training at the age of nine, studying with Betty Downs at Dance Arts in Visalia, California. Mr. Veyette continued his studies at Westside Ballet in Santa Monica, California. Mr. Veyette entered the School of American Ballet (SAB), the official school of New York City Ballet, in the fall of 1998. In 2000, he joined New York City Ballet and in 2006, he was promoted to soloist. In May 2007, Mr. Veyette was promoted to principal dancer. He has performed as a guest artist with American Ballet Theatre, appearing in Balanchine's *Theme and Variations*, and with Pennsylvania Ballet, in *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker*. This is his third appearance with Connecticut Ballet.



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