ROYAL BALLET & OPERA

THE ROYAL BALLET

Director KEVIN O'HARE CBE
Founder DAME NINETTE DE VALOIS OM CH DBE
Founder Choreographer SIR FREDERICK ASHTON OM CH CBE
Founder Music Director CONSTANT LAMBERT
Prima Ballerina Assoluta DAME MARGOT FONTEYN DBE

The Nutcracker

Ballet in Two Acts

Choreography PETER WRIGHT after LEVIVANOV
Music PYOTR IL'YICH TCHAIKOVSKY
Original Scenario MARIUS PETIPA after E.T.A. HOFFMANN'S *Nussknacker und Mausekönig*
Production and Scenario PETER WRIGHT
Designer JULIA TREVELYAN OMAN
Lighting Designer MARK HENDERSON
Projection Consultant ROLAND JOHN WILEY
Staging CHRISTOPHER CARR, GARY AVIS, SAMANTHA RAINE
Arabian Dance adapted by GARY AVIS
Répétiteurs SIAN MURPHY, SAMIRA SAIDI
Principal Coaching DARCEY BUSSELL, EDWARD WATSON
Benesh Choreologist DANIEL KRAUS

Conductor ANDREW LITTON

Orchestra of the Royal Opera House
Concert Master MAGNUS JOHNSTON

Directed for the screen by PETER JONES

Van Cleef & Arpels

Recorded live at the Royal Opera House
TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2023
The 558th performance by The Royal Ballet at the Royal Opera House.

Approximate Timings

The performance lasts approximately 1 hour and 5t8 minutes, including one interval.

PRE SHOW 9 minutes
ACT I 50 minutes
INTERVAL 5 minutes
ACT II 50 minutes
CURTAIN CALL 4 minutes

Cast

The Sugar Plum Fairy ANNA ROSE O'SULLIVAN
The Prince MARCELINO SAMBÉ
Herr Drosselmeyer THOMAS WHITEHEAD
Clara SOPHIE ALLNATT
Hans-Peter/The Nutcracker LEO DIXON

Act I
Drosselmeyer's assistant DAICHI IKARASHI
Dr Stahlbaum CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS
Mrs Stahlbaum KRISTEN MCNALLY
Fritz ALFIE NAPOLITANO
Clara's partner LIAM BOSWELL
Grandmother JULIA ROSCOE
Grandfather HARRY CHURCHES
Housekeeper BARBARA RHODES
Maiden aunts CAROLINE JENNINGS, CLARE LUMLEY
Dancing mistress CHRISTINA ARESTIS
Captain KEVIN EMERTON
Harlequin TÉO DUBREUIL
Columbine CHARLOTTE TONKINSON
Soldier TAISUKE NAKAO
Vivandière MARIKO SASAKI
Mouse King DAVID DONNELLY
Snowflakes ARTISTS OF THE ROYAL BALLET
Singers THE SCHOLA CANTORUM OF THE LONDON ORATORY SCHOOL, LONDON ORATORY JUNIOR CHOIR
Director CHARLES COLE

Act II
Spanish dance HANNAH GRENNELL, AIDEN O'BRIEN, MADISON BAILEY, GIACOMO ROVERO, MADDISON PRITCHARD, HARRY CHURCHES
Arabian dance OLIVIA COWLEY, LUKAS B. BRÆNDSRØD
Chinese dance FRANCISCO SERRANO, STANISŁAW WĘGRZYN
Russian dance JOSHUA JUNKER, TAISUKE NAKAO
Dance of the Mirlitons CHARLOTTE TONKINSON, AMELIA TOWNSEND, YU HANG, GINEVRA ZAMBON

Waltz of the Flowers
Rose Fairy ISABELLA GASPARINI
Rose Fairy Escorts DAVID DONNELLY, TÉO DUBREUIL, HARRISON LEE, JOSEPH SISSENS
Leading Flowers LETICIA DIAS, ISABEL LUBACH, JULIA ROSCOE, MARIKO SASAKI
Flowers ARTISTS OF THE ROYAL BALLET

Students of The Royal Ballet School appear by kind permission of the Artistic Director, CHRISTOPHER POWNEY

Synopsis

Drosselmeyer, a timeless magician and creator of mechanical toys and clocks, was once employed in a royal palace where he invented a trap that killed off half the mouse population. In revenge the wicked Queen of the Mice cast a spell over Drosselmeyer's nephew, Hans-Peter, which transformed him into an ugly Nutcracker Doll. The only way to break the spell was for the Nutcracker to defeat the Mouse King, thereby committing an act of great bravery, and for a young girl to love and care for him in spite of his awful appearance.

When Drosselmeyer is invited to entertain the guests at a Christmas party that his friends, the Stahlbaums, are giving, he decides that this could well be the opportunity he has been looking for.

Their daughter, Clara, is a little younger than Hans-Peter imprisoned in the Nutcracker, and what better time than Christmas, when the mice are busy stealing the leftovers, for a confrontation between the Mouse King and the Nutcracker? He decides to put the Nutcracker in the tender care of Clara and makes a special Christmas Angel to guide her through her task.

When all the guests have departed and the house is asleep, Clara, in search of the Nutcracker, creeps downstairs and discovers Drosselmeyer waiting for her. He draws her into his own special world of fantasy where time is suspended, and exerts all his powers to transform the living room into a great battlefield and summons the Mouse King. In the ensuing fight between the mice and the toy soldiers the Nutcracker defeats the Mouse King, but only through the intervention of Clara, who, out of compassion, saves the Nutcracker's life. Transformed into his real self, he dances with Clara and they find themselves in the Land of Snow. Drosselmeyer then sends them on a magic journey to the Sugar Garden in the Kingdom of Sweets where they meet the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Prince.

Freed at last from his imprisonment inside the Nutcracker, Hans-Peter recounts to the Sugar Plum Fairy his great adventure and how Clara saved his life. They then join in a magnificent entertainment put on by Drosselmeyer to honour them for their bravery.

Returning to reality, Clara runs out into the street in search of Drosselmeyer and encounters a strangely familiar young man, while back in his workshop Drosselmeyer prays that his efforts will be rewarded. His nephew returns; the spell has indeed been broken.

— Peter Wright

The Royal Ballet

Director KEVIN O'HARE CBE
Music Director KOEN KESSELS
Resident Choreographer SIR WAYNE MCGREGOR CBE
Artistic Associate CHRISTOPHER WHEELDON OBE
Administrative Director HEATHER BAXTER
Rehearsal Director CHRISTOPHER SAUNDERS
Clinical Director Ballet Healthcare SHANE KELLY

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