



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Ballet Austin Commences Holiday Season with Austin's Favorite
Holiday Tradition: the 42nd Annual Production of *The Nutcracker***

*Visions of Sugarplum Fairies, Clara and the Nutcracker Prince Dance into the Holiday Season at
Bass Concert Hall*

AUSTIN, TX - November 10, 2004 – Ballet Austin continues its 42-year-old tradition of presenting Austin's most beloved holiday tradition, *The Nutcracker*. Ballet Austin's production was the first production in the state and continues to bring families together annually to enjoy this holiday classic. Choreographed by Stephen Mills, Ballet Austin's artistic director, and set to the timeless music of Pyotr Tchaikovsky, with live accompaniment by the Austin Symphony Orchestra, *The Nutcracker* delights children of all ages. *The Nutcracker* runs December 5 – 21, 2004 at Bass Concert Hall and tickets range from \$17 – 75.

"*The Nutcracker* continues to be a staple in many Central Texas families' holiday traditions. This ballet gives families a time to enjoy the beauty of art while taking a break from the busy lives we all lead during the holiday season," said Cookie Ruiz, executive director, Ballet Austin. "This ballet is filled with the traditional beloved characters of *The Nutcracker* including Clara, the Sugar Plum Fairy and the Nutcracker Prince, but Ballet Austin's version also continues to surprise audiences by featuring local celebrities that are cast in our famous Mother Ginger role."

With more than 150 Central Texas children performing alongside professional dancers and the always popular "Mother Ginger," this year's production of *The Nutcracker* promises fun and fantasy for all. From Clara to the Nutcracker Prince, all the characters that are old are new again.

So whether this is a twinkling family tradition or a new treat during the holidays, come experience the magic and merriment of *The Nutcracker*. For ticket information, please contact (512) 469-SHOW, or visit www.balletaustin.org.

In addition to the eleven public performances of *The Nutcracker* (December 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 21 at 7:30 p.m. and December 5, 11, 12, 18, 19 at 2:00 p.m.), Ballet Austin will host a variety of opportunities for Central Texans to enjoy the production and to learn more about the ballet including:

Ballet Austin School Show Series

Ballet Austin's school show series annually brings more than 20,000 area students from 38 school districts to the ballet to see an abbreviated version of the performance.

Bass Concert Hall, December 7, 8, 9

For more information, contact Pei-San Brown, pei-san.brown@balletaustin.org.

Footlights

Show up early (one hour and fifteen minutes prior to each performance time) and you can hear an informal discussion of the history, choreography and music of that night's ballet.

Bass Concert Hall

Free to ticket holders

Kids Corps Chat

This pre-curtain discussion gives young audience members (under twelve) a chance to view the company and learn more about the ballet.

Bass Concert Hall, December 5, 11, 12, 18, 19 at 12:45 p.m.

Free to ticket holders

TGIF with Ballet Austin

This Friday night performance begins with an opportunity to join Ballet Austin for a light meal and to mix and mingle with fellow balletomanes before enjoying the Footlights presentation and concluding with the ballet.

Bass Concert Hall, Friday, December 10

Dinner is \$10, call 476.9151 ext. 166 for reservations or order online at www.balletaustin.org

Ticket Information

For tickets, please call Star Tickets PLUS at 469-SHOW, online at www.startickets.com, Star Tickets PLUS outlets, Albertson's and Waterloo Records. Season tickets are available through Ballet Austin box office at 512-476-2163 or online at www.balletaustin.org. Tickets range from \$17-\$75. Please note that some service charges may apply.

Photography

Photos are available upon request by emailing christian.meyer@balletaustin.org, or by scheduling a photography/video appointment during a rehearsal by calling 512-476-9151 ext. 102.

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Ballet Austin

Under the leadership of artistic director Stephen Mills, Ballet Austin has uniquely combined classical dance with innovative style and movement. Ballet Austin presents five productions each

year in Austin, tours nationally and is a financially stable \$4 million organization. The Company employs 21 professional dancers from around the world to live in Austin for 34 weeks each season. Ballet Austin II and the Ballet Austin Academy serve as educational arms that strengthen the organization's core purpose. The Ballet Austin Academy is one of the largest in the United States, serving more than 900 students annually. Ballet Austin has established itself as a world-class company that makes ballet accessible to all and enhances Austin's reputation as a city that thrives in the arts.

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