



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Contact

Christian Meyer

Ballet Austin

512.476.9151 ext. 102

[Christian.meyer@balletaustin.org](mailto:Christian.meyer@balletaustin.org)

**Jim Dunaway Graces Ballet Austin's Stage as a Celebrity "Mother Ginger" in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Production of *The Nutcracker***

*Ballet Austin's Production of 'The Nutcracker' Features Celebrities ranging from national music, television and print celebrities to local community and business leaders*

AUSTIN, TX – November 24, 2004 – Ballet Austin's production of *The Nutcracker*, which runs December 5 – 21, has an eight-year tradition of featuring local celebrities in the loveable and outrage role of Mother Ginger. This year Ballet Austin has, yet again, assembled a star-studded cast of Mother Gingers. Jim Dunaway, the Elgin city manager, will make his stage debut as "Mother Ginger" on Dec. 20 at 7:30 p.m. at Bass Concert Hall. Ballet Austin is offering a special 20 percent discount on tickets to Elgin residents. To redeem this offer, please call (512) 476-2163.

"Ballet Austin's production 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," said Cookie Ruiz, executive director, Ballet Austin.

Ballet Austin's "Mother Ginger" campaign honors prominent community leaders and celebrities by casting the notable personalities in the role of "Mother Ginger." Past "Mother Ginger" personalities have included Tom Kite, Michael Dell, Lance Armstrong Ann Richards, Kay Bailey Hutchinson and Judy Maggio. Responsibilities of this coveted role include wearing outrageous makeup, including red lipstick and bright blue eye shadow, and climbing into a dress on a platform five feet off the ground, which covers 14 children dressed as bon bons.

Perched atop a large red satin dress, this year's "Mother Ginger" celebrities include Kinky Friedman, Texas Monthly columnist, Amy Henry, contestant on NBC's "The Apprentice", Peter Bay, music director and conductor of the Austin Symphony, Olga Campos, anchor KVUE Austin, Will Wynn, mayor of Austin, Kevin Rollins, president and CEO of Dell, Grammy-Award winner Shawn Colvin, Joe Long, chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Long Performing Arts Center, Beth Chiarelli, wife of Major General Peter Chiarelli, Fort Hood, Dale Dudley, KLBK and Jim Dunaway, Elgin city manager.

Ballet Austin's production of *The Nutcracker* 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.

**Ticket Information**

SPECIAL FOR ELGIN RESIDENTS – The Ballet Austin Box Office is offering a 20 percent discount to Elgin residents. This offer is only good by call the Ballet Austin Box Office at (512) 476-2163. For regular tickets, please call Star Tickets PLUS at 469-SHOW, online at [www.startickets.com](http://www.startickets.com), Star Tickets PLUS outlets, Albertson's and Waterloo Records.

**This year's full schedule of Mother Gingers:**

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Sunday, 12/5 at 2:00 pm      | Kinky Friedman  |
| Friday, 12/10 at 7:30 pm     | Amy Henry, NBC's "The Apprentice"                               |
| Saturday, 12/11 at 2:00 pm   | Peter Bay, Austin Symphony Orchestra                            |
| Saturday, 12/11 at 7:30 pm   | Olga Campos, KVUE Television                                    |
| Sunday, 12/12 at 2:00 pm     | Hon. Will Wynn, Mayor of Austin                                 |
| Friday, 12/17 at 7:30 pm     | Kevin Rollins, CEO, Dell  |
| Saturday, 12/18 at 2:00 pm   | Beth Chiarelli, wife of Major General Peter Chiarelli, Ft. Hood |
| Saturday, 12/18 at 7:30 p.m. | Dale Dudley, KLBJ   |
| Sunday, 12/19 at 2:00 pm     | Shawn Colvin, Grammy Award Winner                               |
| Monday, 12/20 at 7:30 pm     | Jim Dunaway, Elgin City Manager                                 |
| Tuesday, 12/21 at 7:30 pm    | Joe Long, The Long Performing Arts Center                       |

**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.

###