



**Ballet Austin Presents the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Production of The Nutcracker**

**Texas' longest running production of the timeless classic features more than  
200 dancers and live music from The Austin Symphony Orchestra**

**WHO:** Ballet Austin  
Choreography by Stephen Mills  
Music by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky  
Musical Accompaniment by The Austin Symphony Orchestra

**WHAT:** Ballet Austin's *The Nutcracker*

**WHEN:** 7:30 pm on Dec 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 21, 22  
2 pm on Dec 4, 11, 17, 18, 23

**WHERE:** Dell Hall at the Long Center for the Performing Arts

**TICKETS:** \$15 - \$74 at [www.balletaustin.org](http://www.balletaustin.org), 512.476.2163  
Ballet Austin Box Office at 501 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

**AUSTIN, TX – October 13, 2011** – It's the most wonderful time of the year as Ballet Austin's production of *The Nutcracker* graces the stage of the Long Center for the Performing Arts December 3-23, 2011. In its 49<sup>th</sup> season, Texas' longest running production of *The Nutcracker* features more than 200 local performers, some as young as 8 years old.

Austin's holiday tradition features enchanting characters, magical sets, and an unforgettable story set to the timeless score by Tchaikovsky performed by The Austin Symphony Orchestra. It's a production that stands the test of time: More people see Ballet Austin's performances of *The Nutcracker* each year than any other live performance in Central Texas. In fact, more than 1.5 million people have seen Ballet Austin's *The Nutcracker* during its almost 50-year history.

A beloved and "uniquely Austin" part of Ballet Austin's interpretation of the 1891 masterpiece is the nightly cameo role of Mother Ginger, played in the past by notable Austin personalities including Lance Armstrong, Luci Baines Johnson, Michael Dell, Molly Ivins, Governor Ann Richards, Marc Ott, Robert Rodriguez, Kinky Friedman, Hollywood Henderson, John Paul DeJoria, and even commanding and non-commissioned officers honored each year from Fort Hood.

This year's Mother Ginger cast includes Senator Kirk Watson, Formula 1 United States Chairman Tavo Hellmund, and GSD&M Co-founder Tim McClure. This year also marks the return of

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Austin's choice... Ballet Austin's Mother Ginger Contest in which the community will crown its own Mother Ginger. The 2011 contest details will be announced in November .

## **Additional Events**

### **Family Dance Workshop – *The Nutcracker***

Sunday, November 13, 2 – 3:30 pm

Bring your entire family to see excerpts from Austin's holiday tradition, Ballet Austin's production of *The Nutcracker*. Be part of the magic as you create your own choreography with the help of Ballet Austin dancers. Recommended for ages 3 to 12 years old and their families. [Learn more about Ballet Austin's Family Dance Workshop.](#)

### **Footlights & Iluminación**

Arrive one hour early to the Long Center on performances for a look at the final preparations of *The Nutcracker*. See the last-minute workings of dancers and production crew as you learn about the history, choreography, and artistic process of creating the production. Free for ticket holders. **Now also available as a full Spanish-language program...Iluminación.** [Learn more about Footlights.](#) [Learn more about Iluminación \(en español\).](#)

## **History of *The Nutcracker***

*The Nutcracker* ballet is based on the book called "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King" written by E.T.A. Hoffman. In 1891, the legendary choreographer Marius Petipa commissioned Tchaikovsky to write the music for *The Nutcracker* ballet. In 1892, the first showing of *The Nutcracker* took place at the Mariinsky Theatre of Russia, home of the Kirov Ballet. The production made its way to Western Europe in the 1930's and to America by 1940, performed by Ballet Russe.

The first American full-length production was performed by the San Francisco Ballet, choreographed by W. Christensen. *The Nutcracker* has since become an annual holiday tradition. A selection of eight of the more popular numbers from the ballet was made by the composer, forming "The Nutcracker Suite," designed for concert performance. Ballet Austin's production is the longest running production of *The Nutcracker* in the state of Texas.

## **About Ballet Austin**

As distinctive and dynamic as the city it calls home, Ballet Austin welcomes audiences near and far to participate in its "classically innovative" vision for the democratization of dance. With a rich history spanning five decades, acclaimed productions, a commitment to creating access to programs and one of the nation's largest classical ballet academies, the organization is poised for an even greater future. From their home at the Butler Dance Education Center in downtown Austin, Ballet Austin and Artistic Director Stephen Mills actively engage the community, dancers, and audiences alike. *The New York Times* proclaims Ballet Austin "a company with big ambitions" originating work that is "absorbing."

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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<https://balletaustin.box.net/shared/mxcuoryul927hav1js9s>

MEDIA: Contact LuAnn Glowacz ([luann.glowacz@balletaustin.org](mailto:luann.glowacz@balletaustin.org); 512.476.9151, ext. 101) to schedule an interview or other media coverage.

WEB: <http://www.balletaustin.org/atb/nutcracker2011.php>

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*This project is funded in part by the City of Austin through the Cultural Arts Division, by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts, and by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.*