

the Nutcracker



SEISKAYA BALLET



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the Nutcracker

Casse Noisette

Early in 1891 the legendary composer Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky received a commission from the Imperial Theatre Directorate at St. Petersburg to compose a one-act lyric opera together with a ballet for presentation during the following season. Accepting Tchaikovsky's choice of subject for the opera, the Theatre Directorate selected Alexandre Dumas' French adaptation of E.T.A. Hoffmann's tale *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King* for the ballet.

Tchaikovsky was not pleased with the subject selection because he felt it did not lend itself to theatrical presentation and was therefore quite unsuited to serve as a scenario for a ballet. Both the opera and ballet were presented on December 18, 1892. The ballet, conducted by Riccardo Drigo, was received somewhat unfavorably. Dance historians have attributed this to the Nutcracker's unusual story, which was quite different from the romantic tales normally presented.

The Nutcracker choreography was begun by the redoubtable Marius Petipa. The balance of the work was taken up by his assistant, Leon Ivanov, when Petipa fell ill. According to historical accounts, when the ballet was finally produced, Petipa refused to have his name linked with it, feeling his own part in its creation was insufficient to be publicly announced. However, dance historians have recognized his contribution, and the original choreography is generally credited to both Petipa and Ivanov.

First presented in Western Europe by the Sadler's Wells Ballet at the Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, January 30, 1934, the production was staged by Nicholas Sergeyev after the original Petipa-Ivanov version. The first full-length American Nutcracker was produced by the San Francisco Ballet in 1944, with choreography by William Christensen.

Although constantly changing over its eighty-plus-year history, one of the landmark Nutcrackers was brought to the Metropolitan area in 1954 by the New York City Ballet with choreography by George Balanchine. Subsequent notable Nutcrackers have been choreographed and staged by Rudolf Nureyev, Royal Swedish Ballet (1967)

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*May the joy and peace
of Christmas be with you
all through the New Year!*

The Chen Family



*Congratulations, Brianna Jimenez
and the Cast of Nutcracker 2023*



*"Let them praise His name with dance"
~ Psalm 149*

*Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year*

*Anya,
Congratulations on
your first
Nutcracker performance!
Love,
Mom & Dad*



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Dear Lyanna,

A shining star, no matter how small, is all we need to brighten even the darkest night. You are the light in our lives, and we are super proud of our precious little ballerina!

Wishing you and everyone at Seiskaya another wonderful year of the Nutcracker!

*Love,
Mom & Dad*



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and England's Royal Ballet (1968), and Mikhail Baryshnikov, American Ballet Theatre (1976). With literally hundreds of productions nationwide, the Nutcracker has become the quintessential holiday classic, presented in theatrical productions on ice, on the dance stage and in the movies. This American holiday staple has also become an artistic lifeline, often providing over fifty percent of a dance company's annual ticket sales.

The basic libretto of the Nutcracker has as many interpretations as there are staged versions. The characters' names often change, and plot twists are added. The only constant is the music. Tchaikovsky's musical genius created one of the most recognizable and enduring scores ever written. An abbreviated version, the *Nutcracker Suite*, is one of the most recorded selections in classical repertoire. In the final analysis, it is the music that has truly given the Nutcracker a life of its own.

The Nutcracker is set in Western Europe during the 1800s. A doctor and town mayor, Hans Stahlbaum delights in holding large holiday gatherings for family and friends. His two children, Clara and Fritz, anxiously await the arrival of guests. The snow evokes a pleasantly festive atmosphere as the guests arrive. Tardy as always, Clara's godfather, Herr Drosselmeyer, arrives with special fanfare. He causes quite a stir and then mesmerizes and dazzles all onlookers with his exquisite mechanical dolls.

Presents are distributed to all the children, and Fritz receives a rocking hobby train. A bit jealous, Clara approaches Drosselmeyer for her gift. He teases her with a large mouse doll. Fritz pulls a baby mouse from the mother mouse's apron and sends Clara scampering. Drosselmeyer quickly makes amends and offers Clara an unusual prize, a colorful Nutcracker. Clara is instantly enthralled with the gift. Sibling rivalry takes hold, and in a tussle to wrest the Nutcracker away from Clara, Fritz breaks him. Drosselmeyer repairs the poor Nutcracker, but Clara is disappointed. He promises that all will be well.

Evening overtakes the party, and the guests depart. Clara is shooed to bed. Peace and quiet prevails in the Stahlbaum residency, or does it? Clara has awakened and, longing for her Nutcracker, comes back to the living room. She quickly finds her doll and falls asleep again. Thus begins

Natalie,

We are so proud of your hard work and dedication!
Have a good time and enjoy the journey too!

Love you,

- Mom, Dad and Marcus



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The Lioudakis Family*



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the Nutcracker and
everyone a very
Merry Christmas!*

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AND A HAPPY DRAGON NEW YEAR!



*May God bless Seiskaya Ballet
for another successful year.*

from the Wei family



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her magical dream . . .

Thematically, Clara is cast as a mid-teen just blossoming into adulthood. She is young enough to display childlike emotions, yet mature enough to fantasize that a doll turned human can have idyllic qualities of heroism, selflessness, tenderness and a zest for adventure. Her attraction to the handsome Nutcracker is only natural; Clara has created him in her mind's eye. She has molded a doll into a living being, and a prince at that. Her devotion to the Nutcracker is symbolized by her brave effort to save him from being vanquished by the evil Mouse King. As the Nutcracker becomes more lifelike, the dream sequence carries her to a romantic interlude, a magical winter wonderland and an exotic garden in the Land of the Sweets.

The character of Drosselmeyer has almost endless possibilities. The Seiskaya version adopts the characterization of him as Clara's godfather, who is an eccentric maker of magnificent mechanical toys. A widower with no children of his own, he delights in teasing and pleasing his only godchild. Drosselmeyer's relationship to the Nutcracker is simply that of an artisan. Clara's dream vision of Drosselmeyer is an expression of her affection for him and an extension of the attributes she sees in him.

The Nutcracker presents two major ensemble dances: the Dance of the Snowflakes and the Dance of the Flowers. One of the strengths of the Seiskaya Company has always been ensemble segments. Nowhere is this more evident than in these dances. Flowing lines, exact patterns and intricate interplay between corps and soloists are the hallmark of the choreography.

Cyril W. Beaumont, the noted dance critic, historian and author, panned the original 1934 British version of the Nutcracker: "The final scene is merely an excuse for the traditional series of character dances which, in this instance, are seldom appropriate to the situation and, generally speaking, are of indifferent quality." History has proven that even a revered critic like Mr. Beaumont can be wrong. The Second Act has long been considered the ballet's highlight. The Seiskaya version of the Land of the Sweets, Act II, reaffirms the classical approach. The scene opens with the Sugar Plum Fairy surrounded by a host of

Alex,

We are incredibly impressed by the rapid progress you have made over these past few months. Thank you to all of the teachers who helped him improve his technique.



Merry Christmas to All!
Mom, Dad, Michael



Congratulations Olivia!



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*Merry Christmas
The Caraiani Family*

angels, followed by the entrance of her court, and the arrival of a nutshell boat with Clara and the Nutcracker. The members of the Sugar Plum's court represent many lands, as well as characters, from children's fairy tales. The couple is presented with sweets and delicacies from around the world. The Nutcracker tells of his valiant struggle against the Mouse King and Clara's heroic efforts. Clara's dream at this juncture takes on a "sugar and spice and everything nice" tone. Seiskaya's unusual choreographic adaptations frame the character ballet dances with a unique quality.

Beaumont was a lot more generous in his opinion of the Dance of the Snowflakes and, in particular, the Sugar Plum Pas de Deux: "...there are three beautiful 'classical numbers' - the *pas de deux* danced by the Sugar-Plum Fairy and her Cavalier, the latter's *variation*, and the '*Dance of the Sugar-Plum Fairy*.'" Seiskaya's rendition of this famous pas de deux matches the elegance, beauty and charisma of Seiskaya Ballet principals Vivian Ye, Madeleine Martufi, Nina Zhang and Kaede Urso with guest artist David Wright's consummate artistry. About the pas de deux it can be said, "We saved the best for last."



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Guest
Artist

David Wright from Indianapolis, Indiana started his training under his mother at the age of 5. At the age of 18 he decided to take his classical dance training to the next level and enrolled at Indiana Ballet Conservatory under the direction of Alyona Yakovleva-Randall. Upon graduating David was offered a 2nd company position with Orlando Ballet 2 and a year afterwards was offered a company position with Orlando Ballet. After 3 seasons of performing in the Central Florida area David was offered a contract with Dance Theatre of

Harlem. Currently in his third season with the company David has had the privilege of performing works by Nacho Duato, William Forsythe, George Balanchine, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and Helen Pickett. Since being with the company David has had the amazing opportunity of touring with the company extensively around the country as well as the the honor of performing in Canada, Mexico, and China. He will be performing the dual roles of *Cavalier* and *Nutcracker*. As *Cavalier*, he will perform opposite all four Seiskaya Ballet Principal Dancers, who are each accomplished dancers, with quite different styles. David enjoys the challenge.

With her unwavering focus and elegant athleticism, **Principal Dancer Vivian Ye** charmed audiences during the **2022 Nutcracker** in her debut as the regal *Sugar Plum Fairy*. In the following spring, Vivian's performances at **BESFI 2023** included her additional debut of various new roles, including *First Bacchante* in **Walpurgis Night** and *Day* in **Dance of the Hours**, two Seiskaya-choreographed classics. Stepping



into the spotlight, she rose to the occasion with her own interpretation of the roles, built upon musicality and fluid technique. This *Nutcracker* season, Vivian will again take the stage, reprising her role in the *Sugar Plum Pas De Deux* opposite guest artist David Wright as the noble *Cavalier*. Vivian will also reprise the roles of *Clara* and *Dew Drop*, where her versatility and strength, combined with explosive jumps and dynamic arabesques, will be evident. In addition to honing her craft as a ballerina, she has undertaken a vibrant leadership role as the top Principal Dancer assisting in rehearsals and coaching younger students. Vivian studied traditional Chinese dance for many years and has performed yearly at Asian-American cultural events, including Mid-Autumn celebrations, Lunar New Year, and the annual Port Jefferson Dragon Boat Festival. A diminutive dancer with a powerful stage presence, Vivian is sure to deliver performances this season that will be more sophisticated and nuanced than ever.

*Congratulations
Morgan*



*We are so proud of you
Love Mom, Dad and Madison*



This Nutcracker season, **Principal Dancer Madeleine Martufi** will grace the stage with her musicality and artistry. She will be making her debut as the *Sugar Plum Fairy*, showcasing her athleticism and elegance. Madeleine will also be reprising the roles of both *Clara* and *Dew Drop*, highlighting her gorgeous lines and her emotive acting. Madeleine's exquisite technique and powerful turns are not to be missed as she delights the audience with her charismatic stage presence. Earlier this year in BESFI 2023, she embodied a joyful maiden in the *William Tell Pas De Deux* opposite guest artist Francis Lawrence. A multi-talented performer, Madeleine is also an accomplished musician and a NYSSMA Level 6 soloist. She has also received the honor of being invited to participate in the annual SCMEA and LISFA ensembles for violin. Madeleine's hard work in the studio will be evident as she performs with hard-earned stamina and unflinching strength.

Principal Dancer Nina Zhang, enchanted audiences as *Snow Queen* and *Doll* in the 2022 production of **The Nutcracker**. Her mesmerizing portrayal showcased a perfect blend of technical prowess and emotional depth, leaving audiences spellbound. Last season, Nina's artistry shone brightly in the *Raymonda Pas de Deux* alongside guest artist Francis Lawrence, their chemistry creating a memorable and dynamic performance. Nina also led the corps de ballet as *Night* in Seiskaya-choreographed **Dance of the Hours**, captivating all with a bravura display. This year, Nina will perform *Sugar Plum Fairy* in the **2023 Nutcracker**. Displaying a regal presence and ethereal grace, she will also reprise her role as *Snow Queen*. As the *Doll*, Nina's mechanized precision brings an inanimate character to life. Known for her impeccable lines, expressive movements and a profound connection to the music, Nina continues to evolve as a dancer of extraordinary promise.



Seiskaya Ballet's **Principal Dancer Kaede Urso**, known for her rock-steady turns and high-energy jumps, combines grace, elegance and poise. Her roles as *Chocolate Soldier*, majestic *Flower Soloist* and an enchanting *Chinese* dancer, are some of the most demanding roles in the Seiskaya repertoire. Kaede started dancing at an early age performing as an *Angel* in her first year of the **Nutcracker**. After years of honing her technique and artistry, Kaede will captivate audiences this Nutcracker season dancing flawlessly with the *Cavalier* in the pinnacle role as the *Sugar Plum Fairy*, performing the *Grand Pas de Deux*. This pas is filled with dazzling partnering sequences and solos that showcase their respective technical mastery. Kaede is also a leader in school and her community. She is a Student Government Class representative, an Honor Student, a Girl Scout Bronze and Silver Award Recipient, Key Club member, Presidential Volunteer Award recipient for the last five years and a volunteer Junior Firefighter.

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Guest Artists
First Soloists
Featured Soloists



Dr. Sergey Butkevich, Guest Artist

Role: *Herr Drosselmeyer*

An academically decorated Mathematician and a Researcher for a quantitative investment fund company, Sergey inspires the question, why take on the challenge of the eccentric, yet nurturing, *Drosselmeyer*? Very simply, Sergey loves the arts! He is also a member of the Staller Center Advisory Board.



Jacqueline Kalata (Juana Cala'), Guest Artist

Role: *Spanish - Choreographer and Performer*

Receiving all her ballet training at Seiskaya Ballet, Jacqueline was also introduced to Spanish Dance which became her passion. Off to Spain to study, she embarked on a lifelong career as a Flamenco dancer touring the United States and performing in Italy for 19 years with her own Flamenco company.



Brianna Jimenez, Guest, Former Principal

Roles: *Dew Drop, Friend of Clara, Flower Soloist*

Majoring in dance at Fordham University, Brianna will again capture audiences with her classical lines, blistering allegro and ethereal grace. She received accolades for her performance last season in the *Sugar Plum Pas de Deux* opposite Max Lippman. When Brianna performs, it is a treat for all!



Eva Pyrros, Guest, Former Principal

Roles: *Snow Queen, Doll, Friend of Clara, Flower Soloist*

Whether a role calls for virtuoso technique or graceful épaulement, Eva is always up to the challenge. An excellent teacher and coach who mentors young dancers, she leads by example. Ever versatile, she will perform a plethora of roles. Eva continues to be a Staller Center audience favorite.



Diana Atoian, Guest, Former Principal

Roles: *Chinese, Friend of Clara, Flower Soloist, Snow*

A masterful technician, leader and instructor to the students at Seiskaya Ballet, this Nutcracker season Diana lends her talent to this year's cast. Revered as "A dancer whose confidence and bravura precedes her," Diana's mark will be forever etched at Seiskaya and in the hearts of audiences.

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Lara Caraianni, Guest, Former Principal

Roles: *Friend of Clara, Flower, Snow*

Lara is beautifully poised, technically strong, with elegance and an illuminating stage presence, qualities she tries to imbue to her Seiskaya students. She will be showcasing her grace and impressive leaps as a *Friend of Clara* and displaying her fluid lines in both the *Snow* and *Flower* corps.



Natasha Butkevich, Guest, Former 1st Soloist

Roles: *Snow Queen, Doll, Friend of Clara*

Natasha will once again captivate the audience when she reprises her roles of *Snow Queen, Doll, Friend of Clara* and *Flower Soloist*. She has impeccable lines, a graceful stage presence, and then there's her feet - perfectly arched, perfectly pointed, and perfectly placed, perfect in every performance!



Jamie Bergold, Guest, Former 1st Soloist

Roles: *Snow Queen, Doll, Flower, Friend of Fritz*

Classic balletic lines, gorgeous extensions and secure turns ensure that this statuesque ballerina will once again excel as a glistening *Snow Queen*. Making this role her own, Jamie will enchant the audience as the mechanical *Doll*, whose syncopated movements always entertain.



Ava Aubé, Guest, Former 1st Soloist

Roles: *Friend of Clara, Flower, Snow*

Beginning her training at Seiskaya Ballet. Ava danced the roles of *Clara* and *Dew Drop* in **The Nutcracker**. At The University of Oklahoma, she is a Ballet Performance Major and has performed in works by noted choreographers: George Balanchine, Jiří Kylián, William Forsythe and Jerome Robbins.



Alyson Miller, Guest, Former 1st Soloist

Roles: *Friend of Clara, Snow, Flower, Friend of Fritz*

Seiskaya alumni, Aly is incredibly excited to be back on stage doing what she loves. Showing her range, Aly will be dancing the contrasting roles of a *Friend* of both *Clara* and *Fritz*. *Clara's* friends are empathetic to her disappointment when her *Nutcracker* is broken while the boys cavort in joy.



Peter Gwiazda, Guest

Roles: *Chocolate Soldier, Fritz, Chinese, Clown*

This **Nutcracker** season, Peter is proud to join the Seiskaya family. His prodigious turns and jumps are products of his years of training. He will be debuting as *Fritz* and *Chocolate Soldier*. In Act II Peter will be breaking boundaries by performing en pointe in the role of *Chinese*.



*“May your days be merry, your heart
be light, and the magic of the season
fill your world with joy and delight.”*



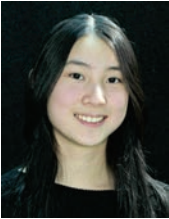
Michaela Lettiere, 1st Soloist

Roles: *Clara, Dew Drop, Chocolate Soldier, Chinese*
Charismatic and charming, Michaela graces the stage in her premiere role as *Clara*. She will then enchant audiences with her powerful turns and dynamic jumps as she reprises the roles of *Dew Drop, Chocolate Solider, Fritz, Chinese* and *Friend of Clara*, while adding *Flower Soloist* and *Snow* to her repertoire.



Morgan McCarty, 1st Soloist

Roles: *Clara, Dew Drop, Chinese, Friend of Clara*
This year Morgan's perseverance and dedication has earned her the prestigious roles of *Clara* and *Dew Drop*. In Morgan's debut *Nutcracker* season with Seiskaya Ballet, she's proud to showcase her graceful lines and clean turns. Morgan will also be performing the roles of *Flower Soloist* and *Snow*.



Sara Li, 1st Soloist

Roles: *Bo Peep, Friend of Clara, Arabian & Flower Soloist*
With dazzling arabesques and impeccable turns, Sara will captivate the Staller audience in the roles of *Bo BEEP, Flower Soloist*, and *Arabian Soloist*. Always a standout, she will be center stage for the intricate *Friends of Clara Ensemble* as well as a delicate snowflake in *Snow*.



Molly Murray, Featured Soloist

Roles: *Bo Peep, Friend of Clara, Snow, Arabian, Flower*
Making her debut this season with Seiskaya Ballet, Molly will perform *Bo Peep* showcasing her explosive jumps and high extensions alongside her amazing *Sheep!* Looking forward to next season, Molly has already begun understudying roles for *Chocolate Soldier, Doll* and *Snow Queen*.



Jillian Rabbitt, Featured Soloist

Roles: *Friend of Clara, Flower and Arabian Soloist, Snow*
A flexible dancer with a dedication to ballet, Jillian is thrilled for another magical year of the **Nutcracker**. Making her debut in multiple solo roles, the audience is sure to love her powerful *Snow* jumps, her musical strength in *Arabian*, her grace as *Friend of Clara* and her mischievous side, as *Mouse Soloist*.



Sterling Carter, Featured Soloist

Roles: *Bo Peep, Arabian Soloist, Snow, Flower*
With sinewy arms and long graceful lines, Sterling personifies the elegance of a ballet dancer. She will delight audiences as the ever watchful *Bo Peep* and the alluring *Arabian Soloist*. Performing with ethereal essence in *Snow* and *Flowers*, she deftly juxtaposes the rascally roles of *Mouse* and a *Friend of Fritz*.

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Averì Savino, Soloist

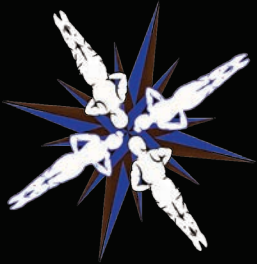
Roles: *Friend of Clara, Arabian Soloist, Snow, Flower*
Add to the foregoing roles a mischievous *Mouse Soloist* and several performances in the *Flower* ensemble and you can cap off a long journey from an ethereal little *Angel*. From the delicate synchronized movements of *Arabian* to the jaunty *Trepak*, Averì's musicality and energy shine through.



Alexander Dobioli, Soloist

Role: *Cossack in Trepak, Male Guest at the Party*
Displaying his prowess in contemporary dance, Alexander performed a solo variation in the Ballet Education & Scholarship Fund, Inc.'s annual Spring Benefit Performances. Headed to college this fall, he wants to continue dancing as part of his future regimen.

We wish everyone a safe
and blessed
Holiday Season



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*- Mom, Dad, Charlotte, Gabe,
Grandma, Pa, Oma & Opa*



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With love, The Martufis*



Nutcracker 2023

Premiere December 15, 1995

Composer	Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Choreographer	Valia Seiskaya
Set & Scenery Designer	Margaret Piotrowska
Costume Mistresses	Andrea Savino, Johanna Hsu
Lighting Designer	Elizabeth Silver
Rehearsal Mistress	Eva Pyrros
Stage Manager	Elizabeth Silver

GUEST ARTISTS (SEE BIO PAGE ALSO)

David Wright

PRINCIPALS

Vivian Ye Madeleine Martufi Nina Zhang Kaede Urso

ACT I

In order of appearance:

Herr Drosselmeyer: S. Butkevich

Drosselmeyer's Assistant: C. Babich

Clara: M. Martufi, M. McCarty, M. Lettiere, V. Ye

Fritz: M. Lettiere, P. Gwiazda, M. McCarty

Herr and Frau Stahlbaum: C. Carter and J. Hsu, D. Lettiere

Guests at Party

A. Doboli	C. Doran	J. Doran	J. Hsu
D. Lettiere	D. McCarty	J. Savino	HP. Wei
Hs. Wei			

Children at Party

A. Carter	I. Caston	G. Chen	E. Correia
L. Doran	A. Huang	A. Li	E. Li
C. Lioudakis	G. Malm	A. Perez-Canoa	Ar. Savino
G. Scotti	L. Shrestha	C. Sorahan	O. Spataro
S. Tang	J. Tuthill	A. Xu	C. You
J. Zarcone	M. Zhang	Na. Zhang	S. Zhong

Friends of Clara and Fritz

D. Atoian	J. Bergold	N. Butkevich	L. Caraiiani
S. Carter	B. Jimenez	M. Lettiere	S. Li
A. Lioudaki	M. Martufi	M. McCarty	A. Miller

(cont'd)

Friends of Clara and Fritz (cont.)

<i>M. Murray</i>	<i>E. Pyrros</i>	<i>J. Rabbitt</i>	<i>Av. Savino</i>
<i>Ja. Wei</i>	<i>Jo. Wei</i>	<i>R. Xu</i>	<i>V. Ye</i>
<i>Ni. Zhang</i>			

Butlers: *C. Babich, S. Shrestha*

Doll: *Ni. Zhang, E. Pyrros, N. Butkevich, J. Bergold*

Chocolate Soldier: *K. Urso, P. Gwiazda, M. Lettiere*

Nutcracker: *D. Wright*

Mouse King: *J. Levy*

Mice (*Soloists)

<i>D. Atoian</i>	<i>L. Caraiani</i>	<i>S. Carter</i>	<i>P. Gwiazda</i>
<i>N. Hateau</i>	<i>D. Lettiere</i>	<i>S. Li*</i>	<i>A. Lioudaki</i>
<i>M. McCarty</i>	<i>M. Murray*</i>	<i>J. Rabbitt*</i>	<i>Av. Savino*</i>
<i>Ja. Wei</i>	<i>Jo. Wei</i>	<i>R. Xu</i>	<i>E. Yu</i>
<i>Na. Zhang*</i>			

Soldiers

<i>A. Carter</i>	<i>I. Caston</i>	<i>G. Chen</i>	<i>E. Correia</i>
<i>L. Doran</i>	<i>A. Huang</i>	<i>A. Li</i>	<i>E. Li</i>
<i>C. Lioudakis</i>	<i>A. Perez-Canoa</i>	<i>Ar. Savino</i>	<i>G. Scotti</i>
<i>L. Shrestha</i>	<i>C. Sorahan</i>	<i>O. Spataro</i>	<i>S. Tang</i>
<i>J. Tuthill</i>	<i>A. Xu</i>	<i>C. You</i>	<i>J. Zarcone</i>
<i>S. Zhong</i>			

Cavalry (*Captain): *Y. Ahn, S. Chen**, *A. Rabbitt, A. Tuthill*

Snow Queen: *Ni. Zhang, E. Pyrros, N. Butkevich, J. Bergold*

Snowflakes

<i>D. Atoian</i>	<i>A. Aubé</i>	<i>J. Bergold</i>	<i>N. Butkevich</i>
<i>L. Caraiani</i>	<i>S. Carter</i>	<i>B. Jimenez</i>	<i>M. Lettiere</i>
<i>S. Li</i>	<i>A. Lioudaki</i>	<i>M. Martufi</i>	<i>M. McCarty</i>
<i>A. Miller</i>	<i>M. Murray</i>	<i>E. Pyrros</i>	<i>J. Rabbitt</i>
<i>Av. Savino</i>	<i>K. Urso</i>	<i>R. Xu</i>	<i>V. Ye</i>
<i>Ni. Zhang</i>			

=====**Intermission**=====

ACT II

Sugar Plum

<i>V. Ye</i>	<i>K. Urso</i>	<i>M. Martufi</i>	<i>Ni. Zhang</i>
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Angels

<i>I. Caston</i>	<i>E. Correia</i>	<i>L. Doran</i>	<i>E. Li</i>
<i>L. Shrestha</i>	<i>C. Sorahan</i>	<i>O. Spataro</i>	<i>S. Tang</i>
<i>J. Tuthill</i>	<i>J. Zarcone</i>		

(cont'd)

ACT II (cont.)

Spanish Dancer: J. Kalata

Arabian Dancers (*Soloists)

Y. Ahn	S. Carter*	B. Jimenez	S. Li*
A. Lioudaki	M. McCarty*	M. Murray	E. Pyrros*
J. Rabbitt*	Av. Savino*	K. Urso	Ja. Wei
R. Xu			

Chinese: D. Atoian, P. Gwiazda, M. Lettiere, M. Martufi,
M. McCarty, K. Urso, V. Ye

Trepak: Av. Savino, Ja. Wei, Jo. Wei, E. Yu

Cossack: A. Doboli

Bo Peep: S. Carter, S. Li, M. Murray

Sheep: A. Carter, G. Chen, L. Doran, A. Huang, A. Li,
A. Perez-Canoa, Ar. Savino, O. Spataro, A. Xu,
Na. Zhang, S. Zhong

Lamb Chop: E. Correia, L. Shrestha, J. Tuthill

Mother Ginger: L. Lamendola

Polichinelles

A. Carter	G. Chen	P. Gwiazda	N. Hateau
A. Huang	A. Li	E. Li	C. Lioudakis
A. Perez-Canoa	Ar. Savino	G. Scotti	A. Xu
C. You	Na. Zhang	S. Zhong	

Clown

P. Gwiazda

Dew Drop: B. Jimenez, M. Lettiere, V. Ye, M. McCarty, M. Martufi

Flowers (*Soloists)

Y. Ahn	D. Atoian*	A. Aubé	J. Bergold
N. Butkevich*	L. Caraiani	S. Carter	B. Jimenez*
M. Lettiere*	S. Li	A. Lioudaki	M. Martufi
M. McCarty*	A. Miller	M. Murray	E. Pyrros
J. Rabbitt	Av. Savino	K. Urso*	Ja. Wei
R. Xu	V. Ye*	Ni. Zhang*	

Cavalier: David Wright



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&
Happy New Year*



*Congratulations on
performing a role in the
"Nutcracker"*

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*Dance with your heart - ♥
And your feet will follow.
Continue to make us
smile and proud.
We love you - ♥*

*Love,
Your Family - ♥
and friends*

*Julia,
Congratulations on your
First Nutcracker performance!
We are so proud of you!
We love you!*



*Love,
The Zarccone Family*



*May the Spirit of Christmas Bring You
Peace, Hope and Love*

The Ye Family

VALIA SEISKAYA



Russian-born Valia Seiskaya took her first ballet lessons in Greece at the age of six. Her teacher was Adam Morianoff, also a Russian *émigré*. (Valia was experiencing difficulty learning Greek; thus, it was natural for her mother to seek out a fellow countryman.) At nine she became a scholarship student, showing prodigious technique—for example, *entrechat huit*, eight beats, in centre—by age ten. *Pointe* work also started at ten, character ballet at twelve. Thereafter, Mme. Seiskaya rapidly developed the combination of strong technique and high elevation which would become her hallmark

as a professional.

At fifteen, Valia continued her training under Sonia Morianova, the niece of Adam Morianoff, who had recently retired from the National Opera of Greece. She became a member of the National Opera at seventeen, soon attaining the rank of featured soloist, and touring Europe and Russia with the company. At the National Theater her preparation continued under resident ballet masters and choreographers, including the Bolshoi's Asaf Messerer, Boris Kniazev, Nina Kyrsanova and Olympia Yelodari (former judge at the *International Ballet Competitions* held in Varna, Bulgaria and Moscow).

In Greece, as in most European countries, ballet students wishing to become professionals must pass comprehensive national level examinations and obtain a license. Mme. Seiskaya has fulfilled all her requirements and has been granted both a diploma and a license.

The Seiskaya Ballet School was founded in 1974, one year after Mme. Seiskaya retired from the National Opera of Greece. At that time she taught all fifteen class sections. In 1976 Studio A was doubled in size to its present 2,500 square feet, and in 1981 Studio B was opened, adding another 1,500 square feet to the dance facility. That year also saw the establishment of the Seiskaya Ballet Academy.

Seiskaya Ballet School continues to be one of the premier institutions of its kind, offering classical and character ballet for the non-career-oriented dancer. The School offers an open-class format, where students are encouraged to explore fulfillment through dance. Expanded in September 2007, the School was supplanted by OPEN which provides pre-Academy and adult

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instructors and volunteers!



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Happy Nutcracker to All!

The Carter Family

MERRY CHRISTMAS

THE BUTKEVICH FAMILY



And Happy New Year!
The Butkevich Family



classes, utilizing the Academy staff and facilities.

The Seiskaya Ballet Academy is designed as a professional training program for serious dancers who display the determination, physical attributes and musicality of the career-oriented dancer. Admission to the Academy is by audition only. Since the inception of the Seiskaya Ballet programs, over seventy students have opted for professional careers.

All Seiskaya students are encouraged to participate in the guest teacher and summer workshop programs offered by the Ballet Education and Scholarship Fund, Inc. (BESFI). As part of their professional preparation, Academy students' participation in auditions for company schools and major dance companies are routinely encouraged.

Seiskaya students have compiled an outstanding record of achievement. Through the years, full scholarships have been awarded by every major institution for which they have auditioned, including schools affiliated with American Ballet Theatre and the New York City, San Francisco, Houston, Joffrey, Pacific Northwest, Pittsburgh, Miami, and Boston Ballets. Some of the numerous dance companies Seiskaya students have joined: American Ballet Theatre (5), Boston Ballet (2), Atlanta Ballet (2), Ballet West, Ballet Memphis, Ballet Austin, State Ballet of Missouri, and Milwaukee (3), Eliot Feld, Fort Worth, New Jersey, Pacific Northwest, Pittsburgh, Royal Swedish, Tennessee, Louisville and Tulsa Ballets (2).

In 1994 Seiskaya student Michael Cusumano captured a bronze medal and Special Commendation at the *International Ballet Competition (IBC)* in Varna, Bulgaria and a coveted Jury Award (a gold medal-level award) at the *Prix de Danse*, Paris, France. Valia Seiskaya was nominated that year as the Best Teacher and Coach at Varna, one of the few Americans ever to be so honored.

In 1996 Kirov student Rasta Thomas, coached by Valia Seiskaya, reached the pinnacle: a gold medal in the Men's Junior Division at the *17th IBC*, Varna, Bulgaria. Incredibly, he was the first American male dancer ever to win a Junior Division gold and the youngest male dancer ever to do so. In addition, his triumph ended a sixteen-year stretch in which no gold medal was awarded in the Junior Men's Division.

In 1998 Seiskaya student Elizabeth McGrath established herself as one of America's potential stars. She represented the U.S. in the *18th IBC* in Varna, Bulgaria distinguishing herself by advancing to the semifinal round. In late



*Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year*

The Li Family



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Agreements, etc.)
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Congratulations Cora and the entire cast of
the 2023 Nutcracker. Merry Christmas and a
healthy and Happy New Year to all.

Love,
Mike, Mommy, Lyla

Merry Christmas

The Murray Family





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'98, she was a top finalist in the *8th Concours International de Danse de Paris*, France and won double gold at the inaugural YAGP. In 2009 Anna Craddock captured the Grand Prize in the *9th Hellas International Dance Competition* and in 2011 garnered 1st place in the American Ballet Competition in Texas.

Additional exemplary efforts in the international arena include those by Alexandra Kastrinos, Allison Wade, Eileen Houghton, Johanna Hsu, Sophie Vanier, Amy Wilks, Karen Lynch, and Lesli Lyon. Seiskaya students have captured more than twenty national and regional awards, including those from the National Arts and Letters Competition; National Arts Recognition and Talent Competition (Presidential Scholar in the Arts); Saraband, Ltd.; the Amilita Hoffman Memorial Ballet Competition and American Ballet Competition.

During her 17-year professional career with the National Opera of Greece, Mme. Seiskaya gained an affinity for the grand sweep of story-line ballets and operas staged by the company. Her own choreographic works reflect that interest, such as: **Street People**, **Las Damiselas**, **Forest**, **MASK**, and the **Nutcracker**. Fresh interpretations of classical favorites **La Boutique Fantasque**, **Walpurgis Night** and **A Night on Bald Mountain** complement her signature ensemble works **Grand Waltz**, **Seasons** and **Dance of the Hours**.

Valia Seiskaya is listed in **Who's Who Among Outstanding Americans**, was The Village Times 1985 Woman of the Year in the Arts and was elected to the Long Island Volunteer Hall of Fame in 2011. She has received commendations from President Reagan, Governor Pataki and Congressman Forbes.

Embarking on its 28th season, the Seiskaya **Nutcracker** has established itself as the premier event of its kind on Long Island. Total cumulative attendance has eclipsed 100,000.

Procedural Notes

LATECOMERS will be seated at appropriate intervals in the program as predetermined by Seiskaya Ballet and the theater's management. Viewing monitors are available in the lobby for those awaiting seating.

SOUND RECORDINGS, VIDEO-TAPING AND/OR PHOTOGRAPHING of any performance without written permission of the management is forbidden by law.

DOCTORS who expect to be called during a performance may give their pager/seat number to an usher who will notify the House Manager.

NO FOOD OR BEVERAGES are permitted in the theater.

SMOKING is strictly prohibited.

Please note that you must comply with all New York State Covid-19 guidelines including wearing a mask at all times while inside the venue.



Happy Holidays!
The Lettiere Family

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The Bergolds*



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We are still working to put together BESFI's Spring Performances. The program will feature a one-act ballet, vibrant character dances plus an exciting series of pas de deux. Guest Artists, show times and particulars will be forthcoming. Although the performing venue may change, the excitement and challenges attached to each set of performances will continue and provide ample opportunity for dancers to stretch their abilities. To join our mailing list, call **631-584-0192**, email us at seiskaya@aol.com or write: **Seiskaya Ballet, 7 Flowerfield Suite 16, St. James, New York 11780**. Auditions for the Seiskaya Ballet Academy are available throughout the year by making an audition reservation at the above phone number. Applicants must be properly attired, with females, if applicable, requiring pointe shoes. A non-refundable audition charge of \$30.00 will be collected at the time of the audition.

The **2024 BESFI Intensive Summer Workshop** will be held from July 8th through August 16th. The program will continue the two division format which allows students flexibility in scheduling and is an alternative to sleepaway camps. As always, an outstanding teaching staff will be featured. In its nearly 40 years, the workshop has attracted such noted instructors as Andre Kramarevsky, Jurgen Schneider, Luis Fuente, Marianna Tcherkassky, Eleanor D'Antuono, Lupe Serrano, Marjorie Tallchief and Cynthia Harvey. When available, students may opt for an abbreviated schedule or simply pay by the class. Class placement priority is given to students attending the entire program. If funds are available, scholarships will be available through an open competition, date to be announced. Details will be available on request by writing BESFI, P.O. Box 2146, St. James, New York 11780 or by visiting www.besfi.com.

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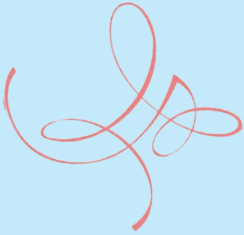
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Mom and Dad*



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=====
Credits
=====

<i>Nutcracker Webmaster</i>	<i>Karin Engel</i>
<i>Rehearsal Mistress</i>	<i>Eva Pyrros</i>
<i>Rehearsal Assistants</i>	<i>Lara Caraiani, Madeleine Martufi, Michaela Lettiere</i>
<i>Costume Mistresses</i>	<i>Andrea Savino, Johanna Hsu</i>
<i>Costume Design & Execution</i>	<i>Kathy Baker, Birgitta Bergeman, Ronni Camhi, Sue DiFiore, Karen Kralik, Kathi Kwiecinski, Vaso Mavrianos, Laura Schifano, Caroline Wilks, Ashley Bland</i>
<i>Costume Detailing</i>	<i>Andrea Savino, Johanna Hsu Cara Doran, Hsin Wei, Genevieve Carter, Katherine Lioudaki</i>
<i>Audio Recording Engineer</i>	<i>Andrew Nittoli</i>
<i>Sculptures/Art Work</i>	<i>Matt Targon/Bill Meehan</i>
<i>Props Manager</i>	<i>Sampurna Shrestha</i>
<i>Green Room Supervisor</i>	<i>Michelle Martufi</i>
<i>Gifts</i>	<i>Luisa Urso</i>
<i>Scenery Painted by</i>	<i>Scenic Art Studios, Inc., Norwalk, CT</i>
<i>Scenery Design Assistant</i>	<i>Anita Wasilewska</i>
<i>Choreography, Spanish Dance</i>	<i>Jacqueline Kalata</i>
<i>Administrative Services</i>	<i>Karin Engel</i>
<i>Biography Assistant</i>	<i>Dani Lettiere</i>
<i>Program Proofreading</i>	<i>Dani Lettiere, Karin Engel</i>
<i>Photography</i>	<i>Sergey Butkevich, Lara Caraiani</i>
<i>Portrait Imaging and Editing</i>	<i>Dani Lettiere</i>
<i>Electronic Imaging</i>	<i>Kevin Urso, Rosie Caston</i>
<i>Computer Technician</i>	<i>Sampurna Shrestha</i>

We would like to acknowledge all those not listed here without whose contributions these performances would not have been possible.

Season's Greetings



*We wish everyone
a happy holiday season.*

the Xu Family



Dear Jasmine,
We are so proud of you for
making great progress. Your
hard work is paying off in
earning higher level roles.



Congratulations! And
keep up the good work.
Love,
Dad and Mom

*Dear Josephine, you always strive to be the best in
everything. We are very impressed with and proud
of your hard work. Congratulations on your recently
earned Trepak role.*



*We are sure that with
some more practice you
will make a quantum
leap in the near future.*

Love, Dad and Mom



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