



HoustonBallet

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STANTON WELCH'S THE NUTCRACKER VENTURES ACROSS HOUSTON TO DELIGHT AND ENTERTAIN THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

*Production to debut at Smart Financial Centre and
The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts*

Tickets available to the general public Saturday, October 14, 2017

HOUSTON, TEXAS – Artistic Director Stanton Welch's spectacular production of **The Nutcracker** returns and ventures across Houston this holiday season. As a result of flooding from Hurricane Harvey, Houston Ballet's home venue, the Wortham Theater, is closed through May 2018, leaving the company unable to perform several programs in the beloved performing arts center. Houston Ballet is pleased to report that select performances of fall programming have been rescheduled and relocated, and the company is taking Mr. Welch's **The Nutcracker** on tour in its hometown city of Houston. This cherished classic will begin its journey at the Smart Financial Centre in Sugar Land and conclude at The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts in Downtown Houston. The schedule is as follows:

Smart Financial Centre

1811 Lexington Blvd, Sugar Land, Texas 77479
-December 10-23, 2017

The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts

800 Bagby, Houston, Texas 77002
-December 30, 2017-January 6, 2018

Current ticket holders for **The Nutcracker** will be notified regarding their options on relocating to these venues. Tickets will be available to the general public on Saturday, October 14 at houstonballet.org or by calling 713-227-2787.

This highly-anticipated, opulent production of **The Nutcracker** features a slew of characters, larger-than life scenery, and sparkling choreography. In addition to Houston Ballet's company of dancers, students from all levels of Houston Ballet Academy also get the chance to perform in Mr. Welch's **The Nutcracker**. Making its world debut last holiday season, the production showcases a family-friendly storyline and characters audiences know and love, only bigger, brighter, and grander.

Mr. Welch drew his inspiration for this production from the 1816 story *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King* by E. T. A. Hoffmann, and features music by Peter I. Tchaikovsky (1840-1893). With Scenic and Costume Design by acclaimed British Designer Tim Goodchild, audiences can expect to see over 250 costumes and a massive Christmas tree in Act I and a serene Land of the Sweets set amongst the clouds in Act II.

Houston Ballet's production of Stanton Welch's **The Nutcracker** is generously sponsored by: Houston Methodist, United Airlines, ConocoPhillips, Bank of America, Shell Oil Company, H-E-B, Apache Corporation, Baker Botts L.L.P., and Macy's.

**HOUSTON BALLET
THE NUTCRACKER
FACT SHEET**

WHAT: THE NUTCRACKER

Music by Peter I. Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)
Choreography by Stanton Welch AM
Scenic and Costume Design by Tim Goodchild
Lighting Design by Lisa J. Pinkham
Projection Design by Wendall Harrington

PRODUCTION

SPONSORED BY: Houston Methodist, United Airlines, ConocoPhillips, Bank of America, Shell Oil Company, H-E-B, Apache Corporation, Baker Botts L.L.P., and Macy's

ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

The Nutcracker tells the story of Clara and her magical nutcracker doll. One Christmas Eve, the mysterious Dr. Drosselmeyer arrives at the family's Christmas party and presents Clara with a special gift, a wooden nutcracker. That night Clara awakens to find the room filled with giant mice. The nutcracker comes to her rescue and a fierce battle ensues as the nutcracker leads the toy soldiers against the mice and their leader, King Rat. The nutcracker overcomes King Rat, and then is transformed into a handsome prince who takes Clara on a magical journey through the Land of the Sweets.

WHEN: **Smart Financial Centre**
 -December 10-23, 2017

The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts
 -December 30, 2017- January 6, 2018

WHERE: **Smart Financial Centre**
 1811 Lexington Blvd, Sugar Land, Texas 77479

The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts
 800 Bagby, Houston, Texas 77002

TICKETS: Starting at \$25
 Call 713-227-2787 or visit houstonballet.org.

FOR MORE
INFORMATION: Visit houstonballet.org.

About Houston Ballet

Houston Ballet has evolved into a company of 59 dancers with a budget of \$33 million (making it the United States' fifth largest ballet company.) With a state-of-the-art performance space built especially for the company, which is the largest professional dance facility in America, Houston Ballet's \$46.6 million Center for Dance opened in April 2011, with an endowment of just over \$74.1 million (as of July 2017).

Australian Choreographer Stanton Welch AM has served as Artistic Director of Houston Ballet since 2003, raising the level of the company's classical technique and commissioning many new works from dance makers such as Christopher Bruce, Alexander Ekman, William Forsythe, Jiří Kylián, Trey McIntyre, Julia Adam, Edwaard Liang and George Balanchine. Executive Director James Nelson serves as the administrative leader of the company, a position he assumed in February 2012 after serving as the company's General Manager for over a decade.

Houston Ballet has toured extensively both nationally and internationally. Over the past fifteen years, the company has appeared in London at Sadler's Wells, at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, Russia, in

six cities in Spain, in Montréal and Ottawa, at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., in New York at City Center and The Joyce Theater, at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées in Paris, at The Arts Center Melbourne State Theatre in Melbourne, Australia, in Los Angeles at The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion and in cities large and small across the United States. Houston Ballet has emerged as a leader in the expensive, labor-intensive task of nurturing the creation and development of new full-length narrative ballets.

Writing in Dancing Times in June 2012, dance critic Margaret Willis praised Houston Ballet and highlighted the fact that “During his own tenure, (Stanton) Welch has upped the standard and Houston Ballet now shows off a group of dancers in splendid shape. With fast and tidy footwork, they are technically skillful and have strong, broad jumps and expansive, fluid movements. The dancers’ musicality shines through their work, dancing as one with elegance and refinement – and they are a handsome bunch too!...if ballet were an Olympic sport, see Houston Ballet well on the way to achieving gold.”

Houston Ballet Orchestra was established in the late 1970s and consists of 61 professional musicians who play for Houston Ballet’s performances at Wortham Theater Center under Music Director Ermanno Florio.

Houston Ballet’s Education and Community Engagement Program reaches over 60,000 individuals in the Houston area annually. Houston Ballet Academy teaches over one thousand students every year, and approximately 50% of the current company was trained by the Academy.

For more information on Houston Ballet visit houstonballet.org.

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