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## **Baltimore School for the Arts Re-imagines Nutcracker**

**BALTIMORE, MARYLAND** – Baltimore School for the Arts will present an original production of the family-friendly ballet *The Nutcracker* December 9, 2021 through December 18, 2021.

*The Nutcracker: A Magical Tale in Mount Vernon* is choreographed by resident artist [Amy Hall Garner](#). Taking place in the Baltimore neighborhood of Mount Vernon, where the school is located, this contemporary production introduces Grace Blake and her middle-class family as they celebrate the holiday season.

In contrast to the traditional male character of Drosselmeyer, it is the beloved Aunt Dee who gives Grace the nutcracker doll. This strong female character encourages young Grace to find the beauty right where she lives, a place of magic and potential. The entire production, the brain child of Dance Department Head Laura Halm Hamilton, was curated with diversity, inclusion, and equity as main priorities.

Mount Vernon's presence is apparent throughout the production, as various local treasures come to life, including a nod to the Flower Mart festival in the form of lemon peppermint stick costumes, a Fanfare dance that pays tribute to Tio Pepe's, design elements inspired by the antiquities collection at the Walters Art Gallery, and an iconic Baltimore rowhome.

Over 100 Baltimore School for the Arts students are involved in this year's *The Nutcracker: A Magical Tale in Mount Vernon* both on- and off-stage as dancers, costumers, set designers, and stage crew. In addition to classical ballet, the choreography showcases modern and contemporary dance styles that challenge and celebrate the unique talents of the BSA dancers.

"While the BSA team and I have been working on this new production of *The Nutcracker* for quite some time, the majority of our work kicked into gear once we started creating on the students in September," said Hall Garner. "Our audience will hear the classic Tchaikovsky score but this production showcases new movement and overall approach. While creating this

production, we were cognizant that the original production is from the perspective of a traditional 19th-century European family. We chose to step away from that while carefully questioning it and creating a production that is inclusive and inspiring.”

The original ballet *The Nutcracker*, centered around a family’s Christmas Eve celebration, was inspired by Alexandre Dumas Père’s adaptation of the story by E.T.A. Hoffmann. It was set to music by Pyotr Tchaikovsky and originally choreographed by Marius Petipa. *The Nutcracker* premiered a week before Christmas in 1892. Baltimore School for the Arts first performed *The Nutcracker* in 1983, and has performed it annually since then with the exception of 2004 and 2005 when the school was under construction, and in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tickets for the Baltimore School for the Arts’ *The Nutcracker: A Magical Tale in Mount Vernon* are \$20 and may be purchased online at [www.mt.com/bsa](http://www.mt.com/bsa).

Performance dates and times:

Thursday, December 9, 2021 — 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 10, 2021 — 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 11, 2021 — 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 11, 2021 — 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 16, 2021 — 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 17, 2021 — 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 18, 2021 — 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 18, 2021 — 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

*The Nutcracker: A Magical Tale in Mount Vernon* is sponsored by Whiting-Turner and Compass.

“Educating the whole student and having more student-driven art are two important focuses of mine,” said [Rosalind Cauthen](#), Baltimore School for the Arts interim executive director. “Amy Hall Garner and our own [Julianne Franz](#) and [Norah Worthington](#) have done just that with our premiere of *The Nutcracker: A Magical Tale in Mount Vernon*. With our current students setting the foundation for this new production, we plan to add to the set and perform the production for audiences for years to come.”

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*The Baltimore School for the Arts is a nationally recognized public arts high school that provides its students with intensive pre-professional training in the arts in conjunction with a rigorous academic curriculum. BSA graduates go on to the most selective arts and university programs nationwide and achieve prominence in theater, film, music, dance, and the visual arts. Additionally, the BSA's highly acclaimed TWIGS program offers free after-school arts instruction to up to 700 city elementary and middle school children from schools across Baltimore each year, as well as other outreach initiatives to thousands more. Founded in 1979, the school is an integral and vibrant part of Baltimore's educational and cultural communities.*