

BOSTON BALLET

MIKKO NISSINEN ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



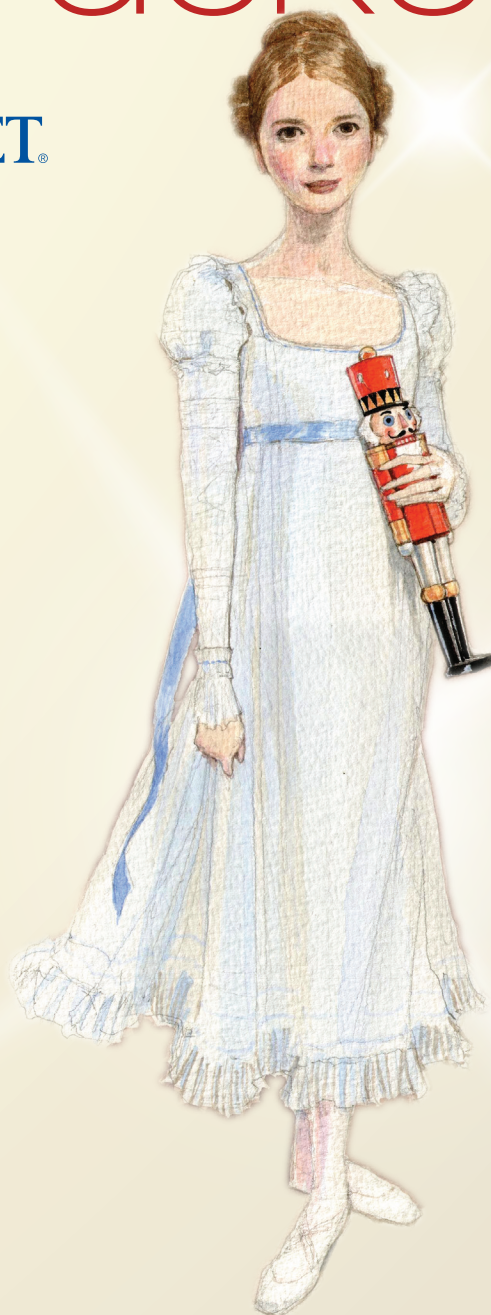
The

Mikko Nissinen's

Nutcracker

Presented by **STATE STREET.**

STUDY GUIDE 2012





ACT I

Prologue

It is Christmas Eve in a small town in Germany, in the 1820's. In the town square, the mysterious Drosselmeier presents a performance in his Children's Theatre and then hurries off to the Silberhaus' Christmas party with his gifts.

The Party Scene

Family and friends gather at the Silberhaus' home to celebrate the holiday. The children are excited to receive Christmas gifts, and Clara Silberhaus is especially delighted with a pair of pointe shoes. Clara and her brother Fritz's favorite uncle, Herr Drosselmeier, arrives an hour late. In his usual manner, Drosselmeier becomes the heart of the party, entertaining the children with magic, a toy theatre and a mechanical ballerina and harlequin. The children are delighted and eagerly ask him for more. Drosselmeier has one more surprise up his sleeve as he presents his favorite creation, the Nutcracker. To his disappointment the children are not interested, with the exception of Clara, who immediately falls in love with the Nutcracker and begs Drosselmeier to make it life-size. Disenchanted with his gift, Fritz gets jealous and breaks Clara's Nutcracker. Drosselmeier repairs him and Clara and her friends rock their dolls to sleep with a lullaby. Soon it is time for the traditional grandparents' dance. With the children tired, the party winds down, and the guests depart. The Governess escorts Clara and Fritz to their rooms and the Silberhaus' retire.

The Transformation

Clara is too excited to sleep as she recalls the evening's party and her Nutcracker left under the Christmas tree. She sneaks back to the living room to find him and falls asleep on the sofa. With the house quiet, the mice begin to appear. The clock strikes midnight and the mice have their own party. Clara awakens to find her living room filled with mice! Drosselmeier appears to rescue Clara and he magically makes the house and the Christmas tree grow. He then grants Clara's wish for a life-size Nutcracker, and her Nutcracker Prince appears.





The Battle Scene

The Nutcracker Prince and his tin soldiers battle the mice for possession of the Castle of the Snow King and Queen. The monstrous Mouse King appears and the battle ensues. The Mouse King seems to have the upper hand, when Clara, frightened, throws her slipper at him, enabling the Nutcracker Prince to slay the distracted Mouse King.



The Snow Scene

The grateful Nutcracker Prince invites Clara to join him on a journey through the Magical Forest, where they meet the Snow King and Queen and see the Snowflakes dance. Clara and the Nutcracker Prince continue on their journey as they travel on a cloud to the Nutcracker Prince's Kingdom.

ACT II

The Nutcracker Prince's Kingdom

Clara and the Nutcracker Prince arrive at the cloud-covered gates of the Nutcracker Prince's Kingdom, where he and the Sugar Plum Fairy reign. The Nutcracker Prince tells his court the story of how Clara saved his life. In gratitude, the Sugar Plum Fairy presents Clara with a crown, and festivities commence in Clara's honor. Showcasing national pride, Spanish dancers perform with passion and flourish. Arabian dancers mesmerize the court, followed by piquant Chinese dancers, and an endearing French Pastorale. Larger than life Mother Ginger appears with little polichinelles beneath her skirt. The spectacular Russians entertain and Dewdrop and her Flowers dance a lilting waltz. The Sugar Plum Fairy and the Nutcracker Prince honor Clara with a grand pas de deux, and the entire court joins in the finale.

As the night goes on and the dream continues, the pages of the Kingdom guide Clara on her journey back home. Clara awakens, disoriented, on the living room couch. Cradling her Nutcracker doll, she remembers, and wonders.....was this all a dream?

Mikko Nissinen's *The Nutcracker* is based on the libretto by Alexandre Dumas père, titled *The Tale of the Nutcracker*, which is adapted from E. T. A. Hoffmann's story *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King*.

Costume and set design by Robert Perdziola



Nutcracker 2012— Did You Know?

Mikko Nissinen's brand new production is a re-imagined classic *Nutcracker* featuring lavish new sets and costumes. Award winning designer Robert Perdziola began working on the new concept in 2011, creating 40 full-color sketches of the costumes and countless smaller sketches in pencil. The vision for the new production references the early 19th century Regency style also identified with the "Jane Austen period".

Boston Ballet has been hard at work *The Nutcracker* for over a year! The exquisite sets and costumes took countless of hours of work and dedication.

Mikko Nissinen's *The Nutcracker*:

- Music: Peter Illyich Tchaikovsky
- Choreography: Mikko Nissinen
- Costume & Set Design: Robert Perdziola
- World Premiere: November 23, 2012, Boston Opera House, Boston MA

Costumes:

- 182 costumes appear on stage in a single performance but approximately 350 were made for multiple casts.
- Over 200,000 jewels are used in the costumes.
- Sugar Plum and Dew Drop costumes have over 3,600 jewels on their tutus and bodices.
- Robert Perdziola hand tipped every Sugar Plum and Snow Queen tutu with metallic paint.
- The Costume Shop imported fabrics from Germany and England as well as purchasing fabric from over 60 other vendors in the US and Canada.
- Each tutu in the production has over 250 hand tied tacks
- On several costumes, such as the Nutcracker Prince and the Harlequin, Robert Perdziola hand inked the patterns to work with each dancer's individual proportions.
- The Sugar Plum Fairy wears two different looks in the production
- The Mice costumes, have 15,000 yards of tulle trim fabricated for them.
- The Big Mice also have gloves and shoes specially made with latex claws and articulated toes.
- Robert Perdziola carved to scale miniature mice heads made to showcase his design.
- The Snow King's costume incorporates 800 metal studs, and over 250 jewels applied to metallic embroidery.
- The Pages have an embroidered, painted, and jeweled nutcracker face on their coat front and each of their hats has 15 ostrich plumes.
- The female Chinese dancer has 9 different fabrics in her costume.



- Each shepherdess has 17 handmade ribbon flowers on her apron and 15 handmade silk duponi butterflies on her skirt.
- The Waltz of the Flowers costumes uses approximately 1,000 yards of hand painted net fabric to create the Flower skirts. Boston Ballet's costume shop painted the net fabric before sending it out for two types of pleats; sunburst pleats with a micro pleat trim.

Scenery:

- All of the sets were painted by hand and domestically made.
- Most scenery was built at Mystic Scenic Studio in Norwood.
- Most props were built in Boston Ballet's 40,000-square-foot warehouse in Newburyport.
- Additional props were made in New York City, Kansas, Stratford, and Ontario, Canada.
- The large Christmas tree is 42 feet 6 inches tall.

More Fun Facts:

- The beloved Bear and Gingerbread are joined by a brand new character – the Bunny.
- More than 300 dancers perform in the new production.
- Each performance has approximately 150 dancers involved.
- Boston Ballet Company, Boston Ballet II, and Boston Ballet School students are in the production.
- There are over 250 children in the performance, making up three casts (classical ballet students from the Boston, Newton, and North Shore studios).
- Some company roles have as many as 12 casts.
- **This version of *The Nutcracker* is the biggest production Boston Ballet has built in over a decade!**



Costume and set design by Robert Perdziola

ACTIVITIES

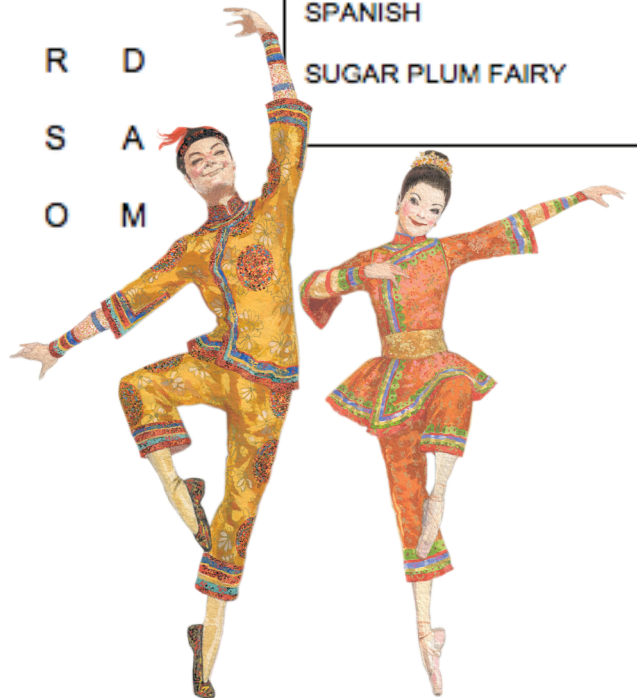
Nutcracker Word Search

How many of Nutcracker words can you find? Some might be tricky! The words might be hidden horizontally, vertically, or backwards!



A S N O W F L A K E S L
S U J T G X B R H T E A
D G S W P Y C O F F E E
E A P B C R F L I T K U
S R A R N V I K A X E A
E P N U U C N N J R S F
N L I S T O A Q C P A P
I U S S C Q I F P E I O
H M H I R A B R A E B R
C F O A A T A I R N M D
P A L N C E R T T K L W
E I A N K C A Z Y M Z E
F R T N E C H A N H R D
W Y E P R E S E N T S A
R E G N I G R E H T O M

ARABIAN
BEAR
CHINESE
CLARA
DEW DROP
FRITZ
MOTHER GINGER
NUTCRACKER
PALACE
PARTY
PRESENTS
PRINCE
RUSSIAN
SNOWFLAKES
SPANISH
SUGAR PLUM FAIRY



ACTIVITIES

Coloring Pages

