



# RDC News

November 2007

## ***Nutcracker* News!**

### **Guest Artists to Return**

RDC is pleased to announce that some familiar faces will be featured as guest artists in its fifth annual production of *The Nutcracker*.

Julie Benirschke and Malachi Squires will again dazzle audiences as the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier.

Nick Mezacapa, a favorite of Rochester theater audiences, will return to the role of Dr. Drosselmeyer. Nick's is the voice you hear in the voice-over segments that help explain the plot of *The Nutcracker* to younger audience members.

And, Alexis O'Farrill will re-join the production after a year away. He will dance the roles of the Mechanical Soldier, the Nutcracker and the Lead Russian.

"We are so fortunate to welcome all of these wonderful guest artists," said Ellen Huston, artistic director of RDC.

In other casting news, RDC added the new role of Angel to the production after dozens of Ballet 1 and 2 students turned out for open auditions on September 22. Twenty-four angels were cast, forming two rotating casts of 12 angels each. "The angels will dance in a lovely new opening for Act II," said Ellen. "We're glad to be able to accommodate such great interest from our young ballet students."

### **Thanks to NUTS Ticket Sellers!**

RDC members who participated in the NUTS pre-season ticket sales program sold a total of 825 tickets: a strong performance given the early date of the program. "While our goal was to sell

950 tickets through NUTS, I'm very pleased with and grateful for the sales efforts of our company members," said Ellen. "While NUTS concluded at the end of September, I know that many company members continue to sell tickets to family members and friends."

Through the combined efforts of company members and parents, as well as RDC's and Mayo Civic Center's group sales and marketing, nearly all of the \$18 tickets for the Saturday performance have already been sold. "If you know people who are interested in buying tickets, let them know that our Sunday performances now have the best available seats," said Ellen. "Our ticket sales are very encouraging at this point, but there are many more to sell. I appreciate everyone's continued efforts."

### **Just a Reminder:**

#### ***Nutcracker* Performance Dates and Times**

##### School-Age Performances

Thurs, Dec 13, 12:30 pm

Fri, Dec 14, 9:45 am

Fri, Dec 14, 12:30 pm

##### Public Performances

Sat, Dec 15, 2:00 pm

Sun, Dec 16, 1:00 pm

Sun, Dec 16, 4:00 pm

Tickets are available at JLDS or the Mayo Civic Center Box Office. Discounts are available for groups of 15 or more: call 287-1510.

### **School-Age Performances for Rochester Second Grade Students and More**

Thanks to the efforts of RDC's Ellen Huston, *The Nutcracker* has been part of the Rochester School District's second-grade curriculum for more than a decade. This year, RDC will perform for the second graders during special school-age performances on December 13 and 14. Students from other schools in and around Rochester will also attend the two school-age performances on December 14. If you know of students who would like to attend, contact Joan Krauss, RDC's school performance coordinator, at [kraussjoan@charter.net](mailto:kraussjoan@charter.net).

**Sugar Plum Fairy Tea Party December 9**  
***Sponsored by the Marriott Hotel Rochester***

RDC will hold its second annual Sugar Plum Fairy Tea Party at the Marriott Hotel Rochester on Sunday, Dec 9, at 1:30 pm and 4:00 pm. Once again, the party will feature simply scrumptious treats, photo ops with the Sugar Plum Fairy and a mini-performance of *The Nutcracker* – plus some new surprises! Tickets are \$10 per person, and reservations will be taken through December 5. For a reservation form, pick up a pink flyer in the JLDS lobby or visit [www.rochesterdancecompany.org](http://www.rochesterdancecompany.org) and click on Special Events. RDC thanks the Marriott Hotel Rochester for sponsoring this sparkling event!

**Land of Sweets Party: A Sellout?**

Plans are also underway for this year's Land of Sweets Party, to be held at the Mayo Civic Center after each public performance of *The Nutcracker*. The party is a delightful post-performance experience, providing the opportunity to relax and enjoy holiday treats, mingle with the cast and take photos with the Sugar Plum Fairy, Clara and other characters. Admission is \$6 per person. At press time, Saturday's Land of Sweets party was well on its way to selling out! Tickets may be purchased in advance at JLDS or the Mayo Civic Center Box Office.

**And Now for Something Completely Different: *The Door to Imagination* Will Open Again in March!**

Rochester Dance Company will stage its second annual production of *The Door to Imagination*, with special guest Odds Bodkin, March 21-22, 2008, at Mayo Civic Center. Renowned storyteller Odds Bodkin will return to perform two of his engaging tales, enhanced by choreography performed by the members of RDC. "We are so excited to be able to bring Odds back and introduce him to Rochester audiences once again," said Ellen. Watch for lots more news and information about *The Door to Imagination* in the months ahead! Casting will be posted the first week of December.

**Notes from the Artistic Director**

It's difficult sometimes to believe that this is RDC's fifth *Nutcracker*, because it still seems fresh and new. I believe that's a tribute to our company members, who bring such energy and dedication to the studio: it's inspiring to watch them grow into their roles as we move through the stages of rehearsal. It's also a tribute to the wonderful RDC parents who give their time and talents to help accomplish the long list of tasks necessary to stage this magnificent production. Thank you all!

As we prepare for our most spectacular *Nutcracker* performances yet, I am also thrilled that we are able to plan for our second production of *The Door to Imagination*. This is such a special, unique production: by staging it at the Civic Center, I believe we will be able to attract a wider audience and increase RDC's standing as a vibrant member of Rochester's arts community.

See you at the studio!

*Ellen*

**About RDC**

Rochester Dance Company is a pre-professional dance company that provides unparalleled training and performance opportunities to Rochester-area dance students. RDC is incorporated as a nonprofit organization in the state of Minnesota, with federal tax-exempt status pending final approval by the IRS. Janet Lang Dance Studio serves as the home of RDC and generously donates rehearsal and office space. Wendy Bielen Jahraus is Chair of the RDC Board of Directors; Ellen Huston is Artistic Director and President of the Board; Lelia Friel is Ballet Mistress. Company members are selected through open auditions held each spring. For more information, visit [www.rochesterdancecompany.org](http://www.rochesterdancecompany.org).