



JOSE MATEO  
BALLET  
THEATRE

DECEMBER 6-21  
STRAND THEATRE  
DORCHESTER, MA

# *The Nutcracker*

REDISCOVER THE MAGIC\*



## 2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JAN 3	Cambridge Open House
JAN 17	Dorchester Open House
FEB 1	Summer Program Auditions
MAR 29	Summer Program Auditions
MAY 8 & 9	Repertory Concert
MAY 16	40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala
JUNE 6	Dance For World Community Festival

JOSE MATEO  
BALLET  
THEATRE

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

Thank you for joining us for the 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary season of José Mateo Ballet Theatre's presentation of *The Nutcracker*.

Our artistic, administrative and production teams have been hard at work for the last several months to weave the distinctive magic of the holiday classic and it is with great pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to you on this special occasion.

I've always attributed the enduring popularity of this wonderful ballet to Peter Tchaikovsky's magnificent score, one of the most recognizable masterpieces of western music that on its own has become a part of holiday traditions around the globe.

It therefore seemed most appropriate that it be from the music that José Mateo Ballet Theatre's version of *The Nutcracker* would take its inspiration for the choreography of its first production in 1988. The narrative, a simple children's fantasy, unfolds in the varied ways that the magnificent score proposes, always changing in its many contrasting moods from the playful to the mystical. The choreography was designed to honor the extraordinarily broad range of expression

in Tchaikovsky's charming melodies, inventive instrumentation and dramatic crescendos. In every scene, the focus is on the dancing to exploit to its fullest the relentless sense of celebration that characterizes the score.

I am tremendously grateful to the cast of dancers we have brought together for this occasion. In addition to the exceptional technical skills they bring to the stage, I applaud their individual artistry, conviction and generosity that collectively imbues the production with a hope and joy so appropriate to the holiday season.

I am especially grateful to Mary Thompson, herself the Sugar Plum Fairy of our earliest production, for her leadership as Associate Director and for so expertly developing the cast of professional dancers, coordinating rehearsals and setting the choreography for all the professional roles. Many thanks also to Brittany Bush, also a former company member in numerous roles of this and other JMBT ballets, for her assistance with professional cast rehearsals; and to Libby Bullinger, a graduate of the School and veteran of the production, who coordinated the children's cast and led the team of instructors who set choreography and rehearsed the young performers.

No production of this scale can happen without the support of hundreds of people behind the scenes, including JMBT's Board of Directors led by Chair Rick Shea, our administrative staff led by Executive Director Scott Fraser, our technical crew, artistic staff, the families of our young dancers, our dedicated volunteers, and philanthropic supporters. I am deeply grateful to them all. A special thank-you to all the personnel at The Strand Theatre.

Finally, I thank you, our audience, for joining us. May your experience with us brighten your holidays and inspire you to participate with us for years to come.

Sincerely,

José Mateo

# The Nutcracker

REDISCOVER THE MAGIC

**CHOREOGRAPHY & DESIGN:** José Mateo

**MUSIC:** Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

**LIGHTING DESIGN:** Matthew Breton

**SCENIC DESIGN:** Laura McPherson

**PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT:** Wooden Kiwi Productions, LLC,  
Richard Wood & Peter Colao, partners

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & PERFORMANCE:** Mary Thompson

**REHEARSAL FACULTY:** Brittany Bush

## THE DANCERS

Da' Von Doane

Paul Galvan

Dorothea Garland

Juliana Godlewski

Margot Hartley

Jason Jordan

Luisa Jorgensen

Olivia Kaczmarzyk

Yutong Li

David Lopez

Maria Perez

Tanner Quirk

Maria Rogler

Alex Schooling

Damien Snow

Phoebe Tsitsa

Massiel Valderrama

Nicole Volpe

Holly Wersinger

Clara Zander

**PHOTOS:** Olivia Moon Photography, Gary Sloan

**PROGRAM DESIGN:** Kathy Tilton

*Photography and the use of recording devices are strictly prohibited during the performance.*

## JOSE MATEO BALLET THEATRE'S *THE NUTCRACKER*

Published in 1819, E.T.A. Hoffman's *Nutcracker* and *Mouse King* was the source of inspiration for the first production of *The Nutcracker* ballet, set to Peter Tchaikovsky's magnificent score by St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre in 1892.

José Mateo Ballet Theatre's version of what has become the most widely performed ballet in the world was choreographed in 1988 and continues to honor the classical tradition. It is presented in the company's hallmark style characterized by simplicity and dynamism. Mateo's *Nutcracker* has become a favorite New England tradition that conjures the beauty, magic and spirit of the holidays like no other.



## THE NUTCRACKER STORY

In anticipation of the upcoming holiday celebration, Clara dreams of a tall ethereal tree attended by magical fairies who deliver a mysterious gift.

Meanwhile, Dr. Drosselmeyer, a marvelous magician and friend to all children, is in his workshop preparing two of his mechanical dolls Columbine and Harlequin, that will entertain the guests at the Silberhaus party. He will also bring a special gift to Clara: a wooden doll shaped like a brave soldier, which he believes to be his grandnephew, a prince who long ago was turned into a Nutcracker by an evil sorcerer. Dr. Drosselmeyer is determined to undo the spell and contrives the plan that will ultimately free the prince and change Clara's life.

Clara's dream is realized at the party the next evening, when Dr. Drosselmeyer brings her the enchanted Nutcracker doll that immediately captures her devoted attention. While Clara is not looking, the boys sneak the Nutcracker away from her and break it. To keep his secret plan on course, Dr. Drosselmeyer promptly mends the broken toy and suggests it remain in Clara's close care.

The hour is late and it is Clara's bedtime; however, she is unable to sleep for she is too busy thinking about her lovely little Nutcracker. She returns to the parlor to look for her new toy. Instead, she is surprised by an army of giant mice, who taunt her. Just then, Dr. Drosselmeyer appears and casts a spell bringing to life the Nutcracker and toy soldiers to protect Clara.

At first, the battle does not go well for the soldiers. The end appears near for the Nutcracker, when Clara unexpectedly comes to his rescue and slays the evil Rat King. Then, to Clara's amazement, her toy Nutcracker turns into a real prince. In gratitude for her having come to his defense, he invites her to the magical Kingdom of the Sweets.

Clara and the Prince travel through the enchanted forest of the dancing snowflakes and arrive at the Kingdom of the Sweets where they visit the delicious palace of the Sugar Plum Fairy. Here, Clara is entertained by waltzing flowers and costumed dancers from distant lands representing delightful confections. As their guest of honor, Clara is also treated to a culminating performance by the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier.

This is the magic of *The Nutcracker*!



## JOSE MATEO BALLET THEATRE

Founded in 1986, José Mateo Ballet Theatre consisted of a performance company that became one of America's leading producers of new ballets, an innovative ballet school, and the originator of Dance for World Community™, an initiative that has elevated the role of dance in the Greater Boston area. Over the past 40 years, Cuban-born Founder/Artistic Director José Mateo has developed his unique vision to create a new model for an inclusive and socially responsible ballet organization that engages today's diverse audiences.

## THE COMPANY

Praised by local and national critics and hailed by *Boston* magazine as "Best Dance Troupe" in 2018, the company regularly presented Mateo's highly acclaimed concerts at its Sanctuary Theatre in its home at Old Cambridge Baptist Church in Harvard Square. Its presentation of Mateo's treasured version of *The Nutcracker* at The Strand Theatre in Dorchester offers an intimate, dance-focused experience that is affordable and universally accessible.

## THE SCHOOL

With studios in Cambridge and Dorchester, the School offers an innovative model for a high-quality academy with a humanistic approach to ballet training that fosters diversity and inclusion. The Young Dancers Program provides expert training for students ages 3-18. Introductory courses are also offered to both Teenagers and Adults seeking to learn ballet at a later age. Finally, the School has a robust adult ballet program with the popular drop-in classes for all levels.

## DANCE FOR WORLD COMMUNITY™

Created in 2008, Dance for World Community is a partnership-based initiative that amplifies the potential for the connective power of dance to unify and strengthen our local communities.

Dance for World Community makes dance accessible to thousands of children, families, and new audiences through several year-round outreach programs and its flagship event, the annual **Dance for World Community Festival** in June, a multi-stage indoor/outdoor festival in Harvard Square.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Dance for World Community Festival will be held on June 6, 2026 with over 20,000 attendees of all ages expected to enjoy free performances and classes in a diverse array of dance forms.

Give the gift of dance this holiday season!



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★ YOUNG DANCERS PROGRAM  
AGES 3-18

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JOSÉ MATEO  
BALLET  
THEATRE

## OPEN HOUSE DORCHESTER

Saturday, January 17

CREATIVE DANCE I	AGE 3	10:15-11:00AM
CREATIVE DANCE II	AGE 4	11:00-11:45AM
PRE BALLET I	AGE 5	12:00-12:45PM
PRE BALLET II	AGE 6	12:45-1:45PM

FREE TRIAL CLASSES!



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14 CUSHING AVE  
UPHAM'S CORNER, DORCHESTER

## OPEN HOUSE CAMBRIDGE

Saturday, January 3

CREATIVE DANCE	AGES 3-4	1:15-2:00PM
PRE BALLET	AGES 5-6	2:00-2:45PM



400 HARVARD STREET  
HARVARD SQUARE, CAMBRIDGE



## JOSE MATEO

### FOUNDER & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Cuban-born choreographer José Mateo founded José Mateo Ballet Theatre (JMBT) (incorporated in 1986 as Ballet Theatre of Boston, Inc.) in 1987 with the company's debut performance of *New Paces* featuring his original ballets at Dorchester Strand Theatre. For four decades, he has led the organization as Artistic Director, choreographing a wide repertory of original ballets (over 100) — including a celebrated annual production of *The Nutcracker* — and directing a year-round ballet school, dedicated to providing a humanistic approach to inclusive high-quality ballet training.

Mateo also created Dance for World Community, an initiative launched in 2009 to harness the connective power of dance to advance social change, featuring an annual free festival in Harvard Square. In 2025, he designed the inaugural Dance for World Community Conference, and the program is launching an online Community Forum to connect dancers and activists across the world.

Mateo holds a BA in Art History from Princeton University where he began his formal training in ballet and modern dance techniques. After a New York-based career as a dancer, Mateo moved to Boston where he worked as an administrator at Harvard University's Fogg Art Museum as he quickly gained a reputation as a prominent ballet teacher and choreographer. JMBT

presentations of his choreographic works have been recognized alongside international touring companies in The Boston Globe's "10 Best Dance Events" in 1990, 1995, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2008.

In recognition of his artistic and civic contributions, Mateo has received numerous awards. Most recently, in October 2024, he received the Eric Oddleifson Arts Learning Service Award from Arts Learning for "his artistic and educational leadership in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts." Other awards include:

- 1996, 2004, 2007: Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship in Choreography
- 2005: Barr Fellowship, inaugural class, Barr Foundation
- 2007: recognized as one of 100 most influential people in the Hispanic community in MA
- 2012: Jorge Hernández leadership award - *Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción*
- 2012: Peace and Justice Award - Cambridge Peace Commission
- 2012: Dr. Michael Shannon Dance Champion- Boston Dance Alliance
- 2016: named one of Boston's 50 Legends and Pioneers by Boston's Get Konnected
- 2017/18: Commonwealth Award for Achievement - the state's highest honor in the arts, sciences, and humanities.

Beyond his artistic work, Mateo has served on several nonprofit boards including Boston Cultural Council, Cambridge Arts Council, ArtsBoston, Boston Dance Alliance, Dance Umbrella, the Victoria Rowell Foster Children's Positive Plan, Homelessness Empowerment Project, MASSCreative and the Muniz Academy. He currently serves on the Boards of Friends of Caritas Cuba and Manship Artist Residency and is the Treasurer of the Cambridge Arts Council Fund. Through his service and leadership, Mateo continues to redefine the role of dance in building more connected, just, and vibrant communities.



## MARY THOMPSON

### ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION & PERFORMANCE

Mary Thompson's early training was at the Boston Ballet School under the direction of founder E. Virginia Williams, where she trained until receiving a coveted Ford Foundation Scholarship to study at George Balanchine's School of American Ballet (SAB) in New York. In addition to dancing soloist roles in SAB's Annual Workshop performances, Ms. Thompson was invited to audition for, and subsequently joined Makarova and Company as a pre-professional dancer. An injury caused Ms. Thompson to take a

hiatus from dance, after which she rehabilitated with Marie Paquet in Boston and Finis Jhung in New York. Recovered, Ms. Thompson joined the Berkshire Ballet as a soloist where she quickly progressed to Principal status. While at Berkshire Ballet, and later at Ballet Michigan and South Carolina Ballet Theater, Ms. Thompson performed lead roles in many of ballet's more beloved classics, as well as pieces by Antony Tudor, Loyce Houlton and Francis Patrelle. In 1986, Ms. Thompson began studying with José Mateo and accepted his invitation to perform with and join the company. She soon began teaching at the school in both the Adult Open and Young Dancers programs, and was highly involved in the establishment of YouthWorks. Over the past four decades, Ms. Thompson has also taught for, and run other schools within the Boston area, however, the majority of her work throughout the years has been dedicated to JMBT, where she has served as Principal of the Young Dancers Program, Summer Program Director and Ballet Mistress for the company. This past year, Ms. Thompson was named Associate Director of Education and Performance for JMBT.

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with  
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## MATTHEW BRETON LIGHTING DESIGN

Matthew Breton (lighting designer) has been working with the José Mateo Ballet Theatre for nearly two decades. This is his eighth year overseeing the design for "The Nutcracker," including the "Tribute to the Nutcracker" presented in 2021. He has also designed for Mr. Mateo's repertory performances, the Dance for World Community festival, and the Dance Saturdays performances at the Sanctuary Theater. In addition to his work as lighting supervisor for numerous Boston theaters, Mr. Breton has designed performances for Jean Appolon Expressions (Summer 2024 at The Yard), Janelle Gilchrist Dance Troupe (November 2024 at the BCA) and Abilities Dance (November 2024 at the Strand). He has served as lighting supervisor for performances by Kyle Abraham/AIM, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, and Faye Driscoll. Upcoming performances include work with Salem State University, United Stylez, Kelley Donovan and Dancers, and the Mark Morris Dance Group.



## BRITTANY BUSH REHEARSAL FACULTY

Brittany was born and raised in Jamestown, NY, where she received her early dance training with Monika Alch at the Chautauqua Regional Youth Ballet. She went on to continue her training at the SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance,

where she received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. In 2013 she joined José Mateo Ballet Theatre as an apprentice, and was promoted to a full company member the following year. During her five seasons with the company she danced featured roles in Mateo's original works including House of Ballet, Covens, Over and Over, Affairs, and The Nutcracker. After many years of teaching in and around Boston, Brittany took the role of Ballet Director at The Greater Boston School of Dance in 2022. She is excited to be back working with Mr. Mateo and the rest of the faculty for this year's production of the Nutcracker!

## LAURA MCPHERSON SCENIC DESIGNER & SCENIC CHARGE ARTIST

Lauren McPherson is a freelance IATSE United Scenic Artists member of Local #829 as a Scenic Designer. After 25 years in New England, has a new studio on the coast of NC. Also a member of IATSE Local #491, she works in the film industry. Design clients include: Orlando Rep., Anchorage Classical Ballet Academy, and Boston Academy of Music among others. She was resident designer for Mystic Scenic Studios and Seismic Scenic. Her MFA is from Boston University, and BFA from The University of North Carolina's School of the Arts. She's taught at Bridgewater State College, Emerson College, and been a Visiting Lecturer for Boston Conservatory, Harvard's Radcliffe College, A. R. T. Institute. With designing and painting for ballet and opera her favorite work, Laura is thrilled to be a part of

# DANCERS



### DA' VON DOANE

Da' Von is a former leading dance artist with Dance Theatre of Harlem, named one of Dance Magazine's Top 25 to Watch in 2014 and a Pointe Magazine Standout in 2017. As a guest / freelance artist he's performed at The Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Vail Dance Festival, Guggenheim Works and Process, Claudia Schreier and Dancers at the Joyce Theater, Joshua Beamish – Move The Company, Ja Malik/ Ballet Boy Productions, New Jersey Ballet, Tulsa Ballet, Ballet Noir, The Francesca Harper Project, Dianne McIntyre, New York Dance Theatre, Mobile Ballet, Wilmington Ballet, Austin City Ballet, The World Dance Gala, Chopin Festival in Poland, Summer Stage Central Park and Wideman-Davis Dance. Da' Von is currently an MFA candidate at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Da' Vons work, through all

mediums and genres, activates the cultivation of oneself as a creative tool for self discovery and the emergence of work that functions as conduit for individual reflection as well as collective growth and transformation. The arts are a conduit for forces that have the capacity to change the world and we as artists are the energetic chords that move through the world enlightening those we encounter along the way. Da'Von is very excited to be returning to José Mateo Ballet Theatre's The Nutcracker for the third season!



### PAUL GALVAN

JPaul Galvan is currently earning his theatrical degree with a focus in dance and stage choreography. He has worked profes-

sionally with Theater Aspen Summer Youth Camp (James & the Giant Peach Jr, Choreographer, Bright Star) and with the Regional Theater of Palouse (Tootsie, Ensemble). He can also be seen on television in upcoming episodes of ABC's 911 Nashville (Episode 11 and 13!) Inspired into the world of dance, Paul believes in the life changing magic of storytelling through the creative arts. He is grateful to be a part of José Mateo Ballet Theater sharing the long standing tradition of the Nutcracker! @paulerino



### DOROTHEA GARLAND

Dorothea Garland is from Framingham, MA and trained at New England Ballet, Boston Ballet Center

for Dance Education, and later Merseyhurst College, where she danced various roles including Elegy Lead in Serenade and Myrtha in Giselle. She then danced with Columbia Classical Ballet in South Carolina and José Mateo's Ballet Theater of Boston before moving to New York City, where she has spent the last 20 years working with various choreographers and companies. She currently dances for Ballets with a Twist and East Coast Contemporary Ballet and is excited to be returning to JMBT for this Nutcracker season.



# DANCERS



## JULIANA GODLEWSKI

Originally from Southern California, Juliana is a dancer and choreographer who has spent most of her life pursuing a professional ballet career. After training at ballet schools including Rock School for Dance, she continued her dance education at the University of Utah's School of Dance where she earned her BFA in three years. While at university, Juliana danced with Michele Wiles's BalletNEXT and performed various principal classical roles and new contemporary works. Since her graduation, Juliana has performed with former NYCB dancer Ally Hellman's Ballet Project OC, Ballet RI, and Sacramento Ballet. She has had the pleasure of working with Yury Yanowsky, Chanel DaSilva, Lia Cirio, Paulo Arrais, Madison Hicks, Yusha Sorzano, and Norbert de la Cruz III. Additionally she has created several choreographic works for The School of Ballet RI, Ballet RI, Ballet Project OC, Sacramento Ballet Second Company, and Rhode Island Women's Choreographic Project under the mentorship of Penny Saunders. Juliana is returning for her second production of The Nutcracker at José Mateo Ballet Theatre



## MARGOT HARTLEY

Margot Hartley is a ballet and contemporary dancer based in NYC. Originally from upstate New York,

she moved to the city as a teenager to study on scholarship at the Joffrey Ballet School. As a professional, Margot has danced for Dzul Dance (a fusion contemporary, circus arts, and traditional Mayan dance company); as a soloist at Connecticut Ballet; and in many repertory showcases with the Merce Cunningham Trust. She has also danced with Armitage GONE! Dance, and in New York Fashion Week. In 2018, Margot toured as a demi-soloist with Vladimir Varnava's evening-length work ISADORA. The piece featured Natalia Osipova and premiered in the US at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts, and in Moscow at the Stanislavski Theatre. Margot currently dances in New York with Compagnie Petra Zanki. She is delighted to be joining the cast of José Mateo Ballet Theatre's Nutcracker for the first time.



## JASON JORDAN

Jason Jordan started his dance career at the tender age of seven when he won five dollars for being the best dancer at a Brooklyn house party. He has since danced with Feld Ballets/NY, Ballet-Tech, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal, Rubberbandance Co., Cedar Lake, Peridance Ensemble, Buglisi Dance Theater, FUKUDANCE, City Ballet of Boston, Dzul Dance, Armitage Gone, Lexington Ballet and Battery Dance. Mr. Jordan is currently teaching dance full time at Brighton High School and is returning to his third production of The Nutcracker at José Mateo Ballet Theatre.



## LUISA JORGENSEN

Luisa is from Needham Massachusetts and began her ballet training at the Charles River Ballet Academy under the direction of Emily Hrones Umland. At the age of seven, she started performing with José Mateo Ballet Theatre in The Nutcracker. At fourteen, Luisa was accepted into the Boston Ballet School's Professional Division, where she trained for four years under the direction of Miranda Weese and José Martín Trujillo. She has also attended summer intensives at The School of American Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, The Royal Ballet (London), Boston Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet, and José Mateo Ballet Theatre. During her time with Boston Ballet, Luisa performed in Next Generation productions, appearing in excerpts from Coppélia, Le Corsaire, and The Sleeping Beauty, as well as in Mikko Nissinen's The Nutcracker. Luisa is thrilled to return to José Mateo Ballet Theatre this year as an apprentice.



## OLIVIA KACZMARZYK

Olivia Kaczmarzyk, a native of Providence, RI, began her ballet training at Ballet RI (formerly Festival Ballet Providence) at the age of six. By 14, she was performing alongside the company corps de ballet in productions of The Nutcracker and The Sleeping Beauty

before officially joining the company at 17. Olivia performed soloist roles in works by Viktor Plotnikov and Christopher Wheeldon and has danced iconic Balanchine ballets including Allegro Brillante, Rubies, and Serenade. She is now a freelance artist in the Boston area and a company dancer with Janelle Gilchrist Dance Troupe. In addition to performing, Olivia works as a classical Pilates instructor, bringing her deep understanding of movement and technique to her teaching.



## YUTONG LI

Yutong Li was born in China and began her dance training at a young age at a local studio in her hometown. At the age of 11, she continued her formal ballet studies at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music. She continued her studies at Guangzhou University, earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance and performing pieces such as Pas de Quatre by Jules Perrot, Falling Leaves by Qi Jiang, and Paquita by Marius Petipa, among others. In 2024, she received her Master of Fine Arts in Dance from the Florida State University School of Dance, studying under Anjali Austin, Ilana Goldman, Meagan Helman, Gwen Welliver, and Kara Wilkes. While at FSU, she performed George Balanchine's Divertimento No. 15 (Excerpt), Meagan Helman's Esbocar, and Rachel Hunter's Tribute to the Tarpon Club. Outside of performance, Li is passionate about GYROTONIC® and Pilates and has a keen interest in dance photography.



# DANCERS



## DAVID LOPEZ

David Villareal Lopez began his dance training in classical ballet at Balletteatro Nacional de Puerto

Rico. After a few years, he started dancing as a professional dancer with the company Ballet Brío, and then he moved to Ballet Concierro de Puerto Rico as a company dancer and choreographer as well. In 2021, Villareal was selected as a ballet master to work with the Syracuse City Ballet in New York, and as Costume Manager for "The Nutcracker 2021". Later, back on the island as an independent artist, he performed in "West Side Story", "Evita" and "Shrek" with the Musical Theater Company BAS Entertainment. His repertoire includes: "The Nutcracker", "Swan Lake", "Don Quijote", "A Midnight Summer Dream", "Carmen", "Pharaoh's Daughter", "Giselle", "Paso a Tres", "Coppelia PDD," "The Dying Swan," among other pieces from the classical and contemporary repertoire. David is a certified teacher based in the Cuban Ballet Methodology (levels 1 – 8).



## MARIA PEREZ

Born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, María Gabriela Pérez began her training as a dancer at the school of Andanza. In

2012, she joined the Andanza Youth Company and then joined Ballet Concierto Conservatory in 2013. She has attended several summer intensives including Jose Mateo

Ballet Theatre in Boston. In 2015 she joined Ballet Concierto de Puerto Rico as an apprentice where she performed various productions such as Phantom of the Opera, Coppelia and many other repertoire pieces. In 2018 she joined the New York Dance Project in New York in which she performed various repertoire pieces by Robert Joffrey, Gerald Arpino and many other renowned choreographers. Currently she is a Soloist in Mauro Ballet Company in Puerto Rico where she has performed repertoire pieces and classical performances such as Reconexión, Somos, \*Sujeto a Cambio, Sleeping Beauty, Bayadere, Coppelia, Esmeralda, Romeo and Juliet, and many others. María also has a bachelor's degree in Cultural Management at the University of Puerto Rico. María is returning for her second production of The Nutcracker at José Mateo Ballet Theatre



## TANNER QUIRK

Tanner is a first-year at Harvard College, planning to concentrate in English with a secondary in Theater, Dance & Media. Tanner grew up in New York City where he trained at the School of American Ballet for eleven years, graduating from the advanced division in 2025. At SAB and for New York City Ballet, Tanner performed in works by choreographers such as George Balanchine, Christopher Wheeldon, and Caili Quan. Additionally, Tanner danced on Broadway during his freshman and sophomore years of high school in the revival of "The Music Man" starring Hugh Jackman and Sutton Foster. He was an original Broadway cast child ensemble

member and then a swing, before becoming an adult ensemble member. Tanner also attended multiple summer intensives throughout his high school years: Boston Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and Miami City Ballet. He is thrilled to be joining JMBT's The Nutcracker!



## MARIA ROGLER

Maria Rogler began dancing at 4 years old at Dance Explosion in Dedham, MA under the direction of Renae Maccioli-Mcleod and Leticia Guerrero. Maria also trained at the International Ballet Academy of Norwell and Festival Ballet Providence. She has competed around the U.S. and internationally in Atlanta, Georgia and Bari, Italy. In 2018 Maria Joined Festival Ballet Providence as a Post-Graduate for a year, and in 2021 she joined the company and danced there for two years. She is now a freelance dancer in the Boston area and is currently a faculty member of Jose Mateo Ballet Theatre. She danced in the 2023 and 2024 JMBT production of the Nutcracker, and is excited to be a part of their production again this year!



## ALEX SCHOOLING

Alex Schooling, originally from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, studied at Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet before earning a BFA in Dance Performance and a minor in Peace and Conflict Studies from Butler University. She has danced with compa-

nies including Push/Fold, The Holding Project, and Zikr Dance Ensemble. Alex spent nine seasons with Oklahoma City Ballet, performing diverse repertoire from choreographers including George Balanchine, Twyla Tharp, Septime Weber, and Alexander Eckman. She has choreographed works for Oklahoma City Ballet, PDX Contemporary Ballet, Central OK Ballet Theater, Race Dance Collective, and Texture Contemporary Ballet. In 2025, she was a finalist at the Red Rock Dance Festival and Palm Desert Dance Festival. Alex was named a 2025 Kirkpatrick Foundation Emerging Artist Fellow.



## DAMIEN SNOW

Damien Alexander Snow began his ballet training at age six at The Hartt School, studying under Samantha Dunster, Eddy Tovar, and Bruce Marks.

At twelve, he trained with Jock Soto at the School of American Ballet and performed a full season of The Nutcracker with New York City Ballet. He continued his studies on merit scholarships with Telmo Moreira at The Rock School and Ethan Stiefel at the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School, he attended summer intensives at Boston Ballet, Orlando Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, The Harid Conservatory, and Walnut Hill School, all on full scholarship. A Youth America Grand Prix competitor, he placed third in the 2013 and 2018 semi-finals and advanced to the New York City Finals. Damien has performed with The Florida Ballet, Ballet Hartford, Ballet Theatre Company, and Ballet Arts. His repertoire includes Coppélia, Flames of Paris, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Gaité Parisienne, Paquita, Sleeping Beauty, Snow White, and Swan Lake.



# DANCERS



## PHOEBE TSITSA

Phoebe Tsitsa began her dance training at the age of four in a small neighborhood sports club in Athens, Greece. During her childhood, she attended various schools, including Alvin Ailey. In 2018, she was awarded a scholarship to attend the Bolshoi Ballet Academy Summer Intensive, followed by a full scholarship to the London Russian Ballet School. In London, she trained for two years under former Bolshoi Principals Evgeny Goremykin and Galina Kozlova and performed ballets such as Chopiniana, Sleeping Beauty, and La Bayadere at Cado-gan Hall alongside Bolshoi Dancers.

In 2020, she joined the Joffrey Ballet School in New York City and graduated in the spring of 2024 with a Bachelor's in Fine Arts. Phoebe now works as a freelance dancer in New York and teaches at Steps Academy. Her repertoire includes Balanchine's Serenade, Arabian in the Nutcracker, and Grigorovich's Russian and Peasant Dances in Swan Lake and Sleeping Beauty.



## MASSIEL VALDERRAMA

Born in Venezuela, she received her training at the "Maria Teresa Alford School". In 2017, she joined the Ballet Teresa Carreño, and in 2018 moved to Peru to become part of the "Ballet Municipal de Lima", where she stood out in soloist roles for four seasons.

In 2021, she relocated to Miami to dance with Dimensions Dance Theater of Miami for two seasons. In 2023, she got a contract with Ballet Rhode Island, performing with the company for two seasons. She is currently in her first year as an independent dancer. Her repertoire includes classical and contemporary works such as La Fille Mal Gardée, Coppélia, Le Corsaire, The Nutcracker, Swan Lake, Light Rain (Gerald Arpino), Juanita y Alicia (Septime Weble), Balance (Jimmy Orrante), Adiemus (Yanis Pikieris), Cinderella (Yury Yanowsky), and The Death and the Maiden (Ken Ossola and Yury Yanowsky).



## NICOLE VOLPE

A Chicagoland native, Nicole has had an eclectic performance career. Before launching her career as a freelance dancer, she trained at Lou Conte Dance Studio in Chicago as a scholarship student, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's Professional Program, and ABT Collegiate Summer Intensives, among others. She has had the opportunity to dance on screen and stage, as Dream Laurey in Reagle Music Theater's Oklahoma!, a featured dancer on FOX's Empire, and as the Sugar Plum Fairy in Tina Hansen's Nutcracker in 2019 and 2022. When she is not dancing, she runs her photography studio Nicole Marie Photography from her home in Somerville where she lives with her husband and three cats. She is thrilled to be a part of JMBT's Nutcracker this season!



## HOLLY WERSINGER

Holly Wersinger, first started to dance at Coupé Theatre Studio at a young age and transferred to the School of American Ballet in NYC at the age of 11. While attending SAB, she has performed with the New York City Ballet in George Balanchine's The Nutcracker, Harlequinade, Midsummer's Nights Dream, Mozartiana, and Scherzo à la Russe. Holly also performed in SAB's Winter Ball, Raymonda Variations for the Winter Showing, Divertimento No. 15 in the Workshop Performances, as well as participating in the Student Choreographic Institute. She graduated from the School of American Ballet as a part of the Capstone Class. She is thrilled to have the opportunity to perform with José Mateo Ballet Theatre for the second year.



## CLARA ZANDER

Clara started dancing at 3 at Westchester Center for the Arts in New York. In high school, she was accepted on full scholarship to Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre's Junior Division where she worked with notable choreographers and teachers such as Earl Mosley, Christian Von Howard, Hope Boykin, and Renee Robinson, and studied ballet, Graham, Horton, and jazz. While in college, Clara danced as a principal artist with The Asheville Ballet, dancing Sugar Plum Fairy, Dew Drop Fairy, and Snow Queen in the Nutcracker, as well as principal roles in numerous contemporary premieres. Most recently she danced the role of Michaela in their production of Carmen. As a freelance artist Clara has worked with Netflix on their series Dance Monsters, The Florida Grand Opera in their The Magic Flute, the North Carolina Opera in Cendrillon.

# DONOR LIST

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Thank you to the families and friends whose gifts made it possible for JMBT to introduce a new magical, growing tree that lights the stage this season and will illuminate our *Nutcracker* production for future generations of young dancers.

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Jess Pfau

**Riggers**  
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Becky Brown

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Kaity Smith

**Stage Manager**  
Em Ross

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Kaity Smith

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Tory Coleman, Wynn Graves,  
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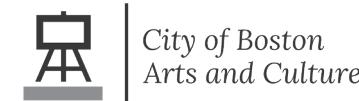
Leslie Brokaw

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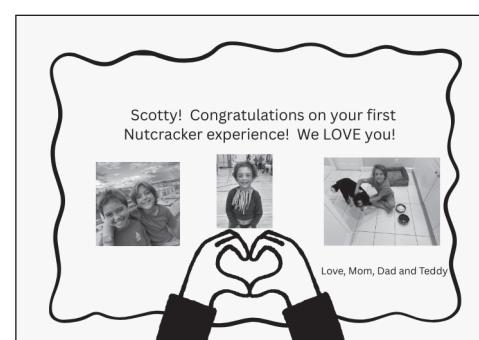
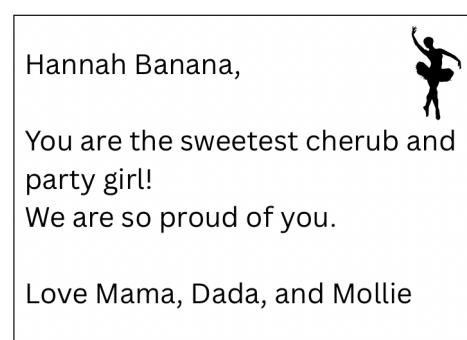
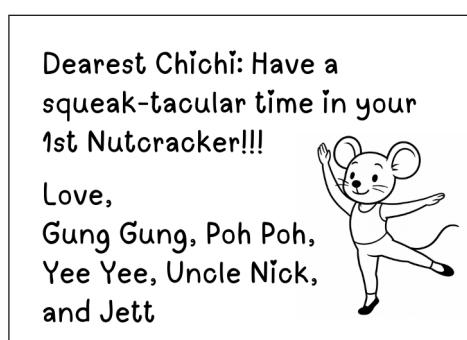
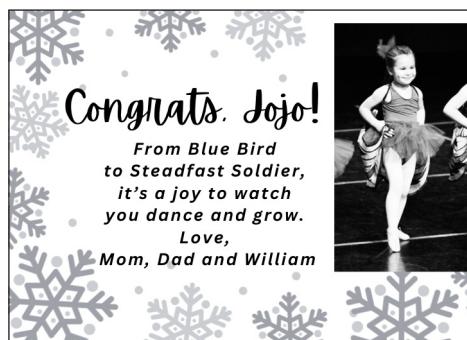
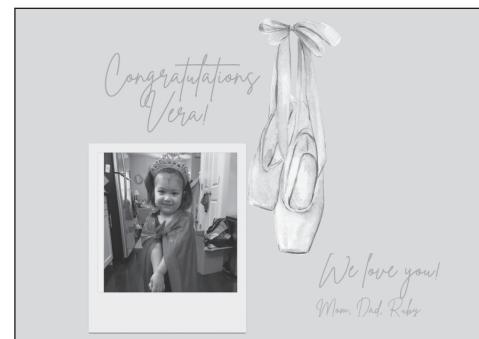
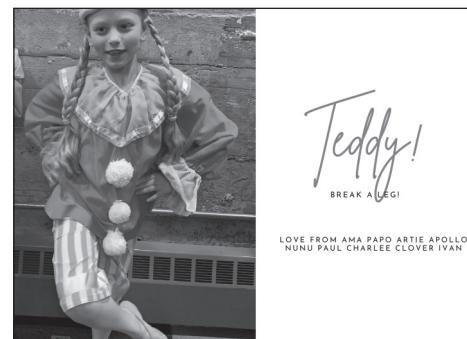
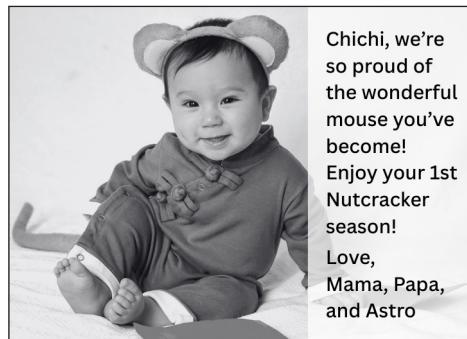
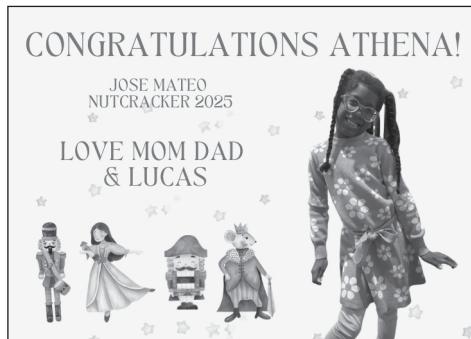
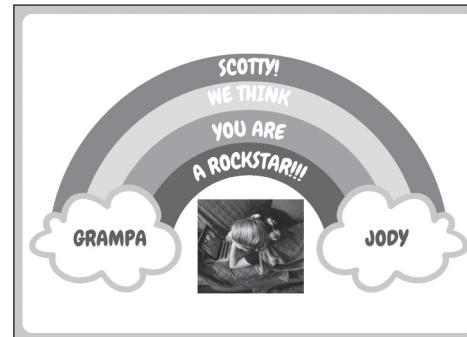
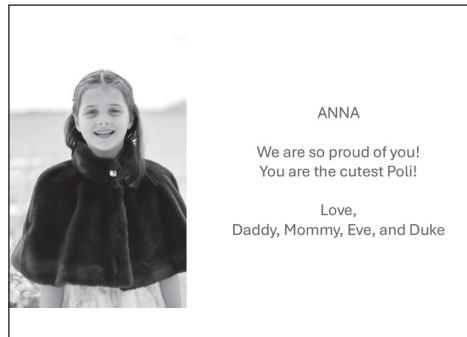
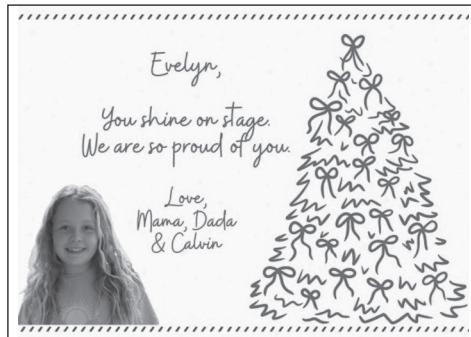
Madison Snyder

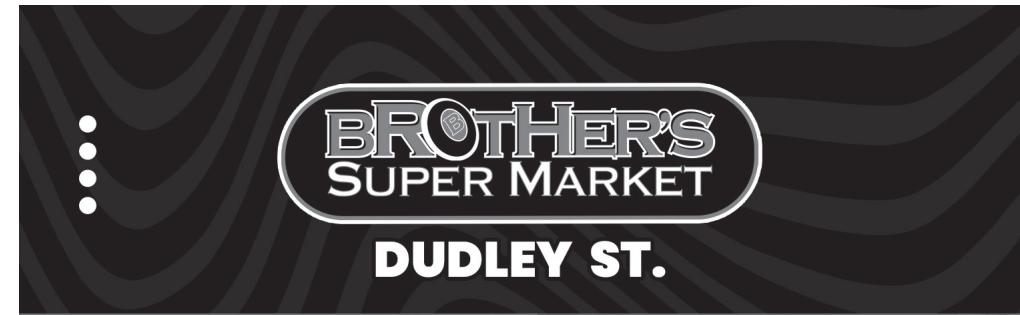
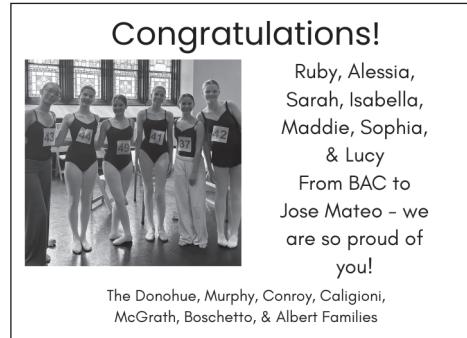
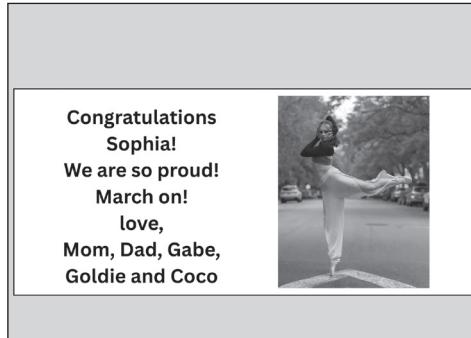
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# The Second Act

## JMBT Alumni & Friends Series

As part of

*Legacy in Motion*

### Celebrating 40 Years of José Mateo Ballet Theatre

JMBT is hosting a special monthly series to bring together past and present JMBT students, dancers, parents, and volunteers to connect and continue the legacy.

#### Save the Date for our upcoming events

The Second Act - January	January 16
The Second Act - February	February 27
The Second Act - March	March 20
The Second Act - April	April 17
Legacy in Motion 40th Anniversary Gala	May 16
The Second Act - June	June 19

#### Join the Legacy Network

Stay connected beyond the studios!

The JMBT Legacy Network is new way for former dancers, students, families, and volunteers to receive updates, special invitations, and access to our exclusive online portal.

SCAN TO JOIN



#### What are your favorite JMBT memories?

Many of you may not remember me, as my time with José was quite a while ago — back in the BTB days on Mass Ave! But I will always be deeply grateful for his guidance and the time and energy he invested in me. He truly played a pivotal role in shaping the artist I became, and those days, along with the friends I worked with back then, hold a very special place in my heart.

I'm sorry I can't be there in person, but I hope you all have a wonderful time reminiscing and celebrating the impact José and the company had on so many of us.

— Kati Hanlon Mayo



Talia in rehearsal with the company in 1994



Kati with Todd Hall as Sugar Plum and Cavalier in *The Nutcracker*

As a teenager uncertain about a career in dance, José, Scott, Mary and others encouraged me to try new things, and they gave me magical opportunities to create new roles and ballets.

I'm sure I am not the only one very grateful for having lived the beauty of JMBT.

— Talya Salant

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well, pretty much  
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# The Nutcracker

REDISCOVER THE MAGIC

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*Take advantage of exclusive discounts at selected local retailers when you show your Nutcracker ticket!*

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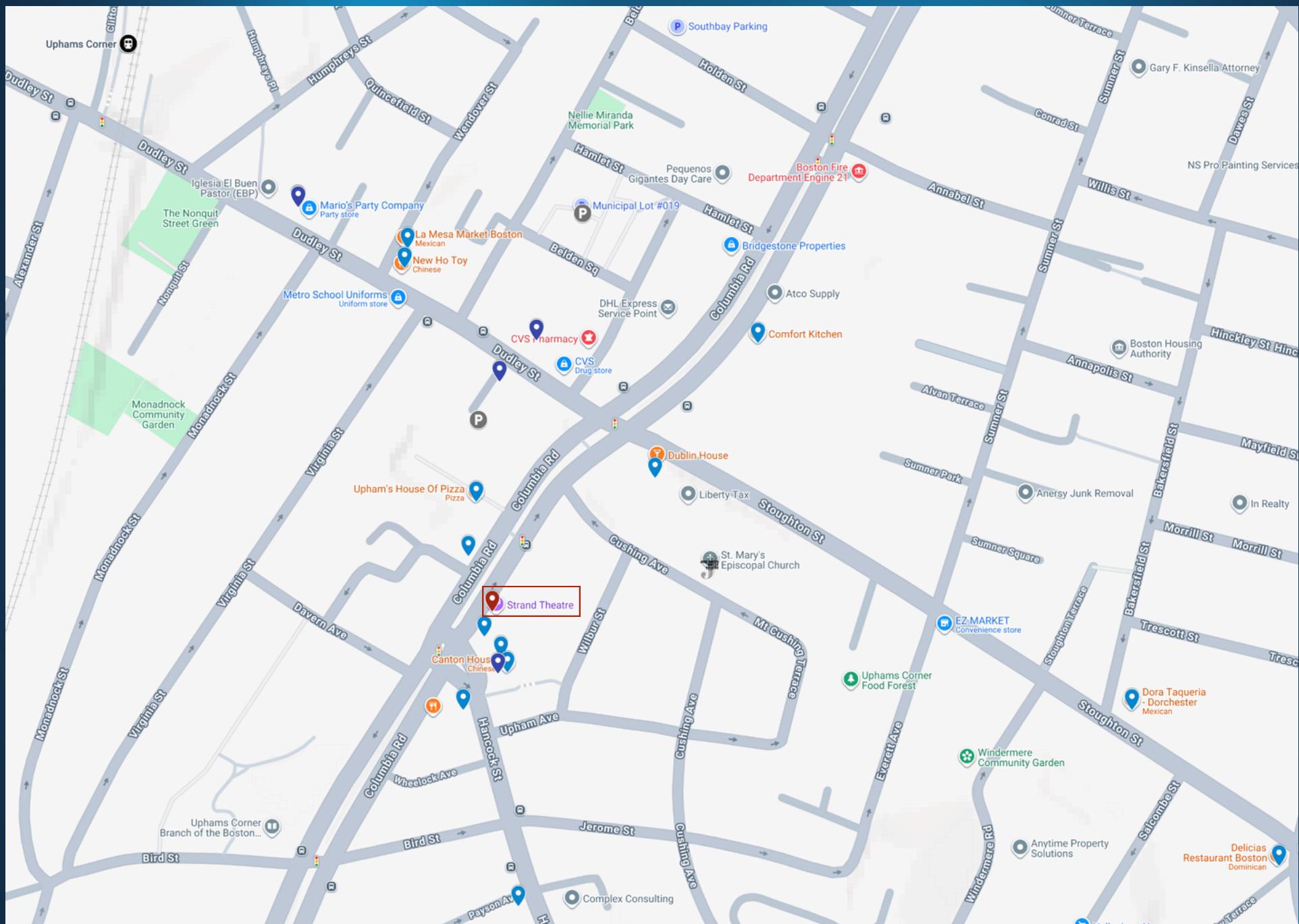
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**Marzipan/French**

Dec 19, Dec 21 Eve

Dec 20 Mat

Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Mat

**Mother Ginger****Polichinelles**

varies by performance

Massiel Valderrama with Dorothea Garland and Alex Schooling

Massiel Valderrama with Yutong Li and Phoebe Tsitsa

Juliana Godlewski with Yutong Li and Phoebe Tsitsa

Eric Perschke or Jess Pfau-Cooper

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**• Waltz of the Flowers •****Dew Drop Fairy**

Dec 19, Dec 21 Eve

Dec 20 Mat

Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Mat

**Flowers**

varies by performance

Juliana Godlewski

Dorothea Garland

Alex Schooling

Dorothea Garland, Juliana Godlewski, Margot Hartley, Luisa Jorgensen, Olivia Kaczmarzyk, Yutong Li, Maria Perez, Maria Rogler, Alex Schooling, Phoebe Tsitsa, Massiel Valderrama, Nicole Volpe, Holly Wersinger, Clara Zander

**• Grand Pas de Deux •****Sugar Plum Fairy & Cavalier**

Dec 19, Dec 20 Mat, Dec 21 Eve

Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Mat

Maria Perez and Da' Von Doane

Holly Wersinger and Damien Snow

JOSE MATEO  
BALLET  
THEATRE**Act I****Scene I: Decoration of the Tree****Dream Fairies**

varies by performance

Dorothea Garland, Juliana Godlewski, Margot Hartley, Luisa Jorgensen, Olivia Kaczmarzyk, Yutong Li, Niharika Nagpal, Maria Perez, Maria Rogler, Alex Schooling, Phoebe Tsitsa, Massiel Valderrama, Nicole Volpe, Holly Wersinger, Clara Zander

**Clara**

Dec 19

Dec 20 Mat / Eve

Dec 21 Mat / Eve

Maia Shen

Emma Cobb / Priscilla Regalado

Nia Dunlap / Annemarie Borawski

**Scene II: Dr. Drosselmeyer's Workshop****Dr. Drosselmeyer**

Jason Jordan

**Columbine**

Dec 19, Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Mat

Dec 20 Mat, Dec 21 Eve

Maria Rogler

Olivia Kaczmarzyk

**Harlequin**

Dec 19, Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Mat

Dec 20 Mat, Dec 21 Eve

David Lopez

Tanner Quirk

**Scene III: The Party****Mr. & Mrs. Silverhaus**

Paul Galvan and Libby Bullinger Snyder

**Party Children**

Ellya Abdel-Azim, Ziki Anyaosah, Bernadette Balis, Kate Borawski, Héloïse Calderwood, Alara Cirit, Asher Clevenson, Ruby Donohue, Evelyn Fofonoff, Scotty Imperatore, Claire Lichtor, Sophie McCallum, Lucy McGrath, Quinton Murphy Chancogne Finn Schneider Lund, Brendan Stroka, Jaclyn Sullivan, Kendall Thorne-Bingham, Chana Timoner, Hannah Weyant

varies by performance

**Party Parents**

Matt Barber, Grace Cluggish, Jason Cluggish, Da' Von Doane, Yutong Li, Damien Snow, Madison Snyder, Phoebe Tsitsa

## Scene IV: The Battle

### Nutcracker Prince

Dec 19, Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Mat  
Dec 20 Mat, Dec 21 Eve

### Soldiers

varies by performance

### Mouse King

### Mice

varies by performance

Tanner Quirk  
David Lopez

Senna Abdel-Azim, Lucy Albert, Daniel Barber, Sanaa Beauté-Acce, Sophia Boschetto, Isabella Caligioni, Vera Cauble, Sarah Conroy, Julia Danahy, Violette DeBurro, Leona Herba, Loula Housh, Lillyrose Lubangi, Sophia MacKenzie, Madison McGrath, Alessia Murphy, Gwenyth Pregizer, Bonnie Reynolds, María Paz Rubio, Talia Sholl, Lily Slade, Lucy Stevens-Wright, Joanna Tellez, Sherri Wu

Paul Galvan

Oluwayemisi Adekoje, Josephine Ames, Olivia Andrade, Madeleine Benjamin, Avya Bhutra, Briya Bray, Paloma Cruz Kim, Sebastián Cruz-Velez, Margot Foley, Kendall Jean, Chichi Lobovsky, Eira Lorda, Kesara Martinek, Karina Martins, Ayla Masalim, Hattie McCoy, Juliette Nohrden, Anya Novton, Athena Pankey, Ann-Arielle Paul, Odessa Scheemaker, Alia Schlooming, Gael Schwartz, Lulu Shepard, Kinsley Shevlin, Juniper Stories, Camille Stroka, Maya Timoner, Malia Turner, Khari Vallecilla, Semadar Wicherksi

## Scene V: In the Forest

### Snow Queen & Snow King

Dec 19, Dec 20 Mat, Dec 21 Eve  
Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Mat

### Snowflakes

varies by performance

Holly Wersinger and Damien Snow  
Massiel Valderrama and Da' Von Doane  
  
Dorothea Garland, Juliana Godlewski, Margot Hartley, Luisa Jorgensen, Olivia Kaczmarzyk, Yutong Li, Niharika Nagpal, Maria Perez, Maria Rogler, Alex Schooling, Phoebe Tsitsa, Massiel Valderrama, Nicole Volpe, Holly Wersinger, Clara Zander

## Act II

## Scene I: The Kingdom of the Sweets

### Cherubs

varies by performance

### Angels

varies by performance

### Court Maids & Attendants

varies by performance

### Chocolate/Spanish

all

### Coffee/Arabian

Dec 19, Dec 20 Mat, Dec 21 Eve

Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Mat

### Tea/Chinese

Dec 19, Dec 21 Eve

Dec 20 Mat

Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Mat

### Trepak/Russian

Dec 19, Dec 21 Mat

Dec 20 Mat

Dec 20 Eve, Dec 21 Eve

### Ellya Abdel-Azim, Ziki Anyaosah, Bernadette Balis, Kate Borawski, Alara Cirit, Clara Colley, Cleo Fofonoff, Louisa Hirsch, Nilah Johnson, Emma Lucia Martinez Rubio, Lucy McGrath, Aubrielle McManus, Empress Noel Lee, Natalie Payack, Evelyn Perschke, Malia Randall, Lillian Shepard, Chana Timoner, Katie Todgham, Hannah Weyant, Tearza Wicherksi

### Lucy Albert, Annemarie Borawski, Sophia Boschetto, Maia Catana, Grace Cluggish, Emma Cobb, Violette DeBurro, Loula Housh, Angela Li, Lillyrose Lubangi, Lily Slade, Lucy Stevens-Wright, Sherri Wu

### Maia Catana, Grace Cluggish, Nia Dunlap, Dorothea Garland, Juliana Godlewski, Margot Hartley, Luisa Jorgensen, Olivia Kaczmarzyk, Angela Li, Yutong Li, Niharika Nagpal, Maria Perez, Priscilla Regalado, Maria Rogler, Alex Schooling, Maia Shen, Phoebe Tsitsa, Massiel Valderrama, Nicole Volpe, Holly Wersinger, Clara Zander

## • The Divertissements •

Margot Hartley and Nicole Volpe

Clara Zander and David Lopez  
Maria Perez and Da' Von Doane

Yutong Li and Phoebe Tsitsa  
Alex Schooling and Maria Rogler  
Dorothea Garland and Clara Zander

Olivia Kaczmarzyk  
Juliana Godlewski  
Maria Rogler